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### Performance and the Paper Stage, 1640–1700

EDITED BY EMMA DEPLEDGE AND RACHEL WILLIE

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## INTRODUCTION

### Performance and the Paper Stage, 1640–1700

Emma Depledge and Rachel Willie

THE SECOND HALF OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY was marked by attempts to limit access to the London theaters and by important developments in the trade in playbooks.<sup>1</sup> The public theaters were closed when civil war broke out in 1642, and they remained closed for eighteen years. The punishments for performing plays during the ban were severe; as ordinances for theater closure state, punitive measures included the confiscation of profits and costumes, public whipping, arrests, and fines for audience members.<sup>2</sup> The theaters were reopened shortly after the monarchy was restored in 1660, but only two playhouses were licensed for performance in London for most of the period 1660–1700, with their managers—William Davenant (Duke’s Company) and Thomas Killigrew (King’s Company)—to “suffer no rival companies.”<sup>3</sup> This was further reduced to just one theater from 1682 to 1695, and admission prices radically increased in comparison to the Elizabethan and Jacobean outdoor playhouses.<sup>4</sup> Thus, although *Restoration* is used frequently to describe the supposedly simultaneous return of the monarchy and the theaters, for

This introduction forms part of a special issue: “Performance and the Paper Stage, 1640–1700,” ed. Emma Depledge and Rachel Willie, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 85, no. 1 (2022). To read other essays in the issue, follow this link: <https://muse.jhu.edu/resolve/167>.

1. David Scott Kastan, “Performances and Playbooks: The Closing of the Theatres and the Politics of Drama,” in *Reading, Society, and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge, 2003), 167–84.

2. Ordinances for theater closure were passed in 1642, 1647, and 1648. The first ordinance followed a pattern familiar to playgoers from the measures put in place at times of plague and public reflection, but the final measure—*An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament, for the utter suppression and abolishing of all Stage-Playes and Interludes* (London, 1648)—was the most punitive.

3. See Edward A. Langhans, “The Theatre,” in *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*, ed. Deborah C. Payne Fisk (Cambridge, 2000), 1–18 at 1.

4. On the actors’ rebellion and the subsequent theater monopoly, see Judith Milhous, *Thomas Betterton and the Management of Lincoln’s Inn Fields, 1695–1708* (Carbondale, Ill., 1979), esp. 51–150. Strolling players required a license to perform, and many theater practitioners were

many Londoners, the licensed theaters remained as inaccessible after 1660 as they had been during the ban on acting. As this special issue demonstrates, although state officials attempted to control when, where, and by whom theater could be produced and consumed, late seventeenth-century actors, managers, and audiences continuously sought out ways to defy the authorities and, in so doing, maintained a vibrant theatrical culture.

Theater historians used to portray 1642–59 as a period in which theater became limited, elitist, and inert, but work by scholars including Janet Clare, Dale B. J. Randall, Rachel Willie, and Susan Wiseman has demonstrated that these years were instead marked by theatrical innovation, particularly in print culture as a dramatic form.<sup>5</sup> Davenant (1606–1668) sought to circumvent the ban on stage plays by developing innovative methods of theatrical performance and by persuading the authorities to allow him to perform “moral entertainments,” as exemplified by his *Siege of Rhodes* (1656), which contained recitative and other elements associated with the court masque and the development of English opera. An underground theater market also developed, in which new dramatic genres such as drolls, play ballads, play pamphlets, and dialogues, as well as the continued practice of dumb shows and dramatic commonplacing, helped to keep theatrical culture alive. These novel pieces were short and could be performed quickly to avoid detection by soldiers, or else they could be delivered privately without the need of professional actors or purpose-built performance venues.<sup>6</sup> There is evidence to suggest that these dramatic forms continued to flourish after 1660. In the early 1680s, the London-based playwright Elkanah Settle decided it would be expedient to take “one Coish [coach] & severall others to act some playes or Drolls in the citty of Yorke.”<sup>7</sup> As this example shows, performances took place beyond the capital, in York and also in places such as Norwich and “Sturbridge Fair” in Cambridge.<sup>8</sup> Thus, it is important to recognize that

left frustrated. George Jolly was the most vociferous objector, but he was eventually pacified with the role of running a nursery for actors to supply Killigrew and Davenant; see below.

5. Janet Clare, *Drama of the English Republic, 1649–60* (Manchester, U.K., 2002); Dale B. J. Randall, *Winter Fruit: English Drama 1642–1660* (Lexington, Ky., 1995); Susan Wiseman, *Drama and Politics in the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1998); and Rachel Willie, *Staging the Revolution: Drama, Reinvention and History, 1647–72* (Manchester, U.K., 2015).

6. As Emma Depledge has shown, these new genres helped to keep Shakespeare’s plots and characters alive during the middle of the century; plays like *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *Hamlet* were abbreviated into playlets known as drolls, and others such as *Much Ado About Nothing* were redacted into ballads to be sung during the ban on acting. They also had an important influence on licensed theatrical production when the playhouses were reopened at the Restoration. To take only the example of Shakespeare, one notes a link between the plays modified for surreptitious performance during the 1640s and 1650s and those selected for performance at the two licensed theaters in operation in the 1660s. See Emma Depledge, *Shakespeare’s Rise to Cultural Prominence: Politics, Print and Alteration, 1642–1700* (Cambridge, 2018).

7. *A Register of English Theatrical Documents, 1660–1737*, vol. 1, 1660–1714, ed. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (Carbondale, Ill., 1991), 231.

8. *English Theatrical Documents*, ed. Milhous and Hume, 320, 212.

surreptitious performances took place during the midcentury ban on acting and that theater culture extended beyond the two patent theaters licensed to perform from the 1660s. Further, it is imperative to speak of theater histories in the plural to reflect the coexistence of state-sanctioned and underground theater culture as well as London and countrywide performances across the late seventeenth century.

### Actors and the Ban on Acting

Prior to the ban on acting, in 1629, a French acting troupe performed at the Blackfriars playhouse. Their company followed Continental European practices and comprised female players, who met with a negative reception despite being admired at the English court.<sup>9</sup> Evidently, English playgoers were not ready to experience women acting on the professional stage. Yet in 1656, Davenant obtained special permission to produce *The Siege of Rhodes* and cast Catherine Coleman to sing and act the part of Ianthe; it was first performed in the dining room of Davenant's home at Rutland House before transferring to the Cockpit theater in Drury Lane. Davenant was casting not only a female musician to sing a vocal line but also the first woman to act on the early modern public stage. Exiled royalists would have routinely seen women actors on the public playhouses in central Europe, and the London stage was thus reinvigorated and transformed by influences from overseas and innovations at home during the Protectorate.

Some actors responded to the ban by traveling to Continental Europe, and this arguably had positive consequences for English dramatic culture, particularly in terms of gender and genre. From 1644 to 1646, the actors Richard Baxter, Thomas Bedford, Walter Clun, William Hall, Charles Hart, Robert Shatterell, William Wintershall, and perhaps Nicholas Burt performed in Paris and at The Hague. Whether they operated as an acting company as such is open to debate, as is their ability to make a profit from the English-speaking exiled communities. By 1647, many of these actors were again performing in London, and Hart and Clun went on to act in the King's Company at the Restoration.<sup>10</sup> However, the ordinances for theater closure passed in 1647 and 1648 meant that acting was not likely to be an especially profitable profession in England in these years, and occasional reports in newsbooks detail the raids that took place.<sup>11</sup>

Whereas some English actors who were performing in Paris in 1646 returned to England, others continued to try their success abroad. George Jolly is reported as touring the Low Countries and Germany with his company, where he proved to be "one of the most capable and progressive of the actor managers."<sup>12</sup> Two treaties signed

9. Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660–1700* (Cambridge, 1992), 22–23.

10. *English Theatrical Documents*, ed. Milhous and Hume, esp. 489–91.

11. John Leslie Hotson offers a comprehensive overview of these reports in *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (Cambridge, Mass., 1928).

12. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 166.

in 1648 formed the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War that had ravaged this part of Europe. Leslie Hotson and Harry R. Hoppe have both suggested that the exigencies of war and its aftermath meant that these were not ideal countries for a foreign touring troop, but Jolly's adaptability, versatility, ruthlessness, and willingness to hire German actors was met with success.<sup>13</sup> On December 24, 1660, Jolly was granted a license to perform drama in London; then on December 30, 1662, an agreement was drawn up between Jolly, Davenant, and Thomas Killigrew whereby Davenant and Killigrew rented from Jolly his London grant for four pounds a week. In January 1663, Jolly was granted a license for a strolling company to act beyond the environs of the city. Davenant and Killigrew used this opportunity to have Jolly's license to perform drama in London revoked and to fully establish their duopoly.<sup>14</sup> Thus, Jolly, who negotiated the trials of war and overseas touring in the 1640s and 1650s, fell victim to Restoration courtier-actor managers on the London stage, which further highlights how limited the 1660 *restoration* of theatrical freedom was for the vast majority of theater professionals.

Not all illegal performances in England in the 1640s and 1650s took place underground. The following is an account of a raid that took place on January 1, 1649, when actors were found performing plays in established playhouses:

The Souldiers seized on the Players on their Stages at Drury-lane, and at Salisbury Court. They went also to the Fortune in Golden-lane, but they found none there, but John Pudding dancing on the Ropes, whom they tooke along with them . . . the Players at the Red Bull . . . had notice of it . . . and were all gone before they came. . . . But at Salisbury Court they were taken on the Stage the Play being almost ended . . . they were carried to White-Hall with their Players cloathes upon their backs. . . . Abraham had a black Satten gown on, and before he came into the durt, he was very neat in his white laced pumps. The people not expecting such a pageant looked and laughed at all the rest, and not knowing who he was, they asked, what had that Lady done?<sup>15</sup>

As Hotson notes, this account shows that all four playhouses were "in full career" during the ban, and it can be inferred that the actor Abraham Ivory continued to play women's parts at Salisbury Court.<sup>16</sup> The soldiers found actors at the Cockpit in Drury

13. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 168–76; Harry R. Hoppe, "George Jolly at Bruges," *Review of English Studies* 5 (1954): 265–68.

14. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 177–94.

15. Richard Collings, *The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, Sent Abroad to prevent misinformation*, no. 293 (Tuesday, January 2–Tuesday, January 9, 1649), sigs. Nnnnnnn1v–2r. This is also cited in Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 40–41, where he suggests the event has been misdated and ought to read January 1.

16. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 40.

Lane and at Salisbury Court; at the Fortune, John Pudding was found performing the still-legal entertainment of rope dancing, and the actors fled from the Red Bull before they were caught. It is possible that the Fortune interspersed legal entertainments with drolls as a way to conceal their illicit dramatic performances or perhaps, by chance, plays were not scheduled to be performed that day. Although the performances were broken up, there seems to have been little attempt to conceal what the actors were doing; they brazenly acted at a time when performing plays was illegal. Seen in this context, Davenant's ability to mount sanctioned entertainments in the 1650s, when stage plays were illegal, may not be as incongruous as it at first appears.<sup>17</sup>

This raid was focused upon the commodities of performance rather than the bodies that performed. The performance at Salisbury Court had nearly ended, and so the actors were taken to Whitehall in their costumes, causing a spectacle for the people they passed en route. This procession transformed people going about their daily lives into spectators. In asserting order and prohibiting performance, the soldiers mounted another form of performance: the arrest of the actors is described as a pageant would be. In particular, we are told that the soldiers "tooke the Crown from his head who acted the King, and in sport would oftentimes put it on again." Such an action would have struck an ominous chord in January 1649. On January 20, 1649, Charles I was brought to trial in Westminster Hall. Ten days later he stepped out of an upper window of the Banqueting House at Whitehall and onto a scaffold, where he was executed for treason. In the context of the political climate of January 1649, the puerile joke of taking the crown off the head of the player king as he was marched toward Whitehall resonates with the political uncertainty of the times.

If actors were regularly and semipublicly flouting the ban on stage plays, then the authorities may have been more tolerant of enacted drama than the narratives developed in the 1640s, 1650s, and 1660s might lead us to believe (see Christopher Highley's foreword). While the Records of Early English Drama (REED) project has done significant work in drawing attention to the vibrancy of early theatrical culture in England and Wales before 1642, its period range indirectly endorses the moribund characterization of mid-seventeenth-century drama. By stopping in 1642, REED implicitly suggests that the outbreak of civil war marked a cessation of early English drama and that a modified dramatic culture emerged at the Restoration. As this special issue will illustrate, performances continued to take place in private houses and elsewhere, suggesting that theatrical culture continued to thrive in alternative sites of performance.

### Politics, Print, and Performance

Theater censorship of the 1640s and 1650s did not extend to the publication of plays. In fact, the late seventeenth century witnessed a radical increase in the number of

17. For a detailed edition and discussion of Davenant's dramas of the 1650s, see Clare, *Drama of the English Republic*.

playbooks published,<sup>18</sup> and stationers like Humphrey Moseley issued multiple plays in the same (octavo) format to encourage consumers to collect them; this allowed customers to bind their favorite plays together in *Sammelbände*. As mentioned above, some actors continued to attempt to earn a living through performing—be it illegally in London, in other parts of England and Wales, or in central Europe. Other actors turned their hand to new careers. As Marissa Nicosia has demonstrated, the performer Andrew Pennycuik became a printer, and when he did so, he made much of his credentials as an actor.<sup>19</sup> The paper stage, by which we mean instances of the textual performance of drama, increased rapidly between 1640 and 1700.<sup>20</sup> As examples such as the 1676 quarto edition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* demonstrate, the border between performance texts and the paper stage is permeable. The 1676 *Hamlet* featured a note informing consumers that what they were getting was both the version seen on stage and additional text that was “left out upon the Stage.” It is further stated that a “Mark” has been used to help them distinguish between the performance text and the passages “inserted according to the Original Copy.”<sup>21</sup> Such printed texts also flirt with the idea of performance by using “features of page design to make characteristics of a performance-based genre legible to readers in a text-based medium,” which teases historians with their simultaneously readerly and dramatic nature.<sup>22</sup> The practice of reading aloud also generated its own forms of performance and entertainment, meaning that the vitality of drama continued throughout this period, even as critics of the nonmonarchical governments attempted to align the playhouse to their cause.

During the Restoration, the gap between play premiere and publication decreased from around a year in the 1660s to less than a month by the late 1680s.<sup>23</sup> This was also a time when booksellers began listing playbooks as their own literary category,<sup>24</sup> and when buying playbooks became less expensive than going to the

18. See Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser, “Canons and Classics: Publishing Drama in Caroline England,” in *Localizing Caroline Drama: Politics and Economics of the Early Modern English Stage, 1625–1642*, ed. Alan B. Farmer and Adam Zucker (New York, 2006), 17–42; and Farmer and Lesser, “The Popularity of Playbooks Revisited,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 56 (2005): 1–32.

19. Marissa Nicosia, “Printing as Revival: Making Playbooks in the 1650s,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 111 (2017): 469–89.

20. For a definition of the paper stage, see Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, chap. 1.

21. William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark* (London, 1676), sig. (A)1v.

22. Claire M. L. Bourne, “Dramatic Typography and the Restoration Quartos of *Hamlet*,” in *Canonising Shakespeare: Stationers and the Book Trade, 1640–1740*, ed. Emma Depledge and Peter Kirwan (Cambridge, 2017), 153–70.

23. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London, 1660–1800: Playwrights, Publishers and the Market* (London, 2015), 55.

24. See Adam G. Hooks, “Booksellers’ Catalogues and the Classification of Printed Drama in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 4 (2008): 445–64. For more on changes between the Renaissance and post-1660 print and performance market, see Depledge and Kirwan’s introduction to *Canonising Shakespeare*.



London public theaters, in a direct reversal of the first half of the century. This pricing shift may have resulted in an increase in the number of people purchasing playbooks. It might also have encouraged those who could afford to go to the public theaters to attend revivals with printed playbooks in their hands.

Printed playbooks may also have furnished the theaters at this time, thus marking another reversal of the practices prior to 1642.<sup>25</sup> Few officially sanctioned new plays were produced between the closing of the theaters in 1642 and their official reopening in the 1660s. The licensed theaters were therefore forced to rely on pre-1642 plays—sometimes in adapted form—for their repertoire in the 1660s. Political parallels also seem to have encouraged playwrights and theater managers to alter or revive pre-1642 plays, thereby blurring boundaries between political and theatrical past and present. On November 5, 1664, a performance of Davenant's alteration of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was mounted. This included spectacles associated with the restored theaters, such as a sinking cave, flying witches, and operatic elements.<sup>26</sup> The date upon which the adaptation was performed is significant, as it coincided with Gunpowder Plot Day, which was celebrated as a providential moment when the interests of England were protected by a congenial deity.<sup>27</sup> A play about the overthrow of a usurping tyrant, especially one where the parallels between (modified) Scottish history and recent history have been highlighted, may have been particularly pertinent viewing for commemorating the day on which an attempt to overthrow the king and Parliament was thwarted.<sup>28</sup>

The argument printed with Davenant's altered *Macbeth*, which may have been issued separately to spectators attending its initial performances, arguably stresses the plot's topicality while attempting to shut down any ambiguities surrounding the play's political outlook. We are told that *Macbeth*

omitted no kind of Libidinous Cruelty for the space of 18 Years; for so long he Tyrannized over *Scotland*. But having then made up the Measure of his Iniquities, *Macduff* the Governor of *Fife*, associating to himself, some few Patriots (and being assisted with Ten Thousand *English*) equally hated by the Tyrant, and abhorring the Tyranny, met in *Birnam* Wood. . . . Marching early in the Morning towards *Dunsinan* Castle,

25. See James J. Marino, *Owning William Shakespeare: The King's Men and Their Intellectual Property* (Philadelphia, 2011), 410.

26. Pepys references seeing this production in his diary. See the entry for November 5, 1664, in *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. 5, 1664, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews (London, 1995), 314; and Hazelton Spencer, "D'Avenant's *Macbeth* and Shakespeare's," *PMLA* 40 (1925): 619–44.

27. J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1660–1832: Religion, Ideology and Politics during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge, 2000), 88.

28. Michael Dobson notes how, in Davenant's version, Fleance echoes Charles II by spending his years of exile in France. See Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769* (Oxford, 1992), 37.

which they took by *Scalado*. *Macbeth* escaping, was pursued by *Macduff*, who having overtaken him, urged him to the Combat; to whom the Tyrant, half in scorn, returned this Answer: That he did in Vain attempt to Kill him, it being his Destiny never to be Slain by any that was Born of Woman. Now then said *Macduff*, is thy fatal end drawing fast upon thee, for I was never Born of Woman, but violently Cut out of my Mothers Belly: Which words so daunted the cruel Tyrant, though otherways a Valiant man and of great Performances, that he was very easily slain; and *Malcolm Conner*, the true Heir, Seated in his Throne.<sup>29</sup>

The parallels being established between the narrative of *Macbeth* and recent history are telling: the eighteen years between the outbreak of civil war and the restoration of the monarchy are implicitly alluded to through the period of Macbeth's reign. There are indirect references to Oliver Cromwell, who was presented as a cruel and libidinous tyrant in much anti-Cromwellian satire, but this is not to say that the play itself is straightforwardly royalist.<sup>30</sup> As Lois Potter has noted, far from pushing a royalist agenda, Davenant's *Macbeth* instead illustrates the ambiguous relationship many of the audience members had with the Commonwealth and Restoration regimes.<sup>31</sup> Thus, documents of performance, such as this argument for *Macbeth*, not only present important (if ambiguous) glosses on the politics of drama in the mid-seventeenth century but also offer helpful insights into the mechanics of performance and the way that writers packaged their plays to make them palatable to the authorities.

### Performance and the Paper Stage

The essays brought together in this special issue address the relationship between stage and page in the period 1640–1700. As Christopher Highley outlines in his foreword, early responses to the closing of the playhouse, such as *The Actors Remonstrance* (1643) and *The Muses Looking-Glasse* (1643), illustrate the political, cultural, and religious circumstances of theater closure and establish a way of considering the period as a point of slight performance in theater history. The narratives created at the time presented dour Puritan parliamentarians as opposing all modes of performance, and these views have had a lasting—and misleading—impact on perceptions of Puritan attitudes toward the theater and on theater history more generally. Yet, as Hotson, Judith Milhous, and Robert Hume have illustrated, English actors did

29. William Davenant, *Macbeth a Tragædy. With all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New songs. As it's now acted at the Dukes Theatre* (London, 1674), sig. A2r.

30. Laura Lunger Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell: Ceremony, Portrait, and Print, 1645–1661* (Cambridge, 2000).

31. Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writings: Royalist Literature, 1641–1660* (Cambridge, 1989), 206. See also Dobson, *Making of the National Poet*, 37.

continue to perform in England and at the exiled courts.<sup>32</sup> Not all Puritans and parliamentarians were opposed to drama, and the oft-repeated narrative of all Puritans being antitheatricals needs further nuance.

Justin Kuhn examines two plays that were printed for the first time in 1657, as *Two New Plays*: Thomas Middleton's *More Dissemblers besides Women* and *Women Beware Women*. Kuhn highlights how Jacobean representations of women as disruptive forces in the body politic took on added significance in the 1650s. Critics such as Jean I. Marsden have observed how Shakespeare's female characters were rewritten during the Restoration; Kuhn instead demonstrates how—without modifying plot or characters—publisher Humphrey Moseley used the medium of print, of the paper stage alone, to reorient the politics of Middleton's plays.<sup>33</sup> Christopher Matusiak examines the theatrical patronage of Isabella Rich, first Countess of Holland (d. 1655), and the types of performances that may have taken place at Holland House in the 1650s. According to James Wright's *Historia Histrionica* (1699), stage players prohibited from acting in London "in Oliver's time" often gravitated toward aristocratic residences just beyond the city, particularly Holland House in Kensington. In 1621 Rich inherited the mansion (originally known as Cope Castle), which had been built by her father, Sir Walter Cope, a prominent Jacobean courtier with ties to Shakespeare and the King's Men. Glittering entertainments also took place at civic feasts, where ticketing systems regulated attendance, and processions from the church to the hall formed part of the ceremony. Newton Key examines the panoply and drama of London's feasting season in the Restoration to assess what these feasts and the entertainments performed as part of the ceremony reveal about corporate and group identity.

Imaginary feasting is also central to the relationship between politics, text, and song in ballads examined by Rachel Willie. Set to the tune "Cook Laurel," these ballads index Ben Jonson, creating a mnemonic connection between the rogues and vagabonds of Tudor and early Stuart folklore and parliamentarians as a way of celebrating the Restoration. Just as ballads were sung in various performance spaces, plays were performed not only in the fixed sites of the playhouse. Stephen Watkins considers plays "on the move." Paying particular attention to William Davenant and John Dryden, Watkins considers how the play moves from the playhouse to the printed page and back again, as textual and aural modes of performance inflect dramatic production. Claire Bowditch and Elaine Hobby examine Aphra Behn's adaptive

32. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, esp. 1–66; Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, "New Light on English Acting Companies in 1646, 1648, and 1660," *Review of English Studies* 42 (1991): 487–509.

33. See Jean I. Marsden, "Rewritten Women: Shakespearean Heroines in the Restoration," in *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, ed. Marsden (New York, 1991), 43–56; and Marsden, "Pathos and Passivity: D'Urfey's *The Injured Princess* and Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*," *Restoration: Studies in English Culture 1660–1700* 14 (1990): 71–81.

practices in *The Rover* (1677) and *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678), carefully highlighting the rich knowledge of earlier forms of theatrical practice that informs Behn's work.

The residues of past theatrical culture inform Heidi Craig's forensic discussion of the printed paratexts and actors' parts, where she argues that actor lists function both as marketing devices and as documents of theater history, which reveal how revivals, theatrical silence, and print format influenced contemporary interest in the theatrical past. Finally, Francis X. Connor returns to the publisher, bookseller, author, and collector of playbooks Francis Kirkham to assess his play catalogs and their impact on the stage and the history of drama.

One of the main aims of this special issue is to question received book and theater history by highlighting the myriad ways in which performance continued to flourish in spite of—and arguably to spite—limitations placed on drama's dual media of performance and print between 1640 and 1700. Recent scholarship has addressed the theatricality of ink and mid-seventeenth-century print and performance culture. This special issue analyzes the relationship between print and performance by examining performances that took place during the ban on acting imposed in London between 1642 and 1659 and by exploring evidence of theatrical culture beyond the expensive and elitist "restored" theaters of the post-1660 period.

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## FOREWORD

# Early Printed Responses to the Closing of London's Playhouses, 1641–43

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Christopher Highley

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IN ONE OF EARLY MODERN ENGLAND'S most unlikely volte-faces, the notorious antitheatricalist William Prynne penned a tract defending the public stage. Published in 1649, *Mr William Prynne His Defence of Stage-Plays* reversed the same author's landmark denunciation of theater in his *Histrio-mastix. The Players Scourge, or, Actors Tragædie* (1633).<sup>1</sup> Prynne's reference in the earlier work to "Women-Actors, notorious whores"<sup>2</sup> was widely seen as glancing at Henrietta Maria's participation in court plays; as a result, he was quickly condemned by the court of Star Chamber to stand in the pillory and have his ears "trimmed." Prynne's outrage in the 1630s at what he considered the growing authoritarianism of the king, and the threats from bishops and a Catholic queen, had turned by 1649 into alarm at "a Tyrannical, abominable, lewd, schismatical [and] hæretical Army"<sup>3</sup> that not only held the king captive but also controlled Parliament following Pride's Purge of its moderate members in December 1648. The specific occasion for Prynne's defense of the stage was the removal of the "Players from their Houses"<sup>4</sup> by groups of overzealous soldiers. For

This foreword forms part of a special issue: "Performance and the Paper Stage, 1640–1700," ed. Emma Depledge and Rachel Willie, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 85, no. 1 (2022). To read other essays in the issue, follow this link: <https://muse.jhu.edu/resolve/167>.

1. See *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter ODNB], s.v. "Prynne, William (1600–1669)," by William Lamont, last modified May 19, 2011, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22854>. It is possible that *Prynne His Defence* was a forgery designed to ridicule his views. Another work published the same year in Prynne's name claimed just this: *A Vindication of William Prynne Esquire, from some scandalous Papers and Imputations* (London, 1649).

2. William Prynne, *Histrio-mastix. The Players Scourge, or, Actors Tragædie* (London, 1633), sig. Rrrrrr3 recto.

3. William Prynne, *Mr William Prynne His Defence of Stage-Plays, or a Retraction of a former Book of his called Histrio-Mastix* (London, 1649), 3.

4. Prynne, *Prynne His Defence*, 4. For the account of soldiers abusing the players at the Salisbury Court theater in January 1649, see *English Professional Theatre, 1530–1660*, ed. Glynne

Prynne, this was a violation of the king's prerogative, an attempt to silence Charles I's allies in the theater and to deny him a form of royal solace. From the beginning of hostilities in 1642, Prynne had upheld royal authority and worked for a reconciliation of king and commons in defiance of more radical voices, many of which emerged from the army. In retrospect, Prynne regretted his earlier comparison of Charles I to Nero for "loving of Stage-plays," as well as his attack on Henrietta Maria "with the bitter and cruell words of whore and strumpet" for performing in plays. He now recognized that "Playes are lawfull things, and are to be allowed as recreations for honest men." Prynne claimed that when he wrote *Histrion-mastix*, he was unaware of the nature of the plays "as were written and acted in *England* of late, for the Recreation of our most gracious King and Queen, and many of their best friends."<sup>5</sup> Although Prynne remained hostile to "lewd" plays, he recognized that "honest Playes may be tolerated," and he even disavowed his earlier objections to cross-dressing on stage.<sup>6</sup> By 1649, then, Prynne had come to the startling conclusion that, as Sir William Davenant later put it, "they that would have no *King*, would have no *Play*."<sup>7</sup>

*Mr William Prynne His Defence of Stage-Plays* is one of a few printed defenses of the stage in the years between 1642 and 1660. In this essay, I examine defenses of the stage in the years immediately after the playhouses were shut, a period when we might expect a flurry of protests to this unprecedented parliamentary action. Here again, defenses of the stage are rare, although *The Actors Remonstrance, or Complaint: For the silencing of their profession* is one notable and well-known exception (January 1643). In particular, I want to suggest that in order to gauge resistance to the closure, we need to look beyond formal defenses of the stage. I will argue that the republication in 1643 of Thomas Randolph's play *The Muses Looking-Glasse* is part of a counteroffensive against the ban on plays that also reveals something about the role of local politics in motivating the parliamentary prohibition.<sup>8</sup>

There are several possible reasons why no printed defenses of playing appeared before *The Actors Remonstrance* of January 1643. This absence is all the stranger when

Wickham, Herbert Berry, and William Ingram (Cambridge, 2000), 669–70; and Janet Clare, "Theatre and Commonwealth," in *The Cambridge History of British Theatre*, vol. 1, *Origins to 1660*, ed. Jane Milling and Peter Thomson (Cambridge, 2004), 461.

5. Prynne, *Prynne His Defence*, 5, 6.

6. Prynne, *Prynne His Defence*, 8, 7. Prynne denied that cross-dressed boys were "again the Scriptures in a plain and ordinary sence" (7), and he preferred continuing this practice to having women on stage, as seen in some European countries.

7. William Davenant, *The Prologue to His Majesty at the first Play presented at the Cock-pit in Whitehall* (London, 1660).

8. For general accounts of the closing of the theaters in 1642, see N. W. Bawcutt, "Puritanism and the Closing of the Theaters in 1642," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 22 (2009): 179–200; Martin Butler, "The Condition of the Theatres in 1642," in *Cambridge History of British Theatre*, ed. Milling and Thomson, 439–57; and David Scott Kastan, "'Publike Sports' and 'Publike Calamities': Plays, Playing, and Politics," in *Shakespeare after Theory* (Oxford, 1999), 201–20.



we recall that a tract called *The Stage-Players Complaint*, published in 1641 shortly before the official closure, offered a precedent and template of sorts for theater supporters and personnel. *The Stage-Players Complaint* is a “pleasant Dialogue between Cane of the *Fortune*, and Reed of the *Friers*” in which the two actors lament “the sad and solitary conditions for want of Employment . . . [during] this heavie and Contagious time of the Plague in London.” Whereas Cane, the pessimist, thinks that public theater is about to be suppressed now that “Monopolers are downe, Projectors are downe, the High Commission Court is downe, Starre-chamber is downe, & (some think) Bishops will downe,” the more upbeat Reed believes that the strong public demand for theater will save it. For Reed, the continuous demand for plays by “strangers . . . Citizens . . . Gallants . . . the learned . . . Gentlewomen . . . [and] the ignorant” all but guarantees that players will stay in business. Plays and players are simply too “needfull for the Common good.”<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the irrepressible appetite of Londoners and visitors for theater may have encouraged players to continue performing after the prohibition was issued. Evidence of surreptitious performances after the ban is not difficult to find, suggesting that actors and audiences were undeterred by what were likely quite feeble efforts at enforcement by the authorities. It was not until the later 1640s that playhouses like the *Fortune* and the *Red Bull* were “made unserviceable” and “despoiled,” their galleries demolished and seating removed. As Prynne notes, even as late as 1649, parliamentary soldiers still had to eject players from their traditional venues.<sup>10</sup>

Whatever the case, actors and audiences may have expected that Parliament’s closure of the theaters was a temporary measure only. After all, the September 1642 ordinance “for Stage-plays to cease” decreed that “while these sad Causes and set times of Humiliation doe continue, publike Stage-playes shall cease, and bee forborne,” implying that when the “Times of Joy and Gladnesse” returned, the theaters would reopen.<sup>11</sup> In fact, it was not until 1645 that Parliament moved to introduce a “perpetuall” ban on “Interludes and Stage-playes.”<sup>12</sup> Some royalist writers assumed that King Charles would shortly return to his capital, rout the rebel parliamentarians, and restore public entertainments. In the manuscript ballad “The Players Petition to the Long Parliament, after being long Silenc’d, that they might Play again, 1642,” Thomas Jordan asked Parliament for

9. Andrew Cane and Emmanuel Reed, *The Stage-Players Complaint* (London, 1641), title page, 4.

10. For evidence of the continuation of playing for several years after the ban in London’s purpose-built theaters, see Hyder E. Rollins, “A Contribution to the History of the English Commonwealth Drama,” *Studies in Philology* 18 (1921): 267–333, quotations at 288, 317.

11. “September 1642: Order for Stage-plays to cease,” in *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642–1660*, ed. C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait (London, 1911), 26–27, British History Online, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/acts-ordinances-interregnum/pp26-27>.

12. *A Full Relation of the Passages concerning the Late Treaty for a Peace, Begun at Uxbridge January 30. 1644* (Oxford, 1645), 4.

leave to Play,  
Quickly before the King comes, for we wou'd  
Be glad to say, y've done a little good  
Since ye have sat, your play is almost done,  
As well as ours, would 't had ne're been begun;  
But we shall finde, e're the last Act be spent,  
*Enter the King, Exit the Parliament.*<sup>13</sup>

*The Actors Remonstrance* is in many ways a puzzling work; asking that playhouses reopen, it begins by asserting that the stage has recently cleaned up its act but then admits that the task of self-reformation is far from complete. In appealing to Parliament as “the great God Phœbus-Apollo, and the nine Heliconian Sisters, on the top of Pernassus,” the narrator adopts a mock-heroic tone that was unlikely to impress the godly men who had voted to close playhouses and other popular gathering places. The author of the *Remonstrance* seeks to appease critics of theater by arguing that drama inculcates virtue in spectators, thus helping to uphold rather than subvert social order. Moreover, the actor-narrator vows to exclude “any Comedian that shall speake his part in a tone, as if hee did it in derision of some of the pious.”<sup>14</sup>

Two of London’s “pious” citizens are shown speaking in just such godly “tones” in another work printed only months before the *Remonstrance*—one that also engages with the profession of playing and its value to the Commonwealth. These are the Puritan characters Mr. Bird and Mrs. Flowerdew, who act as onstage spectators/commentators in Thomas Randolph’s play *The Muses Looking-Glasse*. The play was first performed in 1630, but not published until 1638, as part of Randolph’s *Poems with the Muses Looking-Glasse: and Amyntas*. This collection appeared in a second edition in 1640 and a third in 1643, the same year that the play was also released as a stand-alone quarto. The decision to issue the play in two different formats in 1643 was not Randolph’s (he died in 1635) but the publisher Francis Bowman’s, who may have seen its theorization of drama as a timely response to the recent inhibition of playing and the growing culture wars. Bowman appears to have had strong royalist sympathies: many of the other works he published suggest as much, as does his close affiliation with the royalist university town of Oxford.<sup>15</sup>

13. Printed in Thomas Jordan, *A Royal Arbor of Loyal Poesie, Consisting of Poems and Songs* (London, 1663), 80.

14. *The Actors Remonstrance, or Complaint: For the silencing of their profession* (London, 1643), title page, 8.

15. The first and second editions of Randolph’s collected works were published in Oxford by university printer Leonard Lichtman. The title page of the 1643 edition, however, mentions neither publisher nor printer, only that it was printed in London. The stand-alone play quarto is similarly devoid of bibliographic detail. Bowman’s name reappears on the title pages of the later collected editions of 1652 and 1664, which are both associated with London and Oxford. Oxford was a major royalist stronghold in the early years of the first civil war. Oxford colleges raised money and soldiers for the royalist cause, and Charles made the town his base of operations



Bird and Flowerdew are described in the play's opening stage direction as "two of the sanctified fraternity of Black-Fryers" who have never before been to a playhouse. The playhouse in question is evidently not their local one. When Bird wonders why "more shops of Satan" are built, given that so many "filthy Innes" already exist, we realize we are in a newly erected theater. "No marvell now," Bird adds, "if Play-houses increase, / For they are all grown so obscene of late, / That one begets another."<sup>16</sup> Bird and Flowerdew are in fact at the Salisbury Court playhouse located in the Whitefriars district, a short walk to the west of Blackfriars across the Fleet River. The Salisbury Court opened in 1630, and it was here that *The Muses Looking-Glasse* was first performed. With its negative portrayal of play-hating Puritans, the play earned William Prynne's censure a few years later in *Histrion-mastix*. Prynne notes next to an ironic remark "that none but a companie of Puritans and Precisians speake against [plays]; all else applaud and eke frequent them." He continues, "This objection as I have heard was much urged in a most scurrilous and prophane manner in the first Play that was acted in the New-erected Play-house: a fit consecration Sermon for that Divels Chappell."<sup>17</sup>

Bird and Flowerdew are not at the playhouse as paying customers but as vendors of luxury commodities. Bird, a featherman, sells elaborate plumes; Mrs. Flowerdew, "wife to a Haberdasher of small Wares," sells "Pins and Looking-glasses" (sig. A2r). The ironic association of the supposedly plain and abstemious Puritans of the Blackfriars district with the sartorial trades of feather-making and haberdashery was a long-running stage joke by this time. In a similar metatheatrical scene from Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*—a play Randolph surely had in mind when writing *Muses*—the Puritan character Zeal-of-the-Land Busy watches a puppet play and argues furiously with one of the puppets about the propriety of playing. When Busy accuses the puppet of pride, it charges him with hypocrisy: "What say you to your tire-women . . . or feather-makers i'the Friars, that are o' your faction of faith? Are not they with their perukes and their puffs, their fans and their huffs, as much pages of Pride and waiters upon Vanity?"<sup>18</sup>

At the opening of *Muses*, Bird and Flowerdew are astonished at the popularity of the playhouse:

beginning in October 1642. For more information, see the BCW Project at <https://bcw-project.org>. Bowman's royalist publications included Matthew Wren's *Monarchy Asserted or the State of Monarchicall & Popular Government in Vindication of the Consideration upon Mr Harrington's "Oceana"* (Oxford, 1659).

16. Thomas Randolph, *The Muses Looking-Glasse*, stand-alone quarto ed. (London, 1643), sig. A2r–v. Unless otherwise noted, further references to this edition appear in the text.

17. Prynne, *Histrion-mastix*, 797 and note.

18. I quote from the modernized spelling edition of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, ed. John Creaser, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online* (2014), 5.5.66–71, <https://universitypublishingonline.org/Cambridge/benjonson>.

FLOWERDEW See brother how the wicked throng and crowd  
To works of Vanity! not a nook, or corner  
In all this house of sin, this cave of filthynesse,  
This den of spirituall theeves, but it is stufft,  
Stuffed, and Stufft full as is a cushion  
With the lewd Reprobate.

(sig. A2r)

As the two Puritans discuss the immorality of plays, Roscius, “a Player,” enters and is told by Bird that “we have brought the things you spake for” (sig. A3v). The Puritans are selling their wares to the actors as well as to the spectators. Ostensibly horrified that Roscius is making an “impious . . . [and] irreligious” living on the stage, Bird and Flowerdew then decide to convert him from an “infidel” to “a sincere Professor” (sig. A3r). But Roscius will have none of it; he defends the moral purpose of theater:

Boldly I dare say  
There has been more by us in some one Play  
Laugh’t into wit and vertue, then hath been  
By twenty tedious Lectures drawn from sin  
And foppish humours.

(sig. A4r)

He persuades the Puritans to watch the play before they “condemn” it on stage, presumably alongside actual stage-sitting gallants wearing the kinds of sartorial accessories they peddle.

As Bird and Flowerdew watch a series of allegorical scenes, Roscius “moralize[s] the plot” for them (sig. A4r). Colax, or Flattery, is the play’s pivotal figure; in each scene, he orchestrates an encounter between the opposed extremes of various virtues. The virtue of Fortitude, for example, is represented in the figures of Daring/Presumption and Fearfulness/Despair, and Temperance is represented through the extremes of self-indulgence, figured as “a voluptuous Epicure,” and self-denial, figured as an *Anchorite* that delights in nothing, not in those legitimate recreations allow’d of by God and nature” (sig. B6r). Colax flatters each figure in turn before directing them to a looking glass that will show them what they most want to see.

At moments during this parade of grotesques, the Puritan stage-sitters threaten to rise and leave, as when Flowerdew mishears the word “Masque” as “Mass” and fears that “Idolatry will overtake” them, or when Bird responds to the ramblings of the Epicure, “These are the things indeed the stage doth teach, / Dear heart, what a foule sink of sins run here!” (sigs. A8r, B8v). But two moments cause the pair to reconsider their attitude to playing. First, Bomolochus enters, a figure notorious for spreading scandal and “vile and loathsome scurrility,” but he can only utter the sounds “Oh-Oh-Oh.” Roscius explains that “we have put a gagge / In the licentious mouth of base scurrility”

and promises that “we’le keep him tongue-tide . . . [and] Our language shall flow chaste” (sigs. E5v, E6r, E6v–7r). Bird approves: “This gagg hath wrought my good opinion of you,” while Flowerdew declares: “I begin to think ’em [plays] lawfull recreations” (sig. E7r). The second turning point is when Colax realizes that the looking glass, which is supposed to show the allegorical figures their desires, turns out to produce very different effects. Much to Colax’s chagrin, the looking glass becomes a tool of moral transformation, because when both extremes of a virtue gaze into it at the same time, they “join together, / And are reduc’d into a perfect Mean” (sig. E7v). The theater—the real looking glass in the play’s metatheatrical conceit—ends up reforming rather than reinforcing bad behavior. Bird and Flowerdew are finally converted into advocates of playing: “Hereafter I will visit Comœdies,” says Bird, “And see them oft, they are good exercises!” (sig. F3r). (Busy is similarly “converted” in *Bartholomew Fair* after he is “confuted” by the puppet; “I am changed,” he concedes, “and will become a beholder with you!”<sup>19</sup>) *The Muses Looking-Glasse* thus enacts a vision of drama compatible with that of *The Actors Remonstrance*: a mimetic tool of moral reform, which, in Hamlet’s words, “hold[s] as ’t were the mirror up to Nature: to show Virtue her feature, Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.”<sup>20</sup> Bird and Flowerdew’s transformation from enemies of playing into its friends figures a fantasy of the affective and ethical power of theater that uses the religious zealots’ own discourse of conversion against them.

*The Muses Looking-Glasse* demonstrates Randolph’s contempt for Puritan ignorance and hypocrisy, as well as a local knowledge of the religious culture of Blackfriars, which he must have assumed some in his audience shared. This can be inferred from Flowerdew’s puzzling remark that

Iniquity aboundeth, though pure zeal  
Teach, preach, huffe, puffe and stnuffe at it, yet still,  
Still it aboundeth. Had we seen a Church,  
A new built Church erected North and South,  
It had been something worth the wondring at.  
(sig. A2v)

Here Randolph alludes to the parish church of St. Anne’s Blackfriars, which, uniquely among London parish churches, was oriented on a north-south axis, with the chancel at the north end rather than the traditional east. This strange arrangement of

19. Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, 5.5.94. Jonas Barish sees *Muses* as an aesthetic failure with “a paralyzingly undramatic structure” and thus a “half bungled” defense of theater. See Barish, “Three Caroline ‘Defenses’ of the Stage,” in *Comedy from Shakespeare to Sheridan: Change and Continuity in the English and European Dramatic Tradition*, ed. A. R. Braunmuller and J. C. Bulman (Newark, N.J., 1986), 194–212 at 205.

20. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, rev. ed. (London, 2016), 3.2.21–24.

liturgical space was due to the fact that St. Anne's was not a purpose-built medieval church but instead a converted room in part of the old friary that had been given to the parishioners when their former church collapsed. For religious conservatives like Randolph, the footprint of St. Anne's was an aberration, a physical manifestation of the liturgical errancy of Blackfriars Puritans; for those same Puritans, the peculiar orientation of their place of worship represented a welcome departure from the lingering hold of what they considered Catholic and superstitious ritual.<sup>21</sup>

In the 1630s and early 1640s, one man in particular embodied the Blackfriars reputation for especially strenuous faith: William Gouge, the godly preacher who began his forty-five-year association with St. Anne's in 1608. There is even a fleeting allusion to Gouge in *Muses*, when Flowerdew says, "I have heard our Vicar / Call Play-houses the Colledges of transgression, / Wherein the seven deadly sins are studied" (sig. A3r). On occasion Gouge wrote (and presumably spoke) against playgoing from his pulpit, but never as ferociously as the early Prynne.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps the most significant factor explaining why *The Muses Looking-Glasse* with its focus on Blackfriars gets reprinted twice in 1643 is the apparently leading, if intermittent, role Gouge played in agitating for greater oversight, and even closure, of his local playhouse over the course of his long career. In 1619, he spearheaded a petition from residents and parish officers complaining to the Privy Council of the congestion and disorder that playgoers brought to their community. The Privy Council did nothing, however, to mitigate the situation. Further unsuccessful petitions from residents followed in 1626, 1631, and 1633.<sup>23</sup> A final petition to the House of Commons in February 1641 does not survive, but Gouge was likely one of the moving forces behind it.<sup>24</sup>

21. Bird shows his contempt for traditional church architecture during a discussion of steeples: "They are but wicked Synagogues where those instruments / Of Superstition and Idolatry ring / Warning to sinne, and chime all into the Divell." Likewise, Flowerdew sneers at overly elaborate pulpits: "I have heard as wholesome instructions / From a zealous wicker chaire, as e're I did / From the carv'd Idoll of wainscot" (sig. C3v). The Puritans also cry down the use of the surplice and organ music: "fye on them for *Babylonian Bag-pipes*" (sig. C4r). There may be another reference to Blackfriars's religious history when Bird fears that "the rooffe will fall and brain me" if he hears any more blasphemies in the playhouse (sig. E6r). In 1623, an upper-story room in part of the old Blackfriars priory collapsed during a clandestine Catholic service. Dozens of people were killed or injured. See Alexandra Walsham, "'The Fatall Vesper': Providentialism and Anti-Popery in Late Jacobean London," *Past and Present*, no. 144 (1994): 36–87.

22. See Christopher Highley, *Blackfriars in Early Modern London: Theater, Church, and Neighborhood* (Oxford, 2022).

23. Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, vol. 6, *Theatres* (Oxford, 1941), 17–30, 39–42; Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse* (New York, 1964), 256–69, 489–96; *English Professional Theatre*, ed. Wickham, Berry, and Ingram, 522–25.

24. According to Simonds D'Ewes, the residents blamed the playhouse for "hinderance of trade"; *The Journals of Sir Simonds D'Ewes*, ed. Wallace Notestein (New Haven, Conn., 1923), 412. Just under a year later, on January 26, 1642, it was ordered in Parliament that "the lord chamberlain be desired to move his majesty that in these times of calamity in Ireland and the distractions in this kingdom, that all interludes and plays be suppressed for a season. This was Sir Edward Partridge[s] motion, but laid aside by Mr. Pym his seconding of Mr. Waller in

We don't know why this last anti-playhouse petition stalled in the Commons, but just a year later when Sir Edward Partridge introduced a motion that "all interludes and plays be suppressed for a season," John Pym, the leader of the Commons and a committed reformer, and Edmund Waller blocked it on the grounds that it would deprive the actors of "their trade." Still, the godly gentleman and play-hater Sir Simonds D'Ewes noted in his diary that the Blackfriars petition received the support of Alderman Penington and was "ordered to be referred to the committee for secretary Windebank's business." D'Ewes also wrote cryptically, "Gods howse not soe neare Divils," which seems to mean something like "it is not seemly that the godly church of St. Anne Blackfriars should stand so close to the playhouse."<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the Blackfriars playhouse and church were close neighbors, and their proximity had long been resented by Gouge's more zealous parishioners. As Bird remarks in *Muses*:

We dwell by *Black-Fryers* Colledge, where I wonder  
How that prophane nest of pernicious Birds  
Dare roost themselves there in the midst of us,  
So many good and well-disposed persons.  
(sig. A3r)

In 1641, the Blackfriars petitioners were also supported by residents of the adjacent parishes of St. Martin Ludgate to the north and St. Bride's Fleet Street to the west.<sup>26</sup> Like St. Anne's, these two parishes suffered the public nuisances brought by regular crowds of playgoers. Evidence of how the presence of playgoers adversely affected the streets around St. Martin comes from a humorous anecdote in John Taylor's *The Worlde Runnes on Wheelles* (1623). Mocking the laziness and vanity of affluent Londoners, Taylor describes a gentlewoman who hired a coach at Ludgate Hill to take her to a play in Blackfriars—a distance that would have taken only a few minutes to walk. Gouge may well have helped coordinate this joint petition with the neighboring parishes of St. Martin and St. Bride's, whose current ministers shared his non-conformist outlook, his impatience with the old Book of Common Prayer, and his desire for a Presbyterian style of church government.<sup>27</sup>

When Parliament finally closed the playhouses in September 1642, actors and other members of London's theater community had good grounds for suspecting that

alleging that it was their trade"; *The Private Journals of the Long Parliament 3 January to 5 March 1642*, ed. W. H. Coates, A. S. Young, and F. F. Snow (New Haven, Conn., 1982), 182. In September 1642, an order for suppression of plays was taken to the Lords.

25. *Journals of Sir Simonds D'Ewes*, 412. See the commentary in Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, 282; and Bentley, *Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 39.

26. "26 February 1641," in *Journal of the House of Commons*, vol. 2, 1640–1643 (London, 1802), 93–94, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol2/pp93-94a#h3-0014>.

27. These are James Palmer and Simeon Ashe at St. Bride's and Stanley Gower and Samuel Bolton at St. Martin Ludgate.

the earlier Blackfriars petition under Gouge's presumed leadership had helped bring about the ban. We don't know what role, if any, Gouge played in shaping the "Order for Stage-plays to cease," but his preeminent stature on London's godly scene was such that members of the Long Parliament may have sought his advice. As Anthony à Wood put it, Gouge "was accounted the Father of the London Ministers, that is, of such, who were put in by the Authority of the rebellious Parliament in 1641."<sup>28</sup>

Parliament's ordinance justified closing the theaters on the grounds that at a time of national crisis, God's favor could only be regained if people stopped attending plays and other "public sports" in favor of fasting and praying. Fasting was a penitential practice that Gouge had long defended. In a posthumous biography of Gouge, we learn that "in the Bishops time, when it might not be permitted to keep a Fast openly in the Church, he was one of those Ministers who frequently helped pious Christians in their private Fasts. In times of fear and danger, he and others had sometimes weekly, sometimes monethly Fasts, whereof many in his own House and Vestry; which he was eminently observed to perform with extraordinary reverence and awfullness of spirit."<sup>29</sup> It is no surprise that in June 1642, just months before Parliament closed the theaters, Gouge was invited to deliver his first fast sermon to the House of Commons, one of several he would give to both houses over the next several years.<sup>30</sup> As Gouge and his parliamentary audience prayed and fasted, *The Actors Remonstrance* and *The Muses Looking-Glasse* reminded English men and women that people might be better reformed by attending the edifying spectacle of "honest" plays. *Muses* also suggested that those most in need of the ethical medicine of theater were the very people responsible for shutting it down and for wishing to keep it shut.

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28. Anthony à Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1813), 335–36.

29. William Gouge, *A Learned and Very Useful Commentary on the Whole Epistle to the Hebrewes* (London, 1655), sig. c2r.

30. "25 May 1642," in *Journal of the House of Commons*, vol. 2, 1640–1643, 586–87, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol2/pp586-587>. William Gouge's sermon was printed as *The Saints Support, Set out in a Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Commons assembled in Parliament. At a Publick Fast, 29. June, 1642* (London, [1642]). Gouge frequently led prayers in both houses (see the journals of both the Commons and Lords). He was also appointed one of the clerical leaders of the Westminster Assembly, a body charged by Parliament in 1643 with recommending revisions to the Church of England's liturgy and governance. See ODNB, s.v. "Westminster assembly (act. 1643–1652)," by Chad Van Dixhoorn, last modified May 24, 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/92780>; and John F. Wilson, *Pulpit in Parliament: Puritanism during the English Civil Wars, 1640–1648* (Princeton, N.J., 1969).



# Ladies Rampant: Thomas Middleton's *Two New Playes* in the English Republic

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Justin Kuhn

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**ABSTRACT** This essay examines the joint publication of Thomas Middleton's *More Dissemblers besides Women* (1614) and *Women Beware Women* (1621) as *Two New Playes* in protectorate England. Scholars have highlighted these Jacobean plays' sympathetic treatment of female characters and Middleton's interest in the plight of women generally. When these two plays were published together in 1657, however, their depiction of gender-based hierarchies gained new meaning and significance. Instead of critiquing patriarchal oppression, the plays helped to define the republican body politic as exclusively masculine, promoting a patriarchal model of republican governance at a time of unprecedented political participation among women. **KEYWORDS:** printed drama; Interregnum; Parliament of Women; Humphrey Moseley; widows in literature

IN THE MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, when plays were legally confined to the paper stage and both the reading and publishing of drama were heavily politicized, many of the plays that appeared in print had been originally written and performed decades before, in Jacobean or Caroline England. Their publication in the markedly different context of the English Republic (1649–60)—often as first editions—raises questions about the reception of pre-civil war plays during these politically transformative years. In this essay, I explore how two such plays, Thomas Middleton's comedy *More Dissemblers besides Women* (perf. 1614) and his tragedy *Women Beware Women* (perf. 1621), gained new and unexpected meanings when they were printed in republican England. I demonstrate that the London bookseller Humphrey Moseley published the texts together as *Two New Playes* (1657) in an effort

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to thwart the unprecedented political influence that women had begun to wield.<sup>1</sup> Moseley's Middleton collection, I argue, correlated social and political discord with women's interventions in public affairs. By suggesting that the stability of the state hinged on excluding women from the body politic, *Two New Playes* helped to promote a patriarchal system of republican governance during the 1650s.

The phenomenon that Moseley was responding to in the 1650s found its origins in the early 1640s, when the English Revolution opened up new political opportunities for women. Indeed, women were just as implicated as men in the more "participatory political life" of the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> Like men, women petitioned Parliament,<sup>3</sup> took on leadership roles in religious groups, and published spiritual treatises.<sup>4</sup> While they neither held elected office nor wielded power within the formal institutions of central government, women were nonetheless more visible in the public domain than they had been before the civil wars. As if to fulminate against this development, satiric pamphlets from the period imagined female characters in positions of authority in order to demonstrate that women in the real world could not govern and were unsuited for public life. This trope of dangerous female sovereignty recurred throughout the mid-seventeenth century but acquired a heightened significance within a republican state that was, at least nominally, responsive to the influence of its populace. As I discuss below, tensions over the increased prominence of women began to erupt just as Middleton's playtexts were entering print.

That these tensions motivated the publication of Moseley's collection is surprising, given that modern scholars have often regarded Middleton as a protofeminist playwright. According to Gary Taylor, Middleton sympathized with the perspectives of marginalized women, while "Shakespeare . . . never considers, or asks his audience

1. On publishers as critical readers of Renaissance drama, see Zachary Lesser, *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication: Readings in the English Book Trade* (Cambridge, 2004); on Moseley's publishing, see John Curtis Reed, "Humphrey Moseley, Publisher," in *Oxford Bibliographical Society Proceedings and Papers*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1928), 57–142.

2. Jason Peacey, *Print and Public Politics in the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 2013), 21.

3. On female petitioners, see Patricia Higgins, "The Reactions of Women, with Special Reference to Women Petitioners," in *Politics, Religion, and the English Civil War*, ed. Brian Manning (London, 1973), 179–224; Ann Marie McEntee, "'The [Un]Civill-Sisterhood of Oranges and Lemons': Female Petitioners and Demonstrators, 1642–53," in *Pamphlet Wars: Prose in the English Revolution*, ed. James Holstun (London, 1992), 104–9; and Andrea Button, "Royalist Women Petitioners in South-West England, 1655–62," *Seventeenth Century* 15 (2000): 53–66.

4. See Elaine Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity: English Women's Writing, 1649–1688* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1989); Hilary Hinds, *God's Englishwomen: Seventeenth-Century Radical Sectarian Writing and Feminist Criticism* (Manchester, U.K., 1996); Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650–1700* (Abingdon, U.K., 2005); Rachel Adcock, *Baptist Women's Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640–1680* (Abingdon, U.K., 2015). On women's writing during the mid-seventeenth century, see Marcus Nevitt, *Women and the Pamphlet Culture of Revolutionary England, 1640–1660* (Abingdon, U.K., 2006).



to consider, the circumstances or motives of such women.”<sup>5</sup> Pointing to the sheer number of plays about women in the Middleton canon, Celia R. Daileader has similarly underscored the dramatist’s “feminist sympathies,”<sup>6</sup> and critical commentaries on *More Dissemblers* and *Women Beware* have also emphasized Middleton’s sensitivity to the plight of women and his skepticism about the patriarchal institutions that constrain his female characters.<sup>7</sup> Moseley’s two-play collection, however, offered a radically different, far more conservative approach to these issues. Although Middleton’s plays may have signified as critiques of the patriarchal oppression of women when they were originally performed during the Jacobean era, in 1657, Moseley used *More Dissemblers* and *Women Beware* to help uphold those same structures of patriarchal oppression within the civic culture of republican England. As the publication of *Two New Playes* suggests, the paper stage created a space where publishers could repurpose drama to new, sometimes unexpected, political ends.

With Moseley, those ends involved reasserting the masculinity of the political sphere over and against the intrusions of women. *Two New Playes*, I contend, followed the cultural logic of the trope of dangerous female sovereignty, which portrayed “Ladies Rampant” establishing their own government, ruling ineffectively, and thus bringing the state to ruin.<sup>8</sup> *More Dissemblers* and *Women Beware* both depict authoritative women in much the same way. *More Dissemblers* centers on a woman already in a position of power, the widowed Duchess of Milan, whose reign is compromised when she pursues an illicit romance that ends up fueling turmoil within the state. *Women Beware*, on the other hand, charts the destructive influence that another widow, Livia, exerts upon the court of Florence, culminating in a deadly marriage masque that demonstrates not only the power she has come to wield but

5. Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (New York, 1989), 391–92.

6. Celia R. Daileader, “Thomas Middleton, William Shakespeare, and the Masculine Grotesque,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton*, ed. Gary Taylor and Trish Thomas Henley (Oxford, 2012), 466.

7. On *More Dissemblers*, see Lila Geller, “Widows’ Vows and *More Dissemblers Besides Women*,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 5 (1991): 287–308; Jennifer Panek, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge, 2004), 25–33. Much of the criticism on *Women Beware* concerns gender and sexuality and therefore touches upon Middleton’s sympathies toward women and his suspicions of patriarchal institutions. See, for example, Ann C. Christensen, “Settling House in Middleton’s *Women Beware Women*,” *Comparative Drama* 29 (1995): 493–518; Lisa Hopkins, *The Female Hero in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Houndmills, U.K., 2002), 28–42; and Coppélia Kahn, ““Two kings on one throne”: Lust, Love, and Marriage in *Women Beware Women*,” in *Women Beware Women: A Critical Guide*, ed. Andrew Hiscock (New York, 2011), 156–70.

8. For the term “Ladies Rampant,” see *Newes from the New Exchange, or the Commonwealth of Ladies, Drawn to the Life, in their severall Characters and Concernments* (London, 1650), 2. On responses to women asserting themselves in public, see Sharon Achinstein, “Women on Top in the Pamphlet Literature of the English Revolution,” *Women’s Studies* 24 (1994): 131–63.

also the political discord that accompanies it. Although Middleton's plays were written and performed seven years apart, they clearly complement one another. Seeking to capitalize on these thematic parallels, Moseley assembled the plays into a coherent diptych, one that brought its own Ladies Rampant onto the paper stage, where they exposed the disastrous consequences of women's gaining access to power. In doing so, Moseley's Middleton collection channeled fears about unruly femininity that had become politically pressing during the 1650s. As I will suggest, these fears regarding the increased prominence of women helped to consolidate both monarchism and what Katharine Gillespie has designated "fraternal republicanism" around a broader political framework based on patriarchal stability.<sup>9</sup>

### Parliaments of Women

In sustaining a vision of male governance rooted in the patriarchal structure of the household, the trope of dangerous female sovereignty registered by *Two New Playes* delineated a conception of civil authority upon which diverse political factions could converge. It was invoked by parliamentarians like Henry Neville, widely believed to be the author of several pamphlets on this theme, as well as by royalists, who adapted it into a series of play pamphlets about Mistress Parliament. The trope could be deployed by republicans as well as by Stuart and Cromwellian monarchists precisely because it reflected shared assumptions about women and the political domain.<sup>10</sup> Whatever the partisan inclinations of these writers, the trope invariably reaffirmed a patriarchal system based on traditional views of gender. In her study of masculinity during the English civil wars, Diane Purkiss proposes that the apparent resemblance between monarchical and republican notions of patriarchal authority obscures what makes each of them distinct, claiming that "the idea of the godly householder," the basis for republican citizenship, "has less in common than one might imagine with the king's idea of himself as *paterfamilias* to the nation."<sup>11</sup> Although she carefully and persuasively distinguishes these "fuzzily different models of masculinity," her remark about what they seem to have in common—the source of the fuzziness—bears further investigation; it pinpoints the key aspect of fraternal republicanism that was structurally analogous to, and in some respects continuous with, the model of authority offered by kingship.<sup>12</sup> The idea of the godly householder, it turns out, does have much in common with that of the royal *paterfamilias*, including the presumption that stable political order requires masculine rule. When women entered the public realm in the mid-seventeenth century, their presence not only unsettled a framework of political authority around which the prevailing ideologies of

9. Katharine Gillespie, *Women Writing the English Republic, 1625–1681* (Cambridge, 2017), 45.

10. See Ann Hughes, *Gender and the English Revolution* (London, 2011).

11. Diane Purkiss, *Literature, Gender, and Politics during the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 2005), 2.

12. Purkiss, *Literature, Gender, and Politics*, 2.

monarchism and fraternal republicanism were built but also, more significantly, imperiled the integrity of the state.

Drawing its political force from these concerns, the trope of dangerous female sovereignty alleged that women in power fostered civil unrest. The trope had existed in some form as far back as Aristophanes's comedy *The Assemblywomen* (392 BCE), and similar fears of women assuming supposedly masculine prerogatives informed much of the *querelles des femmes* literature of the early modern period. With women's civic engagement during the English Revolution, however, the trope of dangerous female sovereignty came into sharper focus, gaining a new sense of urgency. By elevating women into positions of authority, the trope could malign both the causes and the political ramifications of their interventions in public affairs. One of the satiric pamphlets in which the trope figures, *The Commonwealth of Ladies* (1650), begins with the pronouncement that "There was a time in England, when men wore the Breeches, and debar'd women of their Liberty; which brought many grievances and oppressions upon the weaker vessels." It continues to specify that the political complaints of these women arose specifically from their circumscription within the private realm of the household, where "they were constrained to converse only with their homes and closets, and now and then with the Gentleman-usher, or the Footman (when they could catch him) for variety."<sup>13</sup> Because such conversations clearly had sexual overtones, the tyranny of men essentially amounted to placing limitations upon women's voracious sexual appetites, which are represented as the "liberty" for which they strove. The pamphlet thus takes the commonplace notion that women in public spaces were sexually available and recasts it as a slur on women's capacity to mobilize politically. The description of the newly established Commonwealth of Ladies continues in this vein by elaborating on the dizzying array of sexual liaisons among the "Ladies Rampant"; it is an image of sexual confusion that articulates the political confusion promised by the rule of women.<sup>14</sup>

Attributed by scholars to Neville, *The Commonwealth of Ladies* was the spiritual successor to a series of pamphlets he had written anonymously in 1647 on a "Parliament of Ladies," all featuring real-life aristocratic women from across the ideological spectrum whose political decision-making was shown to depend entirely on their sexual proclivities.<sup>15</sup> These pamphlets may have been inspired in turn by a similar anonymous text reprinted the previous year, *The Parliament of Women. With the merrie Lawes by them newly Enacted* (1646), which would be issued again in 1656,

13. *Commonwealth of Ladies*, 1.

14. On the political registers of sexual satire in this period, see Susan Wiseman, "'Adam, the Father of all Flesh': Porno-Political Rhetoric and Political Theory in and after the English Civil War," in *Pamphlet Wars*, ed. Holstun, 134–57.

15. For more on these pamphlets, see Purkiss, *Literature, Gender, and Politics*, 64–70; and Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640–1660* (New Haven, Conn., 1994), 47–49. On Henry Neville, see Gaby Mahlberg, *Henry Neville and English Republican Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (Manchester, U.K., 2009).

the year before Moseley published *Two New Playes*.<sup>16</sup> *Now or Never: Or, a New Parliament of Women Assembled*, a loose successor to this original pamphlet, also appeared in 1656, along with a conventional misogynist invective whose title similarly invoked the idea of women holding political authority, *Pray be not Angry: Or, the Womens New Law*. Together, these pamphlets trafficked in the anxiety that even more women were becoming politically engaged in republican England, and their publication in 1656 may have informed Moseley's decision to print *Two New Playes*.

The reappearance of these pamphlets coincided with an important moment of transition in the history of republican England. Elections for a new Parliament were held in 1656, and the publication of the Parliament of Women pamphlets that year can be seen as an effort to guard against women's influence in politics during the reconstitution of the governing institution most responsive to outside input. This Protectorate Parliament furthered the potential for women's influence by taking a series of actions in 1657 that reasserted civilian control over the state.<sup>17</sup> Most significantly, Parliament denied funding for the militias that had been established following a royalist rebellion in 1655, ending a widely reviled experiment with direct military rule by Oliver Cromwell's majors general. Parliament then worked to develop a system of governance less beholden to the power of the army. One proposal for a more civilian administration entailed offering the crown to Cromwell, but after he rejected it, a new Protectorate constitution was approved instead. As a consequence of these parliamentary maneuvers, political power was shifted away from the exclusively masculine domain of the army toward a civic sphere increasingly feminized by the political ascendancy of women. Moseley's publication of *Two New Playes* in 1657 resonated with this general process much as the Parliament of Women pamphlets had the previous year. Through its portrayal of unruly women, Moseley's collection of Middleton plays advanced a rhetorically potent argument for preserving the masculine character of the public domain precisely when the public itself, through an expansion of civilian power, was gaining more political authority within the state. Such periods of transition left the body politic particularly vulnerable, and for monarchists and fraternal republicans alike, the security of civil society was seen to depend on excluding women from civic affairs.

#### More Dissemblers besides Women

In Jacobean England, *More Dissemblers* and *Women Beware* were performed separately and conveyed distinct meanings independent of one another, but in the English Republic, Moseley published the plays jointly to make a single political point about the civic participation of women. The material features of Moseley's volume and the

16. This earlier pamphlet was first published as *The Parliament of Women* (London, 1640).

17. My account of these shifts in the political culture of the Protectorate is indebted to Patrick Little and David L. Smith, *Parliaments and Politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge, 2007).

bibliographic details surrounding its publication suggest that the plays were deliberately paired. During the 1650s, Moseley routinely published single-author octavo collections with as many as six plays apiece, and because he owned the rights to several other Middleton plays, he could have also done so with Middleton;<sup>18</sup> instead, he chose to publish only these two plays, and he printed them in a way that draws suggestive links between the texts. The Middleton edition is unique among Moseley's six octavo drama collections for its continuous pagination, which effectively ties both of the playtexts together as if they had always been meant to appear in this material form.<sup>19</sup> Even more intriguing is the addition of "The First Part" on the sub-title page of *More Dissemblers*, implying that each drama constitutes one portion of a two-play sequence.<sup>20</sup> Compared to the other collections Moseley published, *Two New Playes* was printed as a cohesive whole—a discrete bibliographic unit organized around the interplay between Middleton's texts.

By connecting *More Dissemblers* to *Women Beware*, Moseley promoted a reading practice that interpreted the plays in light of each other. This mode of critical engagement, which differed markedly from how the texts were received on stage, served Moseley's ideological agenda. Read in tandem, the texts of *Two New Playes* converge on a motif of women exercising considerable influence within the state.<sup>21</sup> The motif is foregrounded by a striking number of parallels between the texts.<sup>22</sup> In

18. Moseley entered *More Dissemblers* and *Women Beware* into the Stationers' Register on September 9, 1653, along with two other plays that he attributed to Middleton, one of which, *The Puritan Maid, the Modest Wife, and the Wanton Widow*, he never printed, and the other drama, *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's* (1611), he issued separately in 1657. On Moseley's publication of octavo playbooks, see Paulina Kewes, "'Give Me the Sociable Pocket-Books . . .': Humphrey Moseley's Serial Publication of Octavo Play Collections," *Publishing History* 38 (1995): 5–21.

19. *Two New Playes* also has continuous signatures. Only one other octavo collection published by Moseley, Philip Massinger's *Three New Playes* (London, 1655), likewise features continuous signatures, but it does not include continuous pagination.

20. By *sub-title page*, I mean the first page of dialogue in Moseley's edition of *More Dissemblers*. Above the act and scene designations, the page reiterates the title of the play and adds "The First Part." See Thomas Middleton, *Two New Playes* (London, 1657), sig. B1r. John Jowett, however, considers the printing of "The First Part" to be "misleading." See Jowett, introduction to "*More Dissemblers Besides Women* (1657)," in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to the Collected Works*, ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford, 2007), 1131–32.

21. Critics have pointed out that all of the Middleton plays that Moseley printed in 1657—*More Dissemblers*, *Women Beware*, and *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's*—focus on female characters and that this resonated broadly with the emergence of women into the public sphere during the 1640s and 1650s. But of these plays, only *More Dissemblers* and *Women Beware* represent politically powerful women, and publishing them together capitalized on this connection at the very moment when Englishwomen stood to gain additional leverage within the republican state. See Maureen Bell, "Booksellers without an Author, 1627–1685," in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern*, ed. Taylor and Lavagnino, 274.

22. In addition to the parallels involving the shared motif of women exercising power, the plays feature several structural and thematic resemblances. See John Jowett's introduction

both plays, prominent female characters—the Duchess in *More Dissemblers* and Livia in *Women Beware*—gain access to power by virtue of being widows, a condition that also frees them from patriarchal constraints. Without such constraints, the Duchess and Livia, like the Commonwealth of Ladies, allow their illicit desires to shape their actions within the public domain. As their conduct proceeds unchecked, they end up corrupting other characters and provoking strife within their respective polities. Moseley’s joint publication of *More Dissemblers* and *Women Beware* highlighted these thematic elements within each play, helping to make both texts’ depictions of powerful women far more salient during the 1650s than when the plays were performed individually in Jacobean England. As *Two New Playes*, the texts formed a narrative through line that attributed widespread disorder to female rule—a representation of social and political power that implicitly endorsed masculine governance as a stable alternative at a time of extraordinary political activity among women. In republican England, Middleton’s plays, which in the early seventeenth century had offered sensitive treatments of women’s plights, had now come to support a patriarchal model of civic authority.

Even though the unruly female characters of both plays are shown destabilizing civil society, only Livia brings about the near-total destruction of the body politic. The Duchess, by contrast, withdraws from her power before causing irreparable harm. This anomalous ending, in which the comic protagonist retreats into solitude, has perplexed those who have encountered *More Dissemblers besides Women*. Indeed, since its earliest performances, Middleton’s comedic drama has proven difficult for audiences to parse. In 1624, Henry Herbert, the master of the revels, called it “The worst play that ere I saw.”<sup>23</sup> Modern critics have been more charitable even as they puzzle over the seemingly dark tone of the play and the repression of its central character, the Duchess of Milan. Uncertain whether it truly qualifies as a straightforward comedy, critics have labeled *More Dissemblers* a black comedy, a tragicomedy, a satire of Fletcherian tragicomedy, and a parody of New Comedy, all of which recover some measure of sympathy for the Duchess.<sup>24</sup> When Moseley printed the play in 1657, however, he categorized it simply as “a Comedy.” Unlike the labels proposed by modern critics, Moseley’s generic classification was designed to prompt an unfavorable assessment of the Duchess. Interpreted within a comic framework, *More Dissemblers*

to *More Dissemblers Besides Women*, in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford, 2007), 1034.

23. *The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, 1623–1673*, ed. Joseph Quincy Adams (New Haven, Conn., 1917), 51n8.

24. See Samuel Schoenbaum, “Middleton’s Tragicomedies,” *Modern Philology* 54 (1956): 7–19; John F. McElroy, *Parody and Burlesque in the Tragicomedies of Thomas Middleton* (Salzburg, Austria, 1972), 106–54; George E. Rowe Jr., *Thomas Middleton and the New Comedy Tradition* (Lincoln, Neb., 1979), 156–75; and Kenneth Arthur Muir, “Two Plays Reconsidered: *More Dissemblers Besides Women* and *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman’s*,” in *Accompanying the Players: Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580–1980*, ed. Kenneth Friedenreich (New York, 1983), 147–53.



ultimately suggests that her efforts to step into the political sphere jeopardize Milan's peace and stability. Following the narrative patterns of comedy, the play begins with a social dilemma—the Duchess leaving her domestic seclusion to reenter the court—and elaborates on the disorder she causes before resolving the dilemma with her decision to retire from political life once again. Jacobean audiences may have been baffled by the play and inclined to pity its central figure, but Moseley's readers in republican England were encouraged to view the Duchess, and women like her who attempted to exercise power, as a danger to civil society.

True to its title, *More Dissemblers* weaves an intricate comic fiction out of the interlocking deceptions among its cast of characters.<sup>25</sup> One such deception involves another comic plot in which two young lovers, Lactantio and Aurelia, struggle to keep their relationship hidden from disapproving guardians. Adding to Lactantio's plight is a second, more damning secret: he has a pregnant mistress whom he has disguised as a male page and smuggled into the estate of his oblivious uncle, the Lord Cardinal of Milan. A staunch proponent of chastity, the Lord Cardinal demands the same from his nephew, threatening to disown Lactantio should he pursue women. For his part, the Cardinal engages in the type of pious self-deception reminiscent of anticlerical satire, convincing himself of his own moral superiority even as he abandons his devotion to chastity for personal gain. At the center of these complications stands the Duchess, a widow who begins the play having spent the last seven years in mourning, isolated from her subjects, while fulfilling a vow of chastity stipulated by her late husband, the Duke. When she returns to public life and falls in love with Andrugio, the General of Milan, she, too, ends up dissembling while employing Machiavellian political maneuvers to secure his affections. Ultimately, each of these intrigues unravels, and the characters are restored to the state of affairs that prevailed before the play began: Lactantio betrothed to the Page; Aurelia matched with her former lover, Andrugio; the Cardinal with nothing to show for his ambition; and the Duchess back in seclusion. Far from promising the reconstituted society typical of comic resolutions, the final scene, as critics have pointed out, upholds the status quo and denies the central characters the opportunity to change over the course of the narrative.<sup>26</sup> Throughout, the play treats its dissemblers with little to no sympathy.

The formal structure of *More Dissemblers* thus challenges received notions of comedy. Time and again, key details of the plot, including its inert, almost-punitive ending, fail to align with critics' expectations for the genre.<sup>27</sup> Nor do they accord with feminist interpretations of early modern comedy, given that the liberating potential

25. All citations from the play come from *More Dissemblers Besides Women*, ed. John Jowett, in *Thomas Middleton*, ed. Taylor and Lavagnino, 1034–73. Unless otherwise noted, further references are cited in the text by act, scene, and line.

26. See Schoenbaum, "Middleton's Tragicomedies," 15; Rowe, *New Comedy Tradition*, 168.

27. According to Rowe, the play "explores the less attractive and, at times, frightening aspects of the love and renewal celebrated by traditional comedy." See Rowe, *New Comedy Tradition*, 175. More recently, John Jowett notes that the play culminates in "uneasy resolutions



of the play's middle section, in which the Duchess breaks free of her patriarchal bonds, is fatally undermined by the discord produced in Milan through her schemes to marry Andrugio.<sup>28</sup> Yet, if we take seriously the comic logic of *More Dissemblers*—even though it may not develop in the way we anticipate—this middle section with all of its turbulence sets up a harmonious conclusion in which the Duchess relinquishes her claim to Andrugio and chooses a life of religious solitude once more, a life in which she will never again interfere with the state. As is customary in early modern comedy, the play moves inexorably toward the restoration of order even if, in this case, its dramatic progress appears circular. The status quo, in fact, becomes for Middleton's play not an obstacle to social renewal but rather its necessary precondition, as Milan can stabilize only when the Duchess recommits to her vow of chastity and retires from public authority. At its core, then, *More Dissemblers* is a politically conservative comedy structured around the dynamic between the Duchess wielding her power and the Duchess withdrawing from it; her decision to do either reverberates significantly throughout the rest of the play.

As *More Dissemblers* opens, the Duchess's choice to enter seclusion—a choice she made seven years earlier to safeguard her chastity—is shown to sustain the institutions of civil society. Of these institutions, she has the most discernible impact upon the church. Having “kept her vow, so strictly, and as chaste / As everlasting life is kept for virtue / E'en from the sight of men” (1.2.21–23), the Duchess offers spiritual inspiration to Milan. According to the Lord Cardinal,

I make her constancy  
The holy mistress of my contemplation.  
Whole volumes have I writ in zealous praise  
Of her eternal vow.

(1.2.4–7)

The Cardinal grounds his faith in the Duchess's integrity and even makes it the basis of his theological treatises, which disseminate knowledge of her righteous deeds among the devout. He encourages the Milanese lords to “bestow [their] eyes / Upon those abstracts of the Duchess's virtues” (1.2.2–3) so that they, too, can be “spirit-ravished” (1.2.18) by the precedent she has set. Not only does the church thrive on this

for a play advertised as a comedy.” See Jowett's introduction to *More Dissemblers*, in *Thomas Middleton*, ed. Taylor and Lavagnino, 1037.

28. Jean E. Howard has discussed how early modern women attending a performance of Thomas Heywood's *The Wise-Woman of Hogsdon* (pub. London, 1638) might focus on the subversive activities of the female characters during the middle part of the play rather than on the ending that contains their subversion. While this might be possible for audiences of *More Dissemblers*, the play does present the consequences of the Duchess's unrestrained power as a bigger threat to the functioning of the state. See Howard, *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England* (New York and London, 1994), 90–91.

precedent, so too does the institution of the household. The Duchess, a symbol of chastity, has been proclaimed "th' wonder of her sex" (1.1.12) and "a rare example for our wives!" (1.1.16), embodying an ideal of honor and loyalty toward which the women of Milan can strive. Her steadfastness inspires Lactantio and Aurelia to remain faithful to one another, to the extent that if Lactantio perished, Aurelia would "go beyond the Duchess in her vow" (1.1.31), dying herself rather than suffering his loss for the rest of her days. On a more abstract level, the Duchess's influence extends to the bureaucratic institutions of Milan, and not only because she has withdrawn from her seat of power. With the Duke dead and the Duchess cloistered away, the Milanese lords have assumed responsibility for civic affairs, and the Duchess's moral rectitude, the Cardinal implies, can nourish them "When [they] have hours / Free from the cares of state" (1.2.1–2). Her virtuous achievements are framed as an essential complement to the business of government. This follows a pattern in which the Duchess's seclusion not only empowers the Milanese lords but also provides the ideological underpinnings to the most fundamental institutions of Milan.

As long as the Duchess is confined and observing her vow of chastity, the patriarchal foundations of the state are secure. While early modern widows occupied a liminal space outside the bounds of male control—primarily because they acquired legal independence along with their deceased husbands' property—the Duchess's vow of chastity reinstated her in a patriarchal system by extending the Duke's supremacy from beyond the grave. While the Duke compelled the vow from her out of his obsessive jealousy, the stakes in restraining the Duchess go beyond concerns about remarriage, as the most recent editor of *More Dissemblers* suggests: "When [a] widow inherits nothing less than a duchy, the stability of the state itself is at issue."<sup>29</sup> Milan's dependence on her chastity and the correlation that the play develops between the Duchess's sexuality and her exercise of power at court attest to the political ramifications of the Duke's demand. Far from being merely an act of personal resistance or a moral failure on the part of the Duchess, thwarting this demand poses a broader threat to the social structures of Milan. The trajectory of act 1, which begins with a song praising chastity and ends with another song about wanton lust, represents a fall from grace for the body politic as much as for the Duchess. By emerging from seclusion and making a serious effort to break her vow of chastity, she creates precisely the kind of social problem stipulated by the comic form of the play.

Indeed, during the middle section of *More Dissemblers*, as her schemes to marry Andrugio disrupt the court, the Duchess undermines the very institutions she had once sustained. At this point in the play, she clearly echoes the Commonwealth of Ladies, whose calamitous political actions are similarly motivated by transgressive lust. No sooner does the Duchess develop her infatuation with Andrugio than she plots to erode the moral authority of the church. Knowing that the Cardinal would vigorously oppose remarriage, she devises a trick to enlist his support. She informs

29. See Jowett's introduction to *More Dissemblers*, 1035.

him that after viewing the triumphal procession featuring Andrugio, Lactantio, and other courtiers, she has fallen in love with Lactantio, his nephew: "He lives not, sir, / That could have conquered me, himself excepted" (2.1.119–20). If the Cardinal were amenable to her breaking her vow for his kinsman, she thinks, then he could not on principle deny her marriage to Andrugio. But while the Cardinal does eventually embrace the idea of matching the Duchess to Lactantio, he rebuffs her in this scene and calls his nephew "a basilisk that strikes dead pure affection" (2.1.132), declaring that "I'll lose him now eternally, and strive / To live without him. He shall straight to Rome" (2.1.127–28), before storming off. The Cardinal's outrage here implies a stronger ethical footing than critics have afforded him. Certainly, the Cardinal's reversal in the following scene reveals him to be a hypocrite, and the casuistry of his reasoning as he later tries to convince the Milanese lords to support the Duchess's remarriage only underscores his role as a stock figure from anticlerical satire. But the Cardinal does not immediately discard his beliefs, and when he does take on the qualities of the hypocritical clergyman, he does so at the Duchess's urging and for the Duchess's admittedly irreligious purposes. She "that breaks in vow," the Duchess notes before setting her trap, "breaks with heaven" (2.1.24). By corrupting the Lord Cardinal, an honest if overzealous cleric, the Duchess debases the institutional religion of Milan.

The inchoate household of Lactantio and Aurelia suffers a similar fate, as the Duchess's plot sunders their relationship. Upon learning of the Duchess's love for him, Lactantio is thrilled by his good fortune, enthusing to himself, "My blood dances" (3.1.190). By the time that Aurelia reunites with him during the final scene, Lactantio scorns her without hesitation: "Prithee away, fond fool. Hast no shame in thee? / Thou'rt bold and ignorant, whate'er thou art" (5.2.144–45). That Lactantio would forsake Aurelia so easily comes as no surprise, given that he not only abandons the pregnant Page for Aurelia in the first place but also revels in his dissembling along the way. For him, "The best dissembler lights on the best woman" (3.1.219). Aurelia, however, has also spurned a partner, Andrugio, before the play begins and manipulates him throughout so that she can evade her father and ultimately reconcile with Lactantio. While neither character has a history of fidelity, the play highlights their present relationship, which unravels only when the Duchess intervenes. The Duchess, the virtuous example to which Lactantio and Aurelia aspire in their playful flirtation during the very first scene of the play, has chosen inconstancy, crippling the ideological framework that binds these lovers together and that, more generally, had provided coherence and stability to the domestic sphere of Milan.

The middle section of the play reaches its climax as the turbulence in Milan peaks and extends beyond the center of court. Because of the Duchess's scheming, Aurelia ends up in the company of gypsies, who signify social disorder. Aurelia quickly adapts to the lifestyle, however, as the servant Dondolo observes: "She speaks the language as familiarly already as if she'd been begot of a canter" (4.2.207–8). While owning "neither house nor land" (4.2.58), these gypsies nevertheless constitute their own "commonwealth" (4.2.171), and as they swell their ranks with new recruits like

Aurelia, the gypsies subsist on “cozen[ing] / Poor country folks” (4.2.67–68), a vulgar reflection of the dissimulation at court. Although the gypsy commonwealth forms an alternative polity to that of Milan, this subtle parallel, as well as the ease with which Aurelia shifts into gypsy behavior, suggests continuity with the Duchess's regime rather than a break. Arriving on stage just as the Duchess starts to wield her power and certainly as a consequence of her elaborate intrigues, the gypsies represent the lawlessness and unrest that are the logical outcomes of her rule. This unrest takes on more gendered connotations when the Page, now in the employ of the Duchess, goes into labor during dancing lessons. As she cries for a midwife, the bewildered dancing master proclaims, “the boy's with child! / A miracle! Some woman is the father. / The world's turned upside down” (5.1.223–25). Though his confusion is played for laughs, the dancing master's sense of a topsy-turvy world is not entirely inaccurate, given what transpires during the middle section of the play. The Page's unruly gender identity, like the expanding commonwealth of gypsies, is symptomatic of the larger structural inversion produced by the Duchess's reign. Once the patriarchal institutions of Milan have been compromised, the world is turned upside down, much as monarchists and fraternal republicans feared would happen if women were to obtain power in the English Republic.

To achieve a comic resolution, the play reasserts the patriarchal order by which Milan prospers, and to do that, the controls upon the Duchess are reestablished. After she realizes that Andrugio would prefer to marry Aurelia, someone “younger, fairer” (5.2.128), the Duchess “much commend[s] his noble care and judgment” and considers it a “just cross, led in by a temptation, / For offering but to part from my dear vow” (5.2.130–32). Thus, although she willingly elects to “Return . . . humbly now from whence I fell” (5.2.194), by her own admission she does so only when prompted by an honorable man who hinders her plots. Andrugio's resistance curbs the Duchess as much as her vow ever did; when she proceeds to settle the affairs at court—affirming Andrugio's engagement to Aurelia, matching Lactantio with the Page, and providing them a dowry as incentive—she acts within patriarchal constraints that shape her decision-making. In choosing to “bind [her]self more strictly” and enter “some religious sanctuary” (5.2.200, 202), she strengthens those constraints and ensures that the state will no longer be subject to feminine misrule. Critics have rightly pointed out that this ending can evoke sympathy for the Duchess, and Jacobean audiences may very well have felt sorry for her.<sup>30</sup> But amid the phenomenon of disruptive women that greeted the play upon its publication during the 1650s, the Duchess's choice to withdraw from the political realm acquires a more definitively comic effect. Like the Parliament of Women pamphlets, *More Dissemblers* yields a happy ending once the troublesome woman at its center returns to her confinement. By associating communal healing with a powerful woman's relinquishing control of the state, the play's comic resolution justifies excluding women from civic affairs. In contrast to

30. For a sensitive reading to that effect, see Jennifer Panek, *Widows and Suitors*, 25–33.

the turmoil of the Duchess's rule, this patriarchal conception of political authority offered readers in republican England a form of governance that would stabilize the body politic. The next drama in Moseley's two-play sequence expands on that notion of patriarchal stability by exploring the kind of catastrophe that could have befallen Milan had the Duchess continued to exercise power.

### *Women Beware Women*

*Women Beware Women* was first performed around 1621. Political readings of the play have routinely cast it as an anticourt drama reflective of the playwright's middle-class perspective, from which Middleton inveighs against everything from the decadence and absolutism of James I's rule to the pacifist foreign policy of the early 1620s.<sup>31</sup> The political significance of the play, however, changed considerably between these initial performances and its publication during the 1650s. Without a traditional courtly milieu in republican England, *Women Beware* ended up losing the oppositional edge that the text originally had. In its place, the play gained a newfound topical resonance from its depiction of an imperious female character, Livia, who manipulates events in and around Florence's center of power—a narrative thread that was timely and relevant during a historical moment in which women stood to expand their influence within England's representative republic. By publishing the play amid these circumstances and printing it alongside *More Dissemblers*, Moseley threw into relief the political implications of Livia, who not only manages many of the intrigues within the play but also corrupts other female characters into authoritative, disruptive women like her—with dire results. If *More Dissemblers* hints at the tragic potential of women wielding power, *Women Beware* fully realizes it, portraying unruly women who ultimately destroy the state. While *Women Beware* served to highlight a tragically rotten and self-destructive court when it was staged in Jacobean England, Moseley's publication of the play during the 1650s repurposed it into a tragedy of women assuming social and political agency.

The two story lines of *Women Beware* coalesce around Livia, a wealthy widow and Machiavellian procuress, a woman of whom other women ought to be wary. In the overarching plot, Bianca, a Venetian gentlewoman, has eloped with Leantio, an indigent Florentine, and she is kept hidden away until the Duke of Florence notices her during a state procession. Soon thereafter, Livia tricks Bianca into a secret assignation with the Duke, who ambushes and proceeds to rape her.<sup>32</sup> Bianca then

31. See Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge, 1980), 170–72, 180–99; Albert H. Tricomi, “Middleton's *Women Beware Women* as Anticourt Drama,” *Modern Language Studies* 19, no. 2 (1989): 65–77; and A. A. Bromham, “The Tragedy of Peace: Political Meaning in *Women Beware Women*,” *Studies in English Literature* 26 (1986): 309–29.

32. The scene does not make explicit whether the Duke seduces Bianca or rapes her, but the scholarly consensus holds that she is raped. For a powerful articulation of that argument, see Anthony B. Dawson, “*Women Beware Women* and the Economy of Rape,” *Studies in English*

becomes the Duke's mistress and grows increasingly haughty, scorning her husband and his impoverished lifestyle, while Livia takes the heartbroken Leantio as her lover. In the subplot, Isabella, Livia's niece, is set to marry the foolish Ward at her father's behest, but before she does, her uncle, Hippolito, confesses his love to her. After Isabella rejects him, Livia convinces her that they are not, in fact, related, paving the way for an illicit affair between uncle and niece. These plotlines converge when the Duke, hoping to marry Bianca, incites Hippolito to kill Leantio, prompting an enraged Livia to publicly reveal the affair between Isabella and Hippolito. From there, Livia's thirst for revenge drives the play to a bloody conclusion in which she orchestrates a violent marriage masque. As Livia's plan unfolds, Isabella and Bianca use the occasion to execute their own murderous schemes; in the process, the three women wipe out the majority of the court. Despite the fact that Livia never occupies a formal position of power, such as the Duchess does in *More Dissemblers*, she nonetheless emerges as the dominant figure of *Women Beware*, exercising considerable control over the sexual intrigues that engulf the state and playing a key role at every point in the narrative. More than anyone else in *Two New Playes*, Livia recalls the polemical image of female authority from the Parliament of Women pamphlets, and while *Women Beware* does implicate the male characters in the destruction of Florence, anxieties over the growing political power of women in the 1650s would have focused reader attention on Livia's culpability.

A notable paratext in *Two New Playes* confirms that such a reading was not only possible in republican England but also encouraged by the printed playbook. In his prefatory poem "Upon the Tragedy of My Familiar Acquaintance, Tho. Middleton," Nathanael Richards claims to have witnessed a performance of *Women Beware*, praising it as "a true Text / Never to be forgot" and remarking that "Never came *Tragedy* off with more applause."<sup>33</sup> He devotes most of his commentary to Middleton's female characters, whom he terms "Drabs of State vext," an ambiguous phrase that editors often gloss as "harlots of great men aggrieved."<sup>34</sup> The word *state*, however, also meant "country" or "governing institutions," and Richards's poetic diction evokes all these definitions simultaneously, linking *Women Beware*'s disruptive female characters to political affairs at this time of heightened civic participation among women. The issue of an effeminized state apparatus had been of long-standing concern to Richards, who had written a play explicitly about an unruly woman in power, *The Tragedy of Messalina, the Roman Emperesse* (perf. 1635; pub. 1640). That play's treatment of female authority corrupting the body politic is echoed in Richards's description of the nefarious actions of Middleton's women. According to Richards,

*Literature* 27 (1987): 303–20. For a compelling discussion that seeks to complicate this conundrum, see Joost Daalder, "The State of the Art," in *Women Beware Women*, ed. Hiscock, 84–89.

33. Middleton, *Two New Playes*, sig. A4r.

34. See, for instance, Thomas Middleton, *Women Beware Women and Other Plays*, ed. Richard Dutton (Oxford, 1999), 351; and Thomas Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, ed. William C. Carroll (London, 1994), 3.



the “humors, Hell-bred Malice, [and] Strife” of *Women Beware*’s female characters, along with their “plots, Poysons, Mischiefs that seldom miss, / To murder Vertue with a venom kiss,” were “Acted in State, presented to the life.” Here, “Acted in State” refers at once to the pomp and ceremony of the performance as well as to the fictive political setting in which the women commit their crimes; the latter usage emphasizes the perceived threat that these women pose to the stability of civil society. Richards thus interprets *Women Beware* as a misogynist text in which the female characters bear sole responsibility for the devastation of Florence,<sup>35</sup> and Moseley’s inclusion of the poem in *Two New Playes* invites readers to come to similar conclusions. Though Richards only mentions the “worthy Tragedy” of *Women Beware*, his poem actually appears, along with Moseley’s address “To the Reader,” after the individual title page of *More Dissemblers*, and the logic of Richards’s interpretation certainly applies to the Duchess of Milan as well. Placed at the beginning of the collection, the poem ends up framing both *Women Beware* and *More Dissemblers* as plays about unruly women in the political sphere. Drawing credibility from a first-hand account of theatrical performance, Richards’s poem may very well have shaped readers’ reception of the female characters in each play.

The text of *Women Beware* establishes many of the same connections between women and matters of state as Richards’s commendatory poem.<sup>36</sup> Even before the spectacular marriage masque that ravages the court, the play is rife with imagery about the political power of women, much of it concerning Bianca. After Leantio shows her his home, for instance, he expounds on the considerable sway she has over him: “beauty able to content a conqueror / Whom earth could scarce content keeps me in compass” (1.1.26–27). While Leantio objectifies Bianca by implying that she is a conquest, his phrasing also reveals the extent to which she holds both him and other powerful men in check. Indeed, Bianca’s capacity to “content a conqueror” anticipates the influence she soon wields in Florence. When the Duke fixates on Bianca, her sexual power threatens to bring him—and, by extension, the dukedom—under her dominion. According to Guardiano, “she’s a creature / Able to draw a state from serious business, / And make it their best piece to do her service” (2.2.16–18). These descriptions of Bianca culminate in Leantio’s dying exclamation, “Rise, strumpet, by my fall; thy lust may reign now” (4.2.43). His death, in fact, does permit Bianca to rule as the Duchess of Florence, the title she acquires through her marriage to the Duke. As the imagery portraying her power over men accumulates, Bianca gains institutional authority, imperiling the patriarchal structures of Florence in the process.

35. For a similar argument about Richards’s poem, see Elizabeth Zeman Kolkovich, “‘Drabs of State vext’: Violent Female Masquers in Thomas Middleton’s *Women Beware Women*,” in *Gender Matters: Discourse of Violence in Early Modern Literature and the Arts*, ed. Mara R. Wade (Amsterdam and New York, 2014), 295–306.

36. All citations from the play come from *Women Beware Women*, ed. John Jowett, in *Thomas Middleton*, ed. Taylor and Lavagnino, 1488–1541. Hereafter cited in the text by act, scene, and line numbers.



That Bianca's political ascendancy comes as a result of Livia's ploys underscores the peril's feminine origin. Livia, the play suggests, is ultimately at fault for debauching Bianca and Isabella, which has the effect of turning them both into political actors. During the intricately staged chess scene (2.2), Livia tricks Bianca and Leantio's mother with an invitation to her house. When the women arrive, Livia begins a game of chess with his mother, and Bianca is given a tour of Livia's "rooms and pictures" that turns out to be a private meeting with the Duke (2.2.272). As the dialogue intercuts between these two scenarios, the chess game comments ironically on Bianca's situation. Right before the Duke appears to Bianca, for instance, Livia boasts to Leantio's mother, "Here's a duke / Will strike a sure stroke for the game anon. / Your pawn cannot come back to relieve itself" (2.2.299–301). Likewise, as the Duke rapes Bianca offstage, Livia remarks, "Did I not say my duke would fetch you over, widow?" (2.2.387). Livia's cunning allows her to win the game and entrap Bianca by successfully maneuvering both the chess pieces and the people in her house. In this way, the device of the chess game asserts Livia's control over what is happening on and off stage. Certainly, the Duke instigates the whole affair, but within the framework of this particular scene, the Duke also functions as an object of Livia's manipulations and is merely another chess piece she moves around. "She that can place her man well," she tells the mother, "can never lose her game" (2.2.296–97). By subjecting the Duke to Livia's power, even figuratively, the scene presents an inversion of the patriarchal social order reminiscent of both the Parliament of Women pamphlets and the middle section of *More Dissemblers*. Like those texts, *Women Beware's* chess scene shows a domineering woman fostering discord in the state: Livia's corruption of Bianca not only precipitates her political empowerment but also sets into motion the tragic decline of Florence.

Livia foments even more upheaval in the body politic by transforming Isabella into another disruptive woman. Wishing to make her brother Hippolito happy, Livia resolves to manipulate Isabella into accepting his advances, but to accomplish this, Livia has to overcome Isabella's aversion to incest as well as the decree by Isabella's father, Fabritio, that she marry the idiotic Ward. Livia surmounts these obstacles by lying to Isabella about her parentage. "You are no more allied to any of us," Livia tells her, "Than the mer'st stranger is" (2.1.135–38), alleging that her biological father is actually "that famed Spaniard, / Marquis of Coria" (2.1.143–44). In making these claims, Livia obliterates the patriarchal bonds that shackle Isabella:

How weak his commands now whom you call father!  
 How vain all his enforcements, your obedience!  
 And what a largeness in your will and liberty,  
 To take, or to reject, or to do both!

(2.1.158–61)

Much as she frees Bianca from the confinement of her husband, Livia emancipates Isabella from Fabritio, insisting that she is now in charge of her own fate. But while Isabella does disobey her father by commencing an affair with Hippolito, she ends up acting in accordance with Livia's wishes, trading one controlling figure for another. Rather than liberating her niece from external constraints, Livia merely "usurps the command that Fabritio possesses over his daughter."<sup>37</sup> As in the chess scene, Livia establishes herself as a powerful matriarch governing the people around her. The effect Livia has on Isabella mirrors the way that her ruse with the Duke turns Bianca "bold" (2.2.438). From this point forward, Isabella rebels against the patriarchs in her life—her father and her prospective husband—and becomes sexually forward, embracing Hippolito almost immediately. "A kiss tastes wondrous well," she says in greeting him, "and full o'th' grape" (2.1.203). As soon as she falls under Livia's influence, Isabella adopts the kind of brazen demeanor associated with Livia's own unruly femininity. Like Bianca, she has become a threat to the patriarchal institutions of the state.

Although Livia's adulteration of the two young women already carries a distinct political resonance, the play goes even further, by characterizing Livia's actions as seditious. Early in *Women Beware*, Leantio chides his mother for asserting that Bianca will not be satisfied with their income. Deploying a political metaphor that prefigures what happens to Bianca and Isabella, he states,

I pray, do not you teach her to rebel,  
When she's in a good way to obedience:  
To rise with other women in commotion  
Against their husbands for six gowns a year.  
(1.1.74–77)

Leantio relies on a conventional analogy between the household and the body politic to make the point that contravening the patriarch amounts to a political uprising. Just as significantly, he worries that his mother will recruit Bianca into such a revolt. But if any woman does "teach" Bianca "to rebel," it is Livia. After the chess scene, Bianca grows increasingly contemptuous of Leantio, and before long, she humiliates him by leaving his house to live with the Duke. In corrupting Bianca, Livia fulfils Leantio's worst fears; in teaching Isabella to revolt as well, she sparks a feminine rebellion that brings on the political collapse of Florence.

In this rebellion, each woman appropriates a state function for her own grisly purposes. During the final act, the women seize control of a masque celebrating the Duke's marriage to Bianca and proceed to transform it into a vehicle for bloody

37. Erin Ellerbeck, "Adoptive Names in Thomas Middleton's *Women Beware Women*," *Studies in English Literature* 57 (2017): 407–26 at 420.

retribution.<sup>38</sup> Livia, Isabella, and Bianca implement their revenge plans separately, and the turmoil and confusion that results is bemoaned as “The greatest sorrow and astonishment / That ever struck the general peace of Florence” (5.1.239–40), a turbulent uproar resembling the chaotic reign of the Parliament of Women. Livia organizes the masque with the help of her perennial accomplice Guardiano, promising “a device” for the wedding that “would fit these times so well” (4.2.209). Taking on the suitably authoritative guise of “imperial Juno,” the “sacred goddess / And queen of nuptials” (5.1.121–23), Livia descends from the heavens, throws burning gold in Isabella’s lap, and orders the cupids accompanying her to shoot their arrows at Hippolito, who survives only to “run his breast upon a weapon’s point” out of grief (5.1.207), while Isabella dispatches Livia with poisoned incense. Amid these gruesome events, Bianca attempts to poison the Lord Cardinal for disapproving of the wedding, but she accidentally kills the Duke instead. Distraught, Bianca poisons herself, and with her dying breath, she laments her corruption at Livia’s hands: “O, the deadly snares / That women set for women, without pity / Either to soul or honor” (5.1.252–54). This pronouncement would resonate in republican England, where women were organizing each other in the public sphere, as would Livia’s admission that asserting her influence in Florence has been her undoing: “My own ambition pulls me down to ruin” (5.1.171). According to Middleton’s play, then, women’s exercising of political agency has tragic consequences not only for the state but also for women themselves, implications that Moseley sought to exploit in the political climate of 1657, when England’s Protectorate Parliament was grappling with the question of how best to bring order to the country. The wedding masque of *Women Beware* certainly lends itself to the idea, agreeable to monarchists and fraternal republicans alike, that a civilian government bereft of feminine influence would help preserve the English Republic’s domestic security. Demonstrating the cataclysmic effects of women taking political action, the wedding masque provides an appropriate conclusion to both *Women Beware* and *Two New Plays*, bringing the volume’s portrayal of women to fruition with an explosive finale in which ladies run rampant.

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38. Kolkovich reads the marriage masque similarly. See “‘Drabs of State vext,’” 297–302.



# Holland House in the 1650s: Evidence and Possibilities of Interregnum Theatrical Entertainment

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Christopher Matusiak

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**ABSTRACT** According to James Wright's *Historia Histrionica* (1699), when professional stage players were prohibited from acting publicly during the English civil wars, they gravitated toward aristocratic residences, "in particular *Holland-house at Kensington*." This essay identifies the experiences of Holland House's principal proprietor, Isabel Rich (née Cope), first Countess of Holland, as the principal sponsor of these clandestine Kensington performances. Motivating her patronage, the essay argues, were the countess's obligations within an aristocratic moral economy; contemporary nostalgia for the prewar King's Men; the postwar affective dimensions of "mirth"; and investment in theater as a form of passive resistance to the authority of the new English republic. **KEYWORDS:** private performances; estate architecture; royalism; Alexander Goffe; Bartholomew Fair; Manuche's *The Feast*

☞ IN SEPTEMBER 1940, German incendiaries fell from the sky over Kensington and set fire to the seventeenth-century mansion known as Holland House. The bombardment caused extensive and irreparable damage, documented most famously in a photograph of three men browsing the building's ruined library, clouds visible through a collapsed ceiling above, the floor below heaped with blackened timbers and broken furniture.<sup>1</sup> The London City Council chose to demolish a greater part of the compromised structure in the 1950s, and today only the shell of its central block

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1. "Bombed Library in Holland House, Kensington," FOX02 (copy negative BB83/04456), Historic England Archive, London and Swindon. For rare film footage of the burned house, see "Holland House Damaged 1940," British Pathé, accessed April 1, 2021, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/holland-house-damaged>.

and a renovated east wing remain standing in Holland Park.<sup>2</sup> From the perspective of the theater historian, the mansion's desolation is uniquely unfortunate. The loss especially of its great upper chamber—where seventeenth-century actors, including very likely Shakespeare, once entertained elite patrons—is a sobering reminder that the reconstruction of early modern performance conditions is challenged by more than the disappearance of London's purpose-built playhouses. My focus in this essay is on theatrical activity reported to have taken place at Holland House in the aftermath of the English civil wars. The antitheatrical legislation that Parliament sought to enforce during the military engagements of the 1640s and political revolutions of the 1650s never entirely succeeded in abolishing stage playing. It did, however, compel entertainers to operate with greater circumspection: "in *Oliver's* time, they used to Act privately, three or four Miles, or more, out of Town, now here, now there, sometimes in Noblemens Houses, in particular *Holland-house* at *Kensington*, where the Nobility and Gentry who met (but in no great Numbers) used to make a Sum for them, each giving a broad Peice, or the like. And *Alexander Goffe*, the Woman Actor at *Blackfriars*, (who had made himself known to Persons of Quality) used to be the Jackal and give notice of Time and Place." So says Truman, the wistful old cavalier in James Wright's *Historia Histrionica* (1699).<sup>3</sup> Scholars often cite this passage as evidence of the players' general obstinacy in the face of the effort to suppress them, but Truman's testimony also provokes questions we have yet to fully consider. Why was Holland House remembered "in particular" as a site of dramatic performance? What kind of material environment did players and spectators encounter there? Who among the "Nobility and Gentry" encouraged Alexander Goffe, a former member of the King's Men, to "Act privately" there with his fellows, and to what ends?

The *Historia* tells us nothing further, but it does point the way forward. "Oliver's time"—the decade that saw Oliver Cromwell rise to eminence after the execution of King Charles I in 1649—corresponds with the widowhood of Isabel Rich (née Cope), the dowager Countess of Holland (fig. 1). She was Holland House's principal proprietor from the time of her husband's death in 1649 to her own burial in 1655, and as I argue in the first part of what follows, her illicit sponsorship of players is consistent with an abiding fascination with theater that may be traced back to her youth. Lady Holland's support was a boon for downtrodden entertainers. The regicide and displacement of the Stuart court effectively nullified the institution of royal patronage that had sustained commercial drama in London for decades; those actors who insisted on opening their playhouse doors to the public in the Commonwealth and

2. I am grateful to archivists Dave Walker and Isabel Hernandez for their guidance consulting records of Holland House in the Local Studies and Archives department at the Kensington Central Library.

3. James Wright, *Historia Histrionica: An Historical Account of the English Stage* (London, 1699), 9 (sig. Cr).





FIGURE 1. *Lady Isabel Rich, née Cope*, first Countess of Holland, by William Larkin, ca. 1614–18, PLB/J920337, Kenwood House, London. © Historic England Archive, London and Swindon.



Protectorate capital risked aggressive incursions by New Model Army soldiers.<sup>4</sup> Holland House, by contrast, stood in a secluded green space two miles from Westminster, and the second section of this essay demonstrates how the mansion afforded players both privacy and a lavish architectural and decorative environment in which to perform. Precisely why the Countess of Holland defied parliamentary ordinances and encouraged players to visit her in the 1650s is harder to discern. Likely the impulse was reflexive. In the countess's experience, aristocratic hospitality typically involved a theatrical element. But there are hints, too, of more at stake than adherence to custom. The defeat of the king's party profoundly disturbed the Holland House community, not least when, in the spring of 1649, the Earl of Holland was beheaded on a Westminster scaffold for having led a failed insurgency against Parliament and the army. Lady Holland shared her husband's political and cultural conservatism relative to the radicalism of the moment, and the state violence and personal loss she endured that year must have been jarring. It will be worth considering in the final section of the essay, therefore, whether a desire for consolation or catharsis may have factored into her engagement with players. At the same time, it will be necessary to probe the possibility that Lady Holland sheltered fugitive actors for more overtly ideological reasons. Theater remained closely bound up with the collective identity of Interregnum royalists, akin to the social drinking, sports, and other pastimes frowned on by their cultural adversaries. To what extent, then, should the performance of drama at Holland House be understood as a conscious act of disobedience, a means for the countess and her coterie to passively resist the new authority of the Commonwealth and Protectorate regimes?

### “Mistress Bettie” and Stuart Theatrical Culture

Before Isabel Rich was granted the title of first Countess of Holland, she was known simply and affectionately to family and friends as “Mistress Bettie.”<sup>5</sup> Her date of birth is uncertain, but she came of age early in the reign of James I, a period that saw her father, the industrious courtier Sir Walter Cope, grow prodigiously wealthy in the service of the privy councillor Robert Cecil, first Earl of Salisbury.<sup>6</sup> Isabel's mother, Dorothy Cope (née Grenville), supervised her daughter's meticulous education in dance, music, and other refinements,<sup>7</sup> and in 1612 a matrilineal connection prompted

4. John Leslie Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (Cambridge, Mass., 1928), 7–59.

5. John Chamberlain, a client of Isabel's family, often refers to her this way; see *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. Norman Egbert McClure, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1939), 1:409, 470, 2:30.

6. As Cecil's servant, Cope was knighted and appointed the keeper of Hyde Park, master of the Court of Wards, and chamberlain of the exchequer; see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter *ODNB*], s.v. “Cope, Sir Walter (1553?–1614),” by Elizabeth Allen, last modified January 3, 2008, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6257>.

7. Egerton Brydges, *Collins's Peerage of England*, vol. 2 (London, 1812), 407–8. Dorothy Grenville (d. 1638), daughter of Richard Grenville of Wotton, was a relative of George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham.

Isabel's marriage to Sir Henry Rich (1590–1649), second son of Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick, and Lady Penelope Rich (née Devereux).<sup>8</sup> A verse by Ben Jonson likens Sir Henry, then age twenty-two, to a spark on the cusp of burning brightly at court.<sup>9</sup> Handsome, skillful in the tiltyard, and backed by the powerful Duke of Buckingham, Rich rose to power with predictable swiftness: he was made a gentleman of the prince's bedchamber in 1616; Lord Kensington in 1623; first Earl of Holland after negotiating Charles's marriage to Henrietta Maria in 1624; and a member of the Privy Council upon Charles's succession in 1625.<sup>10</sup> By kinship and marriage, then, Isabel enjoyed great privilege in adolescence and young adulthood, including regular exposure to both elite and popular recreations.

It fell frequently to her father, for instance, to organize seasonal revels on behalf of his political masters—an honorable, if burdensome, responsibility. When Elizabeth I visited Salisbury's new London home at Christmas in 1602, Cecil granted Cope the “very extraordinarie favor to admit him a partner in his entertainment to the Quene,” which permitted him “to present her with some toyes in his house, for which she had many fayre words.”<sup>11</sup> The management of such “toyes” was expensive and time-consuming: poets and musicians were enlisted to devise quasi-dramatic pageants; kitchen staff set out ornate displays of food and drink; and jewels, clothes, and other rich gifts were laid out before powerful guests, calibrated to encourage reciprocal concern for the host's political and financial aspirations.<sup>12</sup> The cost and sequence of Cope's 1602 entertainment are not recorded, but according to the prolific letter writer John Chamberlain, a client of the Cope family, it featured “a pretty dialogue” contrived by John Davies “twixt a maide, a widow and a wife,” which pleased the guests above all.<sup>13</sup>

To better orchestrate aristocratic revels, Cope cultivated relationships with London's professional entertainers. When James Burbage, founder of The Theatre in Shoreditch, mortgaged and then forfeited his playhouse lease to a grocer, John Hyde, Cope insinuated himself into the affair, promising Hyde preferment on the condition

8. *Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. McClure, 1:344, 346. For Sir Henry's career, see Barbara Donagan, “A Courtier's Progress: Greed and Consistency in the Life of the Earl of Holland,” *Historical Journal* 19 (1976): 317–53; and John Louis Beatty, *Warwick and Holland* (Denver, 1965), 36–63.

9. Ben Jonson, vol. 8, *The Poems, the Prose Works*, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford, 1947), 382–83.

10. Donagan, “Courtier's Progress,” 321–23.

11. *Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. McClure, 1:177–78. “Toyes” refers here to facetious speeches, songs, and other amusement. See *Oxford English Dictionary* [hereafter *OED*], s.v. “toy, n. 2–3,” last modified March 2021, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/204133>.

12. Mary Hill Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony* (Amherst, Mass., 1999), 63–80.

13. *Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. McClure, 1:177–78. Davies's own correspondence with Cecil makes it clear that these solicited routines were demonstrations of service; see *The Poems of Sir John Davies*, ed. Robert Krueger and Ruby Nemser (Oxford, 1975), xxviii, 415–16.

that he assign his interest back to Burbage's eldest son, Cuthbert, in June 1589.<sup>14</sup> As Mary Edmond points out, the ramifications of Cope's intervention were considerable; the move effectively preserved the venue in which actor Richard Burbage, Cuthbert's brother, would soon collaborate with Shakespeare and the Lord Chamberlain's Men.<sup>15</sup> Cope probably knew Shakespeare personally.<sup>16</sup> When called upon to organize an entertainment for Queen Anne's stay at the Earl of Southampton's townhouse in the Christmas season of 1604–5, Cope wrote to Salisbury of having "bene all thys morning hunting for players, iauglers [i.e., jugglers] & such kind of creatures." Available performers proved "harde to fynde," but old seeds eventually bore fruit; Cuthbert Burbage stepped forward and proposed to Cope that the King's Men revive for the queen "an olde one cawled Loves Labore Lost which for wytt & mirthe . . . will please her exceedingly."<sup>17</sup> This working relationship with Shakespeare's playing company extended over a period of two decades, which suggests that Cope's daughter, too, moved in proximity to London's most celebrated actors.

Isabel exhibited clear enthusiasm for the popular stage during her formative years. In 1606, Chamberlain wrote to Dudley Carleton of his fatigue after chaperoning "Bettie" and some energetic friends to a London playhouse:

I wished you *with* us on thursday that you might haue don *your* young  
Lady mistris . . . some knight seruice at a play, where *your* presence  
might haue excused me of much trouble and some cost, for I was faine  
all alone to squire her and Sir Rowlands huswifes [i.e., daughters], till  
I was as weary as they [were] wanton. All the comfort I had was that my  
Lady Cope saide she wold not commit her daughter to any mans care but  
mine, *which* was ynough to make some men proude to haue the charge  
of such a jewell, though he were never the richer nor the wiser for yt.<sup>18</sup>

14. Cuthbert Burbage refers to himself as Cope's "servaunt" in the legal depositions that narrate this incident; see Charles William Wallace, *The First London Theatre: Materials for a History* (Lincoln, Neb., 1913), esp. 55–56, 63.

15. ODNB, s.v. "Burbage, Cuthbert (1564/5–1636)," by Mary Edmond, last modified January 3, 2008, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/60972>.

16. J. H. P. Pafford conjectures that Cope made source materials available to company playwrights in "Shakespeare and the Burghley or Cope Library," *Notes and Queries* 34 (1987): 219. On Cope's collection of over two hundred manuscripts, see Andrew G. Watson, *Medieval Manuscripts in Post-Medieval England* (Aldershot, U.K., 2004), 262–97.

17. "Sir Walter Cope, letter to Viscount Cranborne [Robert Cecil], ca. 1604," Cecil Papers, CP 189/95, Hatfield House, Shakespeare Documented, <https://doi.org/10.37078/606>. The undated note must refer to the 1604–5 Christmas season, because on January 5, 1605, Dudley Carleton told Chamberlain that Cecil, too, planned to feast "*ye Queen with ye Duke of Holstein* and a great part of ye court . . . like two nights before at my *Lord of Southampton's*." The revels that season extended past Twelfth Night, prompting Carleton to add, "it seemes we shall haue Christmas all the yeare." SP 14/12, fol. 32, The National Archives, Kew [hereafter TNA].

18. Chamberlain to Carleton, March 5, 1606, SP 14/19, fol. 21, TNA. Sir Rowland Lytton (1561–1615) was Cope's kinsman; his daughters were Anne, Judith, Elizabeth, and Jane.

Isabel's enjoyment of theater would have begun at home. Between 1605 and 1612, her father financed and built Cope Castle, later to be known as Holland House, on five hundred acres of fields and hills west of London. Built on a plateau at the heart of the estate, this prodigy house was designed to broadcast its owner's rising status and to better entertain the courtly benefactors who had enriched him.<sup>19</sup> In 1605, for instance, when a party of Salisbury's genteel associates sought to evade an outbreak of plague in the city, Cope vowed to host them sumptuously in Kensington, assuring his patron that "none [would be] more welcome, unless we had the trees of the which they are branches."<sup>20</sup> On another occasion, in 1608, John Chamberlain joined "the Lady, Little Bettie" and "other goode companie" as they surveyed preparations for a royal visit. Given leave to wander the mansion, Chamberlain wryly observed the delicacies set out for guests more distinguished than himself: "we had the honor to see all, but touch nothing, not so much as a cherry, *which* are charlie preserved for the quenes comming."<sup>21</sup> Queen Anne's affection for drama will have necessitated the staging of a play or some other theatrical "toye" on this occasion as well. Although Cope Castle's earliest years are poorly documented, "common playing" had long been customary in gentle households, and we may surmise that traveling entertainers visited Isabel's family with some regularity.<sup>22</sup> William Peadle's colorful troupe of acrobats are known to have vaulted, juggled, and danced on ropes at the estate in 1609, for example.<sup>23</sup> Hosting domestic entertainments was shot through with sociopolitical importance, and accounts from other houses of gentry at this time highlight the critical role that high-ranking women played in managing hospitality at such events. Isabel and her mother would rarely, if ever, have been passive spectators.<sup>24</sup> For Isabel

19. Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500–1700* (London, 1994), 283, 286–88.

20. *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable the Marquis of Salisbury*, 24 vols. (London, 1883–1976), 17:583–84.

21. Chamberlain to Carleton, July 7, 1608, SP 14/35, fol. 14, TNA.

22. Leeds Barroll, "Shakespeare, Noble Patrons, and the Pleasures of 'Common' Playing," in *Shakespeare and Theatrical Patronage in Early Modern England*, ed. Paul Whitfield White and Suzanne R. Westfall (Cambridge, 2002), 90–121. In January 1611, "Sir Walter Cope & his Lady, & some others" joined the Lord Cranborne (Salisbury's son) and his wife Catherine Howard "to hear a play before supper & another after" at the London house of George Montaigne, Dean of Westminster. MS Lansdowne 92, fol. 141, British Library.

23. *Calendar of the Manuscripts of . . . Salisbury*, 24:169. Cope authorized a payment of £10 to Peadle "for the funabeyes [i.e., feats of agility] at Kensington." Peadle's company performed at Whitehall the same year; see *Dramatic Records in the Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber, 1558–1642*, ed. David Cook with assistance from F. P. Wilson (Oxford, 1962), 15–16, 46–47.

24. Elizabeth Zeman Kolkovich, *The Elizabethan Country House Entertainment: Print, Performance, and Gender* (Cambridge, 2016), 13–14.

especially, these were opportunities to deepen bonds with patrons in the royal family and to scout for matrimonial prospects like Henry Rich.<sup>25</sup>

Over the course of her thirty-seven-year marriage to Sir Henry, Isabel remained fascinated by theater. From 1625, the couple's careers at court endowed them with enormous wealth and influence: she as a favored lady of Henrietta Maria's bed-chamber, he as a privy councillor and the queen's high steward.<sup>26</sup> Sir Henry was reputedly "a very great friend to the old puritans," although this did not evidently encumber his relationship with the Catholic queen, nor did he harbor any antipathy toward stage playing.<sup>27</sup> On the contrary, as the earl rose in stature, he drew many patronage-seeking playwrights and actors into his orbit. At Cambridge, where he served as chancellor, scholars dedicated Latin and vernacular interludes to him.<sup>28</sup> He was a fixture at public playhouses as well, notably accompanying the Duke of Buckingham to a controversial production of Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII* at the Globe in 1628.<sup>29</sup> In 1632, James Shirley praised Holland for inspiring his comedy *Hide Park* and for attending a performance at the Drury Lane Cockpit.<sup>30</sup> And in 1633, when a revival of Fletcher's *The Woman's Prize, or the Tamer Tamed* caused offense and the Revels Office confiscated the King's Men's playbook, it was "at my lord of Hollands request" that the manuscript was returned to the players, according to the master of the revels. Like his father-in-law, the earl appears to have maintained closer-than-usual ties to this company.<sup>31</sup> Neither duty nor distance dulled Holland's taste for ostentatious pastimes; even while campaigning during the Bishops' War in 1639, he reportedly "kept a very noble house" and "gave great entertainments to many of y<sup>e</sup> Commanders."<sup>32</sup>

25. King James visited Cope Castle to fish its ponds in 1608 and again shortly after Prince Henry's death in 1612; however, his stay on that occasion was brief and the entertainment staid. The king found the house cold, Chamberlain writes, and "grew quicklie wearie." Isabel would have socialized with Prince Charles and Elizabeth Stuart on this occasion, and it has been suggested that the king himself proposed her union with Henry Rich. Chamberlain to Carleton, November 19, 1612, SP 14/71, fol. 66, TNA.

26. Donagan, "Courtier's Progress," 332–33.

27. Bulstrode Whitelocke, *Memorials of the English Affairs*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1853), 548. Whitelocke considered Holland an honorable and pious friend. On the compatibility of the earl's Presbyterianism and the Catholicism of the "queen's party," see Donagan, "Courtier's Progress," 340–44; and R. M. Smuts, "The Puritan Followers of Henrietta Maria in the 1630s," *English Historical Review* 93 (1978): 26–45.

28. Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1941–68), 4:534–36, 5:1995–97.

29. Bentley, *Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 1:22–23.

30. James Shirley, *Hide Park a Comedie* (London, 1637). Holland was then keeper of Hyde Park, an office he inherited from his father-in-law.

31. *The Control and Censorship of Caroline Drama: The Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels 1623–73*, ed. N. W. Bawcutt (Oxford, 1996), 182.

32. Daniel Parsons, *The Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby of Scriven, Bart.* (London, 1836), 32–33.

Lord and Lady Holland became especially absorbed by the Stuart vogue for court masques. The countess was among the principal ladies who graced entertainments by George Chapman, Francis Bacon, and Francis Beaumont at the Inns of Court in celebration of Elizabeth Stuart's wedding to Frederick V, Elector Palatine, in 1613.<sup>33</sup> And in 1618, she and her five-year-old daughter Frances readied themselves to play Amazons in a "maske of nine Ladies" organized by Lucy Hay, Countess of Carlisle.<sup>34</sup> Sir Henry, Lady Isabel, and their children subsequently took part in Inigo Jones's even more lavishly designed masques of the 1630s. The earl danced with the king and queen in Ben Jonson's *Love's Triumph through Callipolis* (1631), Aurelian Townsend's *Albions Triumph* (1632) and *Tempe Restord* (1632), and Thomas Carew's *Coelum Britannicum* (1634). For her part, the Countess of Holland joined Henrietta Maria at the Middle Temple for the playful indecorousness of William Davenant's *The Triumphs of Prince d'Amour* (1636), during which she put on citizen's attire and viewed the masque in the company of Mistress Bassett, "the great lace woman of Cheapside." The Earl of Holland sat nearby, shoulder-to-shoulder with the visiting Prince Elector and the Prince d'Amour himself, the mock ruler who delighted law students during the Christmas revels.<sup>35</sup> In terms of cost and scope, these elite spectacles dwarfed the "common playing" that had excited "Bettie" in youth. Yet both were staples of the aristocratic customs and holiday festivity that defined the rhythms of her early experience.

### A Theater of Hospitality

The draftsman John Thorpe drew the earliest known plan of Cope Castle/Holland House around 1603 (fig. 2). It depicts a two-story central block, flanked by arcades and wings on its eastern and western sides, creating the H shape admired by the Jacobean elite. A capacious entrance hall (marked "Hall" on the plan) occupies much of the southern part of the block. Northeast of this hall, Cope and Thorpe envisioned two parlors ("a withdrawing parler," "parler") and, northwest of it, a buttery chamber ("buttery") and a winter parlor, seemingly positioned above a basement kitchen ("winter parler/kyt under").<sup>36</sup> Service passages connect these rooms to a pantry ("pantry") west of the entrance hall, and to a main kitchen ("kyting") with adjacent larders ("wet larder," "dry larder") in the west wing. On the first floor, above

33. *Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. McClure, 1:423–33.

34. *Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. McClure, 2:125–26; Bentley, *Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 5:1288–90. Having "taken great paines in continuall practicing," the performers' plans are said to have been "dasht" when James I suddenly forbade the masque. The cancellation coincided with the king's expressed antagonism toward an emergent fashion for "masculine" comportment by women and their adoption of men's attire in public.

35. Bentley, *Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 3:218–20; *Control and Censorship*, ed. Bawcutt, 197.

36. Anticipating, perhaps, that heat from the cooking and baking below would warm the winter parlor above.



the entrance hall and accessible by a formal staircase, the designers conceived a more exclusive upper hall (“great chamber over”), later dubbed the “Gilded” or “Gilt Room.” The wings of the house are drawn in a different shade of ink, suggesting a later phase of design. Thorpe’s plan does not fully express the intended layout of the house’s upper rooms, but in the process of construction and renovation between 1604 and 1640, these spaces came to include the principal bedchambers, drawing rooms, a chapel, and a long gallery (planned for the east wing but placed ultimately in the west wing).<sup>37</sup>

According to Cope’s will, the acreage surrounding the mansion encompassed

Gardens Orchardes Courts and yeardes Together *with* all the fower severall Closes of Land Meadow and Pasture thereunto adioyninge. And the Wayes and Walkes whatsoever lyenge between the Highway leading between the Towne or Streete of Kensington and Hammersmith in the sayd County of *Middlesex* and the Bricke walles on the South *parte* of the sayd Howse. And alsoe all that Close of Pasture lyenge on the West ende of the Stable . . . oute of *which* the Bowllinge place is inclosed together . . . And alsoe all that Close of Pasture . . . on the Northe syde of the Orchard brickwalle . . . And all that peece of Grounde and Walke lyenge along the Easte syde of the Bricke Wall . . . and so extending all along the Parsonage groundes of Kensington . . . unto the sayd High Way South . . . And all Wayes, Pathes and Passages to the sayde Howse and *premisses*.<sup>38</sup>

In the surrounding meadows, Cope planted fresh orchards of fruit trees—cherry, pear, apple, and mulberry. Further afield, southwest of the mansion, he also introduced an elaborate water garden consisting of spring-fed ponds stocked with fish and islands connected by bridges, all lined with green paths.<sup>39</sup> An estate survey of 1734 (based on a lost original drawn in 1695) provides a valuable glimpse of these landholdings in their entirety (fig. 3). In the section reproduced here, Holland House appears at the lower right, resembling in shape a reverse “E.” North of the mansion (rightward on the map) are several bounded areas to which Cope’s will refers (“Little Hill Field,” “The Wilderness,” and “Great Hill Field”) and that extend to the highway

37. A modern plan of the house, drawn by S. G. Kadleigh in 1936, appears in Giles Stephen Holland Fox-Strangways, Earl of Ilchester, *The Home of the Hollands, 1605–1820* (London, 1937), 372–75. Nicholas Cooper gives the best recent account of the site’s development in Cooper, “Holland House: Architecture in an Elite Society,” *Architectural History* 63 (2020): 37–75.

38. PROB 11/125/121, fols. 529r–30v, TNA. Cope was buried August 1, 1614, in Kensington. He bequeathed the estate to his widow with the stipulation that should she remarry, ownership would revert to their daughter, Isabel. This came to pass when Dorothy Cope wed Sir Thomas Fowler in 1621. See *Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. McClure, 1:376, 547, 549, 554, 599.

39. Sally Miller, “‘The Ponds or Water Maze’: An Early Seventeenth-Century Water Garden at Cope Castle in Kensington,” *Garden History* 42 (2014): 21–40.



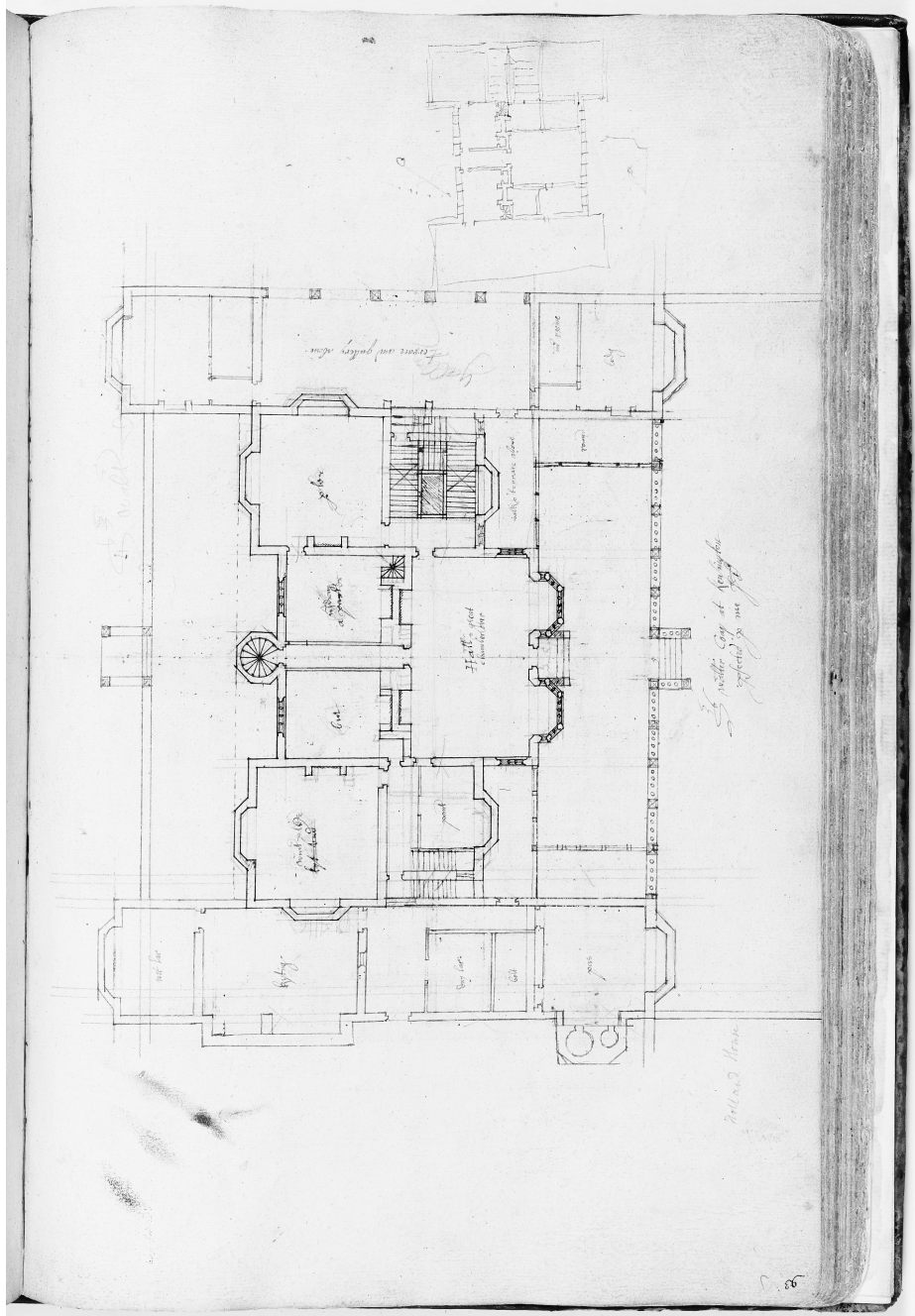


FIGURE 2. Cope Castle, from a book of drawings by John Thorpe, Volume 101, T93 (photo by Ardon Bar-Hama). © Sir John Soane's Museum, London. A note in Thorpe's hand at the bottom of the plan ("Sir walter Coop at Kensington / perfected *par me* JT") indicates that he and Cope collaborated on the house's design.

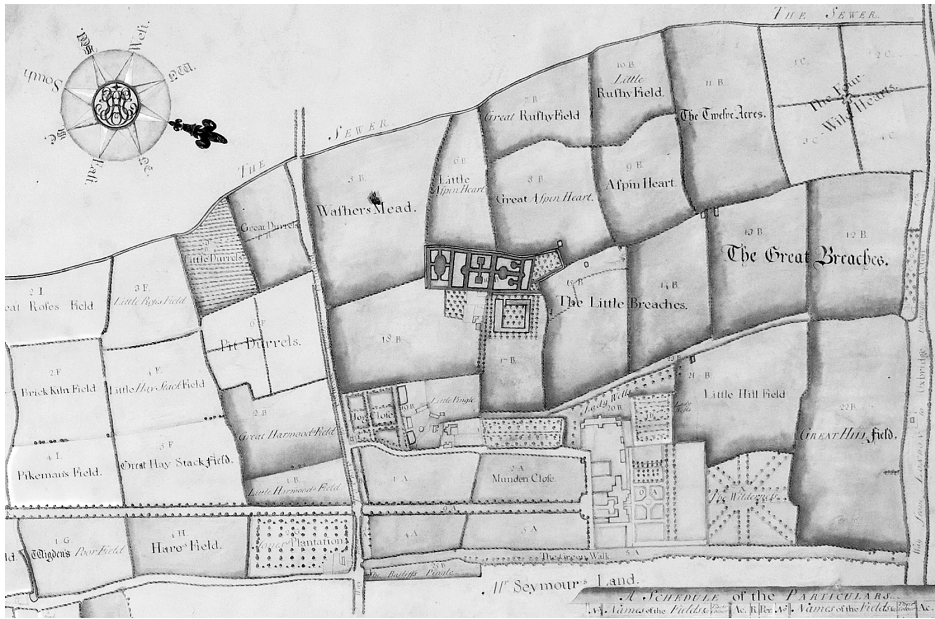


FIGURE 3. Detail from “A Mapp of part of the Mannors of Earls Court, Kensington and Abbots, Kensington in the County of Middlesex,” by J. Johnson and W. Brasier, 1734, after a lost original by Edward Bostock Fuller, 1695. © Kensington Central Library, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

leading from London to Uxbridge. South of the house (leftward on the map) lies “Munden Close” and three other unnamed enclosures; these are framed by elm-lined walks and a coach path connecting the house to the highway leading from London to Hammersmith and Brentford. Cope’s geometrically shaped ponds can be seen to the southwest (upward and to the left), bounded by “Washer’s Mead,” “Great Aspyn Heart,” and “The Little Breaches.”

According to Henry Wotton, “Every mans proper *Mansion House* and *Home*, being the *Theater* of his *Hospitality* . . . may well deserve . . . to be *decently* and *delightfully* adorned.”<sup>40</sup> It is a dictum that the Earl and Countess of Holland took to heart when they inherited the Cope estate in the early 1620s. Forerunners in the race for courtly distinction, the couple spent enormous sums renovating Holland House (as it would now be known), bolstering their capacity to entertain members of the royal family, foreign dignitaries, and other noble visitors.<sup>41</sup> Many of their efforts are preserved in the Rich family’s surviving bills and receipts, enabling us to imagine in

40. Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture* (London, 1624), 82.

41. On the Hollands’ entertainment of visiting French courtiers, for example, see *Memoirs of the Embassy of Marshall de Bassompierre to the Court of England in 1626*, trans. John Wilson Croker (London, 1819), 54–56, 106; and William Roberts, “A French Lyric Poet at the

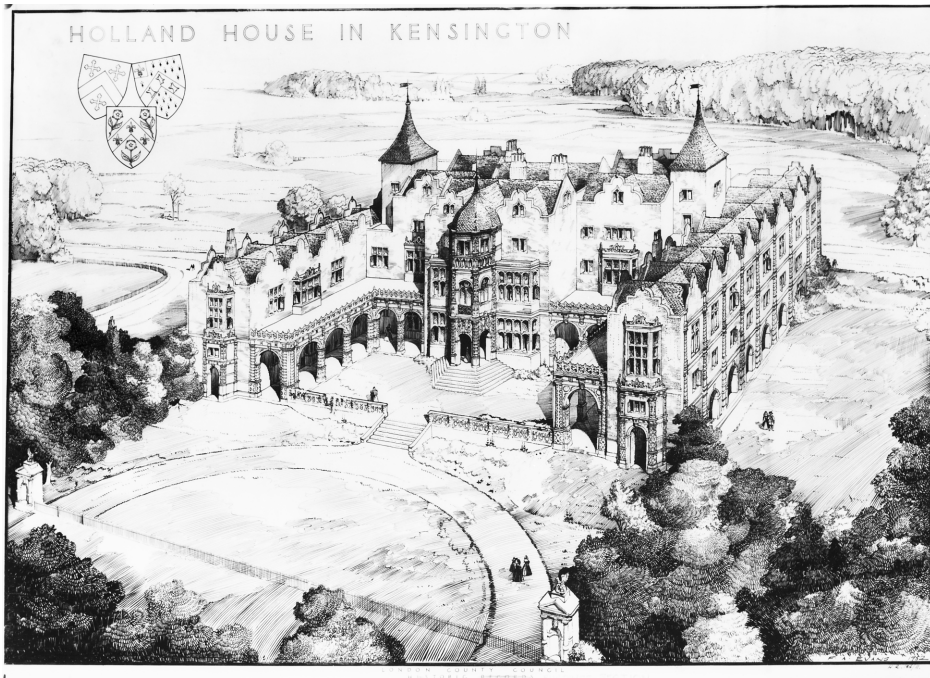


FIGURE 4. Engraving of Holland House, by F. A. Evans, 1952, BSM01/01/119. © Historic England Archive, London and Swindon.

considerable detail the material environment that guests encountered when invited to the estate in the mid-seventeenth century.

A coach wheeling up the house's southern approach would pass first through a handsome pair of gate piers. Designed by the architect Inigo Jones and carved from Portland stone, the piers were shaped like Doric columns and topped with sculpted griffins displaying heraldry of the Cope and Rich families.<sup>42</sup> The apricot-red brick and pale limestone of Holland House itself then would come into view: a grand pile with turrets, fenestrated bays, classical pilasters, and loggia crested with fleurs-de-lis (fig. 4). Disembarking at the forecourt on the south side of the house, visitors would be ushered up a stone porch under the central turret and into the entrance hall. Passing under the vaulted timber of the hall, guests might choose to refresh themselves or socialize in one of the northern parlors. Those guests permitted access to more socially restricted parts of the house would eventually make their way through an

Caroline Court," in *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History*, ed. John F. Sweets (Lawrence, Kans., 1982), 202–11.

42. See the eighteenth volume of the Walpole Society, 1929–30, A. J. Finberg, *Vertue Notebooks*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1930), 99. The gate piers survived the blitzkrieg of 1940 and now stand in what formerly was the house's southern courtyard.



arched portal, elaborately enriched with arabesques, in the northeast corner of the hall and climb a grand staircase with carved oaken balustrades.<sup>43</sup>

From the first-floor landing, guests could immediately access the “great chamber over.” This Gilt Room, as it is remembered today, was as large as the hall below—some sixty feet in width and thirty feet in breadth, with a thirteen-foot-high ceiling—but its purpose was to cater more exclusively to guests of honor. The space was lit naturally by bay windows in three south-facing alcoves and by an enfilade created by a pair of double doors in the north wall that were aligned with windows in the chamber beyond. The limner Rowland Bucket was hired to paint the wainscoting, shields of arms, and chimneypieces in cream, blue, and gold—gilding for which the room acquired its name. Grotesque ornamentation in the original ceiling was the work of Franz Cleyn, who also inlaid the compartments of the walls with cross-lets, fleurs-de-lis, and cherubim. The royal mason Nicholas Stone framed the room’s two fireplaces with Ionic pilasters of Portland stone. Above these were friezes featuring painted allegories of Sovereignty, Justice, and Peace; medallion portraits of the king and queen; and bas-reliefs reproducing scenes from the Aldobrandini Wedding fresco.<sup>44</sup> Scallop-shaped chairs of oak and beech, a “Great clocke” with a mechanical bell wheel, and gold and silver plate on display in fine cupboards may have also defined the room’s decor.<sup>45</sup>

It was here that professional players gathered to perform for Lady Holland and her coterie in the 1650s. Recalling Truman’s description of the exclusive nature of the audience as “Nobility and Gentry . . . (but in no great Numbers),” we may infer that prewar dignities continued to be observed. Barbara Palmer has shown that “trestle tables are easily taken down, leaving benches, stools, and cushions, whose occupancy no doubt was sorted out by the household steward and hall usher along the timeless audience rules of rank, status, wealth, age, health, height, vision, hearing, and gender.”<sup>46</sup> The Gilt Room’s size and architectural features underscore its versatility as a performance space. The paneling of its east and west walls was inset with spring-locked doors that may have served for entrances and exits, rather like *scaenae frons*. A recess in the

43. A lithograph of the entrance hall’s northeast doorway to the great staircase appears in Joseph Nash, *Mansions of England in the Olden Time* (London, 1906), plates 53 and 54. See also the photographs in Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London*, vol. 2, *West London* (London, 1925), plates 118, 119, and 124.

44. For visual glimpses of the Gilt Room, see Thomas Faulkner, *History and Antiquities of Kensington* (London, 1820), 95–97; Charles James Richardson, *Observations on the Architecture of England in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth I and King James I* (London, 1837), plate 4; and A. J. Finberg, *Vertue Notebooks*, vol. 4 (Oxford, 1935), 159, the twenty-fourth volume of the Walpole Society, 1935–36.

45. Bills and receipts from Holland House, 1632–39, E 192/15/20, TNA; bills and receipts from Holland House, 1630–49, E 192/16/4, TNA; bills and receipts from Holland House, 1635–39, E 192/16/11, TNA; and bills and receipts from Holland House, 1658–69, E 192/16/14, TNA.

46. Barbara D. Palmer, “Playing in the Provinces: Front or Back Door?,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 22 (2009): 81–127 at 102.

double-doored archway of the northern wall and three other alcoves to the south could accommodate additional stage business. Meanwhile, branched candelabra and two fireplaces presented opportunities for manipulating artificial light; their flames could create an atmospheric glow in the darkened hall, for instance, when reflected by the gilded wainscoting and precious metal thread of the spectators' finery.

Apart from the Gilt Room, the mansion contained another sumptuous space tailor-made for theatrical performance, although it has never been identified as such. Between 1638 and 1640, more than £6,600 was spent on a program of new construction at Holland House.<sup>47</sup> The largest of the projects was a magnificent new coach house with remodeled stables that was erected west of the mansion by the carpenter Richard Vesey, who had recently worked on the church and townhouses of Covent Garden.<sup>48</sup> An armory and washhouses were built nearby, and new brick walls were set about the gardens. At the same time, the west wing of Holland House itself was considerably enlarged. The bricklayer William Dodson, painter Matthew Goodrich, and glazier Thomas Bagley, all craftsmen of the Royal Works, oversaw this "new addition of building next to the great house," and allusions to "my Lady" in the accounts indicate the Countess of Holland's involvement in its interior design.<sup>49</sup> The addition was three stories high and topped by a tiled garret with oval windows. On its first floor, "great double doores" opened onto a "new dyneing room," approximately forty feet by twenty feet in dimension, its walls painted "walnuttree Color and veyned" and "faire blew." The space featured two marble fireplaces as well as six-foot casements of "well-wrought glass." On the floor above, a "great Chamber room" was fashioned (also termed "the new hall"), "boarded with long deales [wooden planks] cleane and straight" and distinguished by black-and-white marble "footpaces," or elevations in the flooring, and a chimneypiece carved from "my Ladies own stone."<sup>50</sup> Ninety-six feet of rails and balusters painted "a sad Timber Color" framed Purbeck stone stairs

47. "The generall accompts for all the Buildings of the right honorable the Earle of Holland at his Lordships Mannor of Kensington. Annis 1638, 1639 et 1640." 100/EA/13/74, fol. 33, West Yorkshire Library, Leeds [hereafter WYL]. These accounts were kept by Sir Arthur Ingram the elder, a client and kinsman of the Rich family. Sir Arthur's granddaughter, Elizabeth Ingram (daughter of "Arthur Ingram the younger" and his wife, Eleanor Slingsby), was betrothed to the Earl and Countess of Holland's son and heir, Robert Rich. Sir Arthur's disbursements may, then, reflect his anticipation that Elizabeth would one day become the second Countess of Holland and an occupant of Holland House; see the will of "Sir Arthur Ingram the elder," dated 1642, PROB 11/190, fols. 173r-74v, TNA.

48. 100/EA/13/74, fols. 3-15, WYL. Malcolm Airs reconstructs these edifices in Airs, "Inigo Jones, Isaac de Caus and the Stables at Holland House," *Georgian Group Journal* 13 (2003): 141-60.

49. 100/EA/13/74, fol. 2, WYL; *The History of the King's Works*, vol. 3, 1485-1660, Part 1, ed. H. M. Colvin, D. R. Ransome, and John Newenham Summerson (London, 1975), 410.

50. 100/EA/13/74, fols. 24-25, WYL. The mason's account says of the footpace's cost, "I agreed with my Lady," indicating Lady Holland's personal involvement in the chamber's design.

between the floors, and “4 Balconies” covered by stylish pergolas provided perspectives onto the new stables and other sights outdoors.<sup>51</sup>

Of all the new construction at Holland House at this time, the addition to the west wing remains the most mysterious: neither its architect nor its precise function have been determined with certainty.<sup>52</sup> The only surviving visual evidence of the structure is an outline depicted on the 1734 estate map. There, the edifice is shown to be narrower than the length of the wing that it abuts, and it projects westward toward the elongated stables and other new outbuildings (fig. 5). The addition is known to have been dismantled in 1704, but no further information has since come to light.<sup>53</sup> As one historian of the house writes, “Tradition tells us nothing of the existence of this excrescence. It seems to have been entirely forgotten.”<sup>54</sup>

Yet the traces at our disposal arguably point to the construction of a banquetting house and, thus, a second potential site for theater. Several clues suggest that by expanding the wing, the earl and countess expressly aimed to enhance the extravagance of their hospitality. When their Yorkshire kinsman Sir Henry Slingsby dined with the couple in the summer of 1640, he was struck by the artistry of the new-built environment: “besides y<sup>e</sup> entertainment w<sup>ch</sup> we had, I was much taken with y<sup>e</sup> curiosity of y<sup>e</sup> house,” especially its “Placing y<sup>e</sup> Dore[s] so one against another & making at each end a Balcony y<sup>t</sup> one may see clear thro’ y<sup>e</sup> house.”<sup>55</sup> The west wing appears to have been deliberately chosen for its proximity to the kitchens, enabling staff to furnish the new dining room with the spectacle of “conceited” banquets: stately and sculpted arrangements of beasts, fowl, and fish, with dessert courses of spiced wine, marzipan, and gingerbread, forms of domestic theater in their own right.<sup>56</sup> Critically, the “great Chamber roome” was well suited to an evening’s masque, interlude, consort of music, or social dancing. That the Hollands had the aesthetics of Whitehall in mind as they upgraded is further suggested by a corresponding outlay of £886 for luxurious textiles. In December 1639, the earl purchased a “Suite of Hangings” representing scenes from the Acts of the Apostles, woven with silk, wool, and gold and silver thread at the English tapestry manufactory in Mortlake. These tapestries were highly coveted

51. 100/EA/13/74, fol. 30, WYL.

52. Nicholas Cooper posits Inigo Jones and Nicholas Stone as the best candidates on the current evidence. See Cooper, “Holland House,” 67–69.

53. “Memorandum about pulling down the West End of Holland House, called the new Building, and ye Stair Case thereto belonging . . . May ye 8th 1704.” Egerton MS 1973, fols. 3–4, British Library.

54. Earl of Ilchester, *Home of the Hollands*, 359.

55. Parsons, *Diary of Sir Henry Slingsby*, 51–52. Slingsby’s mention of balconies probably situates this enfilade in the expanded west wing, where four were to be added.

56. On the artistry of aristocratic feasts, see Peter Brears, “‘Rare Conceites and Strange Delights’: Practical Aspects of Culinary Sculpture,” in “*Banqueting Stuffe*”: *The Fare and Social Background of the Tudor and Stuart Banquet*, ed. C. Anne Wilson (Edinburgh, 1991), 60–114; and Sara Mueller, “Early Modern Banquet Receipts and Women’s Theatre,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 24 (2011): 106–30.

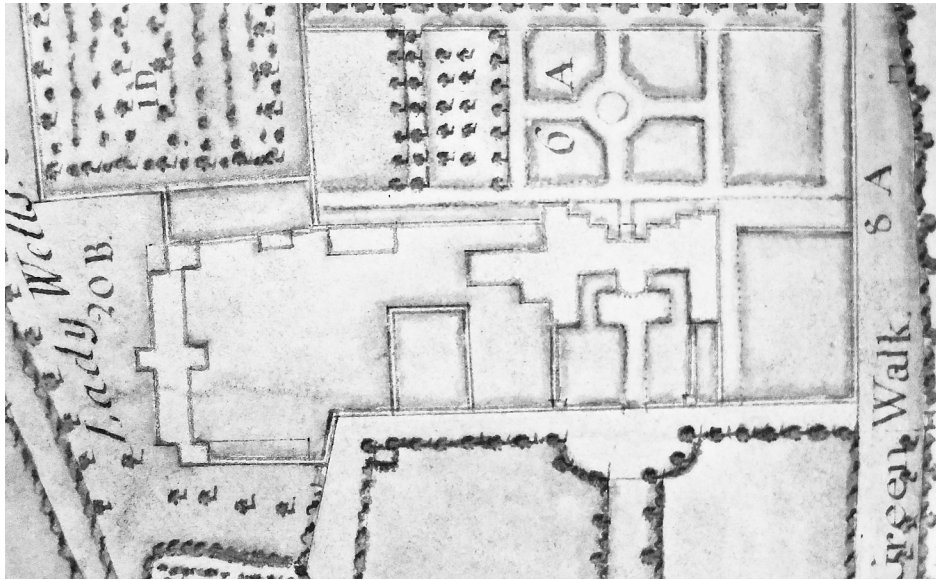


FIGURE 5. Detail from the 1734 “Mapp” (turned 90 degrees counterclockwise) showing the “new addition of building” on Holland House’s west wing. © Kensington Central Library, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

copies of a sequence owned by the king and designed by Franz Cleyn after cartoons by Raphael acquired in Genoa. If they were displayed in emulation of the royal collection in Westminster, and indeed with an eye to hosting the Stuart royal family, the grandeur of Holland House’s “new hall” becomes even clearer.<sup>57</sup>

From the Gilt Room in the center block to the lavish new west wing, then, the upper west quadrant of Holland House became the concentration point for elite entertainment. Appropriately, many of the rooms between served to complement this function. A “billard parler” next to the Gilt Room was equipped with card tables, dice, chess, and other games.<sup>58</sup> The Gilt Room also opened onto a “little gallery” and, beyond that, the “great gallery” in the west wing, where visitors could stretch their legs, discuss current events, conduct business, or gossip as they perused the cultural artifacts on display.<sup>59</sup> Through his ties to the Virginia and East India Companies, Sir Walter Cope had pieced together an extraordinary wonder cabinet, items from

57. Pipe Office Declared Accounts, E 351/3415, TNA. One tapestry from this set, with a border by Cleyn and bearing the Holland coat of arms, found its way into the French royal collection in the 1660s; see Charissa Bremer-David, *Woven Gold: Tapestries of Louis XIV* (Los Angeles, 2015), 55–57.

58. Bills and receipts from Holland House, 1632–39, E 192/15/20, TNA.

59. Faulkner, *History and Antiquities of Kensington*, 106–11. Rosalys Coope explains the utility of the gallery for exercise and aesthetic diversion in Coope, “The ‘Long Gallery’: Its Origins, Development, Use, and Decoration,” *Architectural History* 29 (1986): 43–84. A tally



which remained on display in Kensington after his death. When the traveler Thomas Platter explored Cope's "irregulars of nature" at the knight's house in London, he counted among its "strange objects" the remains of a rhinoceros; a mummified child; the "bauble and bells of Henry VIII's fool"; a "unicorn's horn"; Indian, Arabian, and Chinese clothes; a canoe; weapons of war; musical instruments; and coins, coral, and bones.<sup>60</sup> The upper rooms of Holland House were also lined with portraits carefully chosen to express the family's prestigious status and range of connections. William Larkin's painting of the young Lady Holland was among these (reproduced in fig. 1). So, too, was Anthony van Dyck's full-length portrait of Lord Holland, along with many other pictures of Caroline patrons and contemporaries, including Charles I and Henrietta Maria, Marie de Medici, the Duke of Buckingham, Prince Rupert of the Rhine, and the court entertainer "Jeffry the Dwarf."<sup>61</sup>

In fair weather, there were additional pleasures to pursue out of doors. The balconies on the expanded west wing now offered easy access to fresh air and the arcadian vistas of the surrounding estate; the spires and smoke of London and Westminster would be visible on a clear day above the wooded western horizon. There was much to excite the senses in the courtyards, gardens, and fields below as well. Rabbits might be spotted in the lush flower garden, and in a more curiously manicured garden, "a fountain with an iron hedgehog in a big round basis . . . spouted water from all its spines." Green paths extended outward in all directions, toward the fragrances of the orchards, the cool shade of the groves, and the labyrinthine geometry of the water park, with its classical sculpture and opportunities for angling. Under the carved oak timbers of the new stables, visitors might boast of their horsemanship or discourse on the merits of different breeds. On the bowling green, wagers could be lost and won.<sup>62</sup>

Our understanding of the experience of visiting Holland House may be supplemented further by observing the common excitement, occasional banality, and lurking risk that attended household theater at other residences during the Interregnum. In the winter of 1651–52, for instance, the Dutch diplomat Lodewijck Huygens was invited to join Sir Thomas Ingram and the children of the Countess of Cork

of repairs made in 1632 distinguishes Holland House's two galleries, positioning the lesser one "next" to the Gilt Room. Bills and receipts from Holland House, 1632–39, E 192/15/20, TNA.

60. See the thirtieth volume of the Walpole Society, 1951–52: A. J. Finberg, *Vertue Notebooks*, vol. 6 (London, 1955), 43–44; *Thomas Platter's Travels in England, 1599*, trans. Clare Williams (London, 1937), 171–73. See also Gottfried von Bulow and Wilfred Powell, "Diary of the Journal of Philip Julius, Duke of Stettin-Pomerania through England in the Year 1602," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6 (1892): 1–67 at 24–29.

61. Bills and receipts from Holland House, 1632–39, E 192/15/20, TNA; *Calendar of the Manuscripts of . . . Salisbury*, 24:204; "Notes on British Painting from Archives: I," *Burlington Magazine* 96 (1954): 323; Finberg, *Vertue Notebooks*, 4:69–70.

62. Bills and receipts from Holland House, 1632–39, E 192/15/20, TNA. For a detailed description of the grounds in the spring of 1652, see Lodewijck Huygens, *The English Journal, 1651–1652*, ed. and trans. Alfred Gustave Herbert Bachrach and R. G. Collmer (Leiden, Netherlands, 1982), 95–96.

at “a ballet” (or masque) hosted by the Countess of Newport. Arriving at her townhouse, Newport House, in St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Huygens encountered “a great number of ladies and lords already there, all people of quality but of the King’s party.” On this occasion, the masque had to be postponed because, as Huygens writes, there was “no means of obtaining the protection General Cromwell had promised us, and without this it would be inadvisable to begin anything for fear of the soldiers who, not long ago on a similar occasion had entered the house by force, with swords and rifles, and had carried away all they could get, even hats, rapiers, and ladies’ muffs.” Lacking special dispensation to stage dramatic entertainment, the company agreed to scale back its plans and hear instead “two ladies sing some Italian airs.” When Huygens departed that evening, coaches full of guests were still arriving to join the festivity at the townhouse, and he would later learn that his party had only narrowly avoided another raid by New Model soldiers who “had been very insolent” toward those present, presumably meaning they enriched themselves again by seizing goods or extorting money from persons of honor.<sup>63</sup>

The letters of Dorothy Osborne tell of similarly festive evenings at Knowlton Court, her kinsman’s Kentish estate. Osborne had hoped to retire quietly there in the summer of 1654, but instead she found “a house the most filled of any since y<sup>e</sup> Arke” and so devoted to “mirth” that within a week she confessed to feeling “weary as a dog.” Her fellow guests assigned her a role in their domestic production of Sir William Berkeley’s tragicomedy *The Lost Lady*, and of her “Constant Company,” she writes, “we goe abroade all day and Play all night, and say our Prayers when wee have time.” As at Newport House, the inhabitants of Knowlton Court were largely royalist in sympathy and included “a Coll: and his Lady, a son of his and two daughters, a mayde of honour to the Queen Bohemia, . . . besides all the trayne they brought with them.” With the gusto of Sir Toby Belch, they indulged themselves nightly: “some company that was heer last night kept us up till three a clock and then wee lay three in a bed, wch was all one to mee as if wee had not gon to bed at all.”<sup>64</sup>

Contemporary fictions corroborate these reports by Huygens and Osborne. Cosmo Manuche’s manuscript comedy *The Feast*, for instance, is set entirely in the manor house of one Lord Teasty in Mile End Green and gently pokes fun at the social posturing, erotic intrigue, and conspicuous consumption associated with entertainments such as those at Newport House and Knowlton Court.<sup>65</sup> In the play’s fifth act, the house’s inhabitants, having already heard a consort of musicians, call for a “pretty handsome interlude, a masque, to please your Mastors guests.” They express their

63. Huygens, *English Journal*, 58–59.

64. *The Letters of Dorothy Osborne to William Temple*, ed. G. C. Moore Smith (Oxford, 1928), 171–78. For a critique of excessive drinking, vulgarity, and property damage by “persons of quality” at country house revels, see John Evelyn, *A Character of England* (London, 1659), 35–47.

65. Cosmo Manuche, *The Feast: A Comody* (ca. 1664), Castle Ashby Manuscripts, vol. 2, Add. MS 60274, fol. 34v, British Library. Subsequent citations are given in the text by folio number.

desire especially for a drama of escapist romantic adventure, featuring characters of their own social standing:

Niece:                       let the subject be  
A Justice's of peace's sonne, Rampart,  
Disinherited for valliantly redeeming  
A Captive Lady from bondage.

Shelt[er]: And a houghty knight taken prisoner,  
Transform'd (by an Enchantress) into a Ram:  
ffor no better fortifieng his conscience  
Against beauties batterie.

(fol. 34v)

A guest objects that it will be wearisome to study their roles so late in the day, so the group settles on another plan: “What thinke you of a kind of interlude, / A farce, or peece of droll / Among’st vs all: extempory [?]” While the company thus prepares to improvise their dramatic presentation, a Niece of the household joyfully volunteers to dress them in ready-to-hand costumes: “my wardrobe will furnish vs / With what I sau’d out of oure last Christmas Maske” (fol. 35r). A stage direction suddenly interrupts their pageantry, however:

After a violent noise and bouncing  
at seuerall doors: Enters the Lord Teasty  
Sheriffe Trotter; constable & guard  
Disarming all within.

Teasty is upset and alleges that his servants have been conspiring against him, a charge notably resembling Parliament's and the army's contemporary concern that treason might masquerade in the form of private theatricals. The intervening Sheriff says: "Giue order that the house be set with guards / That not one soule escapes / Nor male or female." The guests are compelled to defend themselves and do so by insisting that all has been "for harmeless mirth's sake" (fols. 37v–38r). Although highly stylized, *Manuche's* play usefully confirms critical aspects of the accounts given by Huygens and Osborne. Householders, guests, and servants engaged collectively in both rehearsed and improvised forms of drama. They did so under the constant threat of forceful disruption by adversarial officials. And their stated aim—in some cases, their justification—was the pursuit of "mirth." Whenever London actors visited Kensington in the 1650s, then, we should reasonably expect Holland House to have been charged with similarly dynamic, participatory, and at times tense energy.<sup>66</sup>

66. Heal and Holmes give further evidence for the participatory nature of household drama in their *Gentry in England and Wales*, 295–96.

“an amusement so obnoxious to the Ruling Party as the Performance of Plays”

London's theatrical marketplace contracted considerably in the 1640s as the capital underwent militarization and Parliament issued its increasingly repressive measures against stage players. That actors willingly trekked to Holland House thereafter is no surprise; a broad piece of gold and warm meal at a steward's board were compensation worth pursuing.<sup>67</sup> We begin to venture into the realm of informed guesswork, however, when broaching the question of why Lady Holland chose to shelter these performers. No direct evidence explicitly articulates her motivation. Her personal history and the composition of her coterie in the late 1640s and early 1650s do at least support provisional explanations for how and why her household would be remembered as a destination for outlawed players. Critically, in the summer of 1648, the countess's husband, the Earl of Holland, joined the sons of his former patron, the Duke of Buckingham, and “diverse other persons of quality” in an armed rising meant to restore Charles I to power.<sup>68</sup> The gambit failed disastrously. A more experienced New Model regiment surprised the royalists on an early July morning and took the Earl of Holland prisoner; his confederate George Villiers, the second Duke of Buckingham, fled the country; and Villiers's brother Francis was killed.<sup>69</sup> Lady Holland and “divers other Countesses and Ladies” petitioned the specially appointed parliamentary court for clemency, but the unsympathetic members seated after Pride's Purge ignored their pleas and sentenced the Earl of Holland to death for high treason.<sup>70</sup> The earl refused to speak with his wife on the eve of his execution, and on March 9, 1649, clad in silk and fur, he was beheaded in New Palace Yard.<sup>71</sup> His remains were sewn together and returned to Kensington the next day for burial.<sup>72</sup>

In rapid succession, further shocks beset the countess. Her daughter Isabella Rich (wife of Sir James Thynne) was exiled in May 1649, suspected of having conspired

67. On the conditions of players' travel, see Barbara D. Palmer, “Star Turns or Small Companies?,” in *Bring Furth the Pageants: Essays in Early English Drama Presented to Alexandra F. Johnston*, ed. David N. Klausner and Karen Sawyer Marsalek (Toronto, 2006), 20–24.

68. Donagan, “Courtier's Progress,” 319, 347–53.

69. The Committee of Both Kingdoms ordered parliamentary generals to suppress the insurrection “five or six hundred strong” on July 5 and tracked its progress until July 15. See SP 21/25, fols. 186–91, 202–3, 211–13, 222–27, TNA.

70. Four of the countess's daughters were among the petitioners; see *A Perfect Diurnall of Some Passages in Parliament* (London, February 5–March 12, 1649), 2358–59; SP 18/1, fol. 3, TNA; SP 21/10, fols. 10, 52–53, TNA; *Journal of the House of Lords*, vol. 10, 1648–1649 (London, 1767–1830), 436, 439, 481, 596–97; and *Journal of the House of Commons* (London, 1802), 5:633, 676, 6:132, 158–60.

71. Theodore Jennings, *The manner of the Beheading of Duke Hambleton, the Earle of Holland, and the Lord Capell* (London, 1649), 4–5.

72. SP 21/10, fols. 10, 52–53, TNA. The earl's Presbyterian chaplain at Holland House, Thomas Hodges, accompanied his patron to the scaffold and later oversaw his body's interment. See Whitelocke, *Memorials*, 313, 549–51.

against the Rump.<sup>73</sup> Another daughter, the devout and poetry-loving Susanna Rich (wife of James Howard, third Earl of Suffolk), died the same month at the age of twenty-two. Perhaps in response to the trauma of these events, Diana Rich, the youngest of the countess's daughters, began to show symptoms of the chronic illness that would end her life within the decade.<sup>74</sup> Upending domestic life further, the army commandeered Holland House as its temporary headquarters that summer. General John Lambert's billeted officers, soldiers, and horses appear to have dispersed by year's end, but Parliament's Committee for Compounding would not officially recognize Lady Holland's proprietorship again until 1652.<sup>75</sup>

A closer examination of this context brings into focus some principal figures in the Countess of Holland's social network. Her foremost relationships were with her adult daughters, four of whom accompanied her to the bar in 1649 to plead for their father's life. The eldest of the sisters, Frances Rich, was no longer the child who had rehearsed with her mother for Lady Carlisle's masque of Amazons in 1618. In 1632, she had married William, fifth Baron Paget, an accomplished masque dancer and royalist, who in 1648 furnished the Earl of Holland's ill-fated insurrection with "two boat loads" of arms.<sup>76</sup> Between 1649 and 1651, this couple's young daughters were living and being educated at Holland House.<sup>77</sup> Frances's sister Isabella (wife of Sir James Thynne) was another regular presence at the mansion following her return from exile in 1653. Renowned in court circles for her lute playing and singing, she had separated from her husband and was now reputedly the head of a party of "shee-Cavilliers" affiliated with arch-royalists the Earl of Ormond and Sir John Denham.<sup>78</sup> Mary Rich, another of Lady Holland's daughters, was a resident until her marriage in 1657 to John Campbell, Earl of Breadalbane, a Scottish lord known for royalist

73. Thomas Carte, *A Collection of Original Letters and Papers, concerning the Affairs of England*, 2 vols. (London, 1739), 1:286.

74. A household account includes payments for "pills" that the family hoped would restore her to health. Bills and receipts from Holland House, 1658–69, E 192/16/14, TNA.

75. *A Perfect Diurnall of Passages in Parliament* (London, July 9–16, 1649), 8; *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding, &c.*, 1643–1660, 5 vols. (London, 1889–92), 4:2935–36. The estate had been confiscated in July 1648, but the countess's argument that sequestration had technically concluded with her husband's death in 1649 eventually resecured her ownership in December 1652.

76. *Calendar of the Proceedings*, 2:872–73.

77. Account Book of Lord Paget (March 1649–May 1651), D-X, 728, fol. 18, 24, 26, Buckinghamshire Archives, Aylesbury. While in London at this time, Paget purchased seven pictures from the studio of Peter Lely (fols. 37v, 42), "a Little guittarre" for his daughter (fol. 34), and, notably, "8 Playbookes" (fol. 42).

78. Henry Neville, *The Parliament of Ladies* (London, 1647), 3, 5; *The Nicholas Papers*, ed. George F. Warner, 4 vols. (London, 1892–1920), 1:306; Margaret Toynbee and Peter Young, *Strangers in Oxford: A Side Light on the First Civil War, 1642–1646* (London, 1973), 32. Lord Paget collected support payments from Isabella's estranged spouse and delivered them to Holland House on her behalf. Receipts for Lady Thynne's allowance, 1654–56, Thynne Papers [microfilm], vol. 62, fols. 84, 88, 106, 112, 114, Longleat House, Warminster.

intrigues. The countess's youngest daughter, the ailing Diana Rich, also lived primarily at Holland House until her death in 1658, characterized by her intimate friend Dorothy Osborne as a lively conversationalist and avid reader of French romances.<sup>79</sup> Elizabeth Ingram, wife of the countess's son and heir Robert Rich (now second Earl of Holland) and their young daughter, Anne, called the Holland estate home throughout the 1650s as well.<sup>80</sup>

Lady Holland herself, newly widowed, enjoyed relative financial independence. Her husband's will, written, he says, in "stormy tymes of bloud and confusion," left to her the family's property and income from Kensington and St. Bartholomew's Priory, London.<sup>81</sup> The same document widens our picture of the couple's social milieu; it details ties, for instance, to Presbyterian leaders Denzil Holles and Sir William Lewis, two of the Eleven Members forced by the army to withdraw from the Commons for insisting that Parliament negotiate peace with the king in 1647. Gifts are issued in the will to Sir Arthur Ingram the younger (Elizabeth Ingram's father), to Sir Charles Herbert (of the king's party, later executor of the countess's will), and to Mildred Belasyse (née Saunderson), first Countess Fauconberg and kinswoman of John Belasyse, with whom Sir Henry Slingsby founded the unremitting society of royalists known as the Sealed Knot in 1653.<sup>82</sup>

As this core sample demonstrates, Lady Holland's closest connections were aristocratic, in large part familial and female, Presbyterian-leaning but loyal to the Crown and, for that reason, purged of their political influence after 1649. Wright's claim that "Nobility and Gentry . . . met (but in no great Numbers)" in Kensington thus appears essentially correct. And this group's interest in theatrical performance may be partially explained, as we have seen, by the moral economy in which the countess was bred. A vested sense of ceremony endured throughout the 1640s and 1650s, and drama was a traditional component of hospitality, especially during holidays. A godly minority may have rankled at the mince pies, hot cockles, and domestic interludes traditionally associated with Christmas, but midwinter festivity was

79. Osborne and Rich regularly shared books, including historical romances featuring Cyrus and Cleopatra. See *Letters of Dorothy Osborne*, ed. Moore Smith, 17–18, 26, 30, 36, 41, 50, 57–59, 81.

80. Receipts from Holland House dated prior to 1655 occasionally refer to Elizabeth Ingram as "the countis of Hollande, the younger" (e.g., E 192/15/8, TNA) and her status as a potential patron of Interregnum players is worth considering. Ingram family accounts record her attendance at stage plays and private musical performances in London in the 1630s. See Temple Newsam Accounts and Day Books, 100/EA/13/19, WYL.

81. Osborn MSS 93, box 1, folder 4, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, Conn.

82. *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Esq.*, 7 vols. (London, 1742), 2:333. Slingsby's entertainment at Holland House in 1640 has already been mentioned. He was executed for conspiring against the Protectorate in 1658; see *The Severall Tryals of Sir Henry Slingsby Kt. John Hewet D. D. and John Mordaunt Esq.; for High Treason, in Westminster-Hall* (London, 1658).



not easily given over, nor were authorities capable of fully enforcing its prohibition.<sup>83</sup> Holland House, in all likelihood, maintained its semipublic character at Easter and Whitsuntide as well, with neighbors, tenants, and servants joining its privileged residents in worship and celebration. Civil war and political revolution damaged the social fabric, but ideals of conspicuous consumption and hospitality remained intact; indeed, it has been suggested that by subjecting these facets of aristocratic identity to stress, moral reformers may, in effect, have given them greater purchase.<sup>84</sup> At its most basic level, then, the countess's patronage of actors was habitual and rooted in formative experience.

But as members of a faction recently defeated in civil war, Lady Holland and her coterie may also have experienced drama more pointedly. The regicide and judicial execution of grandees such as the Earl of Holland cast a palpable gloom over what one contemporary bluntly called "Cromwell's New Slaughter-house."<sup>85</sup> Many royalist communities reacted by immersing themselves in pastimes that they had enjoyed before the conflict but that were now exceedingly offensive to their opponents, such as raising cups in taverns to the health of the young Prince Charles or singing libelous songs about the majors general and parliamentary committeemen. Drama at Holland House conceivably functioned in a similar way: reinforcing group cohesion, satisfying a yearning for pleasures of better days, and mitigating collective melancholy by releasing pent-up sadness and anger. Much depends on how we read the passage from the *Historia Histrionica* cited at the outset of this essay. In it, Wright describes the actor Alexander Goffe as "the Jackal" who gave "notice of Time and Place." I interpret this to mean that Lady Holland entrusted Goffe with the preparatory work necessary for her private revels—coordinating actors, securing playbooks, and directing noble guests discreetly to Kensington—as jackals were once said to lead lions to sustenance.<sup>86</sup> Goffe was born in 1614 in St. Saviour's on the Bankside, and he grew up in the neighborhood of the Globe, where his father, Robert, worked with Shakespeare as an actor-sharer in the King's Men. The younger Goffe joined that company in the later 1620s, and his career as a performer coincided with the King's Men's enjoyment of the Earl of Holland's personal favor in the 1630s. He remained

83. A "Bill of Beere" in the Holland House accounts shows the family purchasing a hogshead of "stronge for Christmas" and nineteen additional tubs between November 1647 and January 1648. See E 192/16/4, TNA. On the significance of the Twelve Days for the nobility and gentry, see Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990), 144–47.

84. Heal and Holmes, *Gentry in England and Wales*, 286–87; Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 2005), 230–76.

85. David Underdown characterizes the early 1650s as a low point in royalist morale in *Royalist Conspiracy in England, 1649–1660* (New Haven, Conn., 1960), 12–17 at 13, quoting from the title of Clement Walker, *The High Court of Justice, or Cromwells New Slaughter-house in England* (London, 1660).

86. OED, s.v. "jackal, *n.* 2," last modified March 2018, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/100499>. Compare this with Dale B. J. Randall's more ambivalent reading of the metaphor in Randall, *Winter Fruit: English Drama, 1642–1660* (Lexington, Ky., 1995), 47n8.

devoted to his profession thereafter, furnishing playbooks and paratextual manuscripts to royalist publishers such as Humphrey Moseley in the 1650s. In his epistle to readers of Thomas Middleton's *The Widdow* (1652), Goffe expresses his hope that the stage "be not thought too unpardonable to pass in oblivion." Soon after that, he dedicated John Ford's *The Queen* (1653) and Lodowick Carlell's *The Passionate Lovers* (1655) to a pair of aristocratic royalist women.<sup>87</sup> It is impossible to tell whether these specific plays were acted at Holland House, but taken together, they form a useful index of what Goffe understood to be the aesthetic preferences and sociopolitical concerns of his patrons.<sup>88</sup>

The plays in Goffe's possession were remnants from the repertory of the King's Men, and the preeminent status of that company among elite Caroline audiences at Blackfriars was almost certainly the basis upon which the actor "made himself known to Persons of Quality." Some have assumed that Goffe also arranged for colleagues from his old company to act at Holland House. A lithograph of the mansion drawn in 1820, for instance, features the inscription "It was at this House that Lowin & Taylor occasionally played privately during the early part of the rebellion."<sup>89</sup> The conjecture is not implausible. John Lowin and Joseph Taylor were the King's Men's leading sharers before the wars, and Lowin managed the Three Pigeons Inn in nearby Brentford, where he and Taylor are said to have revived their famous parts of Falstaff and Hamlet for patrons. It would certainly have reflected well on Goffe if the pair was solicited to stoke the same nostalgic warmth for audiences at Kensington. We may also attribute a certain shrewdness to Goffe's traffic in genres seemingly calculated to address his patrons' interests. The social comedy *The Widdow* and the tragicomic romances *The Queen* and *The Passionate Lovers* trade in fantasies of communal harmony and the reconstitution of broken families, resonant motifs in the aftermath of civil war. Two of the playbooks also noticeably foreground experiences of widowhood. We cannot pretend to comprehend the lifeworld of a seventeenth-century woman whose husband was killed in the English civil wars; the psychological and emotional experience is simply not as well documented as we would wish, and generalizations are bound to distort the complex reality. In some cases, such a loss may have been traumatic; in others, grief may perhaps have been complicated by the acquisition of new personal agency or the economic independence to which aristocratic widows could be

87. Thomas Middleton, *The Widdow a Comedy* (London, 1652), sig. A2r. Goffe's dedications are to Lady Catherine Mohun of Okehampton in John Ford, *The Queen, or the Excellency of Her Sex* (London, 1653), sig. A2r–v, and to Lady Mary Villiers, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox, in Lodowick Carlell, *The Passionate Lovers, a Tragi-Comedy* (London, 1655), sig. A3r–v. In *The Queen*, he likens his preservation of play manuscripts to the rescue of orphans "from the Thunder-shocks of the present blasting age" (sig. A2r).

88. Wright, *Historia Histrionica*, sig. Cr.

89. "Holland House published 1 Apr 1820," RCIN 702393, Royal Collection Trust, accessed April 1, 2021, [www.rct.uk/collection/702393/holland-house](http://www.rct.uk/collection/702393/holland-house). The inscription includes the reference "Davies V.1:P:327," indicating that this tradition arose inferentially from information in Thomas Davies's *Dramatic Miscellanies*, vol. 1 (London, 1785), 325–27.

entitled.<sup>90</sup> Valeria in *The Widdow* and Salassa in *The Queen* are portrayed strikingly against type, not as proud and lascivious widows but as intelligent and commanding noblewomen around whom prowl obtuse and mercenary suitors.<sup>91</sup> It is worth contemplating how the widowed Lady Holland may have received such representations in the 1650s. Positive identification is certainly plausible, as would be a more mixed response, mingling sympathy, quiet admiration, aspiration, or even a cathartic release from the pain and guilt typically experienced by survivors. In these circumstances, the common refrain of theater's defenders—that it merely aspires to harmless “mirth”—probably belies a more complex range of affective possibilities.

Drama's capacity to speak to post-civil war experience certainly heightened its potential for ideological provocation even as it extended its emotional reach. When Parliament executed the countess's husband and the army occupied her estate in 1649, Holland House became an overtly politicized space. All activity within assumed new ideological significance. Lady Holland was not among those Stuart loyalists able and willing to risk their lives in counterrevolutionary violence. But the values of the Commonwealth and Protectorate regimes could be repudiated in more subtle ways; many royalists idealized the condition of patient retirement, especially as a means of holding fast to conviction until the political and cultural tides inevitably turned again. In the free imaginative space of the household, religious ceremonies and artistic recreations offensive to the new government could be conducted with proud awareness of what they represented. As Anne Hughes writes, “Women's creativity and feminine symbolism alike were central to this privatized vision, which, paradoxically, was a public stance.”<sup>92</sup> Household activity tended to intimidate revolutionary officials because it was difficult to perceive, much less police. In 1655, amid a resurgence of armed royalism, the Venetian ambassador Giovanni Sagredo described the Protectorate as proceeding “with such reserve, caution, and suspicion, that all meetings are forbidden, even the gatherings of a few persons for amusement. They have absolutely forbidden plays, suspecting that these gatherings of the people might occasion some disadvantage to the present state of affairs.”<sup>93</sup> Suspicion was predicated, at least in part, on the tendency to locate topical analogies in art and the players' aptitude for caricature and allusiveness. For instance, when Mary Stuart's domestic servants acted scenes from Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *A King and No King* during a royalist congregation at Whitsuntide in 1654, they evoked the

90. For pathbreaking research on this topic, see Hannah Worthen, “Supplicants and Guardians: The Petitions of Royalist Widows during the Civil Wars and Interregnum, 1642–1660,” *Women's History Review* 26 (2017): 528–40.

91. Jennifer Panek examines the misogynistic history of the character type in “‘My naked weapon’: Male Anxiety and the Violent Courtship of the Jacobean Stage Widow,” *Comparative Drama* 34 (2000): 321–44.

92. Anne Hughes, *Gender and the English Revolution* (London, 2012), 68.

93. *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts . . . Northern Italy*, vol. 30, 1655–1656, ed. Allen B. Hinds (London, 1930), 138.

recent regicide so brazenly that one upset spectator claimed it was “as if Cromwell himself had made choice of [the subject] and appointed it.”<sup>94</sup> And in 1656, after falling out with Cromwell, the republican Algernon Percy reportedly “entertayne[d] the town” at Penshurst with a play so obviously analogous to the Lord Protector’s rise to power that some deemed it a “publick affront.”<sup>95</sup> On the current evidence, it cannot be told whether performances at Holland House were ever so explicitly propagandistic. That remains a strong possibility, given Goffe’s ties to the King’s Men, the oaths sworn by those actors as liveried servants and soldiers who had fought for Charles I, and indeed their willingness to politicize plays from their repertory in other venues.<sup>96</sup> In any event, as the countess must surely have recognized, the mere act of gathering socially had become political, and hosting players was de facto a gesture of ideological objection to the dictates of the new authority.<sup>97</sup>

A tantalizing hint that the countess may indeed have been driven by personal resentment emerges from her ties to Bartholomew Fair in the 1650s. By the end of the seventeenth century, it became customary for a crowd of tradespeople styling themselves “Lady Holland’s Mob” to open Bartholomew Fair with a procession through the Cloth Fair district to Smithfield. An effigy of “Lady Holland” was held aloft as the procession marched, rang bells, pounded on doors, and snapped their shears. The Rich family, landowners in the precinct since the late sixteenth century, collected rents each summer from the occupants of the houses and shops converted to booths during the fair. The origins of Lady Holland’s “mob” are murky, but it has been proposed that the countess first galvanized this crowd before her death in 1655 when she opposed Lord Mayor John Dethick’s attempt to purge the carnival of puppet plays, drolls, and other perceived vanities. In solidarity, a group of craftspeople and entertainers is purported to have ignored the standard municipal proclamation of the fair and, in a burlesque manner, to have declared the fair open in the countess’s name instead.<sup>98</sup>

As with so many facets of Lady Holland’s life, there is insufficient evidence to confirm this hypothesis, though it remains an attractive possibility. By the terms of

94. *Nicholas Papers*, ed. Warner, 2:65–66. On the appeal of Fletcher’s plays for royalists, see Hyder E. Rollins, “A Contribution to the History of the English Commonwealth Drama,” *Studies in Philology* 18 (1921): 267–333 at 283–84.

95. *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de l’Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place*, vol. 6, *Sidney Papers, 1626–1698* (London, 1966), 499. The play was reputedly *Julius Caesar*, with Sidney playing the part of Brutus.

96. Lowin and Taylor, for instance, were among the former King’s Men actors who staged Fletcher’s *Rollo, Duke of Normandy: Or the Bloody Brother* at the Drury Lane Cockpit in 1648, a play that explicitly dramatizes civil war and models a noble response to perceived tyranny. See Wright, *Historia Histrionica*, 8–9.

97. David Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England, 1603–1660* (Oxford, 1996), 63–68, 258–61; Heal and Holmes, *Gentry in England and Wales*, 224–26.

98. Henry Morley, *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair* (London, 1859), 234–38.

her jointure, the countess inherited extensive real estate in St. Bartholomew's in 1649. The city's aldermen and members of the Rich family had disputed their respective privileges in the Cloth Fair precinct before, and deeds make it clear that the countess stood to profit considerably from the fair's tolls and other revenues, giving her a reasonable motive to oppose any attempted suppression of its popular attractions.<sup>99</sup> If she did resist Dethick's repressive move against booth performers, it was among the final acts of her life. On September 1, 1655, Lady Holland was buried in St. Mary Abbots churchyard in Kensington, leaving us to wonder whether the "mob" that marched in her name may have done so in commemoration of her.<sup>100</sup> Involvement in controversies at Bartholomew Fair, it should be noted, may have acquainted Lady Holland with one of its most beloved comedians: Robert Cox, who delighted spectators throughout the first half of the 1650s as "John Swabber the Seaman," "Simpleton the Smith," and similar personae in a series of brief, slapstick farces known as "drolls." A "Robert Coxe" is notably recorded among the countess's tenants in Rugman Row for the duration of Bartholomew Fair in 1652 and again in 1655.<sup>101</sup> This potential connection invites speculation that Cox may have also brought his routines to Kensington. High-ranking playgoers were among his biggest fans; when he was arrested in the summer of 1653, for instance, for staging a "modest and harmless jigge" at the Red Bull, a newsbook described the audience as "Gentry who had formerly been [the players'] benefactors."<sup>102</sup> As with Goffe, it was evidently Cox's capacity to promulgate "mirth," that deceptively simple affective response, that ensured his professional viability among elite spectators during the Interregnum.



Taken together, the evidence organized by this essay leaves little doubt that the Countess of Holland hosted players in privacy and material splendor. But her reasons for doing so may only be grasped provisionally, according to degrees of possibility. Sir James Mackintosh struggled with the same modality when he drafted one of the earliest accounts of Holland House's past around 1827: "Lord Holland's ~~Body~~ Corpse was sent to Kensington & the House was soon after restored to the Countess of Holland. The unrighteous Law of Forfeiture was not enforced and her ~~possession~~ <sup>occupation</sup> of the House was so undisturbed that She <sup>made additions to it & cum</sup> ventured

99. Leases of properties in Cloth Fair stipulating the use of ground floor chambers as booths, 1645–55, E 214/29–31, 71, 73, 79, 83–85, 111, 115, 117, et al., TNA; *The Records of St. Bartholomew's Priory and of the Church and Parish of St. Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield*, ed. E. A. Webb, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1921), 1:261–73, 298–317; 2:209–17, 232–47, 277–78, 293–94.

100. *Records of St. Bartholomew's Priory*, ed. Webb, 2:322.

101. Rents for booths and shops "in Bartholomew faire time," 1644–69, C 171/18, TNA. In September 1655, "Robert Cockes" assigned the same leasehold to a "Widdowe Mosse." On December 12, 1655, "Robert Coxe a Player" was buried in nearby St. James, Clerkenwell. Register of baptisms, marriages, and burials, P76/JS1/005, London Metropolitan Archives.

102. *Mercurius Democritus*, June 22–29, 1653, 487.

on an amusement so obnoxious to the Ruling Party as the Performance of Plays in Her Mansion <sup>^</sup> the House.”<sup>103</sup> The deletions and second thoughts exemplify Mackintosh’s ambivalence. He strikes out the word “possession” in favor of “occupation” and replaces the phrase “Her Mansion” with “the House,” as though he could envision Lady Holland only nominally in charge. Yet in the same breath, he gives the opposite impression: the Latin preposition “*cum*” (“with” or “together with”) and the verb “ventured” portray Lady Holland as deliberative in her use of the space, aware that her actions would be both “undisturbed” and “obnoxious to the Ruling Party.” The difficulty of weighing the potentialities inherent in the evidence is compounded by an awareness of how much was intentionally done away with or concealed. Early modern household performances were singular events, ephemeral by design.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, patrons and players in the 1650s tended to operate in secrecy or behind a facade of conformism. As a result, whatever complex tangle of cultural, aesthetic, and political investments may actually have motivated the Countess of Holland is now impossible to unravel.

We may at least assert forcefully the significance of the countess’s patronage. Her final days were absorbed ostensibly by quotidian tasks: managing her family’s rents,<sup>105</sup> promoting ministers and tradespeople,<sup>106</sup> and continuing to revitalize her estate.<sup>107</sup> She left no letters eulogizing the decayed condition of the Blackfriars stage, no lines of commiseration for playgoing peers plundered of their finery by soldiers. Yet behind closed doors, she played an important part in English theater history. Scholars have long appreciated the pragmatism of Sir William Davenant’s Protectorate-approved operatic entertainments at Rutland House in 1656. By contrast, private entertainments given by aristocratic women were subject to fewer aesthetic and ideological compromises and, in their obscurity, arguably proved a more formidable barrier to the period’s antitheatrical program of reform.<sup>108</sup> They also helped to shape the drama to come. Lady Rachel Fane’s family at Apethorpe Hall and Ladies Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth Brackley at Welbeck Abbey and Bolsover Castle

103. Sir James Mackintosh, “Holland House,” Add. MS 51656, fol. 9, British Library.

104. Suzanne Westfall describes this historiographical dilemma in “‘He who pays the piper calls the tune’: Household Entertainments,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, ed. Richard Dutton (Oxford, 2009), 279.

105. Surviving deeds show her leasing the manor house of Earl’s Court (E 214/239, TNA) and properties known by the signs of the Red Cow, the Prince’s Arms, the Glover’s Arms, the Plough, and the Bear’s Head in St. Bartholomew’s (E 214/32, E 214/117, E 214/237–38, E 214/761–62, E 214/766, and E 214/912, TNA).

106. Bills and receipts from Holland House, 1632–49, E 192/15 and 164, TNA; *Records of St. Bartholomew’s Priory*, ed. Webb, 2:322.

107. A stone exhumed near the stables in 1806 was found to be inscribed “This side done by ye La. Holland, A. D. 1654.” See Faulkner, *History and Antiquities of Kensington*, 67–68.

108. Christopher Durston, “Puritan Rule and the Failure of Cultural Revolution, 1645–1660,” in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700*, ed. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (New York, 1996), 210–33.



are among those now acknowledged for having attuned and transformed theatrical practices in the private space of the noble household.<sup>109</sup> Lady Isabel Rich, while a less conspicuous and more ambiguous figure, belongs in the same company. Her patronage of players was integral to the robust and persistent practice of dramatic performance in the 1650s. And although she did not live to appreciate it, the preoccupations of her pageantry at Holland House—its near-certain concern with female power and status, the haunting experience of war, the meanings of “mirth,” and elite refinements of art and fashion—would continue to resound when theater reentered the cultural mainstream at the Restoration.

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109. Alison Findlay, *Playing Spaces in Early Women's Drama* (Cambridge, 2006), 44–65, 94–103.

# The Paper Feast in Late Stuart London: Feast Tickets, Advertisements, Songs, Sermons, and Entertainments

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Newton Key

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**ABSTRACT** Late Stuart London hosted a variety of semipublic feasts; the most common were for those born in a particular county or town, but others fêted alumni or those sharing a patronymic. Although the antecedents of these feasts extend to the early seventeenth century, the number of such feasts expanded from the 1650s onward. And the printed ephemera associated with these feasts—newspaper advertisements, sermons, printed tickets or forms, poems, songs, and even a playbook—were new. This essay explores the performative roles of this feast ephemera, from publicizing feasts, to commemorating the event, to providing charity circulars, to creating a wider community than that formed solely by commensality. **KEYWORDS:** voluntary societies; civic feasts; seventeenth-century sermons; feast menus; corporate identity

❧ IN 1699, A NOTICE IN THE *FLYING POST* requested Londoners with the surname Smith to “meet at Smith’s Coffee-House in Stocks-Market every Thursday Night at 6 a Clock” in order to revive an annual feast with “their Namesakes.”<sup>1</sup> In 1684, a sermon was printed that had been preached before the feast for Eton alumni in November 1683.<sup>2</sup> And, in 1676 or 1682, a ticket was printed for a meeting and feast (costing 2s. 6d.) of “the Society of Mancks-men, at the Sign of the White-Hart against the Sessions-house in the Old Bailly,” adding a welcome at the bottom in the Manx language.<sup>3</sup> These

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1. *Flying Post*, no. 697 (October 26–28, 1699).

2. Joseph Layton, *A Sermon Preached at the Anniversary Meeting of the Eaton-Scholars at St. Mary Le Bow, on Nov. 22d 1683* (London, 1684).

3. Monday, June 26, by Julian calendar, either 1676 or 1682. Add. MS 4424, fol. 79, British Library [hereafter BL].

are examples of the most common types of semipublic feasts held in the London metropolis in the late Stuart period: respectively, the patronymic, the alumni, and the natives (for those born in a particular town or county, although the latter case is from a particular island). These also produced the most common printed remains of such feasts—the newspaper advertisement, the single sermon, and the printed ticket or form, the latter often including handwriting and seals as well. To this print ephemera of “the publick Feasts in the City” might be added feast poems, songs, and even one feast “enterlude,” essentially a playbook.<sup>4</sup> Historians have used the surviving printed evidence to uncover feasting culture in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century London.<sup>5</sup> But the printed feast ephemera performed distinct roles and were often meant for audiences beyond those who attended a feast.

Tiffany Stern and others have analyzed the materiality of the evidence by which we know seventeenth-century theatrical performances. Building on Rachel Willie’s field-defining work, *Staging the Revolution*, the present collection uses the label “paper stage” to describe the performative public-making of the printing of dramatic texts. The term helps us envision the lists, paratexts, and woodcut memes associated with drama as a public space, especially after 1647, when all formal theaters were closed.<sup>6</sup> An analogous neologism, the “paper feast,” allows us to consider the performative roles of feast ephemera collectively, from publicizing feasts, to commemorating the event, to providing charity circulars, to creating a wider community than that formed solely by commensality (eating together). Contemporaries would have understood the connection between feast ephemera and the paper stage. In 1691, actress Anne Bracegirdle delivered the epilogue to *King Edward the Third, with the Fall of Mortimer*, beginning:

It is the Custom of all City-Feasts,  
By Printed Tickets to Invite the Guests;  
The Price is known, and who the Stewards are,  
And nothing’s Private but the Bill of Fare,  
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For Plays are Feasts, and every Scene should be,  
A different Course, still fresh variety.<sup>7</sup>

4. Henri Misson, *M. Misson’s Memoirs and Observations in his Travels over England*, trans. Mr. Ozell (London, 1719), 77. Published in French in 1698.

5. See Sarah Lloyd, “Pleasing Spectacles and Elegant Dinners: Conviviality, Benevolence, and Charity Anniversaries in Eighteenth Century London,” *Journal of British Studies* 41, no. 1 (2002): 23–57; and the work of Holger Hoock and Wilfrid Prest cited below.

6. See Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2009); Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London 1660–1800: Playwrights, Publishers, and the Market* (London, 2015); and Rachel Willie, *Staging the Revolution: Drama, Reinvention and History, 1647–72* (Manchester, U.K., 2015), chap. 1.

7. [John Bancroft and William Mountfort?], *King Edward the Third, with the Fall of Mortimer Earl of March* (London, 1691), [sig. A4].

Feasts are not plays. But the performative aspects of feasts and their various courses and tickets as applied to the theater would have resonated with London audiences in the second half of the seventeenth century, who were well versed in the printed ephemera surrounding the metropolitan feast.

This essay focuses on feasts for voluntary societies—for people who were natives of a county or parish, or shared a patronymic, or were school alumni—held in late Stuart London. Such city feasts can be situated on a spectrum of commensality, from the unremarked-upon private dinner, to the glittering banquet at court or in aristocratic townhouses, to the formal feasts of institutions like the annual lord mayor's feast or those of livery companies, to communal dining at fairs or festivals. Voluntary societies often advertised their feasts and sold or distributed tickets. Their feasts were not outdoor fêtes, open to all, nor were they restricted, private affairs. The organizers could not know in advance who might join their feast; anyone who purchased a ticket could attend. Stewards or their beadles monitored entry. The categories of private dinners and public feasts overlap, and ticketed feasts might best be categorized as semipublic.

Likewise, irregular, voluntary society feasts are not completely distinguishable from long-established, institutional annual feasts that were celebrated more or less continuously. For example, although the annual gatherings for the Sons of the Clergy, established to provide for the widows and orphans of impoverished clergymen, were originally ad hoc and voluntary, meeting twice in the 1650s, they became institutionalized and permanent, with a sermon and banquet every year from 1678 onward.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, the voluntary societies adapted the form and order of shrieval feasts, livery company and Inns of Court annual dinners, or lord mayor's banquets. Institutional feasts were complex and costly, although there is debate about whether they became more time-consuming and expensive in late Stuart London.<sup>9</sup> The ritual of civic feasts—including officers with white staves, extravagant dishes, and revels—in turn arose out of rituals associated with lay religious fraternities, whereby “celebrations surrounding the dinner elaborated in various ways upon the liturgy of the mass.” The feasts were usually held at London's livery halls, whose “theatrical magnificence” had been constructed for drama as much as commensality.<sup>10</sup> A livery company's annual feast often involved two days of ceremony. On the first, aldermen and

8. Ernest Harold Pearce, *The Sons of the Clergy, 1655–1904* (London, 1904), 271–73, <https://archive.org/details/sonsofclergy165500pearrich>.

9. Wilfred R. Prest, “Readers' Dinners and Inns of Court Culture,” in *The Intellectual and Cultural World of the Early Modern Inns of Court*, ed. Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight (Manchester, U.K., 2011), esp. 112.

10. Gervase Rosser, *The Art of Solidarity in the Middle Ages: Guilds in England 1250–1550* (Oxford, 2015), 122–37 at 133–34. See also Dave Postles, “Civic Commensality in Late Medieval England: Mayors and Their Meals,” in *Civic Culture, c. 1200–1640: Four Essays* (privately published, 2015); for feasts at Inns of Court, see Add. MS 32508, fols. 70v–72, BL.

livery met at a livery hall in their gowns, marched to a nearby church, and returned to the hall to drink a health and nominate wardens to serve in the following year. The second day they returned to the hall for a feast dinner and formal selection of the wardens.<sup>11</sup> The sheriffs also held elaborate feasts for each livery company. At one shrieval feast, each livery member attending presented the sheriffs with between two and five guineas in a paper, after which the sheriffs invited the livery members and their wives to a second feast, where the sheriffs presented each with a silver gilt spoon proportional to the money given.<sup>12</sup> Voluntary societies borrowed institutional feast rituals but collapsed them into part of one day. This essay reviews the chronology and nature of the city feasts before turning to the novel role of printed feast ephemera.

### Placing the City Feast in Time and Space

We can make a rough count of feasts held from those advertised. Feast advertisements first appeared in the printed newsbooks of the 1650s and the newspapers of the 1660s. In addition, we have records, mainly from printed sermons, of several feasts for which no printed advertisement remains. About two dozen natives feasts were held between 1654 and 1663. Then, plague and the Great Fire of London interrupted the metropolitan feasts, which only resumed in the mid-1670s. In November 1678, two feasts were held—one for Oxfordshire natives and another for Eton scholars (that is, alumni)—and both were advertised in the *London Gazette*. Over the next two decades, we have record of some 120 natives feasts, 14 scholars feasts, and a handful of patronymic meetings held in London and Westminster. Of these, between 1678 and 1698, there were advertised in the *Gazette* 94 annual feasts for natives of twenty counties and a dozen for alumni.<sup>13</sup> If each of the twenty counties for which at least one natives feast was held during this period continued to hold a feast every year, there should be record of at least 400 feasts during those two decades. There is not. We have record of only about one-quarter as many county natives feasts as would be expected if they held one every year. Although this disparity between expected number and recorded number might be due in part to missing sources, it is more likely

11. Joseph P. Ward, "Religious Diversity and Guild Unity in Early Modern London," in *Religion and the English People, 1500–1640: New Voices, New Perspectives*, ed. Eric Josef Carlson (Kirkville, Mo., 1998), 91–92.

12. August 12, 1682, L.c.1260, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Folger].

13. These data are based on an analysis of virtually all surviving newspapers from *Mercurius Politicus*, to the *London Gazette*, to the *Post Boy* and *Post Man*, and most newspapers with a shorter run, and have been restricted to those feasts for which we know the month and day they were actually held. A handful of feasts that were not advertised can be identified by a printed sermon or ticket, or a newsletter or other manuscript source. See Newton E. Key, "The Political Culture and Political Rhetoric of County Feasts and Feast Sermons, 1654–1714," *Journal of British Studies* 33, no. 3 (1994): 223–56; Paul Morgan, "County Feasts," *Notes and Queries* 45, no. 1 (1998): 54–64; and Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1500–1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford, 2000), chap. 8.

that annual feasts were often postponed or abandoned, as the volunteer organizers, or stewards, came and went. The Dorset society, for example, was “revived” in 1690, only to be revived again in 1706.<sup>14</sup>

Even the first voluntary society feast in the metropolis that we can date, the Warwickshire natives in November 1654, claimed to be reviving an earlier tradition from before the civil wars: “These meetings of Country men are no new thing, though of late years they have been interrupted by reason of the sad calamities, and distracted times.”<sup>15</sup> A letter from 1621 referred, somewhat dismissively, to the novelty of these earlier feasts: “an idle custom being lately brought up, that all Cheshire men about this towne, Staffordshire men, Northampton, Sussex, Suffolk (*et sic de caeteris*) should have a meeting once a year at some hall and laying their money together have a feast, that must not be done without a sermon . . . where there have been three or four of this kind within these ten days.”<sup>16</sup> Note that the structure (sermon and hall dining) and the calendar (feasts clustering in mid-November) had already been established. Yet, the novelty of printed advertisements and tickets from the late 1650s widened the appeal and changed the nature of the feasts.

Planning for a yearly feast could take months and even involve monthly or weekly clubs. In 1680, Leicestershire gentlemen planned to meet every Wednesday night at a tavern to plan their feast, and about 1678 the Huntingdonshire feast organizers reportedly met “the first Wednesday-night in every Month; when in a glasse of Sack or Claret they remember [the gentry] here in the Country.”<sup>17</sup> Such clubs tended to assert their long-standing ancient constitution, even if they were newly forged or revived, as the organizers for one patronymic feast advertised in 1681: “Whereas the Yearly Meeting of the Name of Adams hath of late . . . been neglected, These are to give Notice . . . that at William Adams’s House, commonly called the Northern Ale-House . . . there will be a Weekly Meeting every Munday Night . . . in order to choose Stewards to Revive our Antient and Annual Feast.”<sup>18</sup> Like-minded (in this case, like-named) men gathered one evening each week at an alehouse. Their first order of business was to select feast stewards, who would advertise the feast, arrange for tickets to

14. William Wake, *A Sermon Preach’d at the Reviving of the General Meetings of the Gentlemen and Others of . . . Dorset: In . . . St. Mary-le-Bow* (London, 1690); *Daily Courant*, no. 1439 (November 23, 1706, “revived”).

15. Samuel Clarke, *Christian Good-Fellowship: or, Love, and Good Works, Held forth in a Sermon . . . at their Feast, November the 30. 1654* (London, 1655), 1.

16. John Chamberlain, London, to Sir Dudley Carleton, November 17, 1621, in *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, vol. 2, ed. Norman Egbert McClure (Philadelphia, 1939), 408.

17. *London Gazette*, no. 1525 (June 28–July 1, 1680); W. M., *Huntington Divertisement, or, an Enterlude for the Generall Entertainment at the County-Feast, Held at Merchant-Taylors Hall, June 29, 1678* (London, 1678), 19. See also *Daily Courant*, no. 1116 (November 10, 1705): “the Hampshire Club, at the Founder’s Arms . . ., Lothbury.”

18. *Domestick Intelligence: Or News both from City and Country Impartially Related*, no. 54 (November 24–28, 1681).



be printed and distributed, and book the hall, church, preacher, and entertainment. Stewards fronted funds for all these components of the feast as well as the food itself.<sup>19</sup>

On the day, feasters put on a display of their corporate identity and significance as they first gathered at a church to hear a sermon and then marched en masse to the feast itself. Noted preachers of occasional sermons were much in demand for feasts. In 1680, Yorkshire men not only heard the famous Dr. John Sharpe preach but also heard the equally famous Dr. John Tillotson read prayers before their feast.<sup>20</sup> After the sermon, feasters would process from a London church or chapel to a nearby livery hall, carrying symbols and regalia identifying the feasters, whether “the Sword of Sir Bevis of Southampton . . . to be carry’d in the Procession from the Church to the Hall” for a Southampton natives feast or Kent Society’s “Green Boughs carried before you” by men “in Buff Coats with Bows and Arrows.” Heading all processions were feast stewards, “the Prime Masters of that dayes ceremony,” with wands or other symbols of office (“See how the Stewards grandeurs do dispençe, / Bearing white Rods, the signs of Innocence”). Thomas Fuller, who died in 1661, commented on the spectacle these processions presented: “a pleasant sight in the City of London, to behold the Natives of the several Shires, after the hearing of a Sermon, passe in a decent equipage to some Hall . . . marching under the Banners of their several Eminencies.”<sup>21</sup>

Once tickets were collected at the door, the feast began. Dramatic display of food was accompanied or followed by song or other performance. As one feast preacher noted, “all solemn Feasts . . . usually begin with a Sermon, and end with a Contribution.”<sup>22</sup> After the feast, the stewards’ role continued; they might patronize the publication of the feast sermon or apply contributions collected to a particular charity. One preacher informed his fellow feasters that whatever they “contribute at this time . . . your Stewards . . . will be accountable to you for the same at the next Feast.”<sup>23</sup> While stewards garnered status and respect, they spent substantial time, effort, and money on their duties. A notification sometimes added to feast

19. Hiring a livery hall would require over £5, a feast perhaps £20. Often there were six stewards. One feast steward’s outlay was recorded at £5. See the entry for September 9, 1680, Merchant Taylor Minute Books, 1679–88, MS 34010/010, 75, Guildhall Library, London [hereafter Guildhall].

20. *Currant Intelligence, or An Impartial Account of Transactions both Forraign and Domestick*, no. 3 (February 17–21, 1679/80).

21. Newton E. Key, “The Localism of the County Feast in Late Stuart Political Culture,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (1995): 211–37, esp. 224; *A Congratulatory Poem upon the Noble Feast Made by the Ancient and Renowned Families of Smiths* (London, ca. 1680), broadside; and Thomas Fuller, *The History of the Worthies of England* (London, 1662), 53.

22. Nathaniel Hardy, *The Olive-Branch Presented to the Native Citizens of London . . . being the day of their Yearly Feast* (London, 1658), unpaginated dedication.

23. Clarke, *Christian Good-Fellowship*, 20.

advertisements that “stewards are provided for the next Year” ensured that no one need fear being chosen as a future steward simply for attending a feast.<sup>24</sup>

Feasting meant eating. We have a better idea of what was served at permanent, institutional feasts than at the semipublic ones for irregular, voluntary societies. A surviving dinner bill for the Brewers Company includes legs of veal, loins of beef, sides of lamb, capons, bacon, sprouts, oranges, and lemons.<sup>25</sup> A similar one for a 1700 barber-surgeons company dinner lists legs of mutton, beef loins, pigeon pies, veal, salad, and spinach.<sup>26</sup> But such company dinners were smaller and more elaborate affairs than those with ticketed admission. Anecdotal evidence suggests that those ticketed feasts were famous more for the quantity than the quality of the food.<sup>27</sup> The most common fare was the pie or pasty, which would retain warmth while waiting to be served. We do have one example of the menu of, or at least order for, a feast at Merchant Taylors’ Hall that included fifty venison pasties “among 9 Courses, with Wine in abundance,” with which numerous healths were drunk after dinner.<sup>28</sup> But this, the loyal apprentices feast, was a partisan—not charity—feast with over a thousand attendees and the king as patron.

Feasters usually made multiple toasts, drinking healths to the church, to the royal family, to patrons, and to prosperity.<sup>29</sup> Charity feast preachers worried aloud about the effects of the alcohol imbibed at these events, often choosing for exegesis Jude 1:12, “Let there be not spots in your feasts of charity,” to warn against over-indulgence. When Sir Timothy Treat-all, the main character in Aphra Behn’s *The City-Heiress* (1682), frets that he has purchased too much alcohol for the few grandees attending his treat, his factotum replies that the wine will not go to waste as long as “there are Knights, Citizens, their Wives and Daughters” in attendance.<sup>30</sup> Behn, here, was imagining a private dinner including both men and women, whereas ticketed feasts for voluntary societies were homosocial and often advertised for gentlemen only. Even so, at ticketed feasts, women appear to have been invited in afterward if there was an entertainment or special performance planned.

Feasts, then, were often as much about spectacle as food and drink. We have already noted the processions. In 1699 and 1701, the Kentish strongman William Joy led the Kentish feast procession, carrying “a tree weighing 400 weight [about

24. *London Gazette*, no. 4642 (January 19–21, 1709/10).

25. Company of Brewers, dinner bills, 1669–1746, MS 06818, Guildhall.

26. Printed in Maureen Waller, *1700: Scenes from London Life* (New York, 2000), 184.

27. In Edward Ravenscroft, *The London Cockolds. A Comedy; as it is Acted at the Duke’s Theatre* (London, 1682), 5–6, a character describes another “as insipid and ill relisht as a Guild hall-dish on a Lord Mayor’s day.”

28. August 10, 1682, L.c.1259, Folger; *Domestick Intelligence: Or News both from City and Country Impartially Related*, no. 127 (August 7–10, 1682).

29. “Rules and Orders made by the Honorable Society of the Antient Britons” recorded that the Welsh gentlemen gathered for the first annual dinner at Haberdashers Hall on March 1, 1715, raised their glasses, and drank six distinct healths. Sloane MS 2572, Misc. Tracts, fol. 1r–v, BL.

30. Aphra Behn, *The City-Heiress: Or, Sir Timothy Treat-all* (London, 1682), 24.

450 pounds] . . . with three or four children upon the boughs.” Joy’s display of prowess symbolized the myth of Swanscombe Wood, where Saxon men from Kent, disguised by shrubbery, had surrounded the invading William of Normandy and forced the invader to guarantee their freedoms.<sup>31</sup> Speeches, toasts, and huzzahs also graced feasts, while commemorative songs, poems, and entertainments either accompanied or followed the meal. At a 1680 feast for those named Smith, “several sorts of Musick first advance”; at the 1682 loyal apprentices feast, a scaled ship was hung in the rafters, “with two lads therein who, upon learning of healths, fired the guns which pleased the boys.”<sup>32</sup>

In some formal or institutional feasts, the feasters played their various parts, which included entering and sitting according to rank. For example, seating for the 1674 lord mayor’s feast was arranged so that “His Majesty, with the duke of York and Prince Rupert, Dines at a Table raised upon the Hustings at the East,” while other distinguished guests and peers would be grouped at other raised tables on the north and south sides of the Guildhall, the lord mayor and his aldermen on the west, and the citizens at floor level in the center.<sup>33</sup> But feasts for voluntary societies also emphasized comradery; as one historian notes, they “encouraged social openness . . . predicated . . . on the equality of the company.” Hierarchy may have been displayed more in the procession from church to hall, and less at the seating at such feasts.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the poet for the Smiths’ feast of 1680 notes the social order re-created in the procession:

See how in goodly order next do come  
Whole ranks of *Knights*, the *Champions* of the Town,  
. . . . .  
A glittering train of Esquires next arise,  
. . . . .  
But these being past, the next my sight invades  
Are worthy persons of Domestick Trades,  
. . . . .  
Men who in their narrow Shops can stand  
. . . . .  
In modest Garments bringing up the Rear.

31. *English Post* (November 21, 1701), in Frederick William Hackwood, *Good Cheer: The Romance of Food and Feasting* (New York, 1911), 222; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. “Joy [Joyce], William (1675?–1734),” by Thomas Seccombe, revised by K. D. Reynolds, last modified September 23, 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15149>.

32. *Congratulatory Poem*; L.c.1259, Folger.

33. Thomas Jordan, *The Goldsmiths’ Jubile: Or, Londons Triumphs . . . performed Octob. 29, 1674* (London, 1674), 10.

34. Holger Hoock, “From Beefsteak to Turtle: Artists’ Dinner Culture in Eighteenth-Century London,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 66, no. 1/2 (2003): 27–54, esp. 27.

But then the poet turns to the feast and notes that everyone attending receives equally a goblet and trencher, ensured by ticket admission and charitable subscription.<sup>35</sup>

### ~ The Paper Feast from Advertisements to Divertissements

We can learn much, then, of what occurred at the feasts from the printed ephemera surrounding them. Yet these printed materials held quite different purposes from the feast itself. Indeed, the material remnants of the city feasts can be read as print performance. As noted, book historians have expanded our notion of the use of ephemera as textual sources for the study of seventeenth-century London theater. Theatrical printed documents existed outside of, or performed different roles than, the play acted in a specific time and place.<sup>36</sup> Peter Clark has mined the material culture of feasting and associating, while Sarah Lloyd's work on eighteenth-century tickets and Angela McShane's on printed songs have opened aspects of what I am calling the paper feast.<sup>37</sup> We turn now to recovering the printed remains of the feasts: advertisements, tickets, stewards lists, sermons, songs, and even a feast playbook.

There were a few advertisements for London feasts in the 1650s, and they became a regular addition to the *London Gazette* from 1678 onward. The advertisements named the feast society, sometimes announced their mission (usually charity and friendship), noted whether there were stewards and sometimes whether the ones for next year had been chosen, and announced the date and hall where they were meeting as well as from which coffeehouses and other establishments one could buy tickets in advance. An early advertisement seems to have attempted to widen the base of an already established society: "If any Lord, Knight, or Gentleman, that is a Kentishman, and shall be desirous to honor his Countrymen with his company at their Annual meeting . . . July 22. 1658. and have not already received a Ticket, they are desired to call [at two named establishments]." <sup>38</sup> The continuity of any feast society's "Antient and Charitable Design" was often asserted against evidence of their novelty.<sup>39</sup> There were advertisements for new feasts ("Gentlemen that were heretofore Scholars at the Biggin School in Hitchin . . . have appointed the first meeting," 1684),

35. *Congratulatory Poem*.

36. Tiffany Stern, "'On each Wall and Corner Poast': Playbills, Title-Pages, and Advertising in Early Modern London," *English Literary Renaissance* 36, no. 1 (2006): 57–89.

37. Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*; Sarah Lloyd, "Ticketing the British Eighteenth Century: 'A thing . . . Never Heard of Before,'" *Journal of Social History* 46, no. 4 (2013): 843–71; Lloyd, *Charity and Poverty in England, c. 1680–1820: Wild and Visionary Schemes* (Manchester, U.K., 2009), 231–40; Angela McShane, "Drink, Song and Politics in Early Modern England," *Popular Music* 35, no. 2 (2016): 166–90; and McShane, "Material Culture and 'Political Drinking' in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present*, no. 222 (2014): 247–76.

38. *Mercurius Politicus*, no. 422 (June 24–July 1, 1658).

39. *London Gazette*, no. 1868 (October 11–15, 1683), from the Warwickshire natives, for whom we have record of one definite and one possible feast in the 1650s, another in 1675, and then feasts held annually from 1679 to 1697—perhaps the most regular voluntary society annual feast held in London outside those of the Artillery Company and the Sons of the Clergy.

for revivals ("Feast . . . by the Name of Smiths . . . has been for some Years laid aside," 1699), and, as mentioned, for organizational meetings ("there being an intention to keep a Leicestershire Feast very speedily," 1680).<sup>40</sup> Also, in addition to notices advertising when a feast would be held and where one might pick up tickets, newspapers began inserting publishers' notices of printed feast sermons.<sup>41</sup>

The printed tickets for semipublic metropolitan feasts for voluntary societies are perhaps the most notable and novel feature of the late Stuart paper feast. The earliest paper tickets for admission to theatrical performances reportedly date from after 1700.<sup>42</sup> The earliest mention of tickets for a musical performance are in the advertisements for the "Society of Gentlemen Lovers of Musick," in 1693 and 1694, and these performances were held at the society's anniversary feast. Feast tickets were already part of the clergy's figurative lexicon, used for explanatory analogies that presumably a contemporary audience would understand, in the 1640s ("as it is with some of your . . . feasts in this Cittie, you have tickets") and the 1650s ("as when there is a County Feast in London . . . , he must bring a Ticket from the Stewards").<sup>43</sup> But the earliest *surviving* ticket for a city feast dates from 1660. For the 1660 feast for gentlemen born in Westminster, the ticket is printed on one side of a sheet 16.6 cm wide by 24.5 cm high and includes a woodcut of the Westminster coat of arms with portcullis and rose emblems. The ticket invites Westminster natives to gather at a church at nine in the morning to hear a sermon "and from thence to accompany your Stewards to Westminster Hall; bringing this Ticket for your admittance." The price, 2s. 6d., is noted, and the six feast stewards are named. The Westminster feast ticket also requests that feasters write "your Name on the backside of it, with the place of your abode, for the ease of your next Stewards."<sup>44</sup>

Fewer than thirty tickets to metropolitan feasts between 1660 and 1714 survive.<sup>45</sup> Most share characteristics with the 1660 Westminster feast ticket. There is

40. *London Gazette*, nos. 1936 (June 5–9, 1684) and 1525 (June 28–July 1, 1680); *Flying Post*, no. 697 (October 26–28, 1699).

41. For example, "Advertisements. A Sermon Preached at St. Mary Le-Bow, November 27. 1682, Being the Day of the Wilt-shire-Feast. By Edward Pelling," *Observer*, no. 256 (December 11, 1682); "Advert. A Discourse of the Sovereign Power: In a Sermon preach'd at St. Mary Le-Bow, Nov. 28. 1682. Before the Artillery Company of London," *Observer*, no. 258 (December 14, 1682).

42. Lloyd, "Ticketing the British," 845.

43. *London Gazette*, nos. 2924 (November 16–20, 1693) and 3025 (November 5–8, 1694); William Fenner, *A Divine Message to the Elect Soule*, 2nd ed. (London, 1647), 212–13; Thomas Ball, *Poimēnopurgos. Pastorum Propugnaculum. Or, the Pulpits Patronage against the Force of Un-ordained Usurpation, and Invasion* (London, 1656), 265.

44. 1660. Westminster. Sir, Friendly society being a meanes to preserve unity and beget amity; You are therefore desired to meet with other Gentlemen your Countrymen born in the City of Westminster . . . on Thursday the 11th. day of October, 1660. Worcester College Library, Oxford. I am grateful for the assistance of Mark Bainbridge with this source.

45. The following analysis is based on surviving feast tickets located at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (1662, 1673, 1692, 1698, 1700 [photo]), 1704 [two], 1711, 1714); British Library

often an engraved symbol of the county or other group identity. The price of the ticket, where noted, was usually 2s. 6d. until about 1700, when many were raised to 5 shillings. At least one other ticket besides that for the Westminster natives also requests that ticket holders “subscribe your Name and Residence on the ticket.”<sup>46</sup> Such endorsed collected tickets would provide a ready invitation list for future feast stewards, though alas no such cache remains.

Of these surviving tickets, at least five include one or more seals next to the names of the stewards, the most dramatic being an Oxfordshire natives feast ticket of 1662 in which six different raised seals in black, red, or yellow sealing wax surround the stewards’ names (fig. 1).<sup>47</sup> The seals promised that *this* feast was worthy of special attention and guaranteed authenticity. Likewise, at least five of the surviving tickets are printed forms, with spaces left for filling in the current place, time, and stewards.<sup>48</sup> Two of these also number the tickets by hand: “no. 275” for the St. Botolph with Aldgate feast from 1711 and “898” for the Kent feast ticket from 1698. This format allowed for repeated use. Numbering by hand perhaps also ensured authenticity.

Irregularly cut, the tickets vary in size, from 15.5 cm wide by 14 cm high, to 24 cm wide by 37.5 cm high, and even to 22.7–23 cm wide by 39.5–40 cm high. All are much larger than a modern ticket. The printer left room for text, seals, and, often, a woodcut or copperplate engraving. The ticket for the Oxfordshire natives in London feast features two woodcuts, one each of the university and Oxford City seals.<sup>49</sup> A 1676 ticket for the Finsbury Archers includes a woodcut of an archer.<sup>50</sup> A ticket for the natives feast of St. Botolph without Aldgate has an engraving of “A South East Prospect of the Charity School etc . . . for the Educating and Clothing 50 Boys and 40 Girls. Engraven and Sold by John Sturt in Golden Lion Court in Aldersgate Street, Native of the Parish of St. Botolphs Aldgate,” which itself sold separately elsewhere for a shilling.<sup>51</sup> And, perhaps unsurprisingly, the tickets to the Society of Painters feast are miniature works of art; all are graced by seated cherubs painting and the name of

(1676?, 1712); Guildhall (1676, 1678, 1680, 1682, 1683, 1687, 1688, 1690, 1702, 1703, 1705); The National Archives, Kew (1675); and Worcester College, Oxford (1660).

46. *Sir, You are desired to meet the Stewards, with the rest of the Sons of the Clergy, on Thursday the Third of December, 1702. at Ten of the Clock, at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul’s, London*, Bside 20.38, Guildhall.

47. *Oxford-Shire. 1662. Sir, For the Continuance of our mutual Society and Acquaintance, We the Stewards chosen for this present Year, Request your Company . . . to Grocers-Hall to Dinner*, Wood 276b (119), Bodleian Library, Oxford [hereafter, Bodleian].

48. Peter Stallybrass’s contribution to the “London in Text and History, 1400–1700” conference, at Jesus College, Oxford, September 2007, drew my attention to printed forms.

49. Wood 276b (119), Bodleian.

50. Thomas Allen, *History and Antiquities of London*, vol. 5, part 3, 460 (facing), Guildhall.

51. See Rawl. Prints A 2, 45; and the separate print of the school, Rawl. Prints A 2, 44, Bodleian.





FIGURE 1. Oxford-Shire. 1662. Sir, For the Continuance of our mutual Society and Acquaintance, We the Stewards chosen for this present Year, Request your Company . . . to Grocers-Hall to Dinner. Wood 276b (119), Bodleian Library, Oxford. CC-BY-NC 4.0.

the master of the Court of Assistants in the center, and some feature a griffon and a coat of arms, others an engraving of a painter at his easel.<sup>52</sup>

Some of these tickets might better be termed *invitations*, in that there was no cost noted. The Eton alumni feast ticket from 1704 simply requests that the bearer “bring this ticket with” them, adding at the bottom a reminder of the scholar’s elite status: “No Servants will be Admitted, care being taken for Attendants.”<sup>53</sup> In the lower left corner of the Kent natives feast ticket of 1698 is struck out “~~Pray pay the Bearer five Shillings upon receipt of this Ticket. and Subscribe yor. Name and place of Residence.~~”<sup>54</sup> This suggests that some tickets, even when others were for general sale, were reserved for the stewards and were given out to favored guests or in hope of a later donation to the chosen cause.<sup>55</sup> That stewards were responsible for distributing tickets helps to explain a 1696 advertisement of “Lost in Leister-field, 12 tickets belonging to Gentlemen Stewards of the Wiltshire Feast, clapt up in paper,” which offers a reward, as “otherwise they will be useless to those that have them, having taken cognoisance of their numbers.”<sup>56</sup> Presumably these tickets had been entrusted to a steward to distribute.

From ticket to sermon. One preacher evidently fastened on the printed ticket before him for his feast sermon’s charitable theme: “I . . . shall take my rise from the Tickets sent abroad for our Invitation to this place and solemnity, in which it was declared that this Society was revived for the promoting of Charity.”<sup>57</sup> Such printed feast sermons followed the usual form of occasional or state sermons, but they also performed a distinct function in the afterlife of the feast.<sup>58</sup> Most feast sermons in their application or use specifically addressed the intentions or ideology of

52. Invitations to the Court of Assistants, Society of Painters, October 29, 1678?, October 21, 1680, November 24, 1687, October 3, 1688?, and November 13, 1690, PR L37, Guildhall. See Richard Johns, “James Thornhill and Decorative History Painting in England after 1688,” PhD diss. (University of York, 2004), [https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/9866/2/423739\\_voli.pdf](https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/9866/2/423739_voli.pdf), 43–44.

53. W.T. Tr. *Sir, You are desired to Meet the Gentlemen, Educated at Eton-College, on Wednesday the Sixth of December, 1704 . . . [for] Dinner*, MS Rawl. B 268, fol. 62, Bodleian. For yet another definition of *ticket*, see Stern, “On Each Wall,” 81, where an example from 1648 defines the term as a handbill.

54. *Sir You are desired to meet ye Stewards, & other gentlemen Natives of the ye County of Kent at Bow Church . . . to Merchant Taylors Hall there to Dine*, 4° W 49(13) Th., Bodleian.

55. In 1717, the Society of Antient Britons (ostensibly Welsh-born) had 500 feast tickets printed, of which 100 were reserved for the stewards, and another 50 for the secretary of the society, to distribute to grandees. Sloane MS 2572, Misc. Tracts, fols. 1–5, BL; Sloane MS 3834, esp. fols. 8–11, BL; Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 268.

56. *Post Boy*, no. 238 (November 12–14, 1696).

57. John Williams, *A Sermon Preached at the Northampton-Shire Feast, November 8. 1683* (London, 1684), 20.

58. For occasional sermons, see Tony Claydon, “The Sermon Culture of the Glorious Revolution: Williamite Preaching and Jacobite Anti-preaching, 1685–1702,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*, ed. Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington, and Emma Rhatigan (Oxford, 2011), esp. 481–87.

the feasters themselves, as did the paratext of dedications, prefaces, and stewards' lists. "The worthy Stewards of the Feast" often were responsible for a sermon being "both *pen'd*, and *preached*, and . . . committed to the Presse too" (fig. 2).<sup>59</sup> Dedications often listed stewards by name, or the title page would include the phrase "Published at the request of the Stewards."<sup>60</sup> One sermon, for the Westmorland meeting of 1663, was not printed until 1669, evidently because the preacher had second (and third) thoughts about allowing it to be printed. According to the author, the stewards, "whose eagerness in the business was such, that some of them borrowed my copy, with a pretence to read it over . . . but they had it to the press. I hearing of it fetch'd it thence." Again they "borrowed" it and again he retrieved it, only to finally take it "to the Press my self," with their encouragement.<sup>61</sup>

That a printed sermon would be distinct from one penned and preached is obvious enough, and feigning reluctance to print was standard fare for occasional sermons. But in the case of a feast, the printed sermon served an especially distinct role from that preached on the day. Stewards were keen to use the memory of a recent feast to publicize and even to raise further funds for charity. In 1675, Francis Gregory noted that he had accepted the first request of the Oxfordshire natives to preach a feast sermon and then accepted their second request to publish it. But he accepted the latter task to provide not a memento but a charity prospectus:

I have another design, and that a Charitable one too, in the Publication of this Discourse. . . . If you please to convey one of these Discourses into the hands of such Gentlemen, who had an Invitation to our Feast, and would have come but could not: the very Title Page at first view will mind them of their Country and Duty too. And probably they will not think their Charity so far excused by their absence from our Feast, as to contribute nothing to the Poor Man's Bason, nor pay some few mites at least for the laying of their Trenchers.<sup>62</sup>

As Gregory admitted, the "presenting of small Books to Persons of Quality, hath ever been esteemed a kind of begging." Country gentlemen received both tickets and printed sermons, less because they were the main attendees of the metropolitan feasts

59. Thomas Pierce, *Philallēlia. Or, the Grand Characteristick . . . Delivered in a Sermon at St. Paul's, before the Gentlemen of Wilts. Nov. 10. 1658. It being the day of their Yearly Feast* (London, 1658), sig. A2r-v.

60. For an example of one "Published at the earnest desire of the Stewards," see William Payne, *Learning and Knowledge Recommended to the Scholars of Brentwood School in Essex; in a Sermon Preached at Their First Feast, June 29. 1682* (London, 1682).

61. John Crosbie, *Philadelphia or Brotherly Love, a Sermon Preached at St. Michaels Crooked-Lane London, at Westmerland Meeting November 30. 1663* (London, 1669), [sigs. A3-4].

62. Francis Gregory, *Agaipe, or the Feast of Love, a Sermon at the Oxfordshire Feast, Kept on Thursday Nov. 25. 1675. at Drapers-Hall in London* (London, 1675), unpaginated dedication.



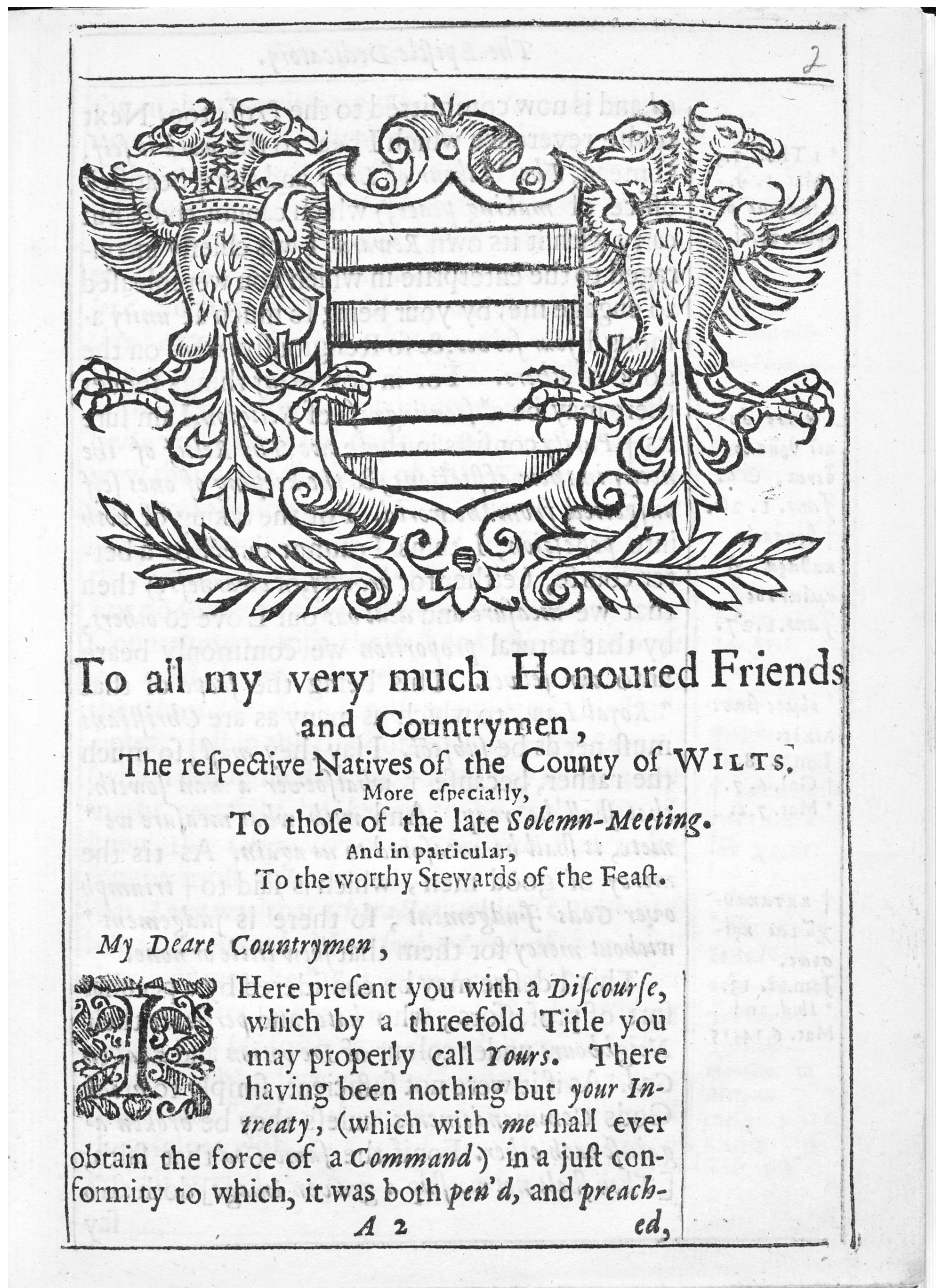


FIGURE 2. Thomas Pierce, *Philallēlia. Or, the Grand Characteristick* . . . Delivered in a Sermon at St. Paul's, before the Gentlemen of Wilts. Nov. 10. 1658. It being the day of their Yearly Feast (London, 1658), sig. A2r. Huntington Library, 302128.

than because they were the main benefactors. Sermons preached before the Kentish Society were printed for the society's official bookseller, whose shop on London Bridge sat at the entrance to the city from Kent, and a Kentish feast sermon advertisement named booksellers in twelve towns in the county.<sup>63</sup> In other words, there was a provincial market for these sermons, composed of gentry who were unlikely to attend the feast themselves.

Just as the printed sermon differed from its preached version, reading a printed feast sermon was different from listening to one. The printed paratext of title and dedication not only temporalized the feast day but also suggested that the feast society had a permanence or at least more than an ad hoc existence. Preachers often acknowledged the patronage of stewards, frequently listing them by name. By mentioning the stewards' work before and after the feast day, these prefaces helped to maintain the edifice of institutional continuity. Marginalia, such as notes on county history from William Camden's *Britannia*, were not read aloud on the feast day and functioned solely as part of the paper feast.

Feast preaching and feast festivities occurred in different buildings; feast sermons, likewise, were printed separately from the songs. But at least one feast poem became part of the paratext added to a printed sermon. "To the Society of the Gregories, upon the Name and Meeting at St. Michael's Cornhil the 19th of June 1673" by Jeremy Gregory was added to *The Gregorian Account, or the Spiritual Watch. A Sermon Preached to the Society of the Gregories Dwelling in and about the City of London* by his namesake, Francis Gregory.<sup>64</sup> Such poems were recited at feasts, and songs were sung. And some feast songs and poems were printed as separates and in collections and distributed well after the feast itself. Again, some parts of performances were not recorded on paper, and the print record sometimes included bits never performed, as we detail below.<sup>65</sup>

Printed songs often insisted on their veracity, reflecting perhaps a general distrust of the print market. The broadside *Song to his Excellency the Ld. General Monck, at Skinners-Hall on Wednesday Aprill 4, 1660* assures "the Reader . . . that this is the right Speech, sung by W. Yeokney." Likewise, *Loyalty Triumphant: On the Confirmation of Mr. North and Mr. Rich, Sheriffs of London and Middlesex* tells its readers that this is the song "as it was Sung at the Sheriffs-Feast at Guild-hall, Saturday

63. *Flying Post*, no. 869 (November 30–December 3, 1700), in Henry R. Plomer, *The Kentish Feast* (Canterbury, U.K., 1916), 16.

64. Francis Gregory, *The Gregorian Account, or the Spiritual Watch. A Sermon Preached to the Society of the Gregories Dwelling in and about the City of London . . . June 19. 1673* (London, 1673), [sig. A4r–v]: "Th'Saints influence and this good Companie's / Have made St. Michael's a St. Gregorie's."

65. McShane, "Drink, Song and Politics," 167, 178, notes that white-letter ballads, such as the feast songs, were not usually printed for profit and instead were often freely circulated.

September 30, 1682.”<sup>66</sup> Such assurances of verisimilitude, of course, could only have been printed *after* the feast, and many songs appeared only or mainly in collections, again post facto.<sup>67</sup> But at least one song, that for the natives of St. Martin’s parish in 1685, was licensed five days before the actual feast, suggesting that it circulated in advance or at the feast itself.<sup>68</sup> After the revolution of 1688–89, Thomas Durfey’s words were set to music by Henry Purcell as the “Yorkshire Feast Song,” performed on March 27, 1690, at Merchant Taylors’ Hall.<sup>69</sup> This feast song, however, may not have been printed before the eighteenth century.<sup>70</sup> Other songs remained in manuscript.<sup>71</sup>

Some feast songs that were memorialized in broadside prints differed markedly from the versions performed at the feasts. For example, when Kent natives heard an ode at Merchant Taylors’ Hall in November 1700, the printed song included verses describing the feasters that “yearly hither throng,” but “this part down to the Grand Chorus was not set, lest the Entertainment should be too long.”<sup>72</sup> This printed song was largely a paper performance, at least part of it never heard at Merchant Taylors’ Hall. We have evidence, then, of stewards paying for the printing of both feast songs and feast sermons. Feast songs or poems may have been distributed at the hall. The printed broadsides also may have been given to possible patrons.

Feast stewards crafted a performance from church to livery hall, from processing with wands, caps, or totemic symbols, to formal toasts or healths, to songs or poems. The feasters might act out their unity and amity, such as in 1683, when some five hundred feasters subscribed a loyal address while in Westminster Hall.<sup>73</sup> Special performances associated with a feast include the Finsbury Archers feast and archery contest and the entertainment promised on the Society of Painters’ tickets.

66. *A Song to his Excellency the Ld. General Monck, at Skinners-Hall on Wednesday Aprill 4, 1660* (London, 1660); *Loyalty Triumphant: On the Confirmation of Mr. North and Mr. Rich, Sheriffs of London and Middlesex* (London, 1682).

67. “A Scotch Sung, sung at the Artillery Feast” of April 1682, in Thomas D’Urfey, *A New Collection of Songs and Poems* (London, 1683), 74; “A new Song Sung before the Loyal Livery-Men in Westminster-hall July the 19th. 168[3],” in *A Choice Collection of 120 Loyal Songs* (London, 1684), 145–47; *Song at the Loyal Feast in Westminster-Hall, August the 6th. 1685* (1685), broadside, also reprinted in *A Choice Collection of 180 Loyal Songs* (London, 1685), 343–44.

68. *A Song at the Loyal Feast, held by the Nobility and Gentry of the Parish of St. Martins, kept on the 14th. of October, 1685. Being His Majesties Birth Day* (London, lic. October 10, 1685); *Song at St. Martin’s Feast on the Birth-day of His Majesty King James II. October 14. 1686* (London, 1686).

69. Key, “Localism of the County Feast,” 211, 215–16.

70. The English Short-Title Catalog suggests 1770.

71. For example, “An Ode; Sung at the Kentish Feast, [26 Nov.] 1696,” Osborn Shelves fb 108, 11, Beinecke Library, Yale University; *London Gazette*, no. 3232 (October 29–November 2, 1696).

72. See the broadside *An Ode Performed at the Anniversary Feast of the Gentlemen, Natives of the County of Kent, at Merchant-Taylors-Hall, Nov. 21, 1700* (London, 1700), as “Set to Musick, by Mr [John] Barret[t].”

73. Diary of Philip Madox, July 19, 1683, Egerton MS 1627, fol. 59, BL.



We also have evidence of one instance where a dramatic performance at a feast was printed. On June 20, 1678, Huntingdonshire natives residing in or visiting London feasted at Merchant Taylors' Hall, where they witnessed a divertisement or "Enterlude For the Generall Entertainment at the County-Feast." The anonymously printed *Huntington Divertisement* is the only printed feast theatrical production we have for the period, and it is one of the very few pieces of printed drama not performed at the licensed theaters or at court. It was dedicated to the nobility and gentry who "Grace[d] this Annual Festivity with their Presence." The author, writing on behalf of those who had planned the feast, was mindful of the need for aristocratic patronage, resolving "for some Novel Divertisement, as our gratefull Testimony for such your Noble and Candid Favours."<sup>74</sup> That is, the entertainment was planned to appeal to country squires who might attend or bankroll the feast.

The author also recognized how the entertainment as performed differed from formal theater, and how both differed from the paper stage—that is, from the quarto *Huntington Divertisement* that the reader might have in hand. The author described the printed *Divertisement* as only "an Embryo of a short Concept." It was not "designed to be duly modelled into the Dimensions of Acts and Scenes, as ought to become a Theater, but only for a small Fascicle of Rustick-Drollery, intermixt with some Serious Reflections of the happinesse of your Rurall Life." Even this modest agenda, however, was more than the feast day itself could bear. The production was intended to have been performed as written, "but finding too many Difficulties to occur, beyond our Expectation, and our time but short, we could only procure the Representation of part of it."<sup>75</sup> The difficulties were enhanced by the scale envisioned: eighteen male and three female speaking parts, as well as twelve nymphs, and three or four boys for a dumbshow or antimasque. In print, the Rustick-Drollery included dialogue, songs, women who represented various cloth-making employments making addresses and throwing nosegays to the attending stewards, and a finale where Huntingdonshire personified addressed each component of the audience in turn, including the ladies in the gallery above.<sup>76</sup>

Like the printed feast sermons and the printed feast songs, the printed divertisement embraced a wider scope and intention than the live performance. Prefaced by an apologia, the printed performance enshrined a grander version than feast day realities allowed. Although we have no evidence that the *Huntington Divertisement* was used as a charity prospectus, as printed feast sermons sometimes were, its existence laid claim to tradition for the Huntingdonshire natives in London, and it underscored the relation between the country gentry and their younger sons or brothers in the metropolis who had established and frequented the annual county feast there.

74. W. M., *Huntington Divertisement*, [sigs. A3–4].

75. W. M., *Huntington Divertisement*, [sig. A1], and see esp. 41–51.

76. For a fuller analysis, see Key, "Localism of the County Feast," 211–15.

On the day of a city feast for a voluntary society, print entered the hall in a variety of ways, such as tickets at the door, lists distributed by stewards, songs and dialogue provided (at least for the entertainers), and totemic signs carried by the stewards. But print also extended the life of the feast beyond that single day. Advertisements and tickets were printed in advance, and the size and decoration of the tickets suggest that they were designed to be displayed prominently. Additionally, songs, sermons, and at least one entertainment were printed and distributed well after the event.

Print reveals feast activity that regularly re-presented the feasters' identities and allowed for subtle and even overt self-representation or shifting of public personas. Feast ephemera, however, are not simply a window to the entertainments on the day. Often, the print's the thing. That is, feast notices, tickets, sermons, and broadsides were all intended to solicit patronage and to influence many more people than those who could have fit in the church and hall.

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# Ballads, Tudor Vagabonds, and Roundhead Reputations: The Restoration Afterlife of Cook Laurel

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Rachel Willie

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**ABSTRACT** This essay examines how ballad song was appropriated to present the demise of the Rump Parliament and commemorate the restoration of the monarchy. Songs not only provide a tune through which words can be performed but also weave together disparate texts through memory of past utterances and performances. The tune “Cook Laurel” establishes a mnemonic connection between parliamentary figures and ubiquitous rascals in Elizabethan folklore and in Ben Jonson’s *Gypsies Metamorphosed*, performed in 1621. This use of song emphasizes and consolidates representations of parliamentarians as rogues, thus offering royalists a way to lament the regicide and to celebrate the Restoration. **KEYWORDS:** Restoration ballads; rogue and vagabond literature; royalism in popular culture; 1517 May Day riots; scatology

❧ **PETER BURKE’S INFLUENTIAL** *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (1978) gave rise to discussions about cultural history and popular culture that have rarely gone out of fashion in the last few decades.<sup>1</sup> The turn to materiality and the history of the book has led to pathbreaking scholarship on the relationship between oral and literate cultures, which has set the scene for serious consideration of the early modern cheap-print market.<sup>2</sup> Paralleling this interest in the circulation of texts within

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1. See Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 3rd ed. (Farnham, U.K., 2009), first published in 1978.

2. Early modern popular culture has been afforded much critical attention. See, for example, Adam Fox, “Ballads, Libels, and Popular Ridicule in Jacobean England,” *Past and Present*, no. 145 (1994): 47–83; Alexandra Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1997); and *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*, vol. 1, *Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660*, ed. Joad Raymond (Oxford, 2011).

the nascent public sphere has been a growing awareness of the early modern soundscape.<sup>3</sup> Building on these exciting developments, this essay will examine ballads that were produced to document the Restoration of the monarchy. As I argue, some writers used ballads both to speak to the past and to consolidate representations of the political moment in and for which the ballad was written. By focusing on the popular tune “Cook Laurel,” I will demonstrate how ballad song was used by royalists to “folklorize” their cause and represent roundheads as being lowborn cheats capable of all manner of skulduggery.<sup>4</sup> In so doing, this essay establishes a connection between Restoration textual satire and early seventeenth-century courtly performance. As I detail below, the tune “Cook Laurel” influenced the textual and aural/oral transmission of a variety of Restoration ballads; by referencing the rogue Cook Laurel in these ballads, royalists presented the singing public with continuity between parliamentarians and the vagabonds of Tudor and (early) Stuart folklore.

### Representing the Stuart Restoration

Ballad writers drew on representations of the Stuart Restoration that were crafted and fashioned by royalists at the time.<sup>5</sup> Newsbooks such as *Mercurius Publicus* provide vital context for the ways in which the ballads I discuss in this essay appropriate the past. The opening of *Mercurius Publicus* dated May 1, 1660, represents the event as follows:

Our Chronicles make mention of an *Ill May-day*; Let this of 1660. hence-forward be called the *Good one* for ever, as having produced the most desired, the most universally satisfactory, and the most welcome News that ever came to these Three Nations since that of 29. of *May* which was the Birthday of our Sovereign *Charls* the Second, whom God preserve; viz. *His Majesties gracious Letter and Declaration sent to the House of Lords by Sir John Greenvil Knight, one of His Majesties Bedchamber, from Breda. His gracious Message, with the Declaration to the House of Commons, and His gracious Letter, with the Declaration inclosed, to his Excellency the Lord General Monck, to be communicated to the Officers*

3. See, for example, Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500–1700* (Oxford, 2000); Jenni Hyde, *Singing the News: Ballads in Mid-Tudor England* (London, 2018); Christopher W. Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2010); and Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago, 1999).

4. *Folklorize* is Mark S. R. Jenner’s term to illustrate how royalists celebrated the Restoration of the monarchy and, more generally, the impetus behind the ways in which historical events take on a mythic and folkloric quality as the event is retold and transmitted in cultural memory. See Jenner, “The Roasting of the Rump: Scatology and the Body Politic in Restoration England,” *Past and Present*, no. 177 (2002): 84–120.

5. For a comprehensive anthology of the various poems that commemorated the Restoration, see *The Return of the King: An Anthology of English Poems Commemorating the Restoration of Charles II*, ed. Gerald Maclean (Charlottesville, Va., 2000), <https://cowley.lib.virginia.edu/MacKing/MacKing.html>.

*of the Armies under his Command.* In all which I refer you to the printed Copies at large, giving you only the heads of the Declaration, wherein His Majesty grants a free general Pardon to all his Subjects whatever that shall within forty days after the publishing thereof lay hold upon that grace and favour, and by any publick act declare their doing so, excepting onely such persons as shall hereafter be excepted by Parliament; such onely excepted, His Majesty promiseth upon the word of a King, that no Crime committed either against Him or His Royal Father, shall (as far as lies in His Majesties power) endamage the least either in Lives, Liberties, Estates, or Reputation; it being His Majesties desire that all Notes of Discord should be laid aside among all His Subjects.<sup>6</sup>

The newsbook begins by referencing chronicles as authoritative markers of history, but it alludes to the past in a way that is, paradoxically, both vague and specific. The “ill May-day” suggests a day so embedded in cultural memory that it needs no further introduction. It refers to the May Day riots of 1517; during this May Day, London apprentices, watermen, priests, serving men, and other miscreants protested against immigrants who they claimed not only deprived them of work and goods but also deprived honest native-born Londoners of their wives and daughters. No one was killed during the rioting, but, inevitably, property was damaged and people sustained injuries before order was restored. Since the rioting was believed to violate an ancient statute detailing various truces between Henry V and other princes of Europe that assured the safety of immigrants, the rioters were “adiudged and determined as guilty of high treason committed against the crown and dignitie of the king.”<sup>7</sup> Their actions were interpreted not only as violence against foreigners but also as a crime against the Crown. In the immediate aftermath, the Duke of Norfolk rounded up many of the rioters, some of whom were brutally killed, and more rioters were condemned to death. According to John Stow, on May 13, 1517, approximately four hundred men and eleven women were called to Westminster Hall with halters around their necks.<sup>8</sup> In what appears to have been a carefully staged display of royal magnanimity, Henry VIII pardoned most of the rioters. The pardoned prisoners rejoiced, removed their halters, and threw them in the air. They may even have danced and sung, bringing their moment upon the scaffold to a close with a jig and a song.<sup>9</sup>

Other sources tell of how Henry’s Spanish wife, Catherine of Aragon, begged clemency from her husband for the offenders and thus how rioters protesting against

6. See the May 1, 1660, edition of *Mercurius Publicus* (April 26–May 3, 1660).

7. John Stow, enlarged by Anthony Munday, *The Suruay of London: Containing, the Originall, Antiquitie, Encrease, and more Moderne Estate of the sayd Famous Citie . . . Written in the yeere 1598* (London, 1618), 156.

8. Stow, *Suruay of London*, 157.

9. *The London Encyclopaedia*, 3rd ed., ed. Ben Weinreb, Christopher Hibbert, Julia Keay, and John Keay (London, 2008), 279.



foreigners were pardoned through the actions of a foreigner. What this demonstrates is the chronicles' status, not as authoritative accounts of history but instead as markers of the way the past is reinvented and revised. Through these sources, the ill May Day that had the potential to undermine Henry VIII's governance thus took on symbolic significance as a moment that not only reaffirmed the monarch through his display of equitable justice but also exhibited the kindness of strangers through the queen's actions. This account of the king's toleration and Catherine's empathy for the rioters entered into popular culture. Many ballads, chronicles, and histories went on to present a different story around the basic details of the event. One of the ballads has the title "The Story of Ill May-day in the time of King Henry the viii, and why it was so called: and how Queene Katharine begged the Liues of two thousand London Prentices. To the tune of Essex good night." The ballad reaffirmed the narrative of the ill May Day and circulated in print in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, illustrating the longevity of ephemeral print and the sustained appeal of the story. The nineteenth-century Shakespearean critic and editor John Payne Collier printed the ballad in his 1868 edition of *Broadside Black-Letter Ballads*, where Thomas Deloney's *Strange Histories* (1607) is given as its provenance.<sup>10</sup> But Collier's exposure as a forger and our knowledge of his fabrication of (and additions to) early modern documents casts doubt on Collier's reliability as an editor, further compounded by the fact that the ballad does not appear in either the 1602 or the 1607 edition of *Strange Histories*.<sup>11</sup> Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman date the ballad to a 1659 edition of the second part of Richard Johnson's *The Crown Garland of Golden Roses*, which Collier would have known from his copy of the 1692 reprint; in this earlier edition, the ballad lacks the final quatrain added by Collier.<sup>12</sup> In his notes, Collier accounts for this by commenting that praise of Elizabeth I would have been unpalatable to James VI and I in 1607, "but when Gosson reprinted the ballad about 1630 or 1640, he made the conclusion complimentary about Charles I. No copy is known which contains the original tribute to Elizabeth, and which must have appeared in 1597 or 1598."<sup>13</sup> Instead of assuming the quatrain was a later addition in praise of Charles, Collier packages it as fragments of a lost stanza, reassembled and modified. Furthermore, Charles Mackay's 1841 *A Collection of Songs and Ballads Relative to the London Prentices and Trades* includes an edition of the ballad that also cites the 1659 *Crown Garland* as its

10. *Broadside Black-Letter Ballads, Printed in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries; Chiefly in the Possession of J. Payne Collier. Illustrated by Original Wood Cuts*, ed. John Payne Collier ([London], 1868), 96–101 and 129.

11. [Thomas Deloney], *Strange Histories, of Kings, Princes, Dukes, Earles, Lords, Ladies, Knights And Gentlemen* (London, 1602; repr., 1607).

12. For a detailed discussion of Collier's textual fabrications, see Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman, *John Payne Collier: Scholarship and Forgery in the Nineteenth Century*, 2 vols. (New Haven, Conn., 2003), esp. 2:959.

13. Collier, *Broadside Black-Letter Ballads*, 129. The printer is presumably Henry Gosson, though I have not been able to locate this version of the ballad.

source and omits Collier's final quatrain; it is also prefaced by a discussion of the ill May Day in which Mackay states that the ballad vastly exaggerates the details of the event and then draws from the chronicles to present a less sensational account.<sup>14</sup> While the publication year of the 1659 edition is tantalizing from the perspective of Restoration politics and poetics, an earlier edition, *The Crowne Garlande of Golden Roses*, exists; printed by Richard Johnson in 1631, it contains the ballad.<sup>15</sup>

I have lingered at length on the print history of this ballad to illustrate the difficulties of tracing in the archives the publication of ballads about historical occurrences, and how the tangled web of ballad print history can lead to further forms of mythologizing the events that they detail, which is as true of the ballads printed in the Restoration as it is of earlier ballads. However, the ballad tune itself calls into question how contemporaneous it was to the ill May Day. The tune "Essex Good Night" dates to 1601 at the earliest, as it was produced in the aftermath of the Essex Rebellion; if this is indeed the first tune to which the May Day ballad was set, then the ballad was printed at least eighty-four years after the event it documents.<sup>16</sup> The ballad tune also casts doubt on Collier's attributing the ballad to Thomas Deloney, who died in 1600, since there is a very clear connection between the tune and the words. Through the juxtaposition of words and music, the pardoning of the rioters is implicitly contrasted with Essex's execution so as to underscore the clemency and compassion of Henry and Catherine in comparison to the lack of clemency shown by Henry's daughter to her erstwhile favorite. However, further parallels and disjunctions can be made between the ill May Day and the Essex Rebellion. Perhaps because of Essex's popularity with the masses, his ineffectual attempt to rouse London against the court met with very few executions; the ill May Day and the Essex Rebellion thus each become representative of royal clemency.<sup>17</sup>

The relationship between ill May Day and its literary afterlives is, in itself, a fascinating case study of the symbiosis between performance and the paper stage, but what I am particularly interested in here is how the 1660 *Mercurius Publicus* newsbook appropriates the narrative and knowledge of the 1517 event to reflect on the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660: the invocation of the ill May Day and its tragicomic resolution resonates with the way that royalists wanted to present

14. *A Collection of Songs and Ballads Relative to the London Prentices and Trades; and to the Affairs of London Generally*, ed. Charles Mackay (London, 1841), 11–22; for commentary, see 11–17. This edition was published by the Percy Society, which also published *Old Ballads from Early Printed Copies of the Utmost Rarity: Now for the First Time Collected*, ed. John Payne Collier (London, 1840).

15. Richard Johnson, *The Crowne Garlande of Golden Roses: Gathered out of Englands Royall Garden*, 2nd ed. (London, 1631).

16. I am grateful to Jenni Hyde and Una McIlvenna for drawing my attention to this ballad and for discussions about it.

17. On contemporary reactions to the Earl of Essex and the way he influenced politics, see Alexandra Gajda, *The Earl of Essex and Late Elizabethan Political Culture* (Oxford, 2012).

the Restoration.<sup>18</sup> The return of Charles was carefully orchestrated. In early April 1660, the Declaration of Breda was signed, but it was not made public until May 1. In this document, the future Charles II magnanimously issued his intent to forgive all who might be guilty of crimes against the Crown (and specifically against his father and himself, unless instructed otherwise by Parliament) as long as they recognized his authority as the king. This was then enshrined in law in August when Parliament passed the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, which offered a free pardon to most people—with the exception of the regicides—who supported Parliament during the civil wars and Commonwealth period.<sup>19</sup> Although brutal retributive punishments were inflicted upon the bodies of the (dead and living) regicides, the events following the ill May Day and the circumstances surrounding the “Good one” mean that both days became represented as moments of monarchical clemency when kingly authority was reaffirmed and violence was contained. Regardless of whether the violence was registered as riots or as a conflict between Parliament and the monarch, the king is presented as having the stature to dispel it.

The newsbook focuses not only upon Charles’s benevolence but also upon the month of May as a political and cultural turning point. Royalist propaganda promulgated the idea that parliamentarians were against holiday pastimes, particularly the festivities associated with May Day. Oliver Cromwell entered cultural memory as being such a fun-crushing killjoy that he even banned Christmas. Choreographing the public announcement of the Declaration of Breda to coincide with May Day implied that traditional holiday pastimes, such as dancing, singing, and merry-making, were restored with the return of the king. The pardoned rioters who had taken their halters from their necks and (possibly) danced and sung in 1517 lived on in the seventeenth century in newsbooks and ballads that were read and sung to reflect upon the cultural and political moment. These iterations of the Restoration contain the beginnings of a narrative of periodization that presented austere Puritan parliamentarianism as giving way to a culturally rich period that heralded the Enlightenment and ushered in the Age of Reason. However, popular culture—perhaps particularly when the setting of new words collides with the music of old ballad songs—shows how the Restoration reflected upon and adapted past cultural production as much as it consciously presented itself as a new era.<sup>20</sup>

18. Lois Potter has surveyed the significant number of plays that were identified as tragicomedies and were written and published in the 1650s. See Potter, “‘True Tragicomedies’ of the Civil War and Commonwealth,” in *Renaissance Tragicomedy: Explorations in Genre and Politics*, ed. Nancy Klein Maguire (New York, 1987), 196–217. On royalist interest in the generic pattern of happy ending after imminent tragedy, see Nancy Klein Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy, 1660–1671* (Cambridge, 1992).

19. “Charles II, 1660: An Act of Free and Generall Pardon Indempnity and Oblivion,” in *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. 5, 1628–80, ed. John Raithby, 226–34, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol5/pp226-234>.

20. For a detailed discussion of the broadside ballad that takes us through the processes of writing, printing, setting to music, and performance, see *The Making of a Broadside Ballad*,

This practice of reviewing the past while claiming to look to the future meant that instead of forgetting the civil war and Commonwealth period, late seventeenth-century readers were forced to reflect upon regicide and Restoration. Leading up to (and immediately after) the Restoration, this preoccupation became manifest in the printing, circulation, and singing of ballads. By setting new ballads to old tunes, ballad writers emphasized how, far from marking a shift in cultural pursuits, the Restoration appropriated and modified past cultural events.

### ~ Ballad Texts

Ballads constitute a broad, sinuous, and omnivorous genre; from the Elizabethan period on, they were constructed as love songs, libels, news, satires, popular history, and “godly ballads.” Some ballads also promulgated or cashed in on the popularity of stage plays by outlining the plots of popular dramas.<sup>21</sup> As single-page documents, they were cheap to produce; they cost no more than a penny, were pitched to an audience with a basic grasp of literacy, and could be learned by rote.<sup>22</sup> As Alexandra Halasz observes, these kinds of cheap print “simultaneously have no value and are the basis on which an economically strong business can be built.”<sup>23</sup> Ballads are ephemeral, and of the ballads entered in the Stationers’ Register before 1640, only about 8 percent are still extant.<sup>24</sup> Yet, for all their ephemeral quality, ballads were lucrative commodities and the rights to print them were worth protecting. From 1612 to 1620, five stationers were granted the monopoly to print ballads, and then in 1624, a syndicate of six printers, the “Ballad Partners,” was formed.<sup>25</sup> According to Tessa Watt, this led to greater regulation of ballad printing after a lapse in recording it in the Stationers’ Register from the 1590s until the 1620s.<sup>26</sup> Between late 1627 and 1633, no printer who was not part of the monopoly registered a ballad, but the partners continued to have competitors. After 1633, it became standard practice for the partners and rival printers to protect copyright by registering the ballads they printed during

ed. Patricia Fumerton, Andrew Griffin, and Carl Stahmer (Santa Barbara, Calif., 2016), <https://press.emcimprint.english.ucsb.edu/the-making-of-a-broadside-ballad/index>.

21. Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge, 1991); Bruce Smith, “Shakespeare’s Residuals: The Circulation of Ballads in Cultural Memory,” in *Shakespeare and Elizabethan Popular Culture*, ed. Neil Rhodes and Stuart Gillespie (London, 2006), 193–218.

22. On the cost of ballads, see Alexandra Hall, *Lost Books and Printing in London, 1557–1640: An Analysis of the Stationers’ Company Register* (Leiden, Netherlands, 2018), 28. For cost and production, see Angela McShane, “Ballads and Broadside from the Beginnings of Print to 1660,” in *Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*, ed. Joad Raymond, 344–47. Literacy is notoriously difficult to gauge in this period, and how “literacy” was understood in the early modern period can be very different from how we understand literacy now. See Heidi Brayman Hackel, “Popular Literacy and Society,” in *Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*, ed. Joad Raymond, 88–100.

23. Halasz, *Marketplace of Print*, 26.

24. Hall, *Lost Books and Printing*, 28, 34.

25. Hall, *Lost Books and Printing*, 35–37.

26. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*, 45.

the year each July.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Alexandra Hall observes that before the outbreak of civil war, roughly 40 percent of ballads were printed illegally.<sup>28</sup>

The broadside ballads of the Restoration were as diverse as earlier ballads in terms of their content, printing, and performance history, and they, too, shared an affinity with drama insofar as they were officially suppressed during the 1650s but continued to circulate surreptitiously. In an attempt to reassert control and reestablish print licensing, which had effectively broken down with the abolition of the Star Chamber in 1641, in September 1649, Parliament passed An Act against Unlicensed and Scandalous Books and Pamphlets, and for better regulating of Printing.<sup>29</sup> This act enshrined into law the punishment of whipping for anyone caught singing, hawking, or selling ballads: "Be it Ordained and Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That no such Hawkers shall be any more permitted; and that they and all Ballad-singers, wheresoever they are or may be apprehended, shall forfeit all Books, Pamphlets, Ballads and Papers by them exposed to sale, and shall, by such as shall by vertue of this Act seize upon them, be conveyed and carried to the House of Correction, there to be whipt as common Rogues, and then dismissed."<sup>30</sup> As with previous attempts by Parliament in 1643 and 1647 to suppress the printing of seditious pamphlets and ballads, this act had limited success, and ballads continued to be circulated and sung throughout the 1650s. Emma Depledge has illustrated how play ballads were sung and performed at dinner parties and probably at other sites, possibly as a way to circumvent the ban on performing dramas, since a ballad took less time to perform than a play.<sup>31</sup> Textual utterance, singing, and politics thus become more closely connected during this period; although ballads always had the potential to contain seditious and libelous material, the regicide transformed the very singing of ballads into something that could be interpreted by some as political protest, and this was capitalized upon by some ballad writers to lampoon parliamentarians and celebrate the return of the king.

One form of political protest can be found in the ballads that plotted the demise of the Rump Parliament. The Rump Parliament comprised members of Parliament who remained after Colonel Thomas Pride and the New Model Army forcibly removed members of the Long Parliament who wanted to negotiate a settlement with

27. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*, 45; Hall, *Lost Books and Printing*, 36.

28. Hall, *Lost Books and Printing*, 36.

29. For more on the abolition of the Star Chamber, see Susan Wiseman, *Drama and Politics in the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1998), 23–25. For a discussion of censorship and the Star Chamber's role in the lead-up to the civil wars, see Cyndia Susan Clegg, *Press Censorship in Caroline England* (Cambridge, 2008).

30. "September 1649: An Act against Unlicensed and Scandalous Books and Pamphlets, and for better regulating of Printing," in *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642–1660*, ed. C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait (London, 1911), 245–54, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/acts-ordinances-interregnum/pp245-254>.

31. Emma Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence: Politics, Print and Alteration, 1642–1700* (Cambridge, 2018), chap. 1.

Charles I in December 1648. It was dissolved in 1653 and recalled in 1659; in February 1660, George Monck, general of the English army in Scotland, then secured readmission for the members of the Long Parliament who were evicted in 1648, thereby paving the way for the royalist Convention Parliament (April 1660) and the restoration of the monarchy.<sup>32</sup> Rump ballads are thus topical. They are also frequently scatological and sometimes elegiac. The use of the ballad as a form of eulogy was not uncommon in the early modern period: from the sixteenth century on, ballads were written to commemorate and lament the death of noblemen.<sup>33</sup> However, the elegiac ballads that circulated during the Restoration flirt with eulogy for satirical ends: rather than lamenting the death of the Rump Parliament, these ballads celebrate the end of an era. As I demonstrate later in this essay, the multiple threads that are apparent within the generic construction of the broadside ballad meant that it could be, and was, used by royalists to present satirical and reductive images of parliamentarians.

### Ballad Tunes

The ballad's generic diversity is mirrored by its use of song. Music was both subsidiary and integral to the ballad form. Depending upon the skill of the musician, complicated arrangements could have been composed for performance at the courts of noblemen. Alternatively, ballads could have been set to familiar songs and sung by the middling sort to make themselves merry at home. Emphasizing the fluidity of popular culture, and how ballads transcended social spheres, peddlers and ballad hawkers could sing ballad tunes as a way of advertising and selling their wares.

Claude Simpson has shown that only about four hundred of one thousand known ballad tunes survive.<sup>34</sup> Drawing from Simpson's analysis and from a detailed study of the Stationers' Register, Alexandra Hall has noted that just 6 percent of the ballads that were entered before 1640 mention a tune and extrapolates that one-quarter of the tunes referenced in the register have been lost.<sup>35</sup> This might sound like a low number, but given how many ballad texts printed before the late seventeenth century have been lost, it is, perhaps, testimony to the importance of musical setting and the familiarity of tunes; multiple ballad texts were set to the same ballad music, creating a corpus of familiar songs that enabled the nonliterate to learn new ballad words through repeating them to well-known tunes.

Musical notation was seldom printed on ballads in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Although music was more commonly appended to ballads printed in the late seventeenth century, it often served a decorative purpose rather

32. On the Restoration, see N. H. Keeble, *The Restoration: England in the 1660s* (Oxford, 2002); Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and His Kingdoms* (London, 2005).

33. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*, 20.

34. Claude M. Simpson, *The Broadside Ballad and Its Music* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1966), xv.

35. Hall, *Lost Books and Printing*, 42–43.



than indicating the tune to which the text was set.<sup>36</sup> The reuse of text, musical setting, and woodcuts across several ballads not only demonstrates the economics of printing but also underscores how ballads are enacted upon the paper stage and how the page is a space where oral and textual forms meet. Ballads were, as Patricia Fumerton contends, multimodal forms, and woodcuts and tunes participated in the textual and aural/oral performances by adding meaning to the text.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the songs to which some anti-Rump ballads were set may have been chosen for satirical reasons rather than because the meter of the text matched the rhythm of the music. While this might suggest that text and music become disjointed in these Rump ballads, thereby fragmenting the relationship between print and performance, this use of song emphasizes the mutual dependency of textual and oral transmission. The printing of ballad text coexisted with the setting of this new ballad text to old ballad song, and while the choice of song might be inappropriate in terms of syllabic and rhythmic unity, the song could heighten the political reflections present in the text. Melodies, as Marsh has observed, “were capable of reinforcing, altering and destabilizing textual messages in a compelling manner.”<sup>38</sup> This connection between oral/aural and textual forms was used by ballad writers, but this did not necessarily “fix” words and music within the early modern soundscape. Rather, ballads operated at the margins of oral and literate cultures, and the relationship between text and tune was subject to negotiation and modification within this liminal space.

While many ballads were set to old tunes, the music did not necessarily predate the text or the themes present in the text. Although the dating of ballads can be difficult, many allude to recent events. Execution ballads, for example, were often printed before the execution and sold during the event, and singing was integral to the ritual of public punishment and death.<sup>39</sup> When the ballad addresses a topical event, it is sometimes possible to date the ballad through cross-referencing text and context. The topicality of some ballad texts means that they can be located within a chronological framework, but the music to which the text is set is more difficult to

36. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*, 33.

37. Marsh, *Music and Society*, 289. See also Christopher Marsh, “‘The Blazing Torch’: New Light on English Balladry as a Multi-Media Matrix,” *Seventeenth Century* 30 (2015): 95–116. See also *Ballads and Performance: The Multimodal Stage in Early Modern England*, ed. Patricia Fumerton (Santa Barbara, Calif., 2018), <https://scalar.usc.edu/works/ballads-and-performance-the-multi-modal-stage-in-early-modern-england/index>. In making the case for the importance of engaging with ballads as multimodal forms, Fumerton is concerned with the relationship between theatrical performance and ballad performance. Marsh has also traced the recycling of woodcuts across a number of ballads to show how the woodcut adds to the meaning of the words and music. See Christopher Marsh, “A Woodcut and Its Wanderings in Seventeenth-Century England,” in “Living English Broadside Ballads, 1550–1750: Song, Art, Dance, Culture,” ed. Patricia Fumerton with the assistance of Megan E. Palmer, special issue, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 79, no. 2 (2016): 245–62.

38. Marsh, *Music and Society*, 289.

39. For a detailed study, see Una McIlvenna, “The Power of Music: The Significance of Contrafactum in Execution Ballads,” *Past and Present*, no. 229 (2015): 47–89 at 56–57.

uncover. Ballads were written in common meter, enabling them to be sung to various familiar musical settings that followed the scansion of the words.<sup>40</sup> Although some tune names were suggested more for satirical purposes than for their appropriateness for word setting, it became common in the seventeenth century for ballads to stipulate what music they ought to be sung to (or to offer a choice of tunes for the singing public); this points to an audience with some musical literacy and prior knowledge of ballad musical conventions. While this might suggest that ballads developed and evolved around rigid preexisting ballad tunes, both text and music participated in a space that was neither fully textual nor oral. Music and text were both subject to adaptation and modification within this space. As Bruce Smith observes, this relationship between words and music highlights Michel de Certeau's insight that orality and literacy are not distinct but exist in relation to each other in ways that are constantly altering.<sup>41</sup> Yet, for Smith, as with early modern culture, orality remains the dominant element of early modern ballads.<sup>42</sup> Surviving broadside ballads provide us with a partial reconstruction of a form that exists at the margins of print and oral culture. The ballad tune "Cook Laurel," the focus of the remainder of this essay, is a useful case study in addressing this fluidity between textual and oral forms.<sup>43</sup>

### ☞ To the Tune of "Cook Laurel"

The earliest surviving reference to Cook Laurel is the fragment of a poem, "Cocke Lorelles Bote," published by Wynkyn de Worde around 1519.<sup>44</sup> Cook Laurel then seems to fall out of use in print until 1561, when his notoriety is reconfirmed by John Awdeley in *The Fraternitie of Vacabondes*. Awdeley's text appears to have been reprinted several times in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and the title page declares that "xxv. Orders of Knaves" have been established by that archetypal knave, "Cocke Lorel."<sup>45</sup> In addition, William Chappell notes that Cook Laurel's boat is mentioned in a manuscript poem titled "Doctour Double Ale," and in John Heywood's *Epigrams upon 300 Proverbs* (1566).<sup>46</sup> The tune associated with the character at the helm of a ship of fools is also found under different titles.<sup>47</sup> Underscoring the relationship between theatrical production and ballad production, the tune appears in William Rowley's *A Match at Midnight* (pub. 1633) and James Shirley's *The Constant Maid* (pub. 1640) but with a different title and words. After this, the words "to be sung

40. Simpson notes that some ballads set to "Cook Laurel" have a meter that "ill fits the tune." See Simpson, *Broadside Ballad and Its Music*, 132.

41. Smith, *Acoustic World*, 12.

42. Smith, *Acoustic World*.

43. "Cook Laurel" has a number of textual variants, including "Cock Lorell," "Cook Lawrel," and "Cook Lorrell."

44. Anon., *Cocke Lorelles Bote* (London, ca. 1519).

45. See the title page of John Awdeley, *The Fraternitie of Vacabondes* (London, 1603).

46. *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, vol. 1, *A Collection of Ancient Songs, Ballads, and Dance Tunes*, ed. William Chappell (London, 1859), 161.

47. Simpson, *Broadside Ballad*, 129–32.

to the tune of Cook Laurel” begin to become a commonplace on broadside ballads; the tune, under the title “An old man is a bed full of Bones,” appears in all editions of John Playford’s *The Dancing Master* printed between 1650 and 1725, and Marsh has identified “Cook Laurel” as being among the top fifty tunes to which ballads were set.<sup>48</sup> What this suggests is that in the absence of textual evidence to the contrary, oral culture connects de Worde’s 1519 fragment to the text that was printed in 1561 and reissued in 1603, supporting Paula McDowell’s contention that thinking of an “oral tradition” overlooks how, before the late eighteenth century, oral and print cultures were closely intertwined.<sup>49</sup> As we will see, through various textual and verbal utterances, Cook Laurel continued to be recast throughout the seventeenth century.

During the Tudor period, Cook Laurel became convenient shorthand for lowborn vagabonds and cheats and was used by writers to construct an image of a criminal underclass, governed by skulduggery and the language of cant. Whether de Worde’s text offers the first appearance of Cook Laurel and his motley crew or the fragment is the first surviving textual representation of a scoundrel who was already well established in oral culture cannot be determined. The act of printing, however, concretizes an archetype differently than oral culture does. Orality, with its reliance upon memory, also relies upon forgetting and extemporizing as a way of disseminating ideas to the hearing audience. Through printing “Cocke Lorelles Bote,” de Worde projected a Tudor rascal, and Awdeley repackaged this rogue for later Tudor and early Stuart audiences. Sometime before, during, or after these textual manifestations, the rapscallion was recaptured and reinvented in song. Once the tune “Cook Laurel” became a commonplace, the vagabond not only made a regular appearance in the sound of the broadside ballad but also infiltrated the Stuart court masque.

While ballads and masques might appear to be opposite forms of performative culture, the two forms have points of connection, emphasizing the interdependency of oral/aural and textual forms and the different performance spaces in which they are enacted. The antimasque to William Davenant’s *Britannia Triumphans*, performed in 1637, featured a ballad singer. This theatrical representation of a ballad singer underscores the codependency of various performance and textual cultures. Similarly, that members of the gentry—perhaps most notably Samuel Pepys—collected ballads further highlights how they reached broad audiences while also raising questions about how ballads that were collected differ from those that were enjoyed and discarded.<sup>50</sup> However, as Lauren Shohet attests, the printing of masques equally demonstrates that

48. *Popular Music*, ed. Chappell, 160–61; Marsh, *Music and Society*, 236.

49. Paula McDowell, “‘The Art of Printing was Fatal’: Print Commerce and the Idea of Oral Tradition in Long Eighteenth-Century Ballad Discourse,” in *Ballads and Broad-sides in Britain, 1500–1800*, ed. Patricia Fumerton, Anita Guerrini, and Kris McAbee (Farnham, U.K., 2010), 35–56.

50. Pepys was particularly fond of collecting “vulgaria” and saw his collection as an index of the times. See Kate Loveman, *Samuel Pepys and His Books: Reading, Newsgathering, and Sociability, 1660–1703* (Oxford, 2015), 249. However, as with all archives, the choices Pepys

elite cultures also reached a wider audience in print.<sup>51</sup> This further shows the difficulties in identifying what “elite” and “popular” mean in this period.<sup>52</sup> Both popular culture and elite culture were received by multiple audiences who interpreted and understood their symbolism and meanings to varying degrees. This porous quality of ballads, masques, and other forms of entertainment, and the ways in which they were transmitted to multiple audiences, emphasizes how textual and oral culture transcended social spheres. Firmly rooted within neither elite nor popular cultures, the words were disseminated among multiple audiences. Ballads thus became an ideal vehicle through which to satirize beleaguered parliamentarians.

The original ballad text that was set to “Cook Laurel” appears to be lost, but the tune’s ubiquity attests to that ballad’s popularity. Cook Laurel also makes an appearance in *Martin Mark-All, Beadle of Bridewell* (1610), attributed to Samuel Rid. Here, Cocke Lorrell is described as “the most notorious knaue that euer liued.”<sup>53</sup> Yet rather than detail these knaveries, the text directs readers to consult Awdeley’s *The Fraternitie of Vacabondes*, which is still available to purchase from booksellers. Instead, we are presented with a description of gypsies:

I referre you to the old manuscript, remayning on record in maunders hall. This was he that reduced and brought in forme the Catalogue of Vagabonds or quarterne of knaues called the fue and twentie orders of knaues: but because it is extant and in euery mans shop, I passe them ouer.

And now about this time, when as warres abroad, and troubles domesticall were ended, swarmed in euery part of the land these Caterpillers, like slies against a plague: in the northerne partes another sort of Vagabonds (at the diuels-arse-a-peake in Darbeshire) began a new regiment, calling themselues by the name of Egiptians: These were a sort of rogues, that liued and do yet liue by cousening and deceit . . . feeding the common people wholly addicted and giuen to nouelties, toyes and new fangles, delighting them with the strangenesse of the attire of their heads, and practising palmistry to such as would know their fortunes.<sup>54</sup>

made as to which texts to retain and which to lose demonstrate that his archive is as much a process of forgetting as remembering.

51. Lauren Shohet, *Reading Masques: The English Masque and Public Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2010).

52. See the introduction to *The Ashgate Research Companion to Popular Culture in Early Modern England*, ed. Matthew Dimmock, Andrew Hadfield, and Abigail Shinn (Farnham, U.K., 2014), 1–9.

53. [Samuel Rid], *Martin Mark-All, Beadle of Bridewell; His defence and Answere to the Belman of London* (London, 1610), sig. G3v.

54. Rid, *Martin Mark-All*, sig. G4r.

As we will see, Ben Jonson conflates the reference to Cook Laurel with the description of the gypsies in *The Masque of the Gypsies*, or *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* (1621), and it is this text that provides the blueprint for many of the Rump ballads that are set to the tune “Cook Laurel.”

In some respects, it is unsurprising that royalists celebrating the Restoration would allude to Jonson. The “Sons of Ben” and Jonson’s posthumous influence upon cavaliering culture are well documented, and the masque’s flirtation with the carnivalesque means that it offers ideal source material for royalists desiring to reflect upon the saturnalian qualities of the Restoration.<sup>55</sup> The masque was commissioned by George Villiers, the future Duke of Buckingham, and performed three times in 1621: first at Burleigh-on-the-Hill (Buckingham’s home) in celebration of his marriage to Lady Katherine Manners, then at his father-in-law’s home, and once more at Windsor Castle. It also circulated in various manuscript and printed forms.<sup>56</sup> The masque celebrates James’s qualities as a pacifist king who is divinely ordained to wear the crown and promises James’s son, the future Charles I, good fortune and marital bliss. However, as James Knowles has demonstrated, the various manuscript versions of the text appropriated Jonson’s words and repackaged them to satirize the royal favorite’s body and censure the body politic; verse libels derived from the masque demonstrate how it could be refashioned to voice potential criticisms of James’s pacifist foreign policy.<sup>57</sup>

Unusually for a masque, *Gypsies Metamorphosed* is stripped of more conventional mythological allusions and imagery, and speaking roles are given to the nobility who dance. The first half of the masque comprises carnivalesque caricature as, dressed as gypsies, Buckingham and the other masquers sing, dance, tell fortunes, and pick pockets. The turning point comes with the singing of a ballad “to the tune of Cock Lorrell,” which lasts long enough to enable the courtiers to have a quick wash; after the ballad, Buckingham and the other masquers reappear in their aristocratic finery, and the items they had pickpocketed are restored to their rightful owners. James’s royal presence leads to the metamorphosis of the gypsies from nomadic rogues to courtiers. This celebration of early Stuart kingship recasts Stuart monarchy as the harmonious and order-restoring focal point of the body politic. However, if we consider the body of the courtier as well as the body of the king, a more complicated picture emerges.

55. See, for example, *Classic and Cavalier: Essays on Jonson and the Sons of Ben*, ed. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Pittsburgh, 1982).

56. James Knowles, “‘Songs of baser alloy’: Jonson’s *Gypsies Metamorphosed* and the Circulation of Manuscript Libels,” in “‘Railing Rhymes’: Politics and Poetry in Early Stuart England,” ed. Andrew McRae, special issue, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 69 (2006): 153–76 at 155.

57. Knowles, “‘Songs of baser alloy,’” 155.

*Gypsies Metamorphosed* echoes Jonson's earlier work *The Masque of Blackness* (1605) through its use of cosmetics to racialize gypsies through performance.<sup>58</sup> In her discussion of *Masque of Blackness*, Noémie Ndiaye contends that white aristocrats blacked up and used their bodies to perform "kinetic blackness" through "animalizing black dances."<sup>59</sup> Such "performative blackness" enabled European courtiers to appropriate "black dances for the purposes of self-emancipation."<sup>60</sup> In considering how white European nobility performed black dances, Ndiaye enriches our understanding of racialized power play in early modern court performance by addressing both bodily movement and the use of cosmetics. As Kim Hall has argued, blacking-up means that "blackness becomes a social idiom for interrogating issues of social order, particularly as they are related to problems of race, gender, and economics. Black figures . . . become the focal points for an extraordinary dense system of signification that, unpacked, reveals layered interconnected anxieties over difference."<sup>61</sup> Within the context of James's court, unruly black dancing in *Masque of Blackness* and performative blackness thus dismantle the social control that the body of the king represents. Similarly, cosmetics and bodily movement in *Gypsies Metamorphosed* destabilize courtly power by drawing the dancers into a racialized power play that exposes anxieties about difference. These anxieties are further emphasized through the ballad "to be sung to the tune of Cock Lorrell."

Whereas in the earlier masque, Anna of Denmark and her ladies-in-waiting appear in black up throughout, in the later masque, tawny paint is washed off to transform the gypsies into courtiers. This underscores the long (mistaken) association of Egyptians with gypsies and gypsies' confused status as both exoticized nomads who occupy a separate sphere and as English (or English counterfeiter) who are a common sight roaming the English land. As Carol Mejia Laperle writes, the error of believing gypsies to be descendants of Egyptians "is relevant to stereotypes of gypsies as outlandish, nomadic and foreign . . . [criminalizing] the exotic, nomadic group's resistance to the priorities of dominant rule in the . . . English commonwealth."<sup>62</sup> In this respect, washing away the tawny cosmetic does not reveal the noble courtier

58. For a discussion of how the use of cosmetics focuses attention on the body of the performers and especially their skin, see Andrea Stevens, "Mastering Masques of Blackness: Jonson's *Masque of Blackness*, the Windsor Text of *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*, and Brome's *The English Moor*," *English Literary Renaissance* 39 (2009): 396–426.

59. Noémie Ndiaye, *Scripts of Blackness: Early Modern Performance Culture and the Making of Race* (Philadelphia, 2022), 215.

60. Ndiaye, *Scripts of Blackness*, 217.

61. Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1996), 141.

62. Carol Mejia Laperle, "Race in Shakespeare's Tragedies," in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Race*, ed. Ayanna Thompson (Cambridge, 2021), 77–92, esp. 84–85. For a comprehensive study of gypsies, see David Cressy, *Gypsies: An English History* (Oxford, 2018); and Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2018), esp. 421–22, 431–35, on the European conflation of gypsies with Egyptians and Jews.



beneath but instead casts doubt on the body of the aristocrat and draws attention to stereotypes of gypsy counterfeiting through counterfeiting the gypsy's body.<sup>63</sup> The transformation of the gypsies from vagabonds to virtuous courtiers at the end of the masque thus emphasizes less the ability of the monarch to transform an underclass into respectability than the fragility of social constructs.

Martin Butler argues that, although Buckingham and his fellow courtiers flirt with the disorder occasioned by their appearance as gypsies, the formal features of the masque allow the courtiers to be dissociated from the thefts and roguish behavior exhibited by the gypsies in performance. Because Buckingham had gained a reputation for greedy opportunism, his acting the part of an opportunistic gypsy had the potential to generate negative satire. In Butler's reading, rather than exposing Buckingham's perceived greed as a source of censure, the performance sanitizes him of association with recent scandals about monopolies; returning the goods stolen by the gypsies in the masque renders the courtiers' greed "sexy" and reaffirms their nobility.<sup>64</sup> Whereas the radical differences in text between the version performed at Buckingham's country home and the performance at Windsor have been read as exposing tensions in James's foreign policy, the panegyric tone of the piece remains largely unchallenged. While Butler's insights prove an invaluable starting point for understanding the politics of the masque, Barbara Ravelhofer helpfully focuses upon the mechanics of performance. It is the legacies of performance and the ballad at the center of the masque that I am most interested in, as this feeds into Restoration satire.

Demonstrating how Jonson appropriates French burlesque and English folklore and blends them with his aesthetic vision for the masque, Ravelhofer exposes the importance of the ballad to the narrative structure of the performance. Whereas other masques rely upon elaborate set and properties to restore order, Ravelhofer insightfully observes that *Gypsies Metamorphosed* uses the performance of the ballad on a simple stage with minimal properties to allow courtiers time to change into their courtly robes and to assume their true personas. The ballad thus becomes the order-restoring focal point of the performance.<sup>65</sup> Buckingham and his fellow courtiers assume their rightful place within the body politic as a consequence of the utterance of a common ballad; the most pervasive form of popular culture thus becomes a way of asserting social order at court. This, combined with the esteem in which Jonson was held by some cavalier poets, may offer some clues as to why the ballad tune proved popular with royalists.

63. For a brief discussion of the fragile line between counterfeit gypsies and counterfeiting gypsies, see Nandini Das, João Vicente Melo, Haig Z. Smith, and Lauren Working, "Gypsy," in *Keywords of Identity, Race, and Human Mobility in Early Modern England* (Amsterdam, 2021), 125–30, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9789048552283>.

64. Martin Butler, "'We are one mans all': Jonson's *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*," *Yearbook of English Studies* 21 (1991): 253–73 at 258.

65. Barbara Ravelhofer, "Burlesque Ballet, a Ballad and a Banquet in Ben Jonson's *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* (1621)," *Dance Research* 25 (2007): 144–55.

*Gypsies Metamorphosed* was printed as a duodecimo in 1640 and then reprinted in the second folio of Jonson's complete works in 1641. Shortly after, in 1642, Charles I raised his standard and civil war began. This masque does not offer commentary on the civil war or the Restoration, but elements of the masque were appropriated into royalist discourse and became a way to comment upon contemporary political anxieties. The central song was taken out of its context within the masque and circulated in manuscript form; it was also printed as a broadside ballad. Titled "A Strange Banquet: or, the Devils Entertainment by Cook Laurel, at the Peak in Devonshire, with a true Relation of the several Dishes"; the ballad went into multiple editions.<sup>66</sup> Here, we are presented with an image of the devil feasting upon various miscreants, ranging from representatives of the criminal underworld and the unchaste to corrupt citizens and holders of office. The feast thus cleanses the body politic of corruption; in so doing, it seems to echo humanist intellectual thought that presents the banquet as a site of sociability and civility.<sup>67</sup>

While the ballad printed separately from the masque ends with a bloated devil rising from the table and experiencing indigestion-induced flatulence, the song printed in the 1640 edition of the masque is extended by three quatrains to argue that the vapor emitted from the devil is made manifest on earth in the form of tobacco:

From which wicked weed, with swines-flesh & Ling,  
Or anything else that's fit for the Fiend:  
Our Captaine and wee, cry God save the King,  
And send him good meate, and mirth without end.<sup>68</sup>

The ballad on its own seeks to remove monarchical discussions from the narrative, but within the masque, the song applauds James's judgment in writing tracts against the growing fashion for smoking the American import of tobacco. Tasting and smelling thus operate differently; while the eating of miscreants assumes they are being

66. "Devonshire" appears to be an error: the 1695 edition has the title as "A Strange Banquet: Or the Devil's Entertainment by Cook Laurel, at the Peak in Derby-Shire; an Account of the several Dishes served to Table. To the Tune of Cook Laurel, &c.," presumably in reference to the Peak Cavern, or "the Devil's Arse," in the Peak District, Derbyshire, which gained its colloquial name from the flatulent-sounding noises emanating from the cave and made by floodwater draining from it. Derbyshire is also the location of Bolsover Castle, one of the estates of Jonson's last patron, William Cavendish. As the Cambridge editors note, Jonson connects Peak Cavern with the devil in *The Devil Is an Ass* (1616) and references witches inviting the devil to Derbyshire to dine in *News from the New World Discovered in the Moon* (1620). See *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, vol. 5, 1616–1625, ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge, 2012), 474.

67. *Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. Bevington, Butler, and Donaldson, 474; Ravelhofer, "Burlesque Ballet," 150.

68. Ben Jonson, *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* (London, 1640), sig. E4r.

wiped out of society, farting repollutes the body politic. Order might be restored, but there is the hint that this order is transitory and smelly.

The relationship between monarchy and the textual transmission of this ballad is therefore complex and made more so by the ambiguous politics that the masque enacts. While the masque constantly alludes to kingship and consciously maneuvers the narrative back to reflect upon and (ambiguously) celebrate early Stuart rule, the printed ballad seeks to erase monarchical debates and instead focuses upon a gluttonous devil who attempts to satiate his appetite through feasting upon sinners. This tension between the different contexts in which the ballad was circulated and disseminated is also present in the ballads that appropriate the tune "Cook Laurel" and were printed or circulated in manuscript between 1653 and 1660. Here, the tune is used in ballads that document current affairs. In July 1653, "A New Ballad to the Tune of Coc-Lorrell" circulated in manuscript. This ballad details Cromwell's dissolving of Parliament and assuming of the role of Lord Protector. While it lacks the scatology of later ballads, or the feasting imagery in Jonson's text, the reference to Cook Laurel invokes the Jonsonian text and establishes a mnemonic connection between the rogues documented in Jonson's ballad and the radical parliamentarians. With the title "A New Ballad to the Tune Coc-Lorrell," the tune to which the ballad is set is afforded a greater degree of prominence, emphasizing the perceived link between roundhead machinations, Cook Laurel's boat, and underworld skulduggery.

This connection between skulduggery and parliamentary leanings is echoed, and modified, in a ballad printed in 1659. Titled "Redemption Ab Aquilone, or Some Good Out of Scotland," this broadside ballad is possibly the most hesitant of the Rump ballads set to the tune of "Cook Laurel." In 1659, it was by no means certain that monarchy would be restored, and then Monck marched on London. At first, it seemed as though he would fulfill the Rump Parliament's commands to dismantle the city gates and, in effect, instigate martial law. However, Monck played a complicated political game, shifted allegiance, and eventually supported London's call for a free Parliament; in so doing, he was largely credited with bringing about the Restoration.<sup>69</sup> "Redemption Ab Aquilone" alludes to this uncertainty; it both applauds Monck for his role in the Restoration and expresses fears that the Restoration might never happen. Questioning the nature of allegiance, the ballad argues that only through the restoration of the monarchy can freedom be restored. Anxiety regarding Monck's actions immediately preceding the Restoration is also present in "A Pair of Prodigals Returned," in which an Englishman and Scotsman express a desire for the Restoration to happen, although they voice concerns with Monck's dealings with London. This ballad inverts the narrative of skulduggery established in the folklore of Cook Laurel to tell a tale of redemption. Rather than presenting a devil feasting upon sinners, the ballad describes sinners' seeking absolution through anticipating the return of the monarchy and pledging allegiance to the king.

69. Harris, *Restoration*, 43–44.

The two ballads that were printed immediately before the Restoration are therefore governed by uncertainty over whether the Restoration would actually take place. Two ballads printed in the aftermath of the Restoration are much more confident about satirizing parliamentarians and appropriating scatological tropes familiar to Restoration lampoonery of the erstwhile Rump Parliament. “The Rump Roughly but Righteously Handled” absolves Monck of his political opportunism and represents the Rump Parliament as a satanic beast. Points of reference with the Jonsonian ballad are present in the celebration of the deaths of notable roundheads who have been swallowed by hell. However, this ballad’s implicit intertextual reference to Jonson’s ballad is eclipsed by “A Proper New Ballad of the Devils Arse a Peake, or Satans Beastly Place, or, in Plain Terms of the Posteriors and Fag-End of a Long Parliament” (1660). Here, the regicide is depicted as the start of a lamentable tale about the demise of the Rump. Feasting, vomiting, flatulence, and scatological imagery are used to lampoon various roundheads, who replace the vagabonds and sinners feasted upon in Jonson’s ballad. The later ballads thus affirm the narrative that Jonson’s ballad presents of order being restored through a devilishly gluttonous feast. Both Jonson’s text and the oral referencing of “Cook Laurel” are appropriated by “A Proper New Ballad” to celebrate the return of monarchy and the demise of the Rump.



The image of Cook Laurel as a ubiquitous rascal became a common trope in Elizabethan folklore, was adopted by playwrights and ballad writers, and even appeared in a masque. These transitions not only emphasize how fraught attempts to define what constitutes “elite” and “popular” culture in the period can be but also demonstrate how ballads were used in multiple ways. Some forms of popular culture assisted royalists in constructing alternative images of parliamentarians, and roundheads were frequently represented in royalist newsbooks, pamphlets, and play pamphlets as lowly, intemperate, cuckolded, and damned fools. While I have discussed only a handful of the surviving ballads that appropriate “Cook Laurel” during the Commonwealth and Restoration, these ballads demonstrate that ballad song provided a prehistory to royalist satire that establishes a mnemonic connection between parliamentarians and the scoundrels of folklore. However, this very appropriation of Tudor vagabonds as a way of articulating royalist triumph and parliamentary defeat has a destabilizing effect upon the politics presented in the ballads. Cook Laurel may have been convenient shorthand for a lowborn vagabond and cheat, but the way in which his notoriety has been constructed also means that he is romanticized; the same strategies that allowed Buckingham to be presented as, in Butler’s words, “sexy greedy” rather than “ugly greedy” in Jonson’s masque lend themselves to Cook Laurel. The skulduggery that is ascribed to him becomes sanitized through these narratives, which in turn limits the dangers and potential violence that a criminal underclass may present. In this context, the use of the tune “Cook Laurel” as a setting for Rump

ballads becomes less a way of celebrating the return of the king than a means through which to limit the authority of parliamentarians. Whether or not the ballads could be sung to the tune “Cook Laurel,” referencing the song reaffirmed the connection between ballads and the early Stuart court and, in so doing, harnessed popular culture and the paper stage to the royalist cause. This gave royalists another means through which to lament the regicide and celebrate the restoration of the monarchy and the downfall of the Rump Parliament.

Paul Hammond has argued that Charles Stuart’s return to England was carefully presented as a restoration of rightful governance in England, but the memory of Charles I’s dismembered body and the knowledge of his son’s libidinous body meant that kingship could never be presented and interpreted in the same way in the late seventeenth century as it had before. Royalists tried to cover the fractures in royalist ideology by greeting the Restoration with panegyric, and attempts were made throughout Charles II’s reign to reaffirm kingship, but these endeavors were undermined by the numerous satirical representations of him.<sup>70</sup> In this context, ballads that satirize the Rump form part of a narrative of resistance to the ongoing critique of the king. Epochs, Hans Blumenberg contends, require a “visible and effective boundary figure,” a person to define the age.<sup>71</sup> Charles II, neither a genius nor a particularly effective monarch, thus becomes the unlikely epoch-defining figure of the Restoration. British politics, culture, and science are all read through the lens of the restoration of the monarchy. While regicide and revolution do not necessitate restoration, for there to be a restoration, there has to be something to be restored. The Restoration is thus defined by what came before, even as the Restoration Settlement sought to erase the past and affirm the newness and immediacy of the present. Music assisted in this. Writing of execution ballads and the setting of new words to old music, Una McIlvenna notes, “listener-singers . . . [had] previous knowledge of the songs . . . pointing to a vast repertoire, sometimes even international, of shared musical knowledge. Such sharing and participation helped to forge communal bonds, echoed in the communal and performative means by which each member of society was expected to participate in the punishment of criminals.”<sup>72</sup> McIlvenna’s insights are equally applicable to ballads that celebrated the Restoration. As this brief survey of ballads set to “Cook Laurel” shows, through the paper stage and musical setting, Tudor folklore continued to be performed and adapted to folklorize the royalist cause and, through the use of song, royalists attempted to charm rebels “into Obedience.”<sup>73</sup>

70. Paul Hammond, “The King’s Two Bodies: Representations of Charles II,” in *Culture, Politics and Society in Britain, 1660–1800*, ed. Jeremy Black and Jeremy Gregory (Manchester, U.K., 1991), 13–48.

71. Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), 470.

72. McIlvenna, “Power of Music,” 89.

73. Nathaniel Thompson, *A Choice Collection of 120 Loyal Songs* (London, 1684), sig. A2r–v, cited in Marsh, *Music and Society*, 283.

The pervasiveness of Tudor folklore in seventeenth-century culture meant that, far from the start of something new, the Restoration was imbued with continuity with the past.

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# Proliferating Performance, Propagating Print: The Many Lives of Restoration Drama

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Stephen Watkins

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**ABSTRACT** This essay explores the myriad stage and paper engagements with one of the most popular plays of the Restoration period: William Davenant and John Dryden's *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (1670). It examines the flurry of printed materials circulated in the wake of the theatrical production, tracing *The Tempest's* migration from performance to print and back again. By charting how audiences and readers encountered the play beyond the playhouse, Stephen Watkins argues that we will begin to more accurately assess the role that commercial drama played in the cultural and imaginative lives of the people it originally entertained. **KEYWORDS:** William Davenant; John Dryden; Thomas Killigrew; Matthew Locke; adaptations of *The Tempest*

☞ **THE PROLOGUE TO WILLIAM DAVENANT** and John Dryden's *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (1670) explains the play's curious genesis by way of a horticultural analogy:

As when a Tree's cut down the secret root  
Lives under ground, and thence new Branches shoot  
So, from old *Shakespeare's* honour'd dust, this day  
Springs up and buds a new reviving Play.<sup>1</sup>

This play, the prologue claims, is a paradox: it is both new *and* revived, both Shakespeare *and not* Shakespeare, the same, yet different, like a plant that grows afresh each spring, fed by the mulch of its previous incarnations. No longer *The Tempest* that

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1. William Davenant and John Dryden, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (London, 1670), sig. A4r; italics reversed. Hereafter, *The Tempest* (1670).

was first performed by the King's Men at Blackfriars in 1611, Davenant and Dryden's adaptation nevertheless has its roots firmly in Shakespearean soil. Shakespeare died in 1616, and his plays—along with those of so many others—were then “cut down” from the stage during the official ban on theatrical activities during the 1640s and 1650s. Once the bitter winter of antitheatricalism had thawed, however, a play that had once retreated “under ground,” seemingly forever, was able to return to its proper place in the theater. The Davenant-Dryden *Tempest* is much altered from its Jacobean parent text, but the prologue is remarkably keen to foreground how the playwrights have given audiences the opportunity once again to revel in “Shakespeare's *Magick*.”<sup>2</sup> Plays may change in response to new performance conditions and locales, the prologue suggests, but their essential components—their “roots”—remain reassuringly the same from one season to the next.

Just as Shakespeare's *Tempest* sowed the seeds for Davenant and Dryden's play, so did their *Tempest* in turn germinate “new Branches” of its very own. Yet, as this essay will demonstrate, their version of the play enjoyed an afterlife that extended far beyond the stage of Davenant's own licensed theater at Lincoln's Inn Fields, with spin-offs and adaptations appearing on each of the four Restoration stages (Lincoln's Inn Fields, Bridges Street, Dorset Garden, and the Theatre Royal) and—even more so—on the page. The changed circumstances of the Restoration theater industry saw a flurry of para- or extratheatrical texts accompanying, promoting, and leeching off cultural capital accrued by successful plays, alongside more traditional theater-bound engagements with plays and dramatic operas. In the sixty years that followed its premiere, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* sprang up in playbooks, songbooks, musical scores, personal diaries, poems, and miscellanies, and even in the guise of a prose romance. These printed seedlings worked to propagate Davenant and Dryden's play beyond Lincoln's Inn Fields, in which it was initially presented, and they offer us vital insights into how Restoration audiences, readers, writers, and even amateur composers consumed (and in turn produced) such dramatic fare. The texts I discuss below thus reveal a fascinating and myriad cultural life for *The Tempest* far beyond the West End of London, one that reached the bookstalls, concert halls, homes, and personal libraries of its early modern audiences. Attending to such printed material will nuance our understanding of the place and power of theatrical texts in late seventeenth-century England.

Much more extratheatrical material is available for the 1660–1700 period than for the pre-1642 theater, yet scholars of Restoration drama have proven remarkably reluctant to search for evidence of nonprofessional or nontheatrical engagements with these plays. This is no doubt an unintended consequence of the kinds of evidence we have readily available to us in such sources as *The London Stage, 1660–1800* and *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors and Actresses*, sources that focus squarely on the

2. *The Tempest* (1670), sig. A4r.

metropolitan theaters and their personnel.<sup>3</sup> Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume's *The Publication of Plays in London 1660–1800* has put printed playbooks firmly on the agenda for scholars of Restoration drama, but historical and current work by theater historians continues to be concerned primarily with life inside London's licensed playhouses, such as their management and personnel, design, and economic organization.<sup>4</sup> This is not a bad thing in and of itself, but by ignoring the extratheatrical materials I analyze in this essay, we risk underappreciating the full, complex reception histories of Restoration drama.

Scholars of Renaissance drama, meanwhile, have long been attentive to such evidence. In a series of illuminating studies, Tiffany Stern has documented the dynamic paper engagements with drama in the pre-1642 context, showing how, for example, portions of plays, such as songs or poems, “habitually became detached from their [original performance] contexts to thrive in others.”<sup>5</sup> Stern uncovers a fascinating archive of evidence demonstrating how early modern playgoers encountered, recorded, and even travestied the plays they watched and read through such processes as commonplacing and extracting, and how remediation into new (paper) forms of cultural production transformed the ways in which people could engage imaginatively with dramatic material. Similarly, Bruce R. Smith has examined popular ballads from Shakespeare's time that ape particular plays, and he argues that these “residuals” not only served to “record performances”—in that they recount plot details or memorable lines—but also “perpetuated them” in the memories of readers and audiences.<sup>6</sup> For Smith, ballads like “The Lamentable and Tragical History of Titus Andronicus” (1594) and “A Lamentable Song of the death of King Leare and his three Daughters” (1620) have a commercial as well as cultural objective: publishers and ballad sellers

3. *The London Stage, 1660–1800*, ed. William Van Lennep, Emmett L. Avery, Arthur H. Scouten, George Winchester Stone Jr., and Charles Beecher Hogan, 11 vols. (Carbondale, Ill., 1960–68); *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers, and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, ed. Philip H. Highhill Jr., Kalman A. Burnim, and Edward A. Langhans, 16 vols. (Carbondale, Ill., 1973–93).

4. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London 1660–1800: Playwrights, Publishers and the Market* (London, 2015). See also Julie Stone Peters's temporally and geographically wide-ranging study, *Theatre of the Book, 1480–1880: Print, Text, and Performance in Europe* (Oxford, 2000).

5. Tiffany Stern, “Repatching the Play,” in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, ed. Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (Houndmills, U.K., 2004), 151–77 at 155. See also her “‘I have both the Note, and Dittie about Me’: Songs on the Early Modern Page and Stage,” *Common Knowledge* 17 (2011): 306–20; “Watching as Reading: The Audience and Written Text in Shakespeare's Playhouse,” in *How to Do Things with Shakespeare: New Approaches, New Essays*, ed. Laurie E. Maguire (Oxford, 2008), 136–59; and “Before the Beginning; After the End: When Did Plays Start and Stop?,” in *Shakespeare and Textual Studies*, ed. Margaret Jane Kidnie and Sonia Massai (Cambridge, 2015), 358–74.

6. Bruce R. Smith, “Shakespeare's Residuals: The Circulation of Ballads in Cultural Memory,” in *Shakespeare and Elizabethan Popular Culture*, ed. Neil Rhodes and Stuart Gillespie (London, 2006), 193–218, esp. 194–95.

could cash in on a play's popularity by providing buyers with material that "enabled performances to happen again and again" away from the theater.<sup>7</sup>

The present essay, then, offers a method for assessing Restoration drama beyond theatrical performance by examining the proliferation and propagation of printed materials relating to and engaging with one of the most popular plays of the late seventeenth century. In what follows, I argue that *The Tempest's* extra-theatrical texts, like Smith's ballads, perpetuated performances of the play, taking it out of the theater and into the homes (and imaginations) of its audiences. Read, excerpted, reimagined, and performed by amateurs and spectators in domestic and other nontheatrical settings, *The Tempest* burst onto the cultural scene of Restoration England, capturing the hearts and minds of a wide swath of the theater-loving public. Restoration audiences did not merely react to performances but were themselves actively bound up in a dynamic, dispersed, and ongoing performance *beyond* the institutional borders of the London theaters, thus prompting us to question such basic notions as "when a play actually starts and stops."<sup>8</sup> Such questions enable us to think about the cultural value of drama, theater, and performance in ways typically neglected by modern criticism.

In order to contextualize this extratheatrical material, I begin with an account of *The Tempest's* multifarious performance lives on the London stages. I demonstrate that the play qua performance event was always understood to be amorphous and adaptable, even before it was remediated into print, and that this adaptability on the stage prompted new kinds of adaptation in turn. I then analyze the many textual incarnations of the play and suggest ways in which audiences might have engaged with them. First, I discuss the reading of playbooks and the way that these texts serve not only as a record of performance but also as an imaginative intervention in the play's reception history, before I move on to examine more fragmentary and ephemeral engagements with the play in print and manuscript, exploring how songbooks, amateur compositions, and printed music scores remediate *The Tempest* for new contexts and with new objectives in mind. My aim is to show just how diverse and rich nontheatrical encounters with *The Tempest* were in the Restoration period and to suggest that scholars might consider such evidence when accounting for a play's reception history and its broader cultural reach. Finally, I consider the publication of a prose romance based on Davenant and Dryden's text, which mixes paraphrase with verbatim excerpts, suggesting that the appeal of *The Tempest's* narrative transcends its theatrical auspices while retaining elements that allude to or hint at dramatic performance.

7. Smith, "Shakespeare's Residuals," 195.

8. Stern, "Before the Beginning," 359.

☞ Proliferating Performances: *The Tempest* and Its Stage Offshoots

The Davenant-Dryden *Tempest* took Restoration London by storm. It premiered on November 7, 1667, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, home to the Duke of York's Company, managed by Davenant.<sup>9</sup> It was performed eight times in its first month and enjoyed regular revivals throughout the rest of the decade and beyond. Its popularity was arguably a result of its state-of-the-art scenic effects and its enchanting musical arrangements, not to mention its flaunting of beautiful actresses in the roles of Miranda; her younger sister, Dorinda; and the breeches parts Hippolito and Ariel. It was first published by Henry Herringman in 1670.

From the beginning, the play was bound up in the commercial rivalry between Davenant's theater and that of his competitor, Thomas Killigrew. Davenant and Dryden's prologue cryptically alludes to a "*Storm which vanish'd on the Neighbor'ing shore.*"<sup>10</sup> This is a reference to another play, *The Storm*, staged by Killigrew at the Theatre Royal, Bridges Street, on September 25, 1667, just six weeks before the *Tempest*'s premiere.<sup>11</sup> Evidently, Davenant and Dryden put their text in dialogue with the other play. Riki Miyoshi has shown how, in 1667, Killigrew and Davenant were in direct competition not only to secure audiences (as they always were) but also to secure the loyalty of London's most sought-after playwright, Dryden, and that Killigrew produced *The Storm* in the aftermath of the Duke's runaway success with Dryden's comedy *Sir Martin Mar-all, or, the Feign'd Innocence*.<sup>12</sup> Miyoshi thus assumes that Davenant retaliated in kind by cowriting *The Tempest* with Dryden himself in an effort to demonstrate Dryden's commitment to the Duke's Company, "undoubtedly to Killigrew's even greater chagrin."<sup>13</sup>

Certainly, Dryden's employment is a key motivating factor in the choice of plays programmed by both managers, but I find it hard to accept Miyoshi's implied chronology. I would submit, instead, that the influence of repertoire from one theater to the other goes in the other direction. *The Storm* is, in fact, itself an adaptation, thus becoming subsumed into a larger performance history of *The Tempest*. Killigrew adapted it from John Fletcher and Philip Massinger's *The Sea Voyage* (1622), which was itself a late Jacobean reworking of Shakespeare's play.<sup>14</sup> As a result, Shakespeare

9. On November 7, 1667, Samuel Pepys noted that he went to see "'The Tempest,' an old play of Shakespeare's, acted, I hear, the first day." See *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (London, 1970–83), 8:521–22. This date has been taken as the premiere; see *London Stage*, ed. Van Lennep et al., 1:123.

10. *The Tempest* (1670), sig. A4r.

11. *London Stage*, ed. Van Lennep et al., 1:118.

12. Riki Miyoshi, "Thomas Killigrew's Early Managerial Career: Carolean Stage Rivalry in London, 1663–1668," *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Theatre Research* 27, no. 2 (2012): 13–33 at 29.

13. Miyoshi, "Thomas Killigrew's Early Managerial Career," 29–30. Dryden would, however, take up a position with the King's Men the following year.

14. See Anthony Parr's discussion of *The Sea Voyage* in *Three Renaissance Travel Plays*, ed. Anthony Parr (Manchester, U.K., 1995), 20–31.



can lay claim, in a certain sense, to both Fletcher and Massinger's play and Killigrew's *Storm*, which is precisely what Davenant and Dryden's prologue states:

That innocence and beauty which did smile  
In *Fletcher*, grew on this *Enchanted Isle*.  
But *Shakespear's* Magick could not copy'd be,  
Within that Circle none durst walk but he.<sup>15</sup>

*The Storm* is an adaptation of an adaptation, then, while *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* is only at one remove from the original source, so Davenant and Dryden claim; theirs is, therefore, the better play.

Julie Stone Peters reminds us that "dramatic writing is a continual process of literary inheritance, from play to play and to new play in turn, in which everyone borrows, and attribution depends, in the end, not only on origins but on merit, for one remembers (and in the theater re-members) only what is most 'worth remembering.'" <sup>16</sup> *The Tempest* prologue suggests that it was in fact Davenant, not Killigrew, who first had the idea to adapt a Jacobean "weather" play, and it does seem unrealistic that even as competent a manager as Davenant could turn his production around in only six weeks. This was a creatively and technologically demanding production, which involved rewriting the script, adding songs, commissioning new music, scenery, and costumes, as well as rehearsing the actors. It surely would have been in the planning stage long before *The Storm's* opening night. More likely, Killigrew got wind of the forthcoming *Tempest* at Lincoln's Inn Fields and moved to mitigate its deleterious effects on his box-office returns; unable to draw on Shakespeare's text, he used the next best thing, Fletcher and Massinger's adaptation of it.<sup>17</sup>

That adaptations of Shakespeare's play appeared in both Restoration theaters so closely together is not only symptomatic of Davenant and Killigrew's rivalry; it also points to the larger tendency of *The Tempest* itself to travel beyond the confines of its institutional auspices. The back-and-forth between the theaters had the effect of reenergizing both productions in the repertory, giving them an added buzz as they circulated in the competitive marketplace. The health of the overall theatrical economy is thus assured, as a King's production feeds off the popularity of a Duke's and vice versa.

Shakespeare's *Tempest* continued to be reimagined by both theaters in the following decade. In 1671, three years after Davenant's death, his successor as manager,

15. *The Tempest* (1670), sig. A4r; italics reversed.

16. Stone Peters, *Theatre of the Book*, 219.

17. On the division of the pre-1642 repertory between the two patent companies after 1660, see Gunnar Sorelius, "The Rights of the Restoration Theatrical Companies in the Older Drama," *Studia Neophilologica* 37 (1965): 174–89; and Robert D. Hume, "Securing a Repertory: Plays on the London Stage 1660–5," in *Poetry and Drama, 1570–1700: Essays in Honour of Harold F. Brooks*, ed. Anthony Coleman and Antony Hammond (London, 1981), 156–71.

Thomas Betterton, moved the company to its new, more technologically advanced home, the Dorset Garden Theatre. It was here, in 1674, that Betterton tasked Thomas Shadwell with expanding *The Tempest* to include yet more musical interludes, songs, dances, and elaborate stage business, turning the play into a dramatic opera while showing off the theater's capacity for special effects.<sup>18</sup> In order to remain competitive, Killigrew reacted by commissioning Thomas Duffett to write a parody of the Duke's new production. Seven months later, they offered up *The Mock-Tempest: Or the Enchanted Castle*. No longer a play about familial reconciliation set on an exotic island, in this version Prospero and his daughters are transported to the "enchanted castle" of Bridewell Prison. The Duke of Milan becomes a jailer, while his pickpocket servant Ariel causes a riot in a brothel instead of a storm at sea.<sup>19</sup> The Dorset Garden *Tempest* was a phenomenal success—"not any succeeding Opera got more Money,"<sup>20</sup> according to the company's prompter, John Downes—and no doubt the King's Company's burlesque helped boost its public profile still further. As we will see, though, *The Mock-Tempest* not only aped Shadwell's opera on the stage in ways analogous to *The Storm* back in 1667, but it, too, left its own residuals, in paper form.

The various performances of *The Tempest* across both theaters in the 1660s and 1670s suggest that it was susceptible to alteration and imaginative reinvention. Shakespeare's *Tempest* was, for whatever reason, considered inappropriate for the new conditions governing the Restoration stage and so left the stage free for a series of reworkings, whether directly, as in Davenant and Dryden's adaptation, or through more circuitous routes, as in Killigrew's adaptation of an adaptation, *The Storm*. This proliferation of the play no doubt encouraged a similar imaginative response to it in paper form—although in the realm of print, it would be one of the adaptations itself, Davenant and Dryden's *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, that would serve as the "secret root."

### Play as Book, Reading as Performance

Early modern people did not encounter drama solely on stage. The publication of playbooks was a crucial factor in precisely how audiences engaged with a play before, during, and after the production. With only two companies in operation after 1660, the printing of playbooks immediately after performance was not a threat to their

18. On the technical demands of this production, see Jocelyn Powell, *Restoration Theatre Production* (London, 1984), 62–83. For the late seventeenth-century fashion for dramatic operas more generally, see Andrew R. Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera, 1661–1706* (London, 2019); and Judith Milhous, "The Multimedia Spectacular on the Restoration Stage," in *British Theatre and the Other Arts, 1660–1800*, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Washington, D.C., 1984), 41–66. There is general agreement that Shadwell adapted the text, though the evidence is admittedly thin. See Helene Maxwell Hooker, "Dryden's and Shadwell's *Tempest*," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 6 (1943): 224–28.

19. Thomas Duffett, *The Mock-Tempest: Or the Enchanted Castle* (London, 1675).

20. John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (London, 1987), 74.

endeavors as it had been to the prewar theater, but was instead a marketing opportunity and, often, a secondary revenue stream for writers. Milhous and Hume have established that many a successful play in the 1660s was published within two months of its first performance but that a delay of up to a year was the norm.<sup>21</sup> For reasons unknown, Davenant and Dryden's *Tempest* was published three years after its first performances, in 1670. Possibly, there was some reluctance to publish immediately because Dryden's future with the Duke's Company was uncertain, and either he or Davenant refused to risk losing the performance rights and publication royalties should he move back to Killigrew's Theatre Royal, as he eventually did. Davenant, however, died in April 1668, leaving Dryden finally free to publish it when he saw fit.

The text of the 1670 *Tempest* records the *dramatis personae*, the prologue and epilogue spoken on the first night, and the spoken dialogue included in the production, as well as a preface by Dryden. There is no mention of the scenery or music used, despite their accounting for much of the production's success. Readers were provided instead with the bare bones of the drama and had to rely on their imaginations and memories (if they had seen it) to reconstruct the scenic spectacle and musical elements of the original production, should they want to do so.

By 1674, this had changed. To coincide with the Dorset Garden opera, Henry Herringman published an expanded quarto playbook, complete with masque-like descriptions of the scenery, music, and dances, giving readers an aide-mémoire of the extensive theatricality on display in the new theater.<sup>22</sup> Take, for example, this opening stage direction:

The Front of the Stage is open'd, and the Band of 24 Violins, with the Harpsicals and Theorbo's which accompany the Voices, are plac'd between the Pit and the Stage. While the Overture is playing, the Curtain rises, and discovers a new Frontispiece, joyn'd to the great Pylasters, on each side of the Stage. . . . Behind this is the Scene, which represents a thick Cloudy Sky, a very Rocky Coast, and a Tempestuous Sea in perpetual Agitation. This Tempest (suppos'd to be rais'd by Magick) has many dreadful Objects in it, as several Spirits in horrid shapes flying down amongst the Sailers, then rising and crossing in the Air. And when the Ship is sinking, the whole House is darken'd, and a shower of Fire falls upon 'em. This is accompanied with Lightning, and several Claps of Thunder, to the end of the Storm.<sup>23</sup>

21. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, "Dating Play Premières from Publication Data, 1660–1700," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 22 (1974): 374–405; Milhous and Hume, *Publication of Plays*, 54–57.

22. See William Davenant, John Dryden, and Thomas Shadwell, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* (London, 1674); hereafter, *The Tempest* (1674).

23. *The Tempest* (1674), 1; italics reversed.

The playbook clearly intended its reader to imagine the play as a theatrical performance, drawing attention to the “Stage,” the musicians present, and the special effects used onstage, such as the darkening of the house lights and the “Claps of Thunder.” At no point are readers meant to imagine Prospero and his daughters as real people on a real enchanted island (even the prologue to the 1670 text, reprinted in 1674, militates against this by drawing attention to the cross-gender casting in the play). Texts for dramatic operas were sometimes published ahead of performance, perhaps with the intention of being sold at the theaters themselves in order to assist audiences in interpreting the words of the songs and to provide information about the settings, characters, and plot not supplied directly by the dialogue.<sup>24</sup> As we will see, however, playbooks do not necessarily reflect the realities of the performance they claim to record. In some circumstances, they diverge from their staged referents in ways that transform how we interpret the narratives presented to readers.

As in earlier periods, reading playbooks was one of the main ways that people in the Restoration encountered drama outside of professional performance.<sup>25</sup> Evidence of play reading from the period is sketchy, but we do have access to an important, if flawed, source: Samuel Pepys. It is practically *de rigueur* to cite Pepys’s diary in accounts of Restoration drama. As he was an avid reader as well as spectator of plays and an amateur musician, Pepys’s extratheatrical engagement with dramatic material is extremely useful for thinking about nonprofessional activities.<sup>26</sup> Pepys enjoyed reading plays as much as seeing them. On Sunday, August 5, 1666, for example, he passed a pleasant afternoon sailing down the Thames, reading (yet again) the second part of Davenant’s *The Siege of Rhodes*, “with great delight.”<sup>27</sup> He and his wife, Elizabeth, spent many evenings reading sections of plays together; on December 19, 1668, Elizabeth read her husband some of Davenant’s play before dinner, while earlier that year, Pepys made her and a friend read out William Habington’s *The Queen of*

24. This is equally true of Davenant’s Protectorate opera, *The Siege of Rhodes*, which was printed in August and first performed in September 1656. Cf. Milhous and Hume’s discussion of quick publication for other operatic productions, such as Shadwell’s *Psyche* (1675) or Charles Davenant’s *Circe* (1677), in “Dating Play Premières,” 383–84. Certainly, plays in the 1690s explicitly advertised themselves as being sold at the theater.

25. Louis B. Wright, “The Reading of Plays during the Puritan Revolution,” *Huntington Library Bulletin* 6 (1934): 73–108; Rachel Willie, *Staging the Revolution: Drama, Reinvention and History, 1647–72* (Manchester, U.K., 2015), 52–79; Marisa Nicosia, “Printing as Revival: Making Playbooks in the 1650s,” *Papers of the Bibliographic Society of America* 111 (2017): 469–89.

26. Of course, we must be careful not to take Pepys’s experiences as representative of broader contemporary responses to the play in question. Michael Cordner has rightly cautioned against drawing uncritically upon the testimony of this “most obsessively idiosyncratic of observers.” See his “Introduction: Expanding Horizons,” in *Players, Playwrights, Playhouses: Investigating Performance, 1660–1800*, ed. Michael Cordner and Peter Holland (Houndmills, U.K., 2007), 1. For a useful discussion of Pepys’s spectatorship, see Deborah C. Payne, “Theatrical Spectatorship in Pepys’s Diary,” *Review of English Studies* 66 (2015): 87–105.

27. *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Latham and Matthews, 7:235 (August 5, 1666).

*Aragon* (1640) until eleven o'clock at night.<sup>28</sup> Although it is not possible to know how histrionic such occasions were, the act of reading out loud is inherently performative, as Jennifer Richards has recently demonstrated, so that reading a play prompts interesting and suggestive questions about the nature (and limits) of genre.<sup>29</sup> Are plays only "plays" in the theater, when recited by professional actors, or can they be reenacted in analogous ways in the home, by just one or two participants? Is reading—or reading aloud—different from acting, amateur or otherwise?

Pepys's contemporary Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, certainly felt that reading plays required an actorly appreciation for the "several humours, or passions, as are exprest by Writing."<sup>30</sup> An amateur playwright herself, Cavendish insisted that there was a performative element to the reading of plays: readers "must not read a Scene as they would read a Chapter; for Scenes must be read as if they were spoke or Acted."<sup>31</sup> Cavendish entertained little hope that her own scripts would be professionally staged, and she developed a sophisticated (if fanciful) method for capturing their peculiar theatricality through her imagination, which she termed the "Stage in my Brain."<sup>32</sup> For such amateurs, reading plays was inherently a performative activity, which in its own way served to perpetuate theatrical performance while at the same time transposing it to the domestic, private sphere.

### ☞ "Lead on Musician": Circulating Songs and Scores

As we have seen, Pepys read *The Siege of Rhodes* long after it had ceased to be a popular novelty at Lincoln's Inn Fields. Yet, his engagement with the play goes beyond merely rereading it for pleasure. Intrigued by the many songs in the production but not content with merely acquiring the play's lyrics in the form of a printed edition, Pepys went to the trouble of asking one of the Duke's musicians for a copy of the music, "which he tells me he can get me, which I am mighty glad of."<sup>33</sup> Whether Pepys, a keen amateur musician and singer, intended to perform the music at home or simply to acquire it as a collector, these residuals of performance (text *and* tune) allow an imaginative engagement with the play outside of the theater that would bring him closer to what he had first seen and heard onstage.

Another example of creative engagement with *The Siege of Rhodes* is presented in John Hayls's portrait of Pepys, painted in 1666, in which the diarist is depicted

28. See *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Latham and Matthews, 9:396 (December 19, 1668) and 9:333 (October 20, 1668), respectively.

29. Jennifer Richards, *Voices and Books in the English Renaissance: A New History of Reading* (Oxford, 2019).

30. Margaret Cavendish, *Playes Written by the Thrice Noble, Illustrious and Excellent Princess, the Lady Marchioness of Newcastle* (London, 1662), sig. A6v.

31. Cavendish, *Playes*, sig. A6v.

32. Margaret Cavendish, letter CXCv, in *CCXI Sociable Letters, Written by the Thrice Noble, Illustrious, and Excellent Princess, the Lady Marchioness of Newcastle* (London, 1664), 408.

33. *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Latham and Matthews, 8:25 (January 22, 1667).

holding a libretto and score.<sup>34</sup> The music is Pepys's own: it is a setting of a lyric from Solyman's final speech in act 4 of Davenant's second part of the play (ca. 1659–61), called "Beauty, retire."<sup>35</sup> Pepys's encounters with the play are thus not simply consumptive, as his intention to acquire the "official" tune from the musician might suggest; they are productive, generative, and creative in themselves. Pepys composed his own music for the lyrics (did he ever get hold of the score from the Lincoln's Inn Fields's musician?) and performed it himself. These amateur engagements with plays are an important, though neglected, part of Restoration cultural life. Plays are not fixed entities watched or read and then laid aside; they are material objects to be reimagined, adapted, and replayed within a whole variety of contexts beyond the theater.

Returning to *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, we find in Pepys the same preoccupation with transferring elements of the live production to the domestic sphere. In an entry for November 7, 1667, he records in his diary his delight with "a curious piece of musique in an echo of half sentences . . . which is mighty pretty."<sup>36</sup> He is referring to the third-act duet "Go thy way," sung by Ferdinand and Ariel. This famous song represents a perfect example of how part of a play can become detached and move across institutional and imaginative borders, from stage to page, from professional performance to amateur dramatics.<sup>37</sup> It also demonstrates the ways in which the publishing and theater industries developed more broadly across the 1660s and 1670s. Spectators like Pepys clearly desired to take home pleasing moments of a production in more tangible forms. As Stern observes, songs tend to come in for this treatment because they are "in general more extractable, moveable, revisable units of play than other pieces of text."<sup>38</sup> No doubt songs appeal, too, because they tend to be deployed at moments of high emotional tension and are thus likely to stick in the memories of spectators.

Very quickly, Pepys set out to acquire both the music and lyrics for his new favorite song, as he had done previously with the lyric from *The Siege of Rhodes*. Six months after *The Tempest*'s premiere, on May 7, 1668, he found himself at dinner with the song's composer, John Banister. Keen not to pass up the opportunity, he asked the musician to "prick me down the notes of the Echo in 'The Tempest.'"<sup>39</sup> This Banister willingly undertook for his new friend. But Pepys still did not have the lyrics to the

34. The portrait is most readily available through the National Portrait Gallery's website. See John Hayls, *Samuel Pepys*, oil on canvas, 1666, National Portrait Gallery, accessed April 30, 2021, [www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mwo4948/Samuel-Pepys](http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mwo4948/Samuel-Pepys).

35. William Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes: The First and Second Part* (London, 1663), 47 (second pagination). This piece has been recorded by Richard Wistreich and Robin Jeffrey in *The Musical Life of Samuel Pepys*, Saydisc, CD-SDL 385, 1994, compact disc.

36. *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Latham and Matthews, 8:522 (November 7, 1667).

37. *The Tempest* (1670), 43; *The Tempest* (1674), 42. The verses were set by John Banister (1630–1679).

38. Stern, "Repatching the Play," 158.

39. *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Latham and Matthews, 9:189 (May 7, 1668).



tune. A few days later, on May 11, he succeeded in obtaining these as well, although this proved a more challenging task: "I to the Duke of York's playhouse, and there saw 'The Tempest,' and between two acts, I went out to Mr. Harris [who played Ferdinand], and got him to repeat to me the words of the Echo, while I writ them down, having tried in the play to have wrote them; but, when I had done it, having done it without looking upon my paper, I find I could not read the blacklead. But now I have got the words clear."<sup>40</sup> Pepys's attempt to record verses from the play is in line with standard accounts of early modern commonplacing.<sup>41</sup> But the practicalities of securing the lyrics were anything but straightforward. In the gloom of the theater's auditorium, Pepys made such a mess of the transcription that he had to track down an actor to recite the lines, which he could then accurately record. This is not something everyone in the audience would have been in a position to do, of course. Most spectators would never have had such unlimited access to the actors after the performance. What Pepys's individual experiences do tell us about Restoration theater culture, though, is that people apparently wanted to take certain parts of the plays they enjoyed away with them, but that they did not necessarily have the means to do so. The theatrical market of the 1660s was unprepared to satisfy adequately this peculiar desire of its patrons. To get what he wanted, Pepys had to either struggle inexpertly in the dark or else corner an actor in the tiring-room.

By the 1670s, however, the market had responded. Had Pepys wanted a textual record of the songs from the Dorset Garden *Tempest*, he would no longer have needed to bring pencil and paper to the theater; he could simply have picked up a songbook from one of the orange sellers or from a bookstall on his way home.<sup>42</sup> In Buckingham's *The Rehearsal* (1672), the playwright Bayes explains how he has "printed above a hundred sheets of papyr, to insinuate the Plot into the Boxes,"<sup>43</sup> suggesting that printed materials were becoming a common paratextual feature of performance.

Within a year of the Dorset Garden production, copies of two songbooks were made available for purchase. *The Songs and Masques in the Tempest* (ca. 1674) was a small pamphlet printed in quarto containing the lyrics of all the songs of the 1674 production.<sup>44</sup> *The Ariels Songs in the Play call'd the Tempest* (ca. 1675) consisted of just four folio sheets, setting Ariel's songs, "Come unto these yellow Sands," "Dry those Eyes," "Go thy Way," "Full Fathom five," and "Where the Bee Sucks," along with a setting of

40. *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Latham and Matthews, 9:195 (May 11, 1668).

41. See Laura Estill, *Dramatic Extracts in Seventeenth-Century Manuscripts: Watching, Reading, Changing Plays* (Newark, Del., 2015).

42. For eighteenth-century evidence that orange sellers sold printed material relating to the day's play, see Valerie Fairbrass, "'Books of the Songs to be Had at the Theatre': Some Notes on Fruit Women and Their Contribution to Theatre Finances," *Theatre Notebook* 66 (2012): 66–84.

43. George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, *The Rehearsal* (London, 1672), 8. For a discussion of this episode in relation to printed libretti in the theater, see Stone Peters, *Theatre of the Book*, 48–49.

44. *The Songs and Masques in the Tempest* (London, ca. 1674).

a song associated with Dorinda, “Adieu to the Pleasures and Follies of Love,” all set to the music of John Banister, Pelham Humfrey, and James Hart.<sup>45</sup> John Playford had printed these sheets to be inserted into his *Choice Ayres, Songs, & Dialogues to Sing to the Theorbo-Lute, or Bass-Viol . . . the Second Edition Corrected and Enlarged* (1675). As James McManaway has shown, the independent copy in the British Library cited here, which displays neither page numbers nor signatures, has been carefully cropped and presumably either removed from its copy of Playford’s book or never actually sewn into it.<sup>46</sup> It is likely that *Songs and Masques* was printed in anticipation of the first performance, in part functioning as a libretto for the sung elements of the play, while *Ariels Songs* looks to be a true “residual,” in Smith’s sense, as a text that remembers and perpetuates performance beyond the stage while taking commercial advantage of the production’s popularity beyond the theater.<sup>47</sup>

While *Songs and Masques* and *Ariels Songs* are fascinating for many reasons, the most notable thing about these texts is that they diverge from the playbook in several key respects. *Songs and Masques*, for instance, prints the “masque of devils” from act 2, but where Shadwell’s playbook boasts three devils, thus mirroring the three Italian visitors—Alonzo, Antonio, and Gonzalo—that they taunt, the songbook insists that the masque was performed by no fewer than five devils (four each conjuring up the figures of Pride, Fraud, Rapine, and Murder and one to summon up the “subterranean Winds” that eventually chase the Italians away).<sup>48</sup> As this songbook was specifically designed to work in concert with the production as a libretto, we must assume that, at some point in the run, the masque graduated from three to five devils. Thus, if audience members keen to relive the performance they had watched in the theater on that “Stage in [their] Brain” should turn to the playbook, they would not, in fact, find the scene exactly as it was performed onstage, but rather a slightly altered version of it. The number of devils in the masque may be a small point in the grand scheme of things, but it is nonetheless a salutary one: it cautions us against taking the printed playbook as an accurate mediator of performance and instead recognizes that it is as contingent in its relationship to the theatrical event as any other residual. In some cases, it may be even less reliable a record than the supposedly ephemeral songbook.

The same might be said for *Ariels Songs*, which contains a song sung by Dorinda over the supposedly dead body of her lover, Hippolito, in act 4. This is not the place to rehearse the complex performance and print history of this song and its

45. *The Ariels Songs in the Play call'd the Tempest* (London, ca. 1675), Music Collections G.109.(2.), British Library.

46. James G. McManaway, “Songs and Masques in *The Tempest*,” in *Theatre Miscellany: Six Pieces Connected with the Seventeenth-Century Stage* (Oxford, 1953), 71–96 at 77. On Playford’s text, see John Playford, *Choice Ayres, Songs, and Dialogues*, ed. Ian Spink (London, 1989), ix and appendix 2.

47. McManaway, “Songs and Masques,” 73–74.

48. *The Tempest* (1674), 28–30; *Songs and Masques*, 2–3.

relationship to the production, but what is important to note here is that no play-book printed during the period reprints this song as part of the play. *Ariels Songs* was printed after the first appearance of the play's 1674 quarto, which suggests that the song was added into the production after the initial run, possibly to add color to a scene that was otherwise considered emotionally flat. There is evidence that the song was widely known and popular, however.<sup>49</sup> Reading the playbook would deny readers the opportunity to relive the moment of this song's performance in their imaginations, which drastically alters the emotional impact of the scene in which Dorinda discovers Hippolito's body. What *Songs and Masques* and *Ariels Songs* demonstrate, then, is that plays frequently alter over time, even during the run of a production, and that to reconstruct this process requires looking far beyond the usual textual evidence theater historians rely upon—namely, the printed playbook alone.

That the long-established tradition of detaching songs from their plays and circulating them in scribal form continued in the 1660s is, given what we know of earlier periods, wholly unsurprising.<sup>50</sup> What is new is that across the first two decades of the Restoration, the print market for dramatic materials responds, reasonably rapidly, to the desires and frustrations of patrons, for whom the troublesome business of commonplacing during performance ceases to be fashionable or, as Pepys's diary entry attests, even practicable in the larger indoor theaters of the Restoration. By the mid-1670s, the elements of a production that spectators are most likely to want to "detach" are anticipated by the theater management and publishers and sold in standardized print formats. This was true for productions at the Duke's and King's theaters alike; as happened with Shadwell's play, Duffett's *The Mock-Tempest* prompted the publication of a bespoke songbook, *The Songs & Masque in the New Tempest*.<sup>51</sup>

Songs were not the only musical elements of *The Tempest* to find themselves an independent readership. Within a year of the Dorset Garden production's opening night, Matthew Locke, the main composer responsible for the music for the operatic *Tempest*, published his instrumental scores to the play in a large volume, combining it

49. The lyrics were set by James Hart, a singer in the 1674 production. They were frequently reprinted in theatrical miscellanies. See, for instance, *A Perfect Collection of the Several Songs Now in Mode Either at the Court or, Theatres. All New* (London, 1675), sig. B1r-v; *A Perfect Collection of all the Songs Now in Mode Either at the Court, or, Theatres. With New Additions* (London, 1675), sig. B1r-v; *A New Collection of the Choicest Songs Now in Esteem in Town or Court* (London, 1676), sig. B5r-v; John Playford, *Choice Ayres, Songs, & Dialogues to Sing to the Theorbo-Lute, or Bass-Viol* (London, 1675), 73; and Henry Playford, *Wit and Mirth: or, Pills to Purge Melancholy* (London, 1699), 189–90. Hart's tune for Dorinda's popular lament was used as the basis for a later ballad, "Good News in Bad Times; or Absaloms Return to David's Bosome." See 34788, Early Broadside Ballad Archive, dir. Patricia Fumerton, accessed April 30, 2021, <https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/34788/image>.

50. See Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993); Stern, "Watching as Reading."

51. Charles Haywood, "The Songs & Masque in the New Tempest: An Incident in the Battle of the Two Theatres, 1674," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 19 (1955): 39–56.

with his score for Shadwell's other operatic success, *Psyche* (1675). The scores appeared together under the triumphantly patriotic title *The English Opera*.<sup>52</sup>

On the face of it, the volume appears to be making a political, rather than a musical, statement. The collection is a reduced score of the act tunes and curtain music used in the Dorset Garden *Tempest*; as a working document for performance, it is essentially unusable. Instead, Locke's intended purpose for this strange text is to demonstrate a native—that is, English—operatic style that is distinct from the French or Italian models that were then gaining popularity in London, especially at court.<sup>53</sup>

However, Locke does have another motive for producing this reduced score, one that speaks to early modern desires to acquire and own elements of theatrical productions away from the circumstances of professional performance. In his text, Locke claims to be providing a record of performance that, while impractical from a musicological standpoint, does at the very least aid both the memory and imagination of its readers. In his preface to the text, Locke explains that he decided to publish his scores “to satisfie those Lovers and Understanders of Musick, whose business or distance prevent their seeing and hearing it” in its proper context of theatrical performance. He even directs his readers to the published playbooks of *The Tempest* and *Psyche*, should readers desire to see further their “particular Excellencies,” such as the plot or elaborate descriptions of the scenic effects used in the production.<sup>54</sup>

In *The English Opera*, Locke appeals to multiple markets: musical connoisseurs and patriots who want to survey the latest in English musical styles, musicians looking to play his works either as rehearsal exercises or as concert repertoire (though this would require some creative engagement with the score), spectators of the original production who want an aide-mémoire of the theatrical event, and potentially interested readers who were unable (or unwilling) to pay to visit the theater to see *The Tempest* in performance but who can now use these scripts and scores to re-create the opera in the theater of their imaginations, or in the privacy of their own homes. Of course, these groups are not mutually exclusive; Locke's readers may well have used his scores in one or all of these ways, and we might assume the same thing is true of the published playbooks as well. What is important is that Locke's readers are *acquiring* the production's music for their own ends away from the playhouse. How buyers then create, perform, and otherwise engage with the text is out of the control of the original institutions—the theaters—that traditionally controlled access to productions.

52. Matthew Locke, *The English Opera, or, the Vocal Musick in Psyche, with the Instrumental Therein Intermix'd. To which is Adjoyned the Instrumental Musick in The Tempest* (London, 1675).

53. On the presence of foreign musicians in London during the later seventeenth century, see Andrew R. Walkling, *Masque and Opera in England, 1656–1688* (New York, 2017), 193–218, 264–90.

54. Locke, *English Opera*, sigs. A1v, A1r.

☞ *The Tempest* beyond Performance, beyond Drama

My final example of *The Tempest* “on the move” perfectly illustrates some of the things I have been discussing throughout this essay about print not just remediating a performance text but actually perpetuating performance in altered forms. *The Force of Nature; or the Loves of Hippollito and Dorinda* was published by the Northampton-based chapbook printers Robert Raikes and William Dicey in 1720.<sup>55</sup> The title page insists that it is a new romance “Translated from the French original, and never before printed in English,” while its running title reads, “The History of *Prospero, Duke of Milan*.”<sup>56</sup>

The text is not a translation but instead a prose retelling of the Davenant-Dryden-Shadwell play. Whether the author really thought his readers would believe it was originally French, rather than immediately recognizing the play that lay behind it, is difficult to determine, although it seems unlikely that anybody would be duped by such an obvious deceit, especially given that it quotes the masques in acts 2 and 5 verbatim. Nicholas Rowe’s edition of Shakespeare’s *Works* was published in 1709, but the Shadwell adaptation was still the only *Tempest* being performed onstage during the early eighteenth century. A new edition of the 1674 play was also published in 1720 by Thomas Johnson of The Hague under the title *The Tempest: Or, the Enchanted Island. A Comedy. First Written by Mr. William Shakespear. & since altered by Sr. William Davenant, and Mr. John Dryden*, and it looks as though the romance writer used this as his or her source text.<sup>57</sup> Given Johnson’s reputation for pirating London Shakespeare editions, the fact that he calls attention directly to Davenant and Dryden’s modifications to the play on his title page suggests how well known their version had become and how their own names added value to the edition rather than detracting from Shakespeare’s “brand” recognition. In this instance, it paid Johnson to draw on the Restoration playwrights’ status and fame as well as Shakespeare’s.

It is clear that the author of the prose romance had an intimate knowledge of Shadwell’s text. They take great care to base their narrative on the script, using a

55. *The Force of Nature; or the Loves of Hippollito and Dorinda. A Romance* (Northampton, 1720). See also Victor E. Neuburg, “The Diceys and the Chapbook Trade,” *The Library* 24 (1969): 219–31.

56. Charles C. Mish provides a short introduction to a transcription of the text in “An Early Eighteenth-Century Prose Version of *The Tempest*,” in *British Theatre and the Other Arts*, ed. Strum Kenny, 237–56.

57. *The Tempest: Or, the Enchanted Island. A Comedy. First Written by Mr. William Shakespear. & since altered by Sr. William Davenant, and Mr. John Dryden* (London, 1710; repr., The Hague, 1720). Although the title page does not name Johnson as the publisher explicitly, the ornament is his. See Milhous and Hume, *Publication of Plays*, 247. See also Theo Bögels, “Fit for the Pocket”: Thomas Johnson’s Edition of *The Tempest*,” in *Shakespeare and the Low Countries*, ed. Ton Hoenselaars and Holger Klein (Lewiston, N.Y., 2005), 165–78. The Restoration adaptation of the play, rather than Shakespeare’s text, was also translated into Dutch at around this time. See Ton Hoenselaars and Frank van Meurs, “The Haarlem Manuscript of *Hartogh Van Savoyj*: An Eighteenth-Century Dutch Translation of *The Tempest: or the Enchanted Island*,” in *Shakespeare im 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Roger Paulin (Göttingen, Germany, 2007), 243–65.

mixture of paraphrase and direct quotation. For example, midway through, we join Alonzo, Antonio, and Gonzalo wandering about the island: “Alonzo . . . Antonio . . . and Gonzalo, had now found out each other; but instead of being mutual Comforts, they only serv’d to aggravate their respective Miseries: The two Dukes appear’d like Men distracted; and good Gonzalo’s Tears run down his Beard, like Winter-Drops from Eves of Houses: Alonzo was brimful of Grief, for the Loss of his Son *Ferdinand*, whom he suppos’d to be drown’d; and reproach’d Antonio with his being the Cause of all their Sorrows; which he indeed could not deny; but laid the Crime at Alonzo’s Door.”<sup>58</sup> At this juncture, “to complete their Terror and Amazement, Alonzo pulling a Tree, Blood issued out of it.” This is a paraphrase of what was said on stage: “I pull’d a Tree, and blood pursu’d my hand.”<sup>59</sup> Ghostly noises are then heard, and the ground opens to reveal “a horrid Masque of Spirits.” At this point, the writer quotes verbatim the masque of devils (though the romance calls them “Spirits”) from act 2 of Shadwell’s text.<sup>60</sup> The romance concludes with Ariel’s song “Where the Bee Sucks” and Prospero’s final farewell to his faithful servant.<sup>61</sup>

Charles Mish suggests that *The Force of Nature* “attests, along with the frequent performances of *The Tempest* recorded in theatrical history, to the staying power of Shakespeare’s imagination.”<sup>62</sup> When considering its immediate sources, however, we see instead that the romance attests to the staying power of Davenant and Dryden’s *Tempest* in the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century imaginary, not Shakespeare’s. The prose narrative is a remediation of the Restoration play into another textual form, the prose romance, which enables it to encounter new audiences (non-London-based readers, who may not have access either to Shadwell’s text or the operatic stage performance), while also perpetuating *The Tempest*’s life beyond the stage. Whoever wrote *The Force of Nature* clearly felt a desire to pay homage to the original playtext while, at the same time, they created a new and distinctive literary product in print for a new readership.

*The Tempest* captured the public imagination in the late seventeenth century. It was picked up and reused in a wide range of contexts for a variety of purposes: from personal study, to public performance, to amateur entertainment, to the pleasure of collecting and ownership, and as an aide-mémoire of personal spectatorship or a record of the larger performance. To achieve this wide set of aims, it was remediated: from performance, playtext, and stand-alone song, to miscellany, music score, and even fictional prose. In describing and accounting for its popularity, it is necessary to examine each of these iterations of the play in turn. Each represents an imaginative engagement with *The Tempest* that, for those who made it, was potentially as

58. *Force of Nature*, 13.

59. *The Tempest* (1674), 27.

60. *Force of Nature*, 13–14.

61. *Force of Nature*, 28–29; cf. *The Tempest* (1674), 81.

62. Mish, “Early Eighteenth-Century Prose,” 240.



powerful and fulfilling as seeing the play at Lincoln's Inn Fields or Dorset Garden (or at either of the King's Company's theaters, as *The Storm* or *The Mock-Tempest*). But the implications reach far beyond *The Tempest*. Restoration drama tout court frequently proliferates in new and varied published forms, nourished by the developing print market and an expanding middle-class readership. If we are to fully understand the cultural and imaginative power these plays enjoyed during the second half of the seventeenth century, then we must look for those parts of plays that become detached from the main body of the text and those residuals that linger long after the thrilling storm of performance has vanished into thin air.

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# Aphra Behn's Adaptations: Paper and Stage Sources for *The Rover* (1677) and *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678)

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Claire Bowditch and Elaine Hobby

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**ABSTRACT** As early as 1687, Gerard Langbaine noted the tendency of the most prolific Restoration playwrights to borrow from a plurality of sources for a single play. While Langbaine's identifications of playwrights' source materials, or "thefts," have been widely expanded upon in recent decades, the precise nature (and implications) of such borrowings have been underexplored. This essay will demonstrate how close comparison between a Restoration play and its paper stage sources contributes to an understanding of what might be at issue in such "thefts." This essay's focus is on two plays by Aphra Behn: *The Rover* (1677) and *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678). **KEYWORDS:** literary borrowing and adaptation; stage picture; drama in print; Killigrew's *Don Thomaso*; *The Decameron*; Molière's *Le Malade imaginaire*; James Shirley; Richard Brome

❧ EVEN BEFORE GERARD LANGBAINE PUBLISHED *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets* in 1691 identifying many "Plagiaries," he had observed that a Restoration dramatist might either purloin their play from a single earlier work or construct it from a plurality of sources. In *Momus Triumphans* (1687), he stated, for instance, that Aphra Behn's *The City-Heiress* (1682) takes plots from both Thomas Middleton's *A Mad World My Masters* and Philip Massinger's *The Guardian* and that John Dryden's *An Evening's Love* (1668) draws on a Pierre Corneille comedy and a novel by Madeleine de Scudéry.<sup>1</sup> Paulina Kewes's foundational work on Langbaine's identifications has demonstrated their wider significance for emergent definitions of

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1. Gerard Langbaine, *Momus Triumphans; or, The Plagiaries of the English Stage* (London, 1687), 2, 7. See also Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (Oxford, 1691), sig. a4r.

authorship and originality in the period.<sup>2</sup> Rather than repeat those investigations of authors' explicit discussion of such matters in paratextual materials, this essay will demonstrate how close comparison between a Restoration play and its paper stage sources contributes to an understanding of what might be at issue in such "thefts." Our focus is on two plays by Aphra Behn: *The Rover* (1677), which Langbaine states was "Taken from Tho. Killigrew's Don Thomaso," and *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678), which, according to Langbaine, combines elements from plays by Richard Brome and Molière.<sup>3</sup> We concentrate on these two consecutive works in order to demonstrate that many different strategies and modes of borrowing were possible, even by a single author within a few months. Although we make no claim that Behn's contemporaries engaged in the same processes, given how regularly she was staged, it would be surprising if her practices were not in some manner representative of Restoration dramatists' relationship with the paper stage.

☞ *The Rover; or, The Banish't Cavaliers*

Langbaine was oversimplifying matters when he declared that *The Rover* is taken from Thomas Killigrew's *Thomaso* (written ca. 1654; pub. 1664), but the connections are unmissable—and not only because Behn's postscript to *The Rover* indicates that some critics were insisting that it was "Thomaso alter'd."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the relationship between the plays far exceeds Behn's having "stoln some hints" from Killigrew, as her "Postscript" firmly states when explaining her use of "the Sign of Angellica."<sup>5</sup> First, it is not only Angellica Bianca who appears in both: Don Pedro, Lucetta, Sanc[h]o, and Cal[l]is also appear; Behn's Frederick is based on Killigrew's Ferdinando; and her Ned Blunt has many of the characteristics of his Edwardo. Further, Behn's rake, Willmore, and his friend, the constant Belvile, are both developed from Killigrew's Thomaso. Behn's sisters Hellena and Florinda, meanwhile, are indebted to Killigrew's Serulina: Florinda, like Serulina, goes on the run to escape a forced marriage, and Hellena evades being sent to a nunnery. The general scenario of *The Rover* also follows *Thomaso*'s group of exiled cavaliers in Continental Europe in the 1650s and includes sequences

2. Paulina Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660–1710* (Oxford, 1998).

3. Langbaine, *Momus Triumphans*, 3. *The Rover*'s publication and first known performance (May) were in 1677; *Sir Patient Fancy* was onstage in January 1678. See *The London Stage: 1660–1800*, vol. 1, 1660–1700, ed. William Van Lennep (Carbondale, Ill., 1965), 256, 266–67. Behn was the author of seventeen plays first performed between 1670 and 1696 and the possible author of at least three more. See Mary Ann O'Donnell, *Aphra Behn: An Annotated Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, 2nd ed. (Aldershot, U.K., 2004).

4. Aphra Behn, *The Rover; or, The Banish't Cavaliers* (London, 1677), 85; Thomas Killigrew, *Thomaso; or, the Wanderer*, in his *Comedies, and Tragedies* (London, 1664), 311–464. Hereafter, unless otherwise noted, they are cited in the text as *Rover* and *Thomaso* respectively, followed by page numbers. As it has two parts, when it is relevant *Thomaso* is preceded by the appropriate 1 or 2. Killigrew's address "To the Reader" asserts that these plays were written during his "Twenty Years Banishment" before the Restoration. See Killigrew's *Comedies, and Tragedies*, sig. \*2r.

5. Elaine Hobby, "No Stolen Object, But Her Own: Aphra Behn's *Rover* and Thomas Killigrew's *Thomaso*," *Women's Writing* 6 (1999): 113–27.

in which one of them attempts to rape a woman. Both plays, too, feature a plot in which a man—Edwardo/Blunt—is tricked and robbed by Lucetta, a “Jilting Wench” (*Rover*, sig. A3v; *Rover*, 37–41; 1 *Thomaso*, 374–79). No doubt it was these similarities that Behn’s early twentieth-century editor, Montague Summers, had in mind when he concluded that the “entire plan” of Behn’s play can be found in Killigrew’s.<sup>6</sup> Behn certainly knew *Thomaso* well, likely from its 1664 publication, and possibly even from a performance by the King’s Company.<sup>7</sup> This essay cannot detail all the ways in which Behn drew on *Thomaso* when composing *The Rover*, but some key examples indicate the nature of the relationship, which is not as simple as these connections of character and plot might suggest.<sup>8</sup>

Behn’s Florinda, like her source character, Serulina, is repeatedly the target of sexual violence. Killigrew’s Edwardo attacks Serulina; in *The Rover*, both Willmore and Blunt threaten Florinda, the Blunt episode developing into an anticipated gang rape. Florinda is even threatened with rape before the action starts, when Belville saves her from assault by soldiers (*Rover*, 2; 1 *Thomaso*, 342). As Jones DeRitter has argued, Behn significantly adjusts Killigrew’s plot when she makes the rakish Willmore responsible for one of the staged assaults, thus complicating the audience’s response to the hero.<sup>9</sup> When it comes to Florinda, though, Behn effects a different kind of transformation. In these episodes, Florinda repeatedly voices Serulina’s sentiments, confident, like her prototype, that “a Gentleman” can be trusted:

SERULINA [to EDUARDO] Sir, as you are a Gentleman, I conjure you, consider, ere your passion transports you. — Why are you so barbarous to abuse a Maid, fled to you for protection? (2 *Thomaso*, 409)

FLORINDA [to BLUNT] I beseech you, as you seem a Gentleman, pity a harmless Virgin, that takes your house for Sanctuary. (*Rover*, 64)

Like Serulina, Florinda is confident that no serious harm will come to her, because she is virtuous. However, whereas in *Thomaso* the audience is never given a reason

6. *The Works of Aphra Behn*, vol. 1, ed. Montague Summers (London, 1915), 4–5. Janet Todd’s edition repeats this, stating, “*The Rover* was based on Thomas Killigrew’s *Thomaso* . . . and it must be classed as one of Behn’s adaptations.” See *The Works of Aphra Behn*, vol. 5, *The Plays: 1671–1677*, ed. Janet Todd (London, 1996), 446.

7. For the possibility of a performance, see Marcus Nevitt, “Thomas Killigrew’s *Thomaso* as Two-Part Comedy,” in *Thomas Killigrew and the Seventeenth-Century English Stage*, ed. Philip Major (Abingdon, U.K., 2013), 113–32. The marked-up copy of *Thomaso* held in Worcester College Library, Oxford, indicates the intention to cast Anne Quin as Angellica Bianca, the part that she certainly created in *The Rover*.

8. See the forthcoming *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Aphra Behn*, vols. 2 and 3, for details of Behn’s use of *Thomaso* both in this play and in *The Second Part of the Rover* (1681).

9. Jones DeRitter, “The Gypsy, *The Rover*, and the Wanderer: Aphra Behn’s Revision of Thomas Killigrew,” *Restoration* 10 (1986): 82–92 at 84–85. In *Thomaso*, the perpetrator in both cases is the Blunt figure, Edwardo: 1 *Thomaso*, 357–59; 2 *Thomaso*, 409–11.

to question the belief that a good woman will be safe in a gentleman's hands, in *The Rover*, Florinda's perspective seems increasingly foolish. *The Rover*'s climax is not found in *Thomaso*. Whereas Behn's cavaliers compare the lengths of their swords to determine who will go first in her planned serial rape (70), in *Thomaso*, Serulina takes comfort when Ferdinando joins the enraged Edwardo, because "you seldom read of two men so wicked by chance, as to act or consent to such crimes as Murder, or Rape, where the looker on grows as guilty as the actor" (2 *Thomaso*, 415–16). While both Florinda and Serulina might appeal to a would-be rapist to "use me kindly" (Florinda, *Rover*, 66) or "use me civilly" (Serulina, 2 *Thomaso*, 411), only Killigrew's plot works to make such confidence in civility seem wise.<sup>10</sup>

Whereas the endangered, eloping Florinda is taken from Serulina's plot and dialogue, Behn developed another aspect of Killigrew's heroine—the heiress worth 200,000 crowns (2 *Thomaso*, 426), whose brother, Pedro, is threatening her with confinement to a nunnery (2 *Thomaso*, 421)—into the character of Hellena. Unlike Florinda, however, Hellena's dialogue cannot be created from the virtuous Serulina's words. Representative in this regard is *The Rover*'s opening scene, where Hellena wittily defends Florinda from a forced marriage. In these extracts, phrases in bold are taken verbatim from Behn's source and underlining indicates a rephrasing of the earlier play. In instances where Behn omits a substantial segment of *Thomaso*'s dialogue, the number of words she has skipped is given in square brackets. In the discussion that follows of *Sir Patient Fancy*, the number of lines of verse omitted by Behn from her Shirley source is indicated. When Pedro suggests that once married to Don Vincentio, Florinda will be able to luxuriate in walking in his gardens, Hellena counters:

**When, by Moon Light? For I am sure she dares not encounter with the heat of the Sun, that were a task only for Don Vincentio and his Indian breeding, who loves it in the Dog dayes.** — and if these be her daily divertisements, what are those of the Night? (*Rover*, 4)

Faced with Pedro's repeated "Have you done yet?," Hellena pictures Florinda's bedtime encounters with such a husband:

the Gyant stretches it self; yawns and sighs a Belch or two, loud as a Musket, throws himself into Bed, and expects you in his foul sheets, and e're you can get your self undrest, call's you with a snore or Two — and are not these fine Blessings to a young Lady? . . . And this Man you must kiss, nay you must kiss none but him too — and nuzel through his Beard to find his Lips. — And this you must submit to for Threescore years, and all for a Joynture. (4)

10. For an excellent exploration of the emergence of "civility," see Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998).

Hellena's words here are taken not from Serulina, but from Harrigo, Killigrew's "sober English Gentleman" (2 *Thomaso*, 312), who advises Serulina to resist forced marriage:

**When? by Moon-shine? I am sure you dare not meet Signior Sol abroad, unless** you'll come home, like Rose-cakes from a Still, bak'd and sweating; [53 words] 'Tis enough for your *Alphonso* and **his Indian breeding** to endure such stabs as the Sun strikes in the Dog-days; [101 words]  
**the Gyant stretches himself, yawns and sighs a belch or two, stales in your pot, farts as loud as a Musket for a jest; and then throws himself under the Rug, and expects you in his foul sheets, and asspitting cloath, where hangs as much of his Lungs as remains in his body; and ere you can get into the bed he calls you with a snore or two; and are not these fine things in a Ladies bed? . . . yet this man you must kiss; nay, you must kiss none but this, and muzzle through his beard to find his lips; and this you can submit to for threescore year for a joynture.**  
 (2 *Thomaso*, 400–401)

Behn indeed found Hellena's situation in Serulina's, but with her language adapted from Harrigo, her heroine speaks in a very different voice from Killigrew's, although she omits some of Harrigo's unseemly details. Behn's remaking of Killigrew's scenario by using unexpected material of his has a further twist. As Hellena's confrontation with her bullying brother becomes increasingly heated, she continues, "Marry *Don Vincentio!* hang me **such a Wedlock would be worse than Adultery with another Man**" (*Rover*, 5). These unladylike words would not be found in the mouth of Killigrew's Serulina. Instead, Behn gives Hellena a speech from Killigrew's straight-talking servant Calis, who remarks of Serulina's proposed marriage to Don Alphonso, "**such a wedlock would have more sins to answer, with him, then adultery with another man**" (2 *Thomaso*, 403). Then, when Hellena's brother proposes that she be confined in a nunnery, her understanding of her options is taken from Killigrew's prostitute Paulina, who says, "when I retire from the world it shall not be into a Nunnery, for I am resolv'd to be honest when ever I profess it; a Nunnery will only add a dissimulation and sacriledge to my fault; and 'tis less sin and shame to yield to the flatteries of young men then the lust and force of old women" (2 *Thomaso*, 458). This becomes Hellena's light, witty insistence on her right to choose her own husband: "I shou'd have staid in the Nunnery still, if I had lik'd my Lady *Abbesse* as well as she lik'd me" (*Rover*, 30).<sup>11</sup> While Behn takes from Serulina's plotline the threat of the cloister, the dialogue of the Restoration stage's witty heroine is compounded from a 1650s gentleman, a maid,

11. For the common Protestant association of nunneries with sexual excess, including lesbianism, see Claire Walker, *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English Convents in France and the Low Countries* (New York, 2003), 53–55.



and a prostitute—as well as from the 1660s convention of a witty couple developed by the Nell Gwyn–Charles Hart pairing.<sup>12</sup>

As she builds *The Rover*'s characters, Behn also reaches beyond Killigrew's *Thomaso* to its own sources and remakes those in the process. For instance, Blunt is based extensively on Killigrew's Edwardo, and both are mocked by their male companions for misidentifying Lucetta as a seducible married lady (1 *Thomaso*, 331; *Rover*, 17). After Lucetta leaves him, robbed and dressed only in his underwear, Blunt/Edwardo calls on Fortune to send him "any Mortal thing in Petticoats" to avenge himself on (*Rover*, 64; "Any thing in Petticoats," 2 *Thomaso*, 409), then leads the attack on Florinda/Serulina discussed above. Between those two incidents, however, Blunt's plot diverges from Edwardo's. Expecting Lucetta, Killigrew's dupe finds himself in bed with another man, fights with him, and is then tricked into going out into the street without his clothes (1 *Thomaso*, 375–80). Behn's Blunt, by contrast, is robbed and falls into the sewer when he tries to get into Lucetta's bed, emerging to soliloquize on his own stupidity (*Rover*, 38–41). Through this change to Blunt's fate, Behn perhaps implies here a more severe judgment on his behavior than Killigrew does for Edwardo. What she certainly does is to recognize the source that Killigrew drew on (and softened) for Edwardo's gulling: the story of a prostitute's tricking of Andrea de Piero in Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Making that connection, Behn reinserts the sewer dunking from which Killigrew saved his Edwardo.<sup>13</sup> The reference to the popular *Boccace's Tales* is then reinforced when Blunt is next seen, still in his underwear. Book in hand, he is annoyed at its "warning to all young Travellers" on how to avoid coming to harm. Here, Behn has Blunt allude directly to the caution that introduces the incident in Boccaccio, which warns "a man that travelleth in affaires of the World, to be provident and well advised, and carefully to keepe himselfe from the deceitfull allurements of Strumpets."<sup>14</sup> Whereas Killigrew's use of *Boccace's Tales* is somewhat muted, Behn actively reminds her audience of the connection, increasing laughter at Blunt's expense.

This comparison of *The Rover*'s Florinda, Hellena, and Blunt with their Killigrew predecessors explains, in part, why Behn defended her play as not merely "Thomaso alter'd." In that same "Post-script," she also suggests that "if the Play of The Novella were as well worth remembring as Thomaso," critics might "have as well said,

12. See Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660–1700* (Cambridge, 1992), 66–74.

13. Boccaccio, *Boccace's Tales*, 4th ed. (London, 1657; first pub. 1620), fols. 52r–58v (sigs. E7r–F1v). Montague Summers considers the source in Boccaccio but thinks it more likely that Behn's direct source was Thomas Dekker's *Blurt, Master-Constable; or, The Spaniards Night-walk* (London, 1602), rather than Boccaccio. See *Works of Aphra Behn*, ed. Summers, 5. Because Blunt's fate is much closer to that of Andrea rather than Lazarillo, who falls through the floor while dancing (Dekker, *Blurt*, sigs. F3r–4v), Behn's direct use of *Boccace's Tales* seems much more likely.

14. Boccaccio, *Boccace's Tales*, fol. 52r (sig. E7r); compare with *Thomaso*'s more general "a damnd Book too tells me how to avoid such accidents now when 'tis too late." See 2 *Thomaso*, 409.

*I took it from thence.*" Behn's teasing invitation is worth accepting by today's readers who are interested in the relationship between Restoration theater and its paper stage predecessors. Richard Brome's *The Novella* (perf. 1632; pub. 1653) features a (supposed) courtesan whose enormous fees and great beauty are the source of Killigrew's Angellica Bianca (and, through her, of Behn's character of the same name).<sup>15</sup> Details selected by Killigrew and repeated by Behn include Horatio's wondering whether he and his friend might share her (*Novella*, 1.1.143–52; 1 *Thomaso*, 340; *Rover*, 26); the courtesan's plotting with her maid and bravo on the balcony before singing as her portrait is exhibited to attract wooers (*Novella*, 2.2.1SD, 2.2.835–37; 1 *Thomaso*, 332–35; *Rover*, 18–21); and all of this display being intermingled with a parade of men of different nationalities wondering over her and fighting.

Having traced Killigrew's Edwardo-Lucetta plotline to Boccaccio and borrowed from that source, Behn followed a similar course in her use of *The Novella*. She draws from it scenarios discarded by Killigrew, such as the attempt by several men to talk their way into Victoria's bed without paying, just as Willmore does with Angellica (*Novella*, 3.1; *Rover*, 24–28). A more curious remaking of *The Novella* appears in Florinda's incognito attempts to test Belvile's constancy and to arrange their elopement, when she uses her own picture to make him realize who she is (*Rover*, 12–13). This echoes (but inverts the gendering of) the scenario in *The Novella* in which the disguised Francisco, wanting to test his beloved's fidelity, uses his own portrait when encountering her, resulting in their planned elopement (*Novella*, 4.1.1404–05, 1444–55). Also repurposed from *The Novella* by Behn but discarded by Killigrew is Belvile's challenge to Willmore about his attack on Florinda. Belvile asks, "**had'st thou** so much sense and light about thee to distinguish her Woman, and could'st not see something about her Face and Person, to strike an awful Reverence into **thy Soul?**" (*Rover*, 45). Belvile's belief in Florinda's awe-inspiring qualities echoes an episode in *The Novella* where the lovestruck Fabritio challenges Borgio for acting as pimp to Victoria:

**Hadst thou** but seen, as I have, one like her,  
And noted the divinity in her looks  
(Although in those adulterate incitements  
Shee seemes to wear) she would have struck thy soule  
With fervent adoration, not base lust. (*Novella*, 5.1.2183–87)<sup>16</sup>

15. See Richard Cave's edition of *The Novella* in Richard Brome Online, ed. Richard Cave, [www.dhi.ac.uk/brome](http://www.dhi.ac.uk/brome). Discussion of Victoria's high price appears first at 1.1.126–31. Unless otherwise noted, this work is cited hereafter as *Novella*, with act, scene, and line numbers.

16. Killigrew's Johanne merely reproves Edwardo as a "Drunken beast." See 1 *Thomaso*, 359. Throughout this essay, we silently emend VV to W.

When she draws on material from Brome's play that Killigrew omitted, Behn uses—and often radically remakes—his situations but does not borrow his dialogue.<sup>17</sup> By 1677, Behn knew *The Novella* well, having drawn on it for her third play, *The Dutch Lover* (1673); whether that familiarity came from reading it or from an unrecorded Restoration revival is not known.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps she anticipated that others would also know their Brome and realize that Killigrew had used *The Novella* without being charged with “stealing” (*Rover*, 85).<sup>19</sup>

Behn also made some apparently trivial but actually fundamental adjustments to Killigrew's original scenarios, several of which wholly change the play's gender politics. Given that Behn insists that her only “*stoln Object*” is “*the Sign of Angellica*,” but not Angellica Bianca herself, her characterization is the appropriate focus here. When Killigrew's Angellica is seduced by Thomaso, “*she is serious and attentive to all he sayes*” (1 *Thomaso*, 337). She defends her willingness to sell sex by complaining, “You men are strangely partial to your selves, you would not despise us else; Is the fault single in us? If not, why should we lose our Honours in the Act, when you think it an Honour to be the Actors?” (1 *Thomaso*, 339). Asking Thomaso to “forget I was to be sold,” she explains that if she were a virgin, she “would beg to be thy wife; but that must not be” (1 *Thomaso*, 340, 341). She is, in sum, an ideal fantasy figure for a man wanting easy sex.

Behn's Angellica Bianca, in contrast, responds to Willmore's criticism of her trade, “Poor angry Man, how I despise this railing” (*Rover*, 26). While Willmore dominates her through his use of verse and by physically manipulating her—he “*Holds her, looks on her, and pawses and sighs*” and then “*Turns her away from him*” (26)—she is initially not taken in. In her argument with Willmore, Behn's Angellica (unlike Killigrew's courtesan) compares prostitution to marriage: a prostitute makes money selling sex, but men are “guilty of the same Mercenary Crime” when they receive a woman's dowry on marriage, having chosen their wife with a view to the richest offer (27). What Behn's Angellica wants, she tells her seducer, “is but thy Love for mine” (28). This is close to the demands of Killigrew's Angellica, but Behn's Angellica makes no disavowal of her right to a reciprocal fidelity. Once she is certain that she has been betrayed, she points a gun at Willmore, saying that she must kill him “for the publick safety of our Sex” (76). There is no acceptance here of the rake's libertine logics, and he finds her compellingly attractive as she dominates

17. See also Willmore's joke that Belvile will have bedded Florinda “or he has not my longings about him” (*Rover*, 78), which remakes Borgio's response to Horatio in *The Novella* (4.2.1804–10).

18. In *The Dutch Lover*, Behn's title character is confronted by Alonso disguised as the Dutchman himself (94–95), a scenario developed from Swartzenburgh's confusion in *The Novella* (5.1.2120–63) when he encounters Fabritio pretending to be him. See Jacqueline Pearson's edition of *The Dutch Lover* in the forthcoming *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Aphra Behn*, vol. 1.

19. For Brome's popularity in the Restoration, see Gunnar Sorelius, “*The Giant Race before the Flood*”: *Pre-Restoration Drama on the Stage and in the Criticism of the Restoration* (Uppsala, Sweden, 1966), esp. 72–73.

him, reflecting, "I wish I were that dull, that constant thing / Which thou wou'dst have" (76). Aware of his Angellica's anger, by contrast, Killigrew's Thomaso compares this bluntly to the "vertuous passion" of his intended wife, Serulina. Angellica is "a common Whore," and he has chosen instead "the friendship of the fair *Serulina*; a maid, whose Dower and Beauty may satisfie an avaritious heart and a wandring eye" (2 *Thomaso*, 438).<sup>20</sup> Killigrew's Angellica uses no pistol in revenge; instead, she writes a letter to Pedro that alerts him to his sister's intended elopement. "Angellica Bianca" is not at all the same character between these plays: her dialogue is different, and her plotlines diverge, because her characterization is changed.<sup>21</sup>

A final brief example of how a seemingly minor change to Killigrew's play instituted in Behn's results in a radical remaking will suffice for this sketch of how *The Rover* uses its paper stage predecessors. Whereas Killigrew's cavaliers have been fighting for the Spanish army, Behn's are fighting for their enemies, the French.<sup>22</sup> In *Thomaso*, the action takes place in Madrid; *The Rover* is set in Naples, the Spanish-ruled part of Angellica Bianca's native Italy. While the move from Spain to Spanish Italy might in part be motivated by Behn's adjusting the plot to center the courtesan's concerns, other factors more specifically related to this 1677 remaking of a paper stage precedent are also at issue. The decision to have Willmore and his friends loyal to the French, not the Spanish army, would have had a particular resonance for *The Rover*'s 1677 audience, when Franco-Spanish conflict in the Spanish Netherlands was intensifying and Parliament was insisting that the king call home the Englishmen fighting for France.<sup>23</sup> On the one hand, Behn's Tory allies might have welcomed the reminder that the prince Willmore left on the ship in the Bay of Naples—James, Duke of York—had resisted leaving the French army in 1656.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand,

20. See also his equally blunt comparison of them earlier in the play: "one is my religion, the other my sport and diversion" (1 *Thomaso*, 363).

21. See also how Behn rewrites *The Novella*'s eloping Flavia: as naive about gentlemen as Florinda is, Behn's eloping heroine can write her own letters and plan her own plot, whereas Brome's Flavia needs her maid Astutta's guidance for all she does. For example, see *Novella*, 4.1.1329–35.

22. According to the dramatis personae, Thomaso is "An English Cavaleer, who had serv'd in the Spanish Army," his friends Edwardo and Ferdinando "late Commanders in that Army." They are therefore on the same side as the Spanish Don Pedro and his sister, Serulina. Belvile, by contrast, has been fighting in the French army against the Spanish, as Florinda explains. See *Rover*, 2.

23. John Spurr, *England in the 1670s: "This Masquerading Age"* (Oxford, 2000), 66–67, 75, 245–46.

24. For accounts of James's resistance to changing sides, see Francis Charles Turner, *James II* (London, 1948), 53–55; John Miller, *James II: A Study in Kingship*, rev. ed. (London, 1991; first pub. 1977), 19–20. Willmore's assertion that the prince, who had been created Lord High Admiral by his father, Charles I, at the age of three, "Reigns still Lord of the watry Element" (*Rover*, 8) might also have been interpreted as a celebration of his continued influence over the Navy in the 1670s, even after he had lost other public offices under the Test Act. See Turner, *James II*, 104–6.

those on the opposite side of the parliamentary argument might have relished the play's portrayal of those cavaliers, perceiving it as wholly negative. Perhaps *The Rover's* great success on the Restoration stage was due to this kind of ambiguity. Also attractive to the 1677 audience would have been the reference to the sorts of theatrical events that flourished during the ban on acting and continued into the Restoration: when Florinda encounters the part-dressed Blunt, she thinks he might be "some Rope-dancer" (*Rover*, 64), alluding to the kind of entertainment advertised at the Red Bull in 1653.<sup>25</sup> Such passing matters, along with Behn's drawing on the carnivalesque energies of gypsies and masquerade not present in Killigrew's play, make *The Rover* a very different animal from *Thomaso*, for all the borrowing of character names, plot-lines, and dialogue.

### ☞ *Sir Patient Fancy*

In her preface to *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678), Behn reflects on how her first audience criticized her for relying heavily on four French sources for this comedy. In defense of her borrowings, Behn claims to have drawn on only one French play, "given" to her and "translated by a Gentleman."<sup>26</sup> Critics have generally dismissed Behn's claim to have worked with Molière's *Le Malade imaginaire* in translation, assuming instead that she had greater familiarity with French-language drama than was necessarily the case in the late 1670s.<sup>27</sup> Our recent research has established, however, that Behn made extensive use of a manuscript translation of *Le Malade imaginaire* in her reworking of that play.<sup>28</sup> It is also the case, though, that Behn drew on a much wider range of earlier English plays for her comedy than Langbaine and his successors have identified, and was far from uniform in her treatment of those sources.<sup>29</sup>

25. For a discussion of such 1650s performance venues, see Janet Clare, *Drama of the English Republic, 1649–60* (Manchester, U.K., 2002), 4, 5–6; Hyder E. Rollins, "A Contribution to the History of the English Commonwealth Drama," *Studies in Philology* 18 (1921): 267–333; and John Leslie Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (New York, 1962), 25, 40, 48–49, 57. Rope dancers continued as attractions at fairs after the Restoration; Pepys mentions them in his diary on September 7, 1664, and August 27, 1668. The famous Restoration rope-dancer, Jacob Hall, might also have occurred to the play's first audiences; see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter ODNB], s.v. "Hall, Jacob (fl. 1662–1681)," by Daniel Hahn, last modified September 23, 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11962>.

26. Aphra Behn, *Sir Patient Fancy: A Comedy* (London, 1678), sig. A1v. Hereafter, unless otherwise noted, cited in the text as *Sir Patient*.

27. An important exception is Derek Hughes, who acknowledges Behn's assertion and does not dispute it. See Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn* (Houndmills, U.K., 2001), 96.

28. The manuscript, "La Mallad," is listed in Alfred Harbage, Samuel Schoenbaum, and Sylvia Stoler Wagonheim, *The Annals of English Drama 975–1700*, 3rd ed. (London, 1989), 206, where it is dated "1700?" A witness survives in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., as "La mallad [manuscript]," V.b.220. The authors wish to thank Heather Wolfe for her careful guidance and generosity in relation to their inquiries. Hereafter, references to this manuscript are cited in the text as Wright, with the folio number, whereas references to the original text are Molière, with the page number.

29. Behn borrowed from at least three Caroline and Interregnum plays for *Sir Patient Fancy*, though the play also contains allusions to other works. C. B. Graham noted, for instance,

Behn's main source for the plot was "La Mallad," James Wright's translation of Molière's comedy *Le Malade imaginaire*, probably based on a 1674 edition of Molière's play, first published in 1673.<sup>30</sup> A Middle Temple lawyer, theater enthusiast, and author of prose treatises, Wright translated Molière's play into English with some latitude of expression but strict adherence to the original sense:

ORGON Voyez-vous mon petit doigt? Ce petit doigt m'a tout dit . . .

FANCHON Mon Papa, vostre petit doigt est un menteur. (Molière, 28)

ORGON Look you here, do you see my Little finger? This little finger has told me all . . .

FANNY O the living Dear! Sr Father, your Little finger is the hugious great Lyer yt ever I saw. (Wright, fol. 7v)

The parallels between the circumlocutions Wright introduced and Behn's adaptation of this exchange demonstrate her debt to the translation rather than to the French original:

SIR PATIENT . . . Come tell me truth, for this little Finger here has told me all.

FANNY Oh Geminy Sir, then that little Finger's the hougesest great Lyer as ever was. (*Sir Patient*, 61–62)

There is no evidence that Wright's translation was ever printed, but Behn's access to it may be explained by their acquaintance. Wright contributed a song to Behn's tragicomedy *The Young King* (1683); his translation "Hypermnestra to Linus" was included alongside Behn's "Oenone to Paris" in *Ovid's Epistles* (1680); and he is probably the "J. W." who contributed both a commendatory poem to Behn's *Poems upon Several Occasions* (1684) and three poems to *Miscellany* (1685), which Behn edited.<sup>31</sup>

Set in two wealthy households, *Sir Patient Fancy* inhabits a relatively narrow social sphere, which contrasts sharply with Behn's complex use of a range of

that Lady Fancy's lover, Wittmore, addresses her fortune by quoting the opening lines of Ben Jonson's *Volpone*: "Good morrow to the day, and next the Gold, open the Shrine, that I may see my Saint—hail the Worlds Soul." The lines are verbatim with a single exception: Wittmore's "The Gold" for Volpone's "my Gold." See Graham, "An Echo of Jonson in Aphra Behn's *Sir Patient Fancy*," *Modern Language Notes* 53 (1938): 278–79.

30. ODNB, s.v. "Wright, James (bap. 1644, d. 1716/17)," by Theodor Harmsen, last modified January 3, 2008, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/30034>. For the basis of these deductions in bibliographic terms, see the entry "*Le Malade imaginaire* (6)," in A. J. Guibert's *Bibliographie des Œuvres de Molière publiées au XVII siècle* (Paris, 1961).

31. See Aphra Behn, *The Young King* (London, 1683); *Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Several Hands* (London, 1680); Behn, *Poems upon Several Occasions: With a Voyage to the Island of Love* (London, 1684); and *Miscellany, Being a Collection of Poems by Several Hands*, ed. Aphra Behn (London, 1685).



dramatic sources in her composition. The domestic arrangement of the Molière/Wright version is retained, in Behn, in the form of Sir Patient/Orgon; his younger second wife, Lady Fancy/Marianne; and his two daughters, Isabella and Fanny/Fanchon. Behn departs from her main source for this plot in two key ways, however: first, Isabella's love interest in Molière/Wright, Leander, becomes her cousin in Behn's play, while the role of her lover is taken by Lodwick, Behn's invention; and, second, while Lady Fancy/Marianne has married for money, Behn adds a lover, Wittmore, for whom she leaves her husband at the play's end. In the adjacent household, meanwhile, the learned widow Lady Knowell provides a contrast to the sober nonconformity of Sir Patient; Lady Knowell's plot to test the constancy of her daughter's lover by feigning courtship with him is taken principally from James Shirley's *The Constant Maid* (1640). Unlike *The Rover*, in which Behn's use of Interregnum sources cuts across boundaries of gender and social rank in its topsyturvyism, her tendency in *Sir Patient* is conservative, both in the narrowness of the milieu represented and in the degree to which distinctions of rank and gender in the play's sources are generally retained.<sup>32</sup>

The confined nature of the play's domestic arrangements and topographical allusions is disrupted only by Sir Credulous Easy, a foolish Devonshire knight, whose inept and unsuccessful courtship of Lady Knowell's daughter, Lucretia, provides many of the play's comic moments. For her portrayal of Sir Credulous, Aphra Behn drew on at least four dramatic sources: Wright's translation, "La Mallad" (1674–77?); Brome's *The Damselle* (1653); and Shirley's *The Constant Maid* and *The Example* (1637). Indeed, in *Sir Patient Fancy*, Behn is curator, director, and author, weaving together multiple sources, re-creating the stage pictures used by her predecessors, and supplementing both with original material. Despite this elaborate mode of composition, in the case of Sir Credulous Easy and *Sir Patient Fancy* more generally, Behn tended toward the preservation of social rank and gender when assigning the dialogue and plot strands from her sources. Indeed, in sharp contrast to the splitting and redistribution of characters' sentiments that she undertook in her treatment of *Thomaso* for *The Rover*, *Sir Patient Fancy* represents another approach to adaptation entirely, one in which contemporary and earlier sources are combined to form a single character and dramaturgical awareness informs the divergences. During adaptation, Behn appears to consider the pace of her play's dialogue, for instance, in Sir Credulous's ceremonial address to his love interest, derived from Wright's translation of the words of Molière's young doctor:

32. By involving the majority of her characters in Sir Patient's gulling in her play's final act, Behn inevitably disrupts this categorization. Whereas in "La Mallad," Orgon is disabused by both his brother and his servant, Cato, of the illusions that he is dying and that his wife loves him, Sir Patient's identical revelations are orchestrated and executed by Lady Knowell and Leander, and they involve the complicity of several other main characters.

YOUNG DIAFORUS I know full well, Madam, yt should I touch upon all the pticular heads of **praise** due to your merits, **it would require more time than the Sun employs in his natural motion between the Tropiques**, yt is to say a whole year (for by ye way I desire it may be observed I am noe Copernicien, but rely upon ye opinion of the Antiens, as the most solid) And **because my Rhetorique Master** hath often assured me yt I was not the least proficient of his Scholling & I am not ignorant yt we ought to **use Allegorys, & Hypallages & ye richest figures of yt beautious Art**; . . . I am extream sensible, Madam, of **your Charms & celestial Graces**. (Wright, fol. 10r)

Although she retains several of Wright's departures from Molière's play, Behn resists her source's soliloquizing through interpolated dialogue and interruption:

SIR CREDULOUS Nay delicious Lady, you may say your Pleasure, but I will justify the Serenade to be as high a piece of Gallantry as was ever practised in our Age, tho' not comparable to **your Charms and Celestial Graces**, which shou'd I **praise** as I ought, 'twou'd **require more time than the Sun employs in his Natural motion between the Tropicks; that is to say a whole Year**, (for by the way, I am no Copernican) for, Dear Madam, you must know **my Rhetorick Master**, — I say **my Rhetorick Master** who was —

LUCRETIA As great a Coxcombe as your self, — pray leave me I am serious, — I must go seek out *Lodwick*.

SIR CREDULOUS Leave ye! I thank you for that i'faith, before I have spoke out my speech, therefore I say Divine Lady — **because my Rhetorick Master** commanded the frequent use of **Hypallages, Allegories, and the richest Figures of that beauteous Art**, — because my Rhetorick, — (*Sir Patient*, 45)

The nature of Behn's reworking here captures several of the paradoxes and complexities inherent in her style of adaptation: while following the shape and progression of the general conceit, she undertakes some reordering at a more focused level. Whereas some short phrases are followed verbatim, several are omitted entirely, and while much of the source's formal tone is retained, Lucretia's interjection both undercuts its weight and adds pace and variety, which are absent from the equivalent moment in Behn's source.

In addition to adjusting the pace of her paper stage source, Behn's reworking of an exchange from Brome's *The Damselle* suggests that she consistently focused on introducing on-stage variety. There is neither a surviving Restoration edition nor a recorded performance between 1660 and 1700 of *The Damselle*—although, as noted above, Behn had known Brome's drama since at least 1673; and while a number of late

seventeenth-century editions of Brome's *The Jovial Crew* point to its enduring appeal, none of Brome's other plays is recorded as having been republished between 1660 and Behn's death in 1689.<sup>33</sup> The closeness with which Behn followed scenes from *The Damoiselle* in drawing the character of Sir Credulous suggests that in the late 1670s, at least, she was considerably indebted to print editions of earlier English drama far beyond the well-known example of Killigrew's *Thomaso*:

SIR AMPHILUS . . . Your first course *Trebasco*, after we come to our lodging, shall be to Turnbull-street, to the Cobler.

TREBASCO Your Dog-tutor.

SIR AMPHILUS Yes, and see how my whelp proves, I put to him last Term.

TREBASCO Yes, Sir.

SIR AMPHILUS And know of him what Gamesters came to the Ponds now adayes, and what good dogs.

TREBASCO Yes Sir.

SIR AMPHILUS And ask him — Dost thou heare? If he ha' not done away his own dog yet, *Blackswan* with the white foot? If I can but purchase him, and my own whelp prove right, I will be Duke of the Ducking-pond.<sup>34</sup>

In Brome's play, much of the scene's exchange between Sir Amphilus and Trebasco is watched, and briefly derailed, by the men competing with Sir Amphilus for the affections of Alice, the daughter of the play's elderly usurer, Vermin. Their raillery prompts Trebasco to defend his master on the grounds that the other men present "make a foole of your Worship before your Worships face, and your Worship perceives it not" (*Damoiselle*, 2.1.790–91). In reworking this dialogue, Behn adjusts only two descriptions and the time of year referred to, but the key difference is in the nature of the stage picture she presents:

33. Following Pepys, *The London Stage* maps a limited but not insignificant number of known performances of Richard Brome's *The Jovial Crew* and *The Antipodes* in the 1660s. See, for example, *London Stage*, ed. Van Lennep, 32, 42, 46, 50, 52. As well as *Jovial Crew*, Brome's *The Northern Lass* was frequently acted and reprinted, and *The City Wit* and *The Sparagus Garden* also seem to have been performed. See Matthew Steggle, *Richard Brome: Place and Politics on the Caroline Stage* (Manchester, U.K., 2004), 192.

34. Richard Brome, *The Damoiselle* (1653), ed. Lucy Munro, in Richard Brome Online, 2.1.814–26, <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/brome/viewTranscripts.jsp?play=DM&type=BOTH&act=2>; hereafter cited in the text as *Damoiselle*, with act, scene, and line numbers. It is almost certainly this exchange to which an early reader of *Sir Patient Fancy* alluded when annotating the play's dramatis personae with the observation that "[P]art of Sr Credulous humour is taken from Brome's Sr Amphilus in his Comedy calld ye Damoysselle." See \*PR 3317 S61, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles [hereafter, Clark].

SIR CREDULOUS And Curry, as soon as I am drest, go you away to  
 St. Clements Church-yard, to Jackson the Cobler there!  
 CURRY What your Dog-tutor Sir?  
 SIR CREDULOUS Yes, and see how my whelp proves I put to him last  
Parlament.  
 CURRY Yes Sir.

*Enter Leander and starts back seeing Sir Credulous*

SIR CREDULOUS And ask him what Gamesters come to the Ponds  
 now adays, and what good Dogs.  
 CURRY Yes Sir.  
 LEANDER (*Aside.*) This is the Beast Lodwick spoke of; how could I laugh  
 were he design'd for any but *Lucretia*!  
 SIR CREDULOUS And dost hear, ask him if he have not sold his own  
 Dog Diver with the white Ear, if I can purchase him, and my own Dog  
 prove right, I'll be Duke of Ducking Pond ads zoz. (*Sir Patient*, 6–7)

As happens with Behn's change of *The Rover's* setting from Killigrew's Madrid to Naples, her main departure from Brome in this exchange updates *The Damselle* for a late-1670s audience: John Jackson of "*Clements-lane*" is identified elsewhere as a contemporary merchant, for instance.<sup>35</sup> While Behn's preservation of Brome's expression and sequence cannot be missed, the broader stage dynamic is wholly changed. Although Sir Credulous and Curry are observed briefly by Leander, much of their exchange is private—and all of it uninterrupted—which creates a sense of intimacy and codependence between Behn's misguided lover and his footman. There is no doubt that Sir Credulous is often mocked and duped in the course of the play, including in a scene with its roots in Shirley's *The Example* where Sir Credulous is tricked out of his movables.<sup>36</sup> But despite the fact that Behn follows Brome's dialogue closely in framing her characterization of Sir Credulous, the relative privacy of this exchange endows Sir Credulous with reflexivity not present in her source, emphasized in part by Behn's introduction of a split-focus element to her stage picture, divided between Leander and Sir Credulous.

The source that Behn remade most extensively in *Sir Patient Fancy*, however, is Shirley's *The Constant Maid; or, Love will finde out the Way*. First published in 1640, it ran to a second edition in 1661, which was reissued with a cancellans title leaf in 1667 that announced the piece as "now Acted at the new Play-house called *The Nursery*,

35. See *A Collection of the Names of the Merchants Living in and about the City of London* (London, 1677), sig. E4v, in which Jackson is named although his profession is not noted.

36. Compare James Shirley's *The Example* (London, 1637), sig. H3r–v, with *Sir Patient Fancy*, 8–12.

in Hatton-Garden.” The style of Behn’s adaptation of this play makes identifying the edition on which she drew no more than a speculative venture, in part because the nature of Behn’s borrowings allow for the possibility that she knew it from performance rather than from print. Based on the very few substantive differences between the first and second editions of *The Constant Maid* that also appear in *Sir Patient Fancy*, however, it is probable that the version of the play that Behn knew is connected to the second edition of 1661, or its 1667 reissue.<sup>37</sup> It is from this Shirley play that Behn took the plot arc of Lady Knowell and Lucretia. The characters Mistress Belamie (*The Constant Maid*) and Lady Knowell (*Sir Patient Fancy*) both feign courtship with their daughters’ suitors to test their constancy. Behn, however, makes a number of key departures from *The Constant Maid*, including alerting her audience to the fact that Lady Knowell has no serious romantic interest in her daughter’s lover, Leander. Behn also made Lady Knowell a woman of letters, and a more persuasive one than the title characters of Molière’s *Les Femmes savantes* (1672), a play on which Behn would later draw for *The False Count* (1682).<sup>38</sup> That Behn knew *The Constant Maid*—and used it for *Sir Patient Fancy*—is clear from the scene that contains the closest verbal parallels between Shirley’s comedy and Behn’s, a scene of courtship between the widow Belamie; her daughter, Frances; and the gentleman and suitor, Startup:

STARTUP Sweet Lady, I am your humble servant; ’tis well known what  
I am, where I live; **my father dyed since I was of age, and left me a  
younger brothers portion.**

BELAMIE A younger brother?

STARTUP Sweet Lady, I know what you would say, my father had no  
more children; but I speak modestly of my estate; I have land enough  
for two or three wives; I have a horse in Town; your daughter shall  
ride behind me; Sweet Lady, did you ever see the country?

FRANCES What country, sir?

STARTUP Why, any country living: sweet Lady, I am your humble  
servant; if you love hawking, hunting, or drinking, there be good fel-  
lows will bear you company. (*Constant Maid*, 13–14)

37. The next extract, from the second edition of *The Constant Maid* (London, 1661; reissued 1667), contains one such substantive variant, which Behn may have followed, although it may simply have been adjusted by her when she reworked her source. Startup’s phrase from the second edition “if you love hawking” (14) has the parallel “if you lov’d Hawking” in *Sir Patient Fancy*. In the first edition of *The Constant Maid* (London, 1640), sig. C1v, however, the phrase reads, “if / You affect hawking.” Further references are to the second edition, cited in the text as *Constant Maid*, with page numbers.

38. For a discussion of Lady’s Knowell’s characterization, see Judy Hayden, “Of Privileges and Masculine Parts: The Learned Lady in Aphra Behn’s *Sir Patient Fancy*,” *Papers on Language and Literature* 42 (2006): 317–31.

The amount of related but original material in Behn's sequence makes it clear that her use of this source is predicated less on verbatim borrowing and more on broader sentiment than is the case for her other dramatic sources, discussed above:

SIR CREDULOUS ... As for my Estate, my Father dy'd since I came of Age, and left me a small younger Brothers Portion, dear Lady.  
 LUCRETIA A younger Brothers Sir?  
 SIR CREDULOUS Ha, I know what you wou'd infer from that now; but you must know delicious Lady, that I am all the Children my Father had.  
 LUCRETIA Witty I protest.  
 SIR CREDULOUS Nay Madam when I set on't I can be witty.  
 LEANDER Cruel *Lucretia* leave 'em, and let us snatch this opportunity to talk of our own affairs.  
 SIR CREDULOUS [to LADY FANCY] For you must know bright Lady, though I was pleas'd to rally my self, I have a pretty competent Estate of about 3000 l. a year, and am to marry Madam *Lucretia*.  
 LADY FANCY You're a happy man Sir.  
 SIR CREDULOUS Not so happy neither, inestimable Lady ... were you never in Devonshire Madam?  
 LADY FANCY Never Sir.  
 SIR CREDULOUS Introth and that's pitty sweet Lady, for if you lov'd Hawking, Drinking, and Whoring, — oh Lord, I mean Hunting, i'faith there be good fellows wou'd keep you company Madam.  
 (*Sir Patient*, 23–24)

Behn's style of adaptation here is broadly recognizable from her treatment of both Wright and Brome. The logics and development of the conceit are preserved; there is a greater diversity in the number of speaking roles, as the original tripartite structure is expanded; and the dynamic of the exchange is further altered through the stage presence of Sir Credulous's rival, Leander. The contrast with Leander underscores the futility of Sir Credulous's courtship attempts, which are complemented by Behn's addition of his malapropism. The financial and geographical specificity, however, is Behn's, as is much of the rest of the dialogue. Indeed, there are far fewer direct parallels of the kind that suggest close textual engagement with this play than are evident in Behn's use of *Thomaso*, "La Mallad," and *The Damselle*; rather, the looser, more impressionistic relationship here between source and adaptation suggests that Behn's familiarity with this play may have resulted from watching a performance rather than through readerly engagement.

The possibility that Behn's familiarity with *The Constant Maid* may have been based on performance is further demonstrated by her consistent treatment of it. When Lucretia tries to persuade Lady Knowell to renounce Leander, for instance, Behn took as her model Shirley's equivalent character, Frances, who assures her mother,



My soul's above **your tyranny**; and would  
 From torturing flames receive new fire of love,  
 . . . . . [5 lines]  
 But as you are my mother, thus I kneel,  
 And beg a **pardon** for my innocence;  
 . . . . . [5 lines]  
 And let me beg but this for all my duty,  
 Against the day you marry him, to provide  
 My coffin; for I fear, I sha'not have  
 Breath many minutes after, to pray for you:  
 The herbs that shall adorn your bridal chamber,  
Will serve my funeral, and deck my hearse:  
 Beneath which you shall say, There lies your daughter  
 That dy'd to shew obedience. (*Constant Maid*, 43)

As with her treatment of "La Mallad," Behn resists her source's soliloquizing, but she preserves the stage picture rather than remake it, as she had done with other early sources:

LUCRETIA Oh Madam, give me leave to kneel before, and tell you if  
 you pursue the Cruelty I hear you're going to commit, I am the most  
 lost, most wretched Maid that breaths; We two have plighted faiths,  
 and should you marry him, 'twere so to sin as Heaven would never  
**pardon**.

LADY KNOWELL Rise fool.

LUCRETIA Never, till you have given me back *Leander*, or leave to live  
 no more, — pray kill me Madam; and the same  
Flowers that deck your Nuptial-bed,  
Shall serve to strow my Herse, when I shall lie  
 A dead cold witness of **your Tyranny**. (*Sir Patient*, 74)

Several of the key elements here originate with Shirley, including both the daughter's submissive posture and the compounding of nuptial and funeral traditions. Yet Behn radically alters her source's notions of forgiveness in relation to parental betrayal; the emphasis on filial "duty" and "obedience" in Shirley is much reduced, and while in Shirley, the consequences of maternal "Tyranny" can be spiritually transcended, in Behn, they are reconfigured as beyond absolution. These generally looser echoes of Shirley's play gesture to the possibility that this Caroline playwright had a broader and more enduring stage presence into the Restoration than bibliographic records suggest.

### Concluding Remarks and Future Research

This sketch of Behn's adaptive strategies in two plays staged during consecutive dramatic seasons suggests that further research on the rest of her drama is likely to establish yet greater variety. The results of any such investigations will be of particular interest to Behn scholars and to those interested in early modern women more generally, given the implications for the ways in which women were producing and consuming literary and dramatic culture. Here, however—and in part because Behn's professional contemporaries were mostly men—we will focus on the implications of our findings for future work on the relationship between Restoration theater and the paper stage.

As she composed *The Rover* and *Sir Patient Fancy*, Behn drew on a range of sources, the diversity of which should also be considered by those investigating the practices of other dramatists of the period. These included a print source that was certainly acted on the Restoration stage (Shirley's *The Constant Maid* for *Sir Patient Fancy*) and another that might have been (Killigrew's *Thomaso* for *The Rover*). She also made use of a manuscript play that was probably not acted ("La Mallad," Wright's translation of Molière's *Le Malade imaginaire*) as well as several plays by both Brome and Shirley that were published during the paper stage era but are not currently known to have had Restoration revivals (Brome's *The Novella* and *The Damselle*; Shirley's *The Example*). Further, her sources included at least one nondramatic work, Boccaccio's *Decameron* (made use of for Blunt's sewer dunking in *The Rover*).<sup>39</sup>

Given the patchiness of performance records for 1660–1700, we may never know whether plays by Shirley and Brome were staged more often during that time. Whether they were or not, Behn's use of them indicates either a close familiarity with the printed text or an understanding of how they develop striking stage pictures. It might also indicate that Restoration readers—including Behn—continued to remember and perhaps to reread a broad range of earlier drama in addition to the Shakespeare, Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher plays that are so clearly present.<sup>40</sup> That possibility, in turn, puts further pressure on the assumption in *The London Stage* that the appearance of a new edition of a Restoration play text suggests that the play was back onstage.<sup>41</sup> Such subsequent editions might, instead, indicate that readers

39. We have not here explored another possible nondramatic source for *The Rover*: the characterization of Angellica Bianca, we conjecture, draws on the laments of Ovid's *Heroides*. Numerous editions of John Sherburne's translation, *Ovid's Heroical Epistles*, appeared before 1665.

40. Behn certainly knew these authors' plays and drew on them frequently, including for *The Second Part of the Rover* (reaching behind *Thomaso* to Ben Jonson's *Volpone* for her mountebank scenes) and for *The Widdow Ranter*. Behn's dedication to *The Emperor of the Moon* (London, 1687), sig. A3r, refers to "Admirable Plays . . . as Shakespear's, Fletcher's, and Johnson's."

41. See, for instance, the assumption that various plays including Orrery's *Henry the Fifth*, Newcastle's *The Humorous Lovers*, and Dryden's *Tyrannick Love* "may have been revived" during *The Rover*'s first season, 1676–77, and that Dryden's *The Assignment* and *The Conquest of Granada* as well as Fletcher and Massinger's *The Elder Brother* "may have been revived" alongside *Sir Patient Fancy*'s premiere in 1677–78. See *London Stage*, ed. Van Lennep, 249, 262.

continued to be interested in particular works and that it was this readerly interest that created a demand for new editions.

Other features of the relationship between *The Rover*, *Sir Patient Fancy*, and their sources also suggest that memory of the period when the public theaters were closed was alive and well in the Restoration among not only playwrights but also some of their early readers, whose manuscript annotations to several of Behn's works point to an interest in her use of earlier dramatic sources. The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, for instance, holds copies of Behn's *The Roundheads* (1682) and the anonymous *The Debauchee* (1677), which is often attributed to Behn. The Clark copy of *The Roundheads* bears the following note on its title page in an early hand: "This comedy is stolen from a Comedy The Rump, or, a Mirrour of ye Times by John Tatham."<sup>42</sup> The title page of the Clark's copy of *The Debauchee* bears the following note in a similarly early hand: "Altered by Mrs Behn from R. Brome's Mad Couple well-match[t]."<sup>43</sup>

Fundamentally, a close analysis of how a Restoration play relates to its source materials can be highly productive in revealing a playwright's own priorities—whether those be, for instance, dramaturgic or sociopolitical. Recognizing what an author repeats from a source verbatim, what is taken but remade, and what is discarded offers sometimes startling evidence of what that playwright's own goals might be—especially if the researcher adds an understanding of how such materials have been combined and what the author has added. If, like Behn, that playwright was successful, such analysis also provides evidence of the reading habits and the tastes of the Restoration audience.

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42. \*PR3317 R71, Clark.

43. \*PR2439.B5M3, Clark. For further discussion of similar instances, see O'Donnell, *Aphra Behn*.

# The King's Servants in Printed Paratexts, 1594–1695

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Heidi Craig

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**ABSTRACT** This essay examines cast and actor lists, as well as other allusions to actors in prologues and epilogues, in plays printed and reprinted between 1594 and 1695. Heidi Craig addresses the evolution of attempts to record actors' involvement in print in the seventeenth century, focusing on three distinct moments in playbook publishing: before 1642, during 1642–60, and after 1660. Analyzing cast and actor lists in collections and in single-text playbooks printed to 1695, Craig argues that they function as marketing devices and as documents of theater history, revealing how revivals and print format influenced contemporary interest in the theatrical past. **KEYWORDS:** cast lists; actor lists; seventeenth-century theater; drama paratexts; Joseph Taylor

I wish they had Printed in the last Age (so I call the times before the Rebellion) the Actors names over against the Parts they Acted, as they have done since the Restauration. And thus one might have guest at the Action of the Men, by the Parts which we now Read in the Old Plays.

—James Wright, *Historia Histrionica*

❧ IN JAMES WRIGHT'S *HISTORIA HISTRIONICA* (1699), a nostalgic dialogue about English theater, the character Lovewit regrets the fact that plays printed in the “last Age . . . before the Rebellion” (that is, before the English civil wars, which began in 1642) do not record the proper names of actors alongside their respective roles.<sup>1</sup> Had they existed, the wished-for lists would help Lovewit “guess at,” but not

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1. James Wright, *Historia Histrionica: An Historical Account of the English Stage* (London, 1699), 3.

remember, the performances of those who acted before the theaters closed in 1642; he, like most readers in the late seventeenth century, had no firsthand experience of pre-1642 theater. Deprived of this imaginative aid, Lovewit is left with a blank, one that will be familiar to scholars of early modern theater. Relatively little is known about early modern acting and the professional performance tradition that endured for nearly seventy years between the opening of the professional theaters in 1576 and their closure in 1642. "Yet," as Lovewit's older interlocutor, Truman, points out, "some few Old Plays there are that have the Names set against the Parts."<sup>2</sup> Truman then lists the eleven playbooks printed before 1660 with cast lists, which record actors' proper names alongside their respective roles.

During their discussion of "Old Plays," from the perspective of the 1690s, Truman and Lovewit chart a steady narrative of dramatic and theatrical decline. Lovewit proposes that "Poets," "Plays," and "the Actors now in being" in the 1690s are "much inferior to those of former Times" in the early Restoration. While Lovewit's firsthand experience of theater "can reach no farther backward" than the Restoration, Truman's extends to the pre-1642 stage, which he claims was better than theater after 1660. He favorably compares the Jacobean- and Caroline-era King's Servant actors John Lowin, Joseph Tayler, and Thomas Pollard to Charles Hart, the leading man of the Restoration King's Company: "if my Fancy and Memory are not partial (for Men of my Age are apt to be over indulgent to the thoughts of their youthful days) I say the Actors I have seen before the Wars, *Lowin, Tayler, Pollard* and some others, were almost as far beyond *Hart* and his Company, as those were beyond these now in being."<sup>3</sup> As for Richard Burbage (d. 1619), arguably the most popular pre-1642 actor, Truman states that he "and others of the Older sort, were Dead before I knew the Town, but in my time, before the Wars, *Lowin* used to Act, with mighty Applause."<sup>4</sup> This portion of Lovewit and Truman's dialogue in *Historia Histrionica* unites a set of issues that this essay addresses: developments in printed dramatic paratexts across the seventeenth century, the function of cast lists as aide-mémoire or for imaginative reconstruction of performance, the definition of different dramatic epochs in the seventeenth century, and the ways that nostalgia shaped contemporary attitudes about the relative merits of each epoch. This essay thinks through these issues by considering those paratexts that "have the Names set against the Parts"—that is, cast lists, as well as other dramatic paratexts that record specific actors' proper names, including actor lists, prologues, epilogues, and commendatory poems. Unlike character lists, which enumerate fictional roles within the play, cast and actor lists enumerate the names of historical actors, either next to their particular roles or in isolation, respectively. By linking particular actors with particular plays, these "player paratexts" offer unique insights into early modern theater history.

2. Wright, *Historia Histrionica*, 3–4.

3. Wright, *Historia Histrionica*, 3, 2.

4. Wright, *Historia Histrionica*, 4.

I focus primarily on player paratexts related to the King's Servants, the most successful (and among the best documented) theater company of the early modern period. Although Richard Burbage—the famous Elizabethan and Jacobean actor who premiered the title roles in *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *Othello*—is now regarded as the most celebrated actor of the King's Servants, cast and actor lists pay more attention to the activities of the King's Servants from the Caroline period, actors who are now, by and large, lesser known. Some of these player paratexts suggest that Caroline actors were overshadowed by their theatrical predecessors, but others flaunt the vitality of Caroline theater in contrast to the departed earlier tradition. Joseph Taylor (ca. 1586–1652) in particular emerges as a through line along which one can trace evolving attitudes toward different theatrical periods. Taylor joined the King's Servants in 1619, inheriting many of Burbage's iconic roles; in the 1630s, he assumed the co-leadership of the King's Servants with fellow actor John Lowin.<sup>5</sup> When he is invoked in Caroline paratexts, Taylor represents theatrical novelty. In paratexts printed after the closure of the theaters in 1642, he becomes a figure of the quickly receding recent theatrical past that the era's cast lists sought to memorialize. In such lists, there is comparatively little effort to recall the performances of Burbage and other Elizabethan actors. After 1660, some printed cast lists record the performances of a new cohort of Restoration actors, while others unite Taylor and Burbage as figures of the “last Age” of drama.

Player paratexts reveal shifting notions of the theatrical past across the seventeenth century—that is, the definitions of and relationship between “now in being” and “old” theater—and of the role of printed drama in constructing and recording that past. I argue that these notions of the past are tied to changes in contemporary theatrical activity and therefore chart three distinct phases in the evolution of player paratexts: from the opening of the first purpose-built theater in 1576 to the closure of the professional theaters in 1642; during the theatrical prohibition of 1642 to 1660; and from the restoration of the theaters in 1660 to the end of the seventeenth century. Prior to 1642, individual actors' names rarely appear in playbooks; by contrast, as Lovewit indicates, cast lists are a standard feature in playbooks printed after the Restoration. The intervening period, the prolonged theatrical prohibition of 1642–60, altered perceptions of theater history and of the need to record it.

#### Cast and Actor Lists, 1576–1642

Much like Lovewit, Peter Holland compares the paratextual apparatus of pre-1642 and Restoration playbooks, and he notes the relative absence of cast lists in playbooks printed before 1642. This evidence indicates, Holland argues, that “in many respects

5. Joseph Taylor's entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* dates his assumption of King's Servants' co-leadership to “about 1625,” with Lowin and “sometimes Eliart Swanston” as co-lead; *ODNB*, s.v. “Taylor, Joseph (bap. 1586?, d. 1652), actor,” by Andrew Gurr, last modified 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27065>.



early modern drama and theater refused to acknowledge their origins, refused to construct a sense of their own history, denied their continuity from an antecedent past.”<sup>6</sup> Holland contends that a sense of English theater history emerged only after the Restoration. By contrast, Adam Zucker and Alan B. Farmer locate this emerging sense of history decades earlier, in the pre-closure Caroline period (1625–42). They observe that Caroline actors were cognizant that “whole generations of actors, writers, audiences and producers had come and gone” in the fifty years since the opening of the first theaters, continuing that “it is, perhaps, the pressing consciousness of this accruing history that made the agents of Caroline theatrical culture so different from their predecessors.”<sup>7</sup>

Player paratexts from the Caroline period manifest this nascent sense of theater history, reflecting on the status of Caroline drama and theater in relation to their Elizabethan and Jacobean predecessors. The paratexts suggest how the weight of the theatrical past could be especially burdensome for Caroline actors who revived older plays. For example, Thomas Heywood’s prologue written for the 1633 public revival of *The Jew of Malta* at the Cockpit (and printed in the 1633 first quarto) refers to the Elizabethan performer Edward Alleyn, who first performed Barabas, as “the best of Actors,” while Alleyn’s successor, Richard Perkins, “being of condition / More modest,” therefore has no “ambition / To exceed, or equall” Alleyn’s performance, but simply wants “To prove his best” and play the part he has studied.<sup>8</sup> This prologue reveals how “the memory of [Alleyn’s] acting, and an idea of it as a standard of value, continued to haunt and challenge his theatrical descendants,” Jeremy Lopez argues.<sup>9</sup>

Other player paratexts suggest that it was not merely the most popular Elizabethan actors but original actors more generally who haunted and challenged their theatrical descendants. A prologue written for revivals of George Chapman’s *Bussy D’Ambois* in the 1630s, later printed in the play’s second quarto (1641), extols the original performance and undermines revival actors. The prologue laments that Nathan “Field is gone, / Whose Action first did give it name” and then vaguely alludes to his replacement, “one / Who came the nearest to him.” This unnamed “one” is probably Joseph Taylor, who likely took over the role of Bussy after Field’s death in 1620. When *Bussy* was revived in the 1630s, the prologue indicates that the aging second actor was “denide / By his gray beard to show the height and pride” and “youth and braverie.” He was therefore replaced by “a third man,” likely Hilliard (Eliard) Swanston, who “with

6. Peter Holland, “A History of Histories: From Flecknoe to Nicoll,” in *Theorizing Practice: Redefining Theatre History*, ed. W. B. Worthen with Peter Holland (Houndmills, U.K., 2003), 12.

7. See Adam Zucker and Alan B. Farmer’s introduction to *Localizing Caroline Drama: Politics and Economics of the Early Modern Stage, 1625–1642*, ed. Zucker and Farmer (New York, 2006), 2.

8. Thomas Heywood, “The Prologue to the Stage, at the Cocke-pit,” in Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta* (London, 1633), sig. A4v. Italics set as roman.

9. Jeremy Lopez, “Alleyn Resurrected,” *Marlowe Studies* 1 (2011): 167–80 at 167.

his best / Of care and pains defends our interest.”<sup>10</sup> The decades-old professional-theater scene produced multiple and distinct (if overlapping and fluid) generations of actors; theatrical revivals enabled and encouraged comparisons of successive actors in particular roles. Even if one reads *Bussy*’s apology as exemplifying the conventional modesty of prefatory materials, the prologue’s phrasing reveals anxiety about decline in the quality of actors’ performances. Field casts a long shadow over the prologue, whereas Taylor and Swanston are not actually named and instead are identified only relative to Field: Taylor is identified as Field’s successor, and Swanston is called “a third man.” The prologue’s verdict on “a third man” is especially unforgiving; subjected to the indignity of an indefinite article, Swanston is at two removes from Field (not one from Taylor), and he strains with “his best / Of care and pains” to capture Field’s (implicitly effortless) original performance. Here it is worth recalling Truman’s estimation of Taylor in *Historia Histrionica* as “far beyond” (that is, superior to) the Restoration actors who followed him. While it is possible that the quality of performance did steadily decline over the course of the seventeenth century, there is also truth in Truman’s claim about people’s tendency to be “over indulgent to the thoughts of their youthful days.”

Along with actors from the 1620s and 1630s, Caroline plays and dramatists were compared with their theatrical predecessors. Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser argue that plays from the Elizabethan and Jacobean period were perceived as “not merely older than but significantly different from Caroline plays” in terms of their form, language, and subject matter. This perceived difference manifested itself in the Caroline playbook market, which underwent an “unprecedented split” between new and older plays. As Farmer and Lesser suggest, the period between about 1590 and 1610 was perceived from the Caroline period as the “Golden Age of English theatre”; plays first staged in that period were frequently reprinted and together were taken as the “Caroline Canon of Classic Plays.”<sup>11</sup> Conversely, plays newly written in the Caroline period rarely saw a second edition, because novelty (not quality) was their chief appeal. Lesser and Farmer focus on the Caroline “canon of classics” of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays, but here I am more interested in the Caroline novelties marketed in counterpoint.

Though Caroline plays were almost inevitably deemed to be inferior to dramatic classics, their novelty was a reliable selling point. Therefore many new playbooks include player paratexts that underscore the plays’ connections with contemporary theater. For example, Joseph Taylor supplied a commendatory verse to the first edition of Philip Massinger’s *The Roman Actor* (1629). In the poem, Taylor wonders if his paratextual contribution might sway a reader who is inclined to be prejudiced against new plays to appreciate this new offering:

10. George Chapman, *Bussy D’Ambois: A Tragedie* (London, 1641), sig. A2r–v.

11. Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser, “Canons and Classics: Publishing Drama in Caroline England,” in *Localizing Caroline Drama*, ed. Zucker and Farmer, 34–35.

If that my Lines being plac'd before thy Booke  
 Could make it sell, or alter but a looke  
 Of some sowre Censurer, who's apt to say  
 No one in these Times can produce a Play  
 Worthy his reading, since of late, 'tis true  
 The old accepted are more then the new.<sup>12</sup>

While Taylor's poem acknowledges the time's preference for old plays, the poem also highlights *The Roman Actor's* novelty, as it is written by someone active in the contemporary theater.

Taylor premiered the role of Paris in *The Roman Actor*; his contribution is recorded in the cast list included in the play's first quarto of 1629. With its cast list, *The Roman Actor* participates in an emerging paratextual trend, wherein several playbooks in the 1620s and 1630s were printed with actor and cast lists. Caroline drama's efforts to distinguish itself from the older tradition helps to explain this seemingly anomalous paratextual development.<sup>13</sup> Compared with other dramatic paratexts, actor and cast lists were a late and inconsistent addition to printed professional drama.<sup>14</sup> Several early seventeenth-century printed masques, particularly by Ben Jonson, list their amateur performers.<sup>15</sup> The first systematic attempt to list professional performers in playbooks occurs in Jonson's first folio collection, *The Workes* (F1 1616), which features individual actor lists appended to nine plays. The paratextual innovation of Jonson F1 did not appear to catch on, however, at least not for single-text plays: the next actor list appeared seven years later, in Shakespeare's first folio (1623), and

12. Joseph Taylor, "To His long knowne and lou'd Friend, Mr. Philip Massinger, upon His Roman Actor," in Philip Massinger, *The Roman Actor. A Tragædie* (London, 1629), sig. A4v.

13. The trend is noted in Emma Smith and Tamara Atkin, "The Form and Function of Character Lists in Plays Printed before the Closing of the Theatres," *Review of English Studies* 65 (2014): 647–72 at 659.

14. The first dedications appeared in George Whetstone's *The Right Excellent and famous Historye, of Promos and Cassandra* (London, 1578) and Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemakers Holiday. Or the Gentle Craft* (London, 1600); the first commendatory verses appeared in Ben Jonson's *Sejanus his Fall* (London, 1605); the first epistles to the reader in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra* and Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (London, 1590); the first arguments in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra* and John Marston's *The Dutch Courtezan* (London, 1605); and the first dramatis personae in Thomas Lupton's *A Moral and Pitieful Comedie, Intitled, All for Money* (London, 1578). As for frequency, we see a gradual increase in prefaces, dedications, and other types of prefatory material. See *Paratexts in English Printed Drama to 1642*, ed. Thomas L. Berger and Sonia Massai, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 2014); and *Early Modern Dramatic Paratexts*, an in-progress digital database of dramatic paratexts printed to 1660, ed. Sonia Massai and Heidi Craig, <https://paratexts.folger.edu/>.

15. See, for example, lists of masquers in Ben Jonson's *Hymenæi* (London, 1606), *The Masque of Blackness* (1605), and *The Masque of Beauty* (1608), printed together in London in 1608; see also the list of masquers in Samuel Daniel's *Tethys Festival* (London, 1610) and "The Names of the Maskers," in Thomas Campion, *The Masque at the Earl of Somerset's Marriage (The Masque of Squires)* (London, 1614), sig. D2v.

then not again until Shakespeare's second folio collection (1632). The actor lists of Jonson F1 were likewise reprinted in Jonson F2 (1640). Professional actor lists, then, would appear at first to be a characteristic of collected works printed in folio.

The first professional cast list, which assigns roles to actors listed, appeared in a single-text quarto, John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (Q1 1623). Between 1629 and 1632, there was a sharp spike in the publication of cast lists, when eight quarto editions included cast lists (another quarto printed within this three-year period includes an actor list) of actors' performances in plays by John Ford, Philip Massinger, James Shirley, Lodowick Carlell, Thomas Heywood, and Shackerley Marmion. The trend was short-lived, however; only two more cast lists appeared before the closure of the theaters, in playbooks printed in 1637 and in 1640.<sup>16</sup> Among the cast and actor lists in professional plays printed before 1642, all were printed after 1616, four decades after both the first performance and the first publication of professional drama, and most focus on original performance.<sup>17</sup> The nine actor lists in Jonson F1 (1616) include the actors who premiered in each play and omit any reference to recent revivals. For example, the actor list attached to *Every Man in His Humor* is headed by the announcement that "This Comoedy was first Acted, in the yeere 1598. By the then L. Chamberlain his Servants" and enumerates actors in the following order:

|                   |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Will Shakespeare. | Ric. Bvrbage             |
| Avg. Philips.     | Ioh. Hemings.            |
| Hen. Condel.      | Tho. Pope.               |
| Will. Slye.       | Chr. Beeston.            |
| Will. Kempe.      | Ioh. Dvke. <sup>18</sup> |

The list is retrospective: it is headed by the recently deceased Shakespeare (who died in 1616, the same year that Jonson's *Workes* was printed), with an attribution that specifically invokes an eighteen-year-old performance by a company performing back "then," under a different name and patron. The Lord Chamberlain's Men became the King's Servants after James I's ascension in 1603 and revived *Every Man in His Humor* at court in February 1604 or 1605, but Jonson's *Workes* makes no mention of that more recent performance. *Every Man in His Humor* was later revived by the King's Servants in mid-February 1631, at the Cockpit in court, before King Charles and Queen Henrietta Maria, and again at Blackfriars a day later, as a benefit performance

16. Gerald Eades Bentley includes all printed lists, as well as manuscript lists, in the appendix to his *The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's Time, 1590–1642* (Princeton, N.J., 1984), 247–95. Since Bentley's publication, a new Caroline cast list has turned up in the form of manuscript annotations in a print book; see Joshua J. McEvilla, "The Original Salisbury Court Players of Richard Brome's *The Antipodes*," *Notes and Queries* 59 (2012): 168–71.

17. Information about cast and actor lists, as well as several other paratext types, can be accessed at *Early Modern Dramatic Paratexts*.

18. Ben Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour*, in *The Workes* (London, 1616), sig. F6v.

for Sir Henry Herbert.<sup>19</sup> There was no sign of these revivals in Jonson's second folio, printed in 1640. The paratextual material in the second folio still invokes the original performance, now forty-two years old.

The persistent focus on original performance in the Jonson folio lends credence to a narrative about the inevitable decline associated with revivals as actors' parts were handed down from one generation to the next. The actor list in Shakespeare's first folio, however, puts productive pressure on this narrative. This list does not reveal a sense of theatrical decline but rather commemorates both those who originated roles and the next generation of performers who kept them alive. "The Names of the Principall Actors in all these Playes" enumerates twenty-six names in two columns of actors who performed at different points of Shakespeare's career. Apart from Shakespeare and Burbage, whose names occupy the first and second entry in the first column, respectively, the early sharers William Kemp, Nathan Field, Robert Armin, Henry Condell, and John Hemmings (the latter two responsible for the publication of F1) are more or less mixed in with later members, such as Joseph Taylor, who could only have performed revivals of Shakespeare's plays, since he joined the company in 1619, three years after Shakespeare's death.

Whereas the multigenerational actor list in Shakespeare's F1 treats older and newer actors more or less equally, the multigenerational cast list in *The Duchess of Malfi* (Q1 1623) emphasizes revival actors; it names only three original performers. The *Duchess* list enumerates two generations of actors who performed in the play's original production (in late 1613 or early 1614) and its revival (ca. 1619–23).<sup>20</sup> The names of Burbage, Condell, and William Ostler, who respectively premiered the roles of Ferdinand, the Cardinal, and Antonio, are each marked with a "1." Their names are followed by their respective successors in the roles: Joseph Taylor, Richard Robinson, and Robert Benfield, who are each marked with a "2." The rest of the players' names, which make up the majority of the list, are not marked with a number. In the case of John Lowin, who performed Bosola, the absence of a number indicates that he performed in both the original performance and the revival. It is doubtful, however, that all the numberless names represent performances by the same actors in both productions. As G. E. Bentley notes, it is unlikely that the three boy players Richard Sharp (the Duchess), John Thompson (the Cardinal's mistress), and Robert Pallant (Cariola) performed their female roles over a period of five or more years, especially since Thompson played another female role in Arthur Wilson's *The Swisser* in 1631, seventeen years after the original performance of *Duchess*. Bentley concludes that "the cast printed in the 1623 quarto is the cast for the revival, and only Burbage,

19. Martin Wiggins in association with Catherine Richardson, *British Drama, 1533–1642: A Catalogue*, vol. 4, 1598–1602 (Oxford, 2014), 56.

20. As Bentley notes, "Since Ostler died late in 1614 and Richard Burbage in early 1619, the opening performance must have taken place before the end of 1614 and the revival between 1619 and the publication date of 1623"; Bentley, *Profession of Player*, 249.

Condell and Ostler are singled out for their memorable creation of the roles in the first performance.”<sup>21</sup> The cast list’s invocation of three well-known actors who originated their roles could express anxiety that the revival fails to live up to the original. Burbage is, literally and figuratively, number “1,” while Taylor is number “2,” a view seemingly consistent with the prologues written for Caroline revivals of *The Jew of Malta* and *Bussy D’Ambois*, which give preference to original actors. Unlike those prologues, however, in the *Duchess* cast list, revival actors are not denigrated for failing to live up to their theatrical predecessors; indeed, they are worthier of textual commemoration. Unlike the old actor lists appended to Jonson’s folio, the *Duchess* cast list emphasizes recent performance, omitting many of the play’s original actors. The first quarto of *Duchess*, then, was not marketed as a historical artifact, an old play first acted a decade ago by the great (and, in some cases, late) actors of the early Jacobean period. Rather, *The Duchess of Malfi* Q1 is a document of contemporary performance, focusing on theatrical revival.

The majority of the cast lists printed before 1642 were appended to publications of new Caroline plays. These lists were associated with a variety of theater companies and printed by a variety of stationers. The clearest pattern, however, is related neither to a particular theater company nor to a stationer. Instead, novelty, of one kind or another, is the most likely predictor that a playbook would feature a cast list. All but two of the lists appear in new plays by new Caroline dramatists: Massinger, Ford, Shirley, Carlell, Marmion, Thomas Nabbes, and Nathaniel Richards. For these dramatists, cast lists appear in their respective plays’ first dramatic publication. The remaining two lists are attached to an Elizabethan play that was revived in the Caroline period and to its newly written Caroline sequel: the first and second part of *The Fair Maid of the West* (both 1631) by Thomas Heywood. Cast lists are associated with dramatic novelty and theatrical vitality: they appear in new plays from new playwrights who are being printed for the first time and in an older play by an older playwright who is being rejuvenated by a theatrical revival and the composition of a new sequel. These lists challenge the notion that Caroline players necessarily toiled in the shadows of Elizabethan and Jacobean theater. In these lists, actors from the so-called Golden Age are nowhere to be seen.

Let us pause to consider the Caroline performances of Heywood’s *Fair Maid* plays and their subsequent paratextual representation. The first part of *The Fair Maid of the West* (1 *Fair Maid*) was first performed ca. 1597–1604; the play was revived in 1631, when it was performed with its newly written sequel, the second part of *The Fair Maid of the West* (2 *Fair Maid*). The two plays were published together in 1631, in an edition that omits any reference to the Elizabethan performance of 1 *Fair Maid*. The title pages for both plays feature the same performance attribution from the Caroline period: “As it was lately acted before the King and Queen, with approved liking. By the Queens Majesties Comedians.” Each play features a cast list with Caroline actors;

21. Bentley, *Profession of Player*, 249–50.



the two lists record one cast who acted the two plays; the roles and names from the longer *1 Fair Maid* cast list are not repeated in the partial list for *2 Fair Maid*, which only adds the names of actors who either had different roles or no roles at all in *1 Fair Maid*.<sup>22</sup> While Heywood's prologue to *The Jew of Malta* suggests how the memory of Alleyn's iconic performance overshadowed Perkins's revival, Heywood's dedication and address to the reader in *1 Fair Maid* give no indication that it was an older play first acted around 1604. The paratextual apparatus does everything it can to maintain the illusion that, like its sequel, the old *1 Fair Maid* is a fresh theatrical offering from the Caroline period.

Highlighting Caroline plays' ties to the contemporary theater is a sensible strategy for a mature dramatic tradition anxious about living up to its predecessors: no matter the achievements of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, Caroline drama will always be newer. Through these paratexts, new Caroline plays were partly distinguished from Elizabethan and Jacobean classics through their association with contemporary theater, while select older plays were subjected to processes of canonization that made them seem bookish and literary. It would be wrong, however, to suggest that new Caroline plays and older ones strictly adhere to a binary of exciting contemporary theater and serious old books. For while Farmer and Lesser argue that printed drama had a "relative independence from the stage," Lucy Munro points out that a striking number of their classic plays "were either printed with a current theatrical attribution in the Caroline period . . . or are known to have been revived between 1625 and 1642."<sup>23</sup> It is also important to note that the same theater companies performed both the revivals of older plays and the new Caroline ones. Jeremy Lopez has described a contrapuntal marketing strategy whereby Caroline theater companies' highly contemporary repertory "by up-and-comers James Shirley, Philip Massinger, and John Ford" was complemented by the nostalgic revival of "much older works by Henry Chettle, Dekker, Heywood, Marlowe, and Webster."<sup>24</sup> Joseph Taylor revived Ferdinand in *The Duchess of Malfi*, inviting comparisons with Burbage's original performance, but he also premiered the role of Paris in Massinger's *The Roman Actor*. The performance of older, significantly different works was favorably offset by the performance of dramatic novelties, and vice versa.

Cast and actor lists illuminate the Caroline drama and theater's attitudes toward the dramatic past and its position within a decades-long tradition. Peter Holland argues that, by consistently presenting plays with some variation of the past-tense locution "as it hath been acted," early modern playbooks "located performance as a past event" and, in so doing, denied theater's "immediacy and contemporaneity."<sup>25</sup> But the trend during the late 1620s and early 1630s of including cast lists was a way to

22. Bentley, *Profession of Player*, 272–73.

23. Lucy Munro, "Marlowe and the Caroline Stage," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 27 (2009): 39–50 at 40–41.

24. Lopez, "Alleyn Resurrected," 172.

25. Holland, "History of Histories," 12.

assert the immediacy of Caroline drama and theater, to distinguish them from the older fare they were competing with and, in many ways, not measuring up to. Pre-1642 cast and actor lists suggest that Caroline drama's awareness of its "accruing history" took many shapes: a celebration of English drama's venerable past, an assertion of theatrical continuity, and an attempt to supersede that past. The sense of theater history expressed by cast lists—and of the perceived role of print in commemorating that history—would continue to evolve after the theaters closed in 1642.

### ☞ The King's Servants in Player Paratexts, 1642–1660

Pre-1642 player paratexts thus had a Janus-faced quality that both underscored novelty and commemorated tradition. By contrast, player paratexts printed after 1642 had an elegiac air, paying homage to a professional tradition that had been suddenly curtailed. Notably, the tradition commemorated in cast lists printed after 1642 was not the "Golden Age" of Elizabethan and early Jacobean theater but instead the more recent contributions of Caroline actors. Whereas Caroline actors were invoked in pre-1642 dramatic paratexts as figures of theatrical novelty, after the closure of the theaters, they became the objects of theatrical nostalgia.

The closure of the theaters marked significant changes in how the theatrical past was understood and recorded in print. These changes also illuminate the function of pre-1642 paratexts. Player paratexts printed prior to 1642 often betrayed nostalgia for the distant theatrical past—commemorating dead actors, defunct companies, and original performances that revival actors could not match—but this impression was often counterbalanced by an impression of theatrical continuity, through references to the next generation of players who, for better or worse, kept performance alive. Although Peter Holland argues that pre-1642 theatrical attributions always located performance in the past, the pastness of such locutions must have been mitigated by the context of active theater in which pre-1642 playbooks were printed. Many (though by no means all) of the venues, companies, and audiences identified on title pages continued to stage, perform, and watch plays over multiple decades. Moreover, when individual venues, companies, and actors and audience members, respectively, were dismantled, disbanded, or died, their losses were at least partly counterbalanced by the continual infusion of new iterations. The Theatre was dismantled on December 28, 1598, but its timber was repurposed to build the Globe in 1599. The Admiral's Men faded from the London stages around 1591, but a reconstituted version of the company reappeared three years later in 1594. Taylor revived many of Burbage's roles after 1619. Pre-1642 players performed at court for a succession of queens, kings, and princes. Although individual losses were felt, and new iterations were not necessarily equivalent to the earlier ones ("a third man" would not measure up to Nathan Field), the more or less constant activity of the theater industry meant that there was always something to supplement individual losses, or at least distract from them. Even as individual participants or venues died off or disappeared, performance, in one form or another, lived on.

This was no longer the case after 1642. Although the theatrical prohibition of 1642 never fully succeeded in silencing the theaters, it effectively eliminated professional theater as a viable industry. The paratextual conventions that had become entrenched by 1642 continued to appear in print after the theaters closed, but familiar phrases took on different meanings as the prohibition dragged on. "As it hath been played" referred not to a past performance from an active, ongoing industry but rather to one from a forcibly concluded tradition. The theatrical venues mentioned on title pages were, as a group, not operational; they were either vacant, used for illegal performance, repurposed, or demolished (the Globe was torn down around 1644, the second Blackfriars in 1655). Individual losses that had been previously restored or mitigated by the next theatrical generation would no longer be repaired. While Taylor appears as Burbage's successor in the *Duchess* cast list, the cast appended to Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Wild-Goose Chase*, first printed in a single-text folio edition in 1652, offers no immediate theatrical successors for Taylor. The actors in *The Wild-Goose Chase* cast list represent the end of the line, a fact that the edition's paratexts make painfully visible. The paratextual apparatus of *The Wild-Goose Chase* memorializes a dead theatrical tradition, the actors themselves awkwardly outliving their professional usefulness.

Before 1642, an actor's death (or retirement) removed him from the stage; hence, funeral orations that bid farewell to the actor also doubled as a farewell to his performances, a duality pithily captured by Burbage's famous epitaph, "Exit Burbage." Burbage's epitaph haunts a player paratext in *The Wild-Goose Chase*, an address to the reader written by Lowin and Taylor, the co-leaders of the King's Servants, who had been functionally unemployed for the last decade. In their poignant epistle, Lowin and Taylor acknowledge the prolonged theatrical silence and bid farewell to the stage: "'Tis not unknown unto you All, how by a cruell Destinie we have a long time been *Mutes* and *Bound*. . . . But be the *Comædie* at your *Mercy* as *We* are. Onely we wish, that you may have the same *kind Joy* in *Perusing* of it, as we had in the *Acting*. So *Exeunt*. Your Gratefull Servants, *John Lowin, Joseph Taylor*."<sup>26</sup> Instead of "Exit Burbage," where one actor's death removes him from the scene, we have "So *Exeunt*," where multiple actors are forced off the stage, standing in for English actors' removal from the English theater industry. While Burbage's dramatic successors paid homage to the late actor, unemployed actors now engaged in acts of self-memorialization, nostalgically reflecting on their own concluded careers.

The player paratexts, including two cast lists, attached to Beaumont and Fletcher's 1652 *The Wild-Goose Chase* and Robert Davenport's *King John and Matilda* (1655) speak to their moment of publication after a prolonged period of theatrical suppression. *The Wild-Goose Chase*'s title page declares that the text is printed for the

26. John Lowin and Joseph Taylor, "The Dedication. To the Honour'd, Few, Lovers of Drammatick Poesie," in John Fletcher and Francis Beaumont, *The Wild-Goose Chase. A Comedie* (London, 1652), sig. A2r.

"private Benefit of John Lowin, and Joseph Taylor, Servants to His late Majestie," the quality of lateness describing both the executed king and his disbanded servants. In the edition's cast list, for the very first time we see complimentary adverbs appended to particular performances: the role of Mirabell is said to be "Incomparably Acted by Mr. *Joseph Taylor*"; Pinac is "Admirably well Acted by Mr. *Thomas Pollard*"; and Belleur is "Most naturally Acted by Mr. *John Lowin*." G. E. Bentley calls the *Wild-Goose* list "the most descriptive of the printed casts for plays by the King's company."<sup>27</sup> One might argue that the descriptive adverbs bolster the text's ability to substitute for performance in a moment when performance is inaccessible. Jitka Štollová argues that the descriptive cast list in *The Wild-Goose Chase* "set[s] the scene for the Restoration character lists furnished with extensive descriptions and characterizations of individual figures."<sup>28</sup> But, for all its information about fictional characters, the list does not offer insights about each player's particular acting style, enabling us to imagine their performances; we are simply told that the performances were excellent and, in the case of Lowin, "natural." The cast list appended to *King John and Matilda* also features vague praise; it notes that Mr. Perkins's "action" as Fitzwater "gave Grace to the Play" and that Mr. Shirelock "performed excellently well" as Brand.<sup>29</sup> No matter their future influence, the lists are firmly retrospective, making a deliberate effort to recover and memorialize pre-1642 theater a decade after the fact. The descriptive cast lists attached to *The Wild-Goose Chase* and *King John and Matilda* are nostalgic for the era of public theater, and they prompt a similar nostalgia in the reader who may or may not have seen the incomparable, graceful performances of professional actors who are now silenced.

With the inclusion of laudatory player paratexts, the first edition of *The Wild-Goose Chase* perhaps succeeded in keeping the memory of the pre-1642 theatrical tradition alive. It did not, in the end, keep alive the actors for whose benefit the edition was printed: Taylor and Lowin both died within a year of the publication, respectively in 1652 and 1653, joining the long line of principal King's Servants who exited the stage without immediate theatrical heirs. By and large, the principal King's Servants who performed before 1642 were not extensively involved in theatrical productions after 1660; the famed Restoration actor Charles Hart was a boy actor with the pre-1642 King's Servants, but few actors were well known both before 1642 and after 1660.<sup>30</sup>

27. Bentley, *Profession of Player*, 255.

28. Jitka Štollová, "Reading Dramatic Character through *Dramatis Personae* in Early Modern Printed Drama," *Studies in Philology* 115 (2018): 312–42 at 330.

29. Like *The Wild-Goose Chase*, Davenport's *King John and Matilda, a Tragedy* (London, 1655) was printed for the financial benefit of an actor who was involved in its theatrical production; in this case, the edition was published by the actor himself, Andrew Pennycuicke. See Marissa Nicosia, "Printing as Revival: Making Playbooks in the 1650s," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 111 (2017): 469–89.

30. As indicated above, some Restoration actors did perform on pre-1642 stages, notably Charles Hart (who apprenticed under the King's Servant Richard Robinson) and Michael Mohun. Hart (1625–1683) and Mohun (b. ca. 1616–20?, d. 1684), respectively seventeen and in his twenties when the theaters closed, were minor players in 1642; both became leading players

This cleft between the two traditions is evident in player paratexts in Restoration publications of pre-1642 plays, which tend to deny theatrical continuities between the pre-war period and the Restoration. Instead, when pre-1642 plays were printed following Restoration revivals, cast lists record the contributions of contemporary Restoration actors. The exceptions to this trend—namely, the actor lists reprinted in Shakespeare's and Jonson's Restoration folios and the twenty-five new actor lists included in Beaumont and Fletcher's second folio of 1679—suggest that the emerging conceptions of dramatic authorship grew in tandem with an interest in early modern theater history.

### ☞ The King's Servants in Printed Paratexts after 1660

Lovewit in *Historia Histrionica* tells us that cast lists became a common feature of professional playbooks after the Restoration. Paratexts in reprints of older plays that were revived after 1660 tend to showcase Restoration actors (as do, unsurprisingly, paratexts in publications of new Restoration plays). The notable exception to this trend, however, is in Restoration folios of early modern plays. The third and fourth Shakespeare folios (1663/4 and 1685) and the third Jonson folio (1692) reproduce the actor lists of their respective first folios. The second Beaumont and Fletcher folio, *Fifty Comedies and Tragedies* (1679), includes twenty-five previously unprinted actor lists featuring the King's Servants active before the closure of the theaters. While critics have doubted the accuracy of the lists in Beaumont and Fletcher F2, the accuracy of these lists matters less than what they suggest about the late seventeenth-century desire to retrieve—or invent—the pre-1642 theatrical past.

In contrast to the Restoration Shakespeare folios, with their lists of pre-1642 actors, all Shakespeare quartos printed between 1660 and 1695 include cast lists with Restoration actors.<sup>31</sup> These include *Macbeth* (Q1 1673); four editions of *Hamlet* (Q6 1676, Q7 "1676" [1683/4],<sup>32</sup> Q8 1683, Q9 1695), three editions of *Othello* (Q4 1681, Q5 1687, Q6 1695), and two editions of *Julius Caesar* (Q1 1684, Q2 1691); this number

of the King's Company only after 1660. Similarly, a small number of pre-1642 performers had brief careers on the Restoration stage: Theophilus Bird (1608–1663) was a well-known pre-1642 player who performed in the Restoration, but he performed only for a season or two after 1660. Richard Baxter (1593–1665), as John Astington writes, "had the longest and most varied career of any of his contemporaries, beginning as a teenage hired player at the Red Bull, 1605–6." After the reopening of the theaters, he "re-emerged as a player with the Restoration King's company, but seems not to have taken parts after he was seventy; he died in 1665." See Astington, *Actors and Acting in Shakespeare's Time: The Art of Stage Playing* (Cambridge, 2010), 188–206.

31. It is difficult to define a "Shakespeare publication" after 1660, since many of his plays were adapted to such an extent that one might call them different plays. I examine the plays listed in the appendix of Andrew Murphy's *Shakespeare in Print*, which excludes "texts which engage in anything that might be regarded as a significant rewriting or restructuring of the text." Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge, 2003), 284.

32. The second 1676 quarto actually dates from 1683 or 1684. See Emma Depledge, "False Dating: The Case of the '1676' *Hamlet* Quartos," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 112 (2018): 183–99.

increases if we date three undated quartos of *Julius Caesar* to the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>33</sup> Thanks to these lists, we know that Thomas Betterton played Hamlet and Brutus and that his wife, Mary Saunderson Betterton, played Ophelia. The relationship between text and paratext in *Macbeth* Q1 1673 is more complicated. The text is based on Shakespeare's folios, while the cast list identifies the Bettertons' turn as the Macbeths (likely in William Davenant's Restoration adaptation). It is not surprising that Restoration quartos of Shakespeare's plays do not name pre-1642 actors, since none of Shakespeare's pre-1642 quartos were printed with a cast list.

Yet the paratexts attached to the Restoration publications of another pre-1642 play, *The Duchess of Malfi*, reveal if not a total indifference to the pre-1642 theatrical tradition, then a clear preference for contemporary theater. The two Restoration reprints of *The Duchess of Malfi* omit the multigenerational cast list from *Duchess* Q1 1623, which, as we have seen, records the original performance of Burbage and the revival performance of Taylor, among others. The title page of the reissued second quarto of *The Duchess of Malfi* (ca. 1664) asserts theatrical continuity between pre-1642 and post-1660 performance; it presents the play, "As it was Acted by his late Majesties Servants at Black Fryers with great applause, Thirty Years Since, And now acted by his Highness the Duke of York's Servants." This attribution refers neither to the original 1614 performance nor to the revived performances around 1619–23 recorded in Q1's cast list but instead to a revival in the early 1630s.<sup>34</sup> Despite this specific reference to a pre-1642 performance, the reissue of *Duchess* Q2 does not include any cast list, early modern or Restoration, a fact doubly strange considering that it was a reissue of Q2 1640, which had the list. The list was printed on the verso of the title page of *Duchess* Q2 1640; the circa 1664 reissue had a cancel title page, with a blank verso. This explains why the cast list is missing from the reissue but not why stationers failed to reproduce it; presumably readers in 1664 were indifferent to actors of their parents' and grandparents' generations.

Obscured in 1664, the specific memory of pre-1642 performance was erased entirely in the third quarto, *The Dutchess of Malfey* (1678). This edition features a present-tense performance attribution, "As it is now Acted at the Dukes Theater," and a cast list with Restoration actors, including Mary and Thomas Betterton as the Duchess and Bosola, and Henry Harris as Ferdinand. As with Q1, Q3 of *Duchess* was not marketed as a historical relic but rather as a text from the contemporary theater; the revival actors Taylor, Robinson, and Benfield, trotted out in 1623 as a sign of theatrical vitality in contrast to Burbage, Condell, and Ostler, were omitted in 1678, making room for a new generation of revival actors.

33. Cf. John W. Velz, who has dated a fourth undated quarto to the eighteenth century, in "'Pirate Hills' and the Quartos of *Julius Caesar*," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 63 (1969): 177–93.

34. We know the play was revived at court on December 26, 1630, and likely in the public theaters as well. See John Webster, *The Dutchess of Malfi*, ed. Leah S. Marcus (London, 2009), 95.



The Restoration Shakespeare quartos are also marketed in terms of contemporary performance. As with most Restoration theatrical attributions, performance of the plays is described in the present tense,<sup>35</sup> and over half of the editions omit reference to the prewar tradition entirely. *Hamlet* Q6, Q7, and Q8 are presented “As it is now Acted at his Highness the Duke of York’s Theatre”; the two editions of *Julius Caesar* are offered “As it is now Acted at the Theatre Royal.” Notably, the cast list and performance attributions for the first Restoration editions of *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Julius Caesar* were not updated to reflect personnel changes in later revivals. Peter Holland notes that cast lists in new Restoration plays remain similarly fixed despite later revivals, and he argues that “the effect of this fixity in the cast is to fix the first performance as that which ‘realized’ the play most fully.”<sup>36</sup> As we have seen from the lists in the Jonson folios, a preoccupation with the original performance is not unique to the Restoration. In Restoration reprints of older plays, however, the new cast lists effectively reset the play’s stage history to begin after 1660. The paratext establishes a new “original” post-1660 performance to be continually invoked in later editions, effectively erasing the pre-1642 tradition.

The three Restoration *Othello* editions are the only Restoration Shakespeare quartos to explicitly invoke pre-1642 performance, presenting the play “As it hath been divers times acted at the Globe, and at the Black-Friers: And now at the Theater Royal.” The first part of the attribution imitates the early modern tendency to locate performance in the past; indeed, it reproduces the performance attribution of *Othello* Q1 (1622). Although the words are the same, the meaning of the performance attribution is redefined in the new context. Alluded-to past performance does not belong to an ongoing tradition but instead to one that is extinct; this tradition is further relegated to the past since it is contrasted with contemporary theater happening “now.”

In the case of Restoration editions of *Macbeth*, the desire to call attention to contemporary theater at the expense of the theatrical past produced a paratextual muddle that did not reflect any performance, past or present. William Cademan’s edition of *Macbeth* (Q1 1673) is reprinted from *Macbeth* in Shakespeare’s F1, but its attribution (“A Tragedy. Acted at the Dukes-Theatre”) and Restoration cast list refer to Davenant’s adaptation. Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* was probably never performed in the Restoration, while Davenant’s adaptation was first performed at Lincoln’s Inn Fields in 1664 and revived, with added operatic spectacle, at Dorset Garden in 1673. Christopher Spencer speculates that *Macbeth* Q1 1673 was the stationer William Cademan’s attempt to cash in on the popularity of Davenant’s *Macbeth* without access to his actual text.<sup>37</sup> Two quartos of Davenant’s *Macbeth* adaptation appeared in 1674, one

35. Holland, “History of Histories,” 12.

36. Peter Holland, *The Ornament of Action: Text and Performance in Restoration Comedy* (Cambridge, 1979), 109.

37. Christopher Spencer, *Davenant’s “Macbeth” from the Yale Manuscript: An Edition, with a Discussion of the Relation of Davenant’s Text to Shakespeare’s* (New Haven, Conn., 1961), 4.

by Andrew Clark and another by Philip Chetwind (printer of Shakespeare F3); these two later, legitimate quartos were presumably attempts by Clark and Chetwind to supplant Cademan's earlier, illicit publication.<sup>38</sup> Emma Depledge notes that "Cademan seems to have gazumped Clark," who was "thus forced to distinguish his genuine edition of the Davenant text audiences had recently enjoyed by emphasizing its novelty as 'a tragedy: with all the alterations, amendments, additions, and new songs. As it is *now* acted at the Dukes Theatres.'" <sup>39</sup> Spencer notes that Chetwind's version "seems to have been printed hastily," suggesting that "Cademan had found a good market for his edition, and Chetwind was anxious to profit from it."<sup>40</sup> One result of this haste, perhaps, was that Chetwind reprinted the cast list from Cademan's Q1 1673 (with typographical alterations), which includes nine characters from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* who were actually cut from Davenant's version: Ross; Angus; Monteth; Cathnes, son to Seyward; "Doctor" (both the English doctor of act 4, scene 3 and Lady Macbeth's physician of act 5, scene 1); the Porter; the Old Man of act 2, scene 4; and Macduff's son. Spencer argues that Clark's edition was printed from Chetwind's and corrects many of its errors. But this correction did not extend to the paratexts: Clark reproduces the erroneous cast list, with its nine absent characters. Neither *Macbeth* Q1 1673 (Shakespeare's text) nor the two quartos of 1674 (with cast lists including characters cut from the stage play) represents what was said and done on stage at Lincoln's Inn Fields or Dorset Garden. Nor does *Macbeth* Q1 1673, cast with Restoration actors, reflect a pre-1642 performance. A person who bought one or more of the three Restoration *Macbeth* quartos seeking either a historical reconstruction of a past performance or an aide-mémoire of a recent one would get neither.<sup>41</sup>

Restoration quartos of early modern plays privilege the current theatrical moment; by contrast, Restoration folios of early modern plays reveal an interest in the distant theatrical past. Shakespeare F3 (1663/4), printed by Philip Chetwind, retained "the names of the Principal *Actors* in all these *Playes*," the original actor list printed in F1 (1623) and reprinted in F2 (1632), and Henry Herringman reproduced this actor list in his edition of Shakespeare F4 (1685). In his publication of the third Jonson folio (1692), Herringman also reproduced all actor lists and theatrical attributions from

38. The relationship between the rights to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Davenant's version is somewhat unclear. Chetwind and Clark (who each separately published a copy of Davenant's *Macbeth*) legitimately claimed ownership of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*; each traced their rights from one of the two publishers of F1, Edward Blount and Isaac Jaggard. Christopher Spencer assumes that owning the rights to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* entitled Chetwind and Clark to print Davenant's but does not explain why. Spencer, *Davenant's "Macbeth"*, 18–24.

39. Emma Depledge, "Shakespeare for Sale, 1640–1740," in *Canonising Shakespeare: Stationers and the Book Trade, 1640–1740*, ed. Emma Depledge and Peter Kirwan (Cambridge, 2017), 20. Emphasis Depledge's.

40. Spencer, *Davenant's "Macbeth"*, 23.

41. Thank you to Stephen Watkins and Emma Depledge for clarifying the perplexing publication and performance history of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* relative to the Restoration performance and publication of Davenant's adaptation.

the first Jonson folio of 1616; *Every Man in his Humour* is still said to be “first acted in the year 1598.” Already retrospective in 1616, such references to Elizabethan performance were positively antique nearly a century later, especially since many of the plays had been revived in the previous thirty years.

The consistent reproduction of first folio actor lists in the post-1660 Jonson and Shakespeare folios provides context for the most notable Restoration-era actor list of pre-1642 players, found in the second folio collection of Beaumont and Fletcher, *Fifty Comedies and Tragedies* (1679), published by Herringman, John Martyn, and Richard Marriot. As we have seen, when Herringman published single-text quartos of plays by Beaumont and Fletcher and Shakespeare, he appended cast lists featuring Restoration actors. By contrast, twenty-five plays in *Fifty Comedies and Tragedies* were printed with new actor lists that featured the pre-1642 King’s Servants. G. E. Bentley doubts the lists’ authenticity; he notes that while lists in Jonson’s folio “were made by one of the most experienced and certainly the most meticulous playwright” in early modern London, and lists in Shakespeare’s F1 were made by Heminges and Condell, “two of the most knowledgeable theatre men of their time,” no one knows who compiled the Beaumont and Fletcher lists nor when they did it.<sup>42</sup> For my purposes, however, the factual accuracy of the twenty-five actor lists in the Beaumont and Fletcher second folio matters less than their deliberate effort to associate the 1679 volume with the pre-1642 stage. The Beaumont and Fletcher second folio partly adheres to the paratextual conventions of new Restoration playbooks by printing actors’ proper names. But while cast lists in new Restoration playbooks (and quarto publications of early modern revivals) link plays to contemporary performance, the actor lists in the Beaumont and Fletcher second folio connect the text to the pre-1642 tradition, which many readers in the late 1670s would not have experienced. The presence of actor lists in the Restoration folios of Shakespeare, Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher puts pressure on Richard Schoch’s argument that “the seventeenth-century folio editions of plays by Jonson, Shakespeare, and Beaumont and Fletcher were monuments to authorship” and therefore “highly conspicuous exceptions to the rule exemplified in the printing of drama in quarto: plays were most strongly linked not to their authors but to the companies who performed them.”<sup>43</sup> But the reproduction and, especially, the addition of pre-1642 actor lists in Restoration folios instead reveal an interest in linking plays to the people who performed them, with one important difference: while quartos record contemporary performance, the folios commemorate the distant theatrical past, reproducing for Restoration readers the names of actors they had probably never seen perform.

The twenty-five lists in the Beaumont and Fletcher second folio feature multiple generations of King’s Servants, but they also distinguish between the different (though

42. Bentley, *Profession of Player*, 217.

43. Richard W. Schoch, *Writing the History of the British Stage, 1660–1900* (Cambridge, 2016), 65.

also overlapping) generations. The list appended to *The Mad Lover* (performed at court on January 5, 1617) features Richard Burbage and Nathan Field; the list attached to *The Custom of the Country* (performed in 1620, a year after Burbage's death) features Joseph Taylor; no list features both Burbage and Taylor. The lists maintain Burbage's and Taylor's consecutive tenures, yet both actors symbolize pre-1642 drama.

Through the shifting symbolism of Joseph Taylor, then, one can chart the evolving notions of the theatrical past. In the 1620s and 1630s, Taylor was invoked as an emblem of theatrical novelty, in contrast to the Elizabethan and early Jacobean actors Richard Burbage and Nathan Field. Taylor lived long enough to see himself become a figure of the increasingly remote pre-1642 theatrical past; cast lists from the 1650s were more interested in memorializing the immediate theatrical losses of the Caroline period than in celebrating English drama's supposed Golden Age. By the 1670s, in contrast to contemporary performances of the Bettertons and their cohort, Taylor and Burbage were united as figures of theater of the "last Age."

Changes in contemporary theatrical practice across the seventeenth century influenced if and how actors' individual contributions were recorded in print. Elizabethan and Jacobean theater had relatively little interest in commemorating its activities in print. The emergence of cast lists in the 1620s reveals English theater's emerging sense of its own history, yet, somewhat counterintuitively, these lists were mostly populated with Caroline actors and were deployed to underscore the plays' novelty, the one area in which Caroline drama could reliably surpass its celebrated predecessors. By contrast, in playbooks printed after the closure of the theaters in 1642, Caroline actors were themselves the objects of nostalgia, invoked in elegiac paratexts that pay homage to the pre-1642 stage. After 1660, when older plays were revived and reprinted, pre-1642 and Restoration actors competed for paratextual space. The publication format determined which tradition would win out: quartos favored contemporary Restoration actors, and folios favored pre-1642 theater. The allusions to remote, largely abstract performers bolster the commemorative function of the folios, monuments to both authorship and to historical theatrical performance.

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# Francis Kirkman, Theatrical Historian

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Francis X. Connor

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**ABSTRACT** The authors staged most frequently during the first decade of the Restoration were John Fletcher, William Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson, codifying the post-Restoration critical history of the English theater around the “triumvirate of wit.” However, patrons also saw plays by non-triumvirate authors, and publishers played an essential role in the formation of the English theatrical canon, notably by issuing catalogs. Francis Kirkman produced two of the most comprehensive and influential play catalogs of the late seventeenth century and can be identified as one of the first British literary figures to take an interest in theater that postdated classical writers but predated the “modern” triumvirate. **KEYWORDS:** antiquarianism; English dramatic canon; John Dryden; Gerard Langbaine; interludes

☞ **THE DECADE THAT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED** the reopening of the London theaters can be understood as a period of historical recovery. The playwrights, actors, and other theatrical professionals who reestablished the stage in 1660 drew on the expertise of veterans who had substantial careers before the closing of the theaters in 1642—most notably Thomas Killigrew and William Davenant, who would receive patents to open new companies. Out of necessity and economy, these companies used pre-Commonwealth plays for most early Restoration performances. The authors staged most frequently during the first decade were John Fletcher, William Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson, the prolific playwrights whose work had been collected in folio editions.<sup>1</sup> The post-Restoration critical history of the English theater quickly codified around this “triumvirate of wit,” a history influentially articulated

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1. Counting known performances listed in *The London Stage*, between 1660 and 1669, there were 112 performances of plays from the Fletcher canon, 36 from Jonson, and 26 from Shakespeare. See *The London Stage: 1660–1800*, vol. 1, 1660–1700, ed. William Van Lennep (Carbondale, Ill., 1965).



by John Dryden and other post-Restoration critics.<sup>2</sup> However, patrons of the early stage would have also had the opportunity to see George Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois*, Thomas Dekker and Philip Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*, Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, and other plays by nontriumvirate authors including Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Middleton, and John Webster; in short, a playgoer of the first decade after the Restoration had the opportunity to survey the breadth of early modern drama. By 1668, however, the number of pre-Commonwealth play revivals had declined, owing to, among other things, a substantial body of new dramatic work and changing theatrical tastes that favored low comedy or the heroic aesthetic proposed by John Dryden and others.<sup>3</sup> Robert Hume calculates that "90 per cent of the old [pre-Commonwealth] plays ever revived had been played by 1670," with new plays gradually supplanting old ones over the course of the first decade of the Restoration.<sup>4</sup> During the period when they held the stage, these frequent early revivals of pre-Commonwealth plays provided an opportunity for theatrical performers and patrons to revisit these plays as part of a distinct period of theatrical history. The presence of Middleton, Webster, Thomas Heywood, and other less prominent playwrights during this period further suggests that persons involved with the professional theater were willing to dig deeply into England's theatrical past.

Just as the restored companies were performing English dramatic history on public stages, authors and stationers had begun a similar historical performance on their paper stages. Coinciding with this theatrical renaissance, publishers, according to Adam Hooks, had begun offering an alternative valuation of dramatic work that depended on the availability and value of printed plays.<sup>5</sup> Paulina Kewes has argued that the "expansion of the market for printed plays," the "growing respect" for printed and performed plays, a new body of dramatic criticism, and other such factors "made possible the formation of a canon of English drama" in the late seventeenth century.<sup>6</sup> Publishers played an essential role in the formation of the English theatrical canon, notably by issuing catalogs. Richard Schoch argues that bookseller catalogs "created the initial textual space out of which theater history emerged," and Hooks demonstrates that they were essential to the emergence of plays as a distinct commercial

2. As Adam Hooks argues, Dryden's influence on early theatrical criticism, most notably his neoclassicism, resulted in the formation of an evaluative lexicon for dramatic work that identified dramatic texts worthy of scholarly study as "dramatic poetry" and those valuable as commodities, "plays." See Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare: Biography, Bibliography, and the Book Trade* (Cambridge, 2016), 138–41.

3. Additionally, according to my count of performances listed in *The London Stage*, fifty-six pre-Commonwealth plays were staged in 1661 and thirty-eight in 1662; no subsequent year had more than twenty-eight.

4. Robert D. Hume, *The Development of the English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1976), 235.

5. Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 140.

6. Paulina Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660–1710* (Oxford, 1998), 180.

bookselling category.<sup>7</sup> Thus, neoclassicist critics such as Dryden were far from being the only arbiters of the history of pre-Commonwealth drama.

Among these less prominent arbiters was Francis Kirkman (1632–ca. 1680), a publisher, bookseller, author, and collector of playbooks who, in 1661 and 1671, produced two of the most comprehensive and influential play catalogs of the late seventeenth century. With these, as well as his paratexts, publications, and involvement with the 1662 and 1673 droll collections *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport*, Kirkman, in Hooks's words, emphasized "a native [English] dramatic history."<sup>8</sup> He earned a reputation as "a Bookseller, and a great Trader in Plays," as well as a chronicler of early drama, a specialist in playbooks, and an authority on theater history.<sup>9</sup> This influence is most immediately seen in the play catalogs of Gerard Langbaine, whom Hooks calls "the heir, both figuratively and materially, to Kirkman."<sup>10</sup> Langbaine's 1687 play catalog, *Momus Triumphans*, calls Kirkman's 1671 playlist "The first Catalog that was printed of any worth,"<sup>11</sup> and he frequently acknowledges his indebtedness to Kirkman in his expanded *Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (1691). Citing Kirkman's superior knowledge, Langbaine generally sides with Kirkman's authorial attributions of plays against attributions by other dramatic historians, notably Edward Phillips and William Winstanley. In noting, for example, that Phillips's and Winstanley's catalogs failed to acknowledge the authorship of two plays that Kirkman had identified as by Aston Cokain, Langbaine states that Kirkman "knew Plays far better than either of these Authors."<sup>12</sup> Similarly, in another account of disputed authorship, Langbaine discusses the plays of Anthony Brewer, "which are ascrib'd to him by Mr. Kirkman, who was better vers'd in Writings of this Nature," in contrast to "Mr. Winstanley, [who] is much mistaken in the Account that he gives of our Author."<sup>13</sup> It is "according to Mr. Kirkman" that Langbaine can report John Heywood's interludes "were printed with the first of our English Printing."<sup>14</sup> Some of Langbaine's trust in Kirkman's authority stems from his reputation as an antiquarian publisher: "it being a common

7. Richard Schoch, *Writing the History of the British Stage, 1600–1900* (Cambridge, 2016), 50; Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 153–58.

8. Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 154.

9. Anthony à Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses*, vol. 1 (London, 1691), sig. T2r.

10. Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 163.

11. Gerard Langbaine, *Momus Triumphans: Or, the Plagiaries of the English Stage* (London, 1687), sig. A3r.

12. Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (Oxford, 1691), sig. E3v. Edward Phillips also used Kirkman's catalogs as sources for his *Theatrum Poetarum, or a Compleat Collection of the Poets* (London, 1675); as Langbaine first noted, Phillips's misunderstanding of Kirkman's organizational method led him to misattribute plays. See Sanford Golding, "Sources of the *Theatrum Poetarum*," *PMLA* 76, no. 1 (1961): 48–53 at 51–52. For more on the influence of Kirkman's catalog, see Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 158–68.

13. Langbaine, *Account*, sigs. D7v–8r. Similarly, Langbaine trusts Kirkman's identification of some plays as Thomas Middleton's, "knowing his Acquaintance with Plays to have been very considerable" (sig. Aa2r).

14. Langbaine, *Account*, sig. Q7v.

thing with Mr. Kirkman, to publish old Plays; as, *Any thing for a Quiet Life*; *Cure for a Cuckold*; *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, and many others."<sup>15</sup>

However, Kirkman's more mercenary tendencies as a publisher and bookseller have tended to obscure the value of his historical work concerning the theater. John James Elson evaluated Kirkman as "an odd mixture of an unreliable stationer and an enthusiastic collector of dramatic works, with some of the instincts of a dilettante scholar" and wished that he had been "as definite and thoroughgoing" in his accounts of the sources of the drolls collected in *The Wits* as he had been in his catalogs.<sup>16</sup> Further, Elson called Kirkman "anything but careful and scholarly" and questioned his historical accounts of the drolls in *The Wits*, implying that Kirkman deceitfully refuses to take credit for and passes off these abridgements as authentic "relics of the Commonwealth suppression of the theatre" in order to "make his book sell."<sup>17</sup> Douglas Brooks considers Kirkman's catalogs and historical writings part of a "brash marketing scheme" aimed solely at selling books; "in the end," Brooks argues, "potential book buyers are what really matter to Kirkman."<sup>18</sup> Kirkman was certainly involved in the unauthorized publication of some plays that were the property of other booksellers, a circumstance that would be publicly revealed on Anne Moseley's title page to her and Humphrey Robinson's 1661 edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Beggars Bush*; it records how "Kirkman, and his Hawkers have deceived the buyers withall" with their expensive and unauthorized play publications.<sup>19</sup> Later, Kirkman would reveal some of the deceptive practices of booksellers in his own *The Unlucky Citizen* (1673). He may be partly responsible for his reputation as untrustworthy.

Even if we grant Kirkman's sketchy business practices and acknowledge that he used his interest in the history of theater as a hook to advertise his various book-selling endeavors, his antiquarian, bibliographical, and narrative material concerning the theater still constitute a foundational effort to write a reliable, if scattered,

15. Langbaine, *Account*, sig. U2r. For Langbaine's catalogs and their contributions to the development of theatrical criticism, see Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 163–68; and Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation*, 96–129.

16. *The Wits*, ed. John James Elson (Ithaca, N.Y., 1932), 11.

17. *The Wits*, ed. Elson, 36–37.

18. Douglas A. Brooks, *From Playhouse to Printing House: Drama and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), 194–96.

19. Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *The Beggars Bush* (London, 1661). For Kirkman's reputation for piracy in this period, see W. W. Greg, *A List of Masques, Pageants, &c.: Supplementary to a List of English Plays* (London, 1902), v–vi; R. C. Bald, "Francis Kirkman, Bookseller and Author," *Modern Philology* 41 (1943): 17–32 at 25–26; and Johan Gerritsen, "The Dramatic Piracies of 1661: A Comparative Analysis," *Studies in Bibliography* 9 (1958): 117–31. For Kirkman's account of the events surrounding this piracy and his take on the "Knaveries and Cheats" of the book trade, see his "Preface to the Reader," in *The English Rogue Continued, in the Life of Meriton Latroon, and other Extravagants* (London, 1671), sigs. A6v–8v.

account of the history of English theater.<sup>20</sup> W. W. Greg considered his catalogs “on the whole a careful compilation,”<sup>21</sup> and more recent scholars have acknowledged Kirkman as an early theatrical historian, although some assessments of his work in this field continue to emphasize his endorsement of the canonical primacy of the theatrical triumvirate.<sup>22</sup> However, in an important reassessment of Kirkman’s career, Adam Hooks reads Kirkman’s historically grounded interest in “plays” as commercial artifacts in tension with Dryden’s privileging of “dramatic poetry,” concluding that Kirkman’s approach “designated a coherent, material, and above all commercial category that could be enumerated, classified, and mined for evidence that could then provide the basis for understanding the history of printed (and even performed) drama.”<sup>23</sup>

I hope to enhance Kirkman’s reputation as an early theatrical historian by considering how his play publications, catalogs, and droll collection, *The Wits*, also pay attention to less canonical plays, playwrights, and theatrical spaces that predated the triumvirate. As such, Kirkman can be identified as one of the first British literary figures to take an interest in theater that postdated classical writers but predated the “modern” triumvirate, whose attempts to recover elements of the pre-Commonwealth and pretriumvirate theater would prove foundational to the development of early English theatrical histories. Therefore, I consider how he created this reputation through three of his publishing ventures. First, I survey his nonpiratical play publications of 1661–62, particularly the linked series of *A Cure for a Cuckold*, *The Thracian Wonder*, and *Gammer Gurtons Needle*, to argue that together they created a representative collection of comic dramatic modes that established his reputation as an antiquarian. Next, I turn to his catalog of plays attached to his 1661 publication of *Tom Tyler and His Wife*; in particular, I look at how Kirkman used bibliographical evidence to correct mistaken classifications in a 1656 catalog published by Edward Archer, a source for Kirkman’s 1661 catalog. While scholars such as Greg have previously noted how Kirkman used bibliographical evidence to ascertain authorship of early plays, I want to focus on how he did so to assign correct dramatic

20. Lisa Maruca characterizes Kirkman as a publisher who unabashedly and influentially combined commercial and literary interests (romance as well as drama), “constructing a view of print as a commodity that exists in harmony with the pleasurable text.” Maruca, *The Work of Print: Authorship and the English Text Trades, 1660–1760* (Seattle, Wash., 2007), 73. See also Bald, “Francis Kirkman”; Jody Greene, “Francis Kirkman’s Counterfeit Authority: Autobiography, Subjectivity, Print,” *PMLA* 121 (2006): 17–32; Natasha Simonova, “Owning *The English Rogue*: Commerce and Reputation in Restoration Authorship,” *Restoration* 40 (2016): 67–84; and Kirkman’s own intermittently trustworthy recollections of his life in Kirkman, *The Unlucky Citizen* (London, 1673).

21. Greg, *List of Masques*, vii.

22. See, for example, Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation*, 204–5.

23. Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 157.

genres.<sup>24</sup> By focusing on one generic category in these catalogs—interludes—we can better reconstruct Kirkman’s practice as a bibliographer. Finally, I briefly turn to his contributions to the 1662 and 1673 drolls collection, *The Wits*, and discuss how we may understand the latter as a nexus of his antiquarian and historical approaches, in part designed as a narrative history of Interregnum theater that continues the work of his historical “Advertisement” included in his 1671 play catalog. Doing so, I argue for a more dynamic understanding of Kirkman as a publisher and point to an early attempt to recover a pre-Restoration theatrical history that was not solely invested in the triumvirate.

### ☞ Kirkman’s 1661–62 Play Collections

Even before he began publishing, selling, and cataloging plays after the Restoration, Kirkman demonstrated an interest in English theatrical history. In his semiautobiographical account, *The Unlucky Citizen*, he recalls how, soon after becoming a free-man of the Blacksmith’s Company in 1653, he took “the greatest pleasure” in seeing and reading plays, after which, he “then began to Collect . . . all the *English Stage Plays* that were ever yet Printed, and . . . read them all.”<sup>25</sup> Even as an apprentice, he had been a theater patron and had dabbled in the book trade; he dedicated his 1652 translation of the romance *The Loves and Adventures of Clerio & Lozia* to the actor and theatrical manager William Beeston, asking him to be his “Patron and Protector,” because he was “the happiest interpretor and judg of our English Stage-Playes this Nation ever produced.” Kirkman claims that he can confirm Beeston’s skill because of his own acquaintance with “the Poets and Actors of these times,” having “heard the chief, and most ingenious of them, acknowledg their Fames & Profits essentially sprung from your instructions, judgment and fancy.”<sup>26</sup> With this dedication, Kirkman asks to be associated with a theater professional tied to the pre-Commonwealth stage and confirms Beeston’s prominence through his own discussions among people associated with the theater, thus demonstrating Kirkman’s own historical curiosity. His choice of Beeston may not be accidental: Beeston became a source for John Aubrey’s *Brief Lives*, suggesting that he may have been recognized and trusted as a source on early theater.<sup>27</sup> In 1657, Kirkman published his first play, *Lusts Dominion; or, the Lascivious Queen*, attributed to Christopher Marlowe in later issues.<sup>28</sup> Although this appears

24. See, for example, W. W. Greg, “Authorship Attributions in the Early Play-Lists, 1656–1671,” *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions* 2 (1946): 305–29.

25. Kirkman, *Unlucky Citizen*, sigs. S1v–2r. See also Bald, “Francis Kirkman,” 22.

26. Antoine Du Perier, *The Loves and Adventures of Clerio & Lozia*, trans. Francis Kirkman (London, 1652), sig. A2r–v.

27. Aubrey cites “Mr. Beeston” in the margin as a source for some anecdotes in his entry on William Shakespeare and records that “Mr Dreyden calles [Beeston] the Chronicle of the Stage.” See John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, vol. 1, ed. Kate Bennett (Oxford, 2015), 366, 447.

28. W. W. Greg, *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration*, 4 vols. (London, 1962), 2:884–85.

to be Kirkman's first play published from a manuscript source, as it had not been printed previously, neither the dedication nor the title page discusses the history of the play. At this point, his engagement with the theater remains dilettantish.

As if channeling the enthusiasm of the newly reopened theaters, Kirkman's publications from 1661 to 1662 make public his ambition to recover forgotten plays of the early theater. Just as the revived theatrical companies drew from a wide variety of pre-Restoration playwrights, Kirkman published lesser-known plays from then-lesser-known playwrights after the Restoration. Lori Humphrey Newcomb has observed that "bookdealer-collectors" during the Restoration, including Kirkman, "rescued and systematized early dramatic editions for buyers, readers, and future scholars,"<sup>29</sup> and this seems a likely motivation for Kirkman's books of this period. In 1661–62, he was involved with the publication of a batch of mostly pre-Commonwealth plays, sometimes with his frequent partners, Henry Marsh and Thomas Johnson.<sup>30</sup> Table 1 lists plays associated with Kirkman that were published in 1661–62 and that he appears to have had legitimate claims to publish.

Kirkman would later write in his preface to the second part of *The Wits* that "Plays are but Diversions" and that the comic scenes in both volumes of *The Wits*, excerpted from complete plays from a variety of comic and tragic genres, are "the very soul of their [Shakespeare, Fletcher, Jonson, and Shirley] writings." In view of this, his decision to focus on comedies, tragicomedies, and interludes for his two active years publishing plays seems like the deliberate cultivation of an aesthetic. The only tragedy is *Lusts Dominion*, which was not a new edition but a reissue with a new 1661 title page. Otherwise, his published plays demonstrate a chronological and generic range. *Gurton* and *Tom Tyler* are sixteenth-century plays, one an academic comedy and the other an interlude; otherwise, there are five seventeenth-century comedies, a seventeenth-century academic interlude (*Band, Cuff, and Ruff*), an interlude purportedly staged during the Interregnum (*Bottom*), as well as examples of tragicomedy, pastoral comedy, and historical comedy. Taken together with the comic drolls collected in the first volume of *The Wits* in 1663, Kirkman's publications constitute a representative sampling of comic genres from the beginnings of the public theater to his present.

In their authorial reach, these publications go beyond the most popular pre-Commonwealth playwrights. Only two of these plays could be associated with one of the triumvirate: *Bottom the Weaver*, an unattributed droll taken from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the misattributed *Birth of Merlin*, where Shakespeare is credited in collaboration with apparent Kirkman favorite William Rowley.

29. Lori Humphrey Newcomb, "Literary Restoration: Francis Kirkman and the Canons of Pre-War Drama and Romance," *Analytic and Enumerative Bibliography* 12 (2001): 229–40 at 230.

30. Fredson Bowers, "The First Series of Plays Published by Francis Kirkman in 1661," *The Library*, ser. 5, vol. 2 (1948): 289–91; Gerritsen, "Dramatic Piracies." None of the plays discussed in this essay is among those Gerritsen identifies as piracies.



TABLE 1. Francis Kirkman's "legitimate" play publications, 1661–62

| Title                           | Attributed authors                            | Publication information                                                                          | Genre                                      | Year                                                        |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Lusts Dominion</i>           | Christopher Marloe,<br>Gent.                  | "Printed for Fr. Kirkman"                                                                        | Tragedy                                    | 1661 (reissue of 1657<br>edition with cancel<br>title page) |
| <i>A Cure for a Cuckold</i>     | John Webster and<br>William Rowley            | "to be sold by Francis Kirkman"                                                                  | Comedy                                     | 1661                                                        |
| <i>The Thracian Wonder</i>      | John Webster and<br>William Rowley            | "to be sold by Francis Kirkman"                                                                  | History (title page:<br>"Comical History") | 1661                                                        |
| <i>Gammer Gurtons Needle</i>    | Mr. S., Master of Art                         | "to be sold by Nath. Brook . . .<br>Francis Kirkman . . . Tho. Johnson . . .<br>and Henry Marsh" | Comedy                                     | 1661                                                        |
| <i>The Two Merry Milk-Maids</i> | I. C.                                         | "to be sold by Nath. Brook . . .<br>Francis Kirkman . . . Tho. Johnson . . .<br>and Henry Marsh" | Comedy                                     | 1661                                                        |
| <i>Tom Tyler and His Wife</i>   | —                                             | —                                                                                                | Interlude                                  | 1661                                                        |
| <i>The Spanish Gipsie</i>       | Thomas Middleton and<br>William Rowley, Gent. | "Printed . . . for Francis<br>Kirkman"                                                           | Comedy                                     | 1661                                                        |
| <i>Bottom the Weaver</i>        | —                                             | "Printed for F. Kirkman and H. Marsh"                                                            | Interlude                                  | 1661                                                        |

TABLE 1, cont'd. Francis Kirkman's "legitimate" play publications, 1661–62

| Title                                                                                        | Attributed authors                     | Publication information                              | Genre                | Year |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------|
| <i>A Merry Dialogue between Band, Cuff, and Ruff</i>                                         | "by an excellent Wit"                  | "Printed for F. K."                                  | Interlude            | 1661 |
| <i>Three New Playes (The Noble Ingratitude, The Enchanted Lovers, The Amorous Fantasmie)</i> | Sir Wil. Lower Knight                  | "Printed for Franc. Kirkman"                         | Pastoral/Tragicomedy | 1661 |
| <i>Any Thing for a Quiet Life</i>                                                            | Thos. Middleton, Gent.                 | "Printed . . . for Francis Kirkman and Henry Marsh"  | Comedy               | 1662 |
| <i>The Poor Scholar</i>                                                                      | Robert Nevile                          | "Printed . . . for Francis Kirkman, and Henry Marsh" | Comedy               | 1662 |
| <i>The Birth of Merlin</i>                                                                   | William Shakespear, and William Rowley | "Printed . . . for Francis Kirkman, and Henry Marsh" | Tragicomedy          | 1662 |
| <i>The English Lovers</i>                                                                    | I. D. Gent.                            | "Printed . . . for Francis Kirkman, and Henry Marsh" | Romance              | 1662 |

Certainly, there is an obvious practical reason for this: Kirkman did not own the right to print any plays from triumvirate writers. Nevertheless, with four plays credited or co-credited to Rowley, two to Webster, and two to Middleton, Kirkman's publications expand the canon of comic playwrights. The two plays identified as predating the Shakespearean stage—the only two plays of such early vintage published around this time—similarly attempt to stretch the theatrical comic canon to predate the triumvirate. The academic comedy *Gammer Gurtons Needle*, an absurd comedy of a lost needle attributed to Mr. S. Master of Art, has indeed become a standard representative of early English drama. Less famous is the anonymous *Tom Tyler and His Wife*, a comic interlude depicting a popular tale of a shrewish wife (characteristically and without subtlety named “Strife”) and her titular henpecked husband.<sup>31</sup> David Bevington groups *Tom Tyler* among the elite plays “designed primarily for the intelligentsia and the well-to-do” as an example of boys’ courtly theater,<sup>32</sup> a claim supported by the prologue’s mention of “a play set out by prettie boyes.” The title page identifies it as the “second Impression” of a play “Printed and Acted about a hundred Years ago”;<sup>33</sup> to date, no copy of the first edition appears to have been identified.

According to his 1661 catalog, Kirkman certainly had access to other early English plays, but *Tom Tyler* and *Gurton* are the two he published as exemplars of pre-Shakespearean drama.<sup>34</sup> He does, however, situate these plays among later comic exemplars. *Gurton* was advertised as part of a series of publications, along with two plays he attributed to John Webster and William Rowley, *A Cure for a Cuckold*

31. *Tom Tyler and His Wife* (London, 1661). See Felix E. Schelling, “Tom Tyler and His Wife,” *PMLA* 15 (1900): 253–89; and the Malone Society edition *Tom Tyler and His Wife*, ed. G. C. Moore Smith and W. W. Greg (London, 1910). The title page does not identify a publisher, and there is no Stationers’ Register entry for the play, but I see little reason to doubt Kirkman’s role as publisher of *Tom Tyler*. Kirkman’s catalog is advertised on the title page, and *Tom Tyler* is included in other advertisements in plays Kirkman published or copublished. For typographical links between *Tom Tyler* and some other plays printed for Kirkman and his associates, see Gerritsen, “Dramatic Piracies,” 122–23.

32. David M. Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), 26–27, 31–32.

33. No author is listed on the title page or in Kirkman’s catalogs; presumably the first edition was also anonymous. In *Theatrum poetarum Anglicanorum* (Canterbury, 1800), sig. Ii2, Edward Phillips attributes the play to William Wager, but this is probably the result of Phillips’s misreading of Kirkman’s 1661 or 1671 catalog, which lists *Tom Tyler* underneath Wager’s *The Longer Thou Livest*.

34. According to his 1661 catalog, the other early plays Kirkman had access to included *Albion* (printed 1566), Thomas Ingelend’s *Disobedient Child* (1570?), *Darius* (1565, 1577), *Youth* (1565), Thomas Norton’s *Ferex and Porex*, *Mary Magdalens Repentance* (1567), six plays of John Heywood published between 1554 and 1573, *Promus and Cassandra* (1578), *A Mery Gests of Robyn Hooode* (ca. 1560), *Susanna* (1578), Jasper Heywood’s Senecan translations *Thyestes* and *Troas* (1578), George Wapull’s *The Tide Tarrieth No Man* (1576), W. Wager’s *The Longest Thou Livest the More Fool Thou Art* (1569), *Thersites* (1562?), and *Wealth and Health* (1565).

and *The Thracian Wonder*.<sup>35</sup> Of the aforementioned plays he was associated with, Kirkman only contributes prefatory essays to three: *Cuckold*, *Thracian Wonder*, and *Bottom the Weaver*. These prefaces, however, are enough to suggest Kirkman's purpose for this batch of pre-Commonwealth comedies, and they hint at a longer project of historical theatrical recovery. In his preface to *Cuckold*, the first of the three plays of this series to be published,<sup>36</sup> Kirkman, claiming to have formerly been "onely a Book-Reader," announces his endeavor to publish old plays.<sup>37</sup> He reveals that he has collected plays both for personal edification and also as stock for his bookshop: "Many of these [plays] I have several times over, and intend as I sell, to purchase more." To this end, "In order to the increasing of my Store," he would print these three plays "this *Tearm*." He chose these plays because they were widely unavailable, as the Webster and Rowley plays had never been printed and *Gurton* had been "formerly printed, but . . . almost a hundred years since." Kirkman judges *Cuckold* "an excellent old *Play*," supporting his assessment by recounting its theatrical success: "several persons remember the Acting of it, and say that it then pleased generally well." As he counts on the novelty of the unfamiliar plays to sell them, Kirkman's aim here is not purely historical, but his claim that this play was popular in the past age contextualizes the work as a relevant artifact for people like himself who are interested in the development of English drama.

Kirkman's preface to *Thracian Wonder* more explicitly identifies his publishing career as an act of dramatic recovery. "I have several *Manuscripts* of this nature, written by worthy Authors," he brags, later claiming "700 several *Plays*," "and I account it much pity they should now lye dormant, and buried in oblivion." He anticipates publishing his catalog, promising to "furnish you with all the *Plays* that were ever yet printed," thus introducing a phrase that would later appear on his catalogs. Kirkman expresses a motivation beyond personal profit or dramatic history; he also wants to reprint old plays because "ingenuity is so likely to be encouraged, by reason of the happy Restauration of our Liberties" after the period where theaters had been "clouded."<sup>38</sup> Neither *Cuckold* nor *Thracian Wonder* had previously appeared in print, so Kirkman apparently printed them from manuscripts he owned. Two of this advertised triad of old plays, then, establish his credibility as an archival historian or as an "antiquarian," in his contemporary parlance. Although his 1661–62 plays are all comic, his claim to own 700 plays and his hope to "furnish" them, presumably by publishing more plays that are not all comic, perhaps indicate that later publications would incorporate other genres.

35. Bowers characterizes the advertisement as written "in terms which suit a first publishing venture." See Bowers, "First Series of Plays," 289.

36. Kirkman calls his preface to *Thracian Wonder* "the second time of my appearing in Print in this nature," and *Gurton* "the third" of this group of plays (*Thracian Wonder*, sig. A2r).

37. John Webster and William Rowley (attributed), *A Cure for a Cuckold* (London, 1661), sig. A2r. Italics are reversed in quotations from Kirkman's prefaces.

38. John Webster and William Rowley, *The Thracian Wonder* (London, 1661), sig. A2r.

As promised, Kirkman published *Gurton* in 1661, but this edition seems disconnected from the other two editions he had advertised.<sup>39</sup> Unlike with *Cuckold* and *Thracian Wonder*, he does not include a preface explaining his motivation for publishing, nor does he report or contribute any claims about the play's quality. While the previous two plays were printed in Roman type, *Gurton* is in black letter, which had long been archaic by 1661.<sup>40</sup> Kirkman's *Gurton* is a page-for-page reprint of the 1575 quarto, with no attempt to update this mise-en-page: besides the typography, the handful of stage directions from 1575 are exactly reproduced with no entrances or exits added, and all the characters in a scene are listed at the start of that scene, as in the first edition. The spelling is modernized on a fairly consistent basis, which indicates that the second edition is not designed with a facsimile in mind but with some consideration of a contemporary audience. Despite this modernization, some errors from the first quarto remain, including some that had been corrected in several states of the 1575 quarto, suggesting no new attempt to correct errors in the 1661 quarto.<sup>41</sup> The edition understandably does not include the colophon from the first edition, ending the play instead with a "FINIS," making this the only design element that is modernized. Kirkman published his editions of *Cuckold* and *Thracian Wonder* conventionally; combined with his prefatory claims that these plays were worthy of notice in light of the revived theater, he implicitly seems to claim they would be worth staging. *Gurton*, however, appears as if it were a historical relic. Taken as a whole, these three linked Kirkman publications offered playgoers and book buyers access to a portion of English literary history that otherwise would have been lost. Kirkman imagines his customers as collaborators in his efforts to recover this history, promising that the more successful these books are, the more lost plays he will publish from his personal stash. Thus, with these plays Kirkman publicly defines himself as a public antiquarian, one whose commercial interests are being put to a public and historical good.

Along with this grouping, Kirkman participated in the publication of two other dramatic works, the interlude *Tom Tyler* and the Shakespearean droll *Bottom the Weaver*, both of which are similarly presented as antiquarian objects, but only one of which seems relevant to the contemporary theater. *Bottom*, published with Henry Marsh, is presented in a manner that most closely resembles the *Cuckold*, *Thracian*

39. Notably, Kirkman reissued *A Cure for a Cuckold* and *The Thracian Wonder* together with a new general title page as *Two New Playes* in London in 1661 (Wing W1225). Although it was advertised as part of this group, *Gurton* was not reissued with them.

40. The black letter in *Gurton* and *Tyler* may perhaps be related to Zachary Lesser's notion of "typographic nostalgia," although I suspect an antiquarian or historical rationale may have primarily influenced the decision to replicate the type of the original plays. See Lesser, "Typographic Nostalgia: Play-Reading, Popularity, and the Meanings of Black Letter," in *The Book of the Play: Playwrights, Stationers, and Readers in Early Modern England*, ed. Marta Straznicky (Amherst, Mass., 2006), 99–126.

41. See *Gammer Gvrtons Nedle*, ed. H. F. B. Brett-Smith (Oxford, 1939), xi.

*Wonder*, and *Gurton* grouping, because it includes a preface that addresses *Bottom*'s history, focusing on its reception in performance and its status as a recovered artifact. The preface, "The Stationers to the Reader," emphasizes the droll's performance history in the context of the contemporary drama. (None of Kirkman's other plays of this period include prefaces.) The publishers state, "friends" had "enduced [them] to the publishing of this Piece, which (when the life of action was added to it) pleased generally well."<sup>42</sup> The parenthetical comment indicated that the interlude had been performed and positively received. Similarly, the publishers find that the play will be a fitting contribution to the "general mirth that is likely, very suddainly to happen about the Kings Coronation," because it "may be easily acted" and is therefore "as fit for a private recreation as formerly it hath been for a publicke." In selling the play, Kirkman and Marsh hint at a dramatic history from before the civil war, when the play was acted in the public theaters with paying theatergoers, as well as a more recent history of private performances, perhaps alluding to performances during the Interregnum. With the revitalized Restoration theaters, *Bottom the Weaver* (if not *Midsummer Night's Dream*), a fitting dramatic production for the newly optimistic time, can take the public stage again.

This preface to *Bottom the Weaver*, therefore, ties the book's appeal to the work's performance history and present. This appeal is significant because, as Schoch writes, "a droll was precisely the sort of work that lived *only* in performance and could not plausibly be read as literature."<sup>43</sup> Most of Kirkman's post-Restoration editions of pre-Interregnum plays, at the very least, allude to a performance history on their title pages.<sup>44</sup> Printing from an early state of the 1575 quarto, Kirkman may give only an approximate date on the title page to account for a recognized gap between performance and publication dates, in which case it is notable that his estimate favors the performance date. The title page also identifies it as a work of the university stage rather than the London stage, gesturing to a history of dramatic publication outside of London and making the play unique among singleton plays published after the Restoration.

In contrast to *Bottom* and its near-contemporary *Gurton*, *Tom Tyler and His Wife* seems to be presented foremost as a print artifact. As with *Gurton*, Kirkman does not do much to make the play seem like a contemporary artifact: it is printed in black letter, and its organization and design elements probably imitate the first edition. The way in which Kirkman printed *Gurton* may tell us about the lost quarto he

42. All quotes taken from *The Merry conceited Humours of Bottome the Weaver*, 2nd ed. (London, 1661; Wing S2937), sig. A2r.

43. Schoch, *Writing the History*, 65.

44. For example, *The Birth of Merlin* "hath been several times Acted with great Applause"; *Any Thing for a Quiet Life* was "Formerly Acted at Black-Fryers, by His late Majesties Servants." The title page to *Gammer Gurtons Needle* also recalls its performance history, recording that it was "Played on the Stage near a hundred years ago in Christs-Colledge in Cambridge."



used to print *Tom Tyler*. Julie Stone Peters uses *Tom Tyler*'s typography as an example of how "Black Letter . . . could evoke the quaint past."<sup>45</sup> If this quarto, like *Gurton*, is a page-for-page reprint, it seems more likely that black letter was used in both texts not simply as an evocation of the past but as an act of historical recovery, of reminding a reader in 1661, at the dawn of a new age of theater, what plays looked like at the first dawn of English theater. Kirkman may have found this recovery necessary because he published *Tom Tyler* and *Gurton* in a period with a scattered understanding of the pre-Shakespearean English stage.<sup>46</sup>

Of his early historical play publications, *Tom Tyler* is the only playbook associated with Kirkman that includes the 1661 "True, perfect, and exact Catalogue." While the catalog also appears to have circulated separately—it is listed as an individual item in an advertisement at the end of the 1662 *The Wits*<sup>47</sup>—most extant copies of *Tom Tyler* add a notice on the title page: "Together, with an exact *Catalogue* of all the playes that were ever yet printed."<sup>48</sup> Not every copy of the play includes this catalog, and G. C. Moore Smith and W. W. Greg suppose it was "an afterthought," since its sheets had been "severely cut down before being added to copies of the play, with which in consequence they often fail to range."<sup>49</sup> However, even if the catalog was an afterthought, the publisher found it worthwhile to reprint the title page with the new information about the added catalog, and it is worth considering why he chose to do so for this book alone.<sup>50</sup>

In contrast to the attention given to the performance in these plays, the addition of the catalog to *Tom Tyler* emphasizes the print and publication history of the play rather than its potential value as a performed play. It is possible that, as with most republished pre-Restoration plays after 1660, Kirkman was attempting to profit from a

45. Julie Stone Peters, *Theatre of the Book 1480–1880: Print, Text, and Performance in Europe* (Oxford, 2000), 58.

46. Contemporary critical accounts of the pre-Shakespearean stage are, perhaps not unsurprisingly, quite cursory. John Flecknoe's "A Short Discourse of the English Stage" finds the pre-Shakespearean stage notable mostly for its organizational innovation: he notes that actors were "without any certain Theaters or set Companies, till about the beginning of Queen *Elizabeths* reign." See Flecknoe, *Love's Kingdom* (London, 1664), 92. In his preface to *The Rival Ladies* (London, 1664), 98–99, Dryden recalls the pre-Shakespearean drama as part of his defense of the use of rhyme in his plays: "writing Scenes in Verse," Dryden argues, "'tis not so much a New way amongst us, as an Old way new reviv'd," citing *Gorboduc* as an example.

47. Kirkman, *The Wits*, sig. O8v. The catalog is numbered as item 112 in a list of "Incomperable Comedies and Tragedies, written by several Ingenious Authors" (sig. O8r).

48. The English Short Title Catalog lists six copies lacking the catalog and sixteen that include it, although it is not clear if all the copies without the catalog lack the notice on the title page.

49. *Tom Tyler*, ed. Moore Smith and Greg, vi. The editors do not include the catalog in their facsimile edition.

50. Kirkman did reissue title pages for some of his plays but did not add a notice of this catalog to any of these.

theatrical revival of an early play.<sup>51</sup> While there is no explicit record of a performance of *Tom Tyler* after the Restoration, another play by John Fletcher, *The Woman's Prize, or the Tamer Tamed*, was staged several times, suggesting early popularity.<sup>52</sup> In Fletcher's play, a Country Wife, one of the women occupying Petronius's house, addresses a group of men as "Tom Tylers."<sup>53</sup> This could be a reference to a song rather than the play,<sup>54</sup> but nevertheless, with Kirkman obviously unable to reprint *Tamer Tamed* himself, he could publish a play he could claim rights to, one that thematically ties into the then-popular "shrew" play. However, if this was his motivation, he does not advertise it anywhere in the published playbook or in any contemporary prefaces: instead, *Tom Tyler* is presented "As It was *Printed* and *Acted* about a hundred Years ago." The lack of detail about where it was acted almost certainly demonstrates that neither Kirkman nor the lost original play had any additional information about its staging. Unlike *Gurton*, which is similarly reprinted as a historical artifact, Kirkman here presumes that the play was printed around the time it was originally performed, about a century earlier. He identifies this book as "The second Impression," which he did not do with *Gurton*, despite its 1575 edition. A reader seeing *Gurton* in a bookshop may not realize that it had been previously printed, but if that same reader saw *Tom Tyler*, they would know something about its print history. Therefore, unlike Kirkman's other publications of pre-Interregnum plays, *Tom Tyler* is presented as a print artifact with a performance history rather than a performed work that has been printed. In distinguishing these two plays, Kirkman may be applying some critical perspective to them, suggesting that *Gurton* is worth comparing to more recent plays, even if the play itself is too outdated to stage, while *Tom Tyler* is valuable as an antiquarian artifact. In appending this catalog to *Tom Tyler*, Kirkman thus quietly

51. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume report that for plays of pre-1642 dramatists, "single plays that got in repertory got reprinted, and revivals usually sparked one-off reprints." Milhous and Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London, 1660–1800: Playwrights, Publishers, and the Market* (London, 2015), 230. Gerald Winstanley includes an entry for *Tom Tyler* that attributes it to William Wager and suggests that it had been staged: "William Wager is most famous for an Interlude which he wrote, called *Tom Tyler and his Wife*, which passed with such general applause that it was reprinted in the year 1661. and has been Acted divers times by private persons." See Winstanley's *The Lives of the Most Famous English Poets* (London, 1687), sig. H1r. Since Winstanley is primarily working from Kirkman's catalog, he is likely inferring that *Tom Tyler* was published because of its popularity on stage, but his indication that it had subsequently been privately performed may be valid.

52. *London Stage*, ed. Van Lennep, lists performances for *The Tamer Tamed* on June 23, 1660; October 30, 1660; July 31, 1661; December 23, 1661; November 9, 1668; and December 8, 1674.

53. John Fletcher, *The Tamer Tamed; or, The Woman's Prize*, ed. Celia R. Daileader and Gary Taylor (New York, 2006), 2.6.94.

54. There was apparently a popular "Tom Tyler" song mentioned in Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Kilde with Kindnesse* (London, 1607), 1.2.33, and *Fair Maid of the West . . . the second part* (London, 1631), 2.1.10, as one of two named "Countrey dances" (2.1.9); as well as Ben Jonson's *Tale of a Tub* (London, 1640), 1.4. The bawdy 1668 broadside *Tom Tyler, or His Nurse* (Wing T1791) seems unrelated to the play. Indeed, "Tom Tiler" appears to have been a somewhat common alliterative generic name for a country laborer.

creates a category distinct from the performed history of English drama that he otherwise constructs with *Gurton*, *Bottom*, and other publications. Of all Kirkman's plays of this period, *Tom Tyler* becomes the one closest to Hooks's notion of the "play" as a commodity; the attachment of the catalog of all his plays makes *Tom Tyler* part checklist and part dramatic curiosity, useful not primarily for performers but rather for fellow playbook collectors.

This sampling of Kirkman's nonpiratical plays published in 1661–62 reveals that he presented these comic plays as texts that deserved readings or performances, records of the theater of "the Last Age," and an example of other plays of many genres he could potentially publish, as demonstrated by his catalog. Read in conversation with each other, Kirkman's play publications of the early 1660s may be understood as a collection akin to such play collections as John Matthews Manley's *Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearean Drama* (1897) and Alfred W. Pollard's *English Miracle Plays: Specimens of the Pre-Elizabethan Drama* (1890), which offer exemplars of the pre-Restoration stage designed to illustrate how it evolved into the modern theater and of what Jeremy Lopez calls "diffuse volume sets," in which a collection is "not necessarily meant to be taken as constituting a physical whole," such as Havelock Ellis's original Mermaids Series.<sup>55</sup> Though Kirkman would briefly cease publishing in 1662, likely lying low after some of his publications angered members of the Stationers' Company, these early works were enough to establish him as a historical antiquarian and authority on old English plays.

### Interludes: The 1661 Catalog

Kirkman's modern reputation as a theater historian is largely, and justifiably, concerned with two Restoration play catalogs, the first of which was published in 1661, both titled "A True, perfect, and exact Catalogue." The headnote in figure 1 describes its contents and purpose.

Although not the first such catalog, it was the most comprehensive account of English plays to date and remained so until Kirkman revised it in 1671.<sup>56</sup> The catalog appears to be directly based on one that appeared in a 1656 play, *The Old Law*, published by Edward Archer.<sup>57</sup> Titled in part "An Exact and perfect CATALOGUE of all the PLAIES that were ever printed; together, with all the Authors names; and what are Comedies, Histories, Interludes, Masks, Pastorels, Tragedies,"<sup>58</sup> Archer's catalog contains many of the same plays and a similar classification system as Kirkman's 1661

55. Jeremy Lopez, *Constructing the Canon of Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge, 2014), 11.

56. See Schoch, *Writing the History*, 53–56; Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 146–61. W. W. Greg suggests Kirkman was responsible for this catalog, a view endorsed by Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 147. See Greg, *Bibliography*, 3:128.

57. See Schoch, *Writing the History*, 53–56; and Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 146–61.

58. Edward Archer (?), "An Exact and perfect Catalogue" (London, 1656), sig. (a)1r.

A True, perfect, and exact Catalogue of all the Comedies, Tragedies, Tragi-Comedies, Pastorals, Masques and Interludes, that were ever yet printed and published, till this present year 1661. all which you may either buy or sell at the severall shops of *Nath. Brook* at the Angel in *Cornhil*, *Francis Kirkman* at the *John Fletchers Head*, on the Back-side of *St. Clements*, *Tho. Johnson* at the Golden Key in *St. Pauls Churchyard*, and *Henry Marsh* at the *Princes Arms* in *Chancery-lane* near *Fleetstreet*. 1661.

## A

| Names of the Authors.    | Names of the Playes.       |   | Names of the Authors.    | Names of the Playes.             |    |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----|
| <i>Will. Shakespeare</i> | <b>A</b> S You like it.    | C |                          | Arden of Feverham.               | T  |
| <i>Will. Shakespeare</i> | Alls well that ends well.  | C | <i>Cyryll Tournour</i>   | Atheists Tragedy                 | T  |
| <i>Will. Shakespeare</i> | Anthony & Cleopater.       | T | <i>John Jones</i>        | Adraffa.                         | C  |
| <i>Lord Sterling</i>     | Alexandrian Tragedy.       | T | <i>Nat. Field</i>        | Amends for Ladies.               | C  |
| <i>Lord Brooks</i>       | Alaham.                    | T | <i>Dr. Maine.</i>        | Amorous War.                     | C  |
| <i>Geo. Peele</i>        | Alphonfus Emp. of Germany. | T | <i>Rob. Cox</i>          | Aeteon and Diana.                | I  |
| <i>John Webster</i>      | Appius and Virginia.       | T | <i>Torquato Tasso</i>    | Aminta.                          | P  |
| <i>Jz. Shirley</i>       | Arcadia.                   | P | <i>John Studly</i>       | Agamemnon.                       | T  |
| <i>Will. Rowly</i>       | Alls lost by lust.         | T | <i>Sir John Suckling</i> | Aglaura.                         | TC |
| <i>Rich. Brome</i>       | Antipodes.                 | C | <i>Leonard Willan</i>    | Astrea.                          | P  |
| <i>Sir W.D' Avenant</i>  | Albouine.                  | T | <i>Tho. May</i>          | Antigone.                        | T  |
| <i>Hen. Glapthorne</i>   | Albertus Wallenstein.      | T | <i>Lod. Carlile</i>      | Arviragus & Philicia, 1st. part. | TC |
| <i>Hen. Glapthorne</i>   | Argalus and Parthenia.     | P | <i>Lod. Carlile</i>      | Arviragus & Philicia, 2d. part.  | TC |
| <i>Shak. Marmion</i>     | Antiquary.                 | C | <i>John Muston</i>       | Antonio and Melida.              | T  |
| <i>Tho. Randoll</i>      | Aristippus.                | I | <i>John Muston.</i>      | Antonio and Melida.              | T  |
| <i>Tho. Randoll</i>      | Aminas.                    | C | <i>Tho. May</i>          | Agrippina.                       | T  |
|                          |                            |   | <i>E. W.</i>             | Apollo Shroving                  | C  |

FIGURE 1. Headnote of Francis Kirkman's "True, perfect, and exact Catalogue," from *Tom Tylor and His Wife* (London, 1661; Wing T1792A), sig. <sup>2</sup>A1r. Huntington Library, 125492.



catalog, and it seems quite possible that Kirkman was responsible for it.<sup>59</sup> If he were not, Kirkman clearly used Archer's catalog as a foundation for his own.

Kirkman's 1661 catalog attests to his attention to bibliographical method. Both Archer's and Kirkman's catalogs organize plays according to the initial letter of the title, listing the author, if known, for each. They identify each play by genre: "C" for comedy, "T" for tragedy, "H" for history, "I" for interlude, "P" for pastoral, "TC" for tragicomedy, and "M" for masque. The structure of Archer's catalog is simpler; the plays are presented in rough alphabetical order without regard to authorship. Kirkman, as Hooks notes, reorganizes the plays by author within each alphabetical section, placing Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Jonson first in each section.<sup>60</sup> Because of this organization, Hooks argues that Kirkman's catalogs "numerically and commercially [justify] . . . the already acknowledged ascendancy of the so-called 'Triumvirate of Wit,'" <sup>61</sup> an ascendancy Kirkman had already explicitly acknowledged in his preface to his own 1652 romance, *The Loves and Adventures of Clerio & Lozia*.<sup>62</sup>

Even so, Kirkman's attention to the minor genre of interludes—a genre that none of the triumvirate is associated with in his catalog—indicates both his concern for accuracy and a desire to assay the entire historical breadth of English drama. For example, *Tom Tyler* is one of the plays that Archer's catalog lists as "C," comedy, but Kirkman's changes to "I," interlude. Such changes demonstrate Kirkman's authority in defining the genres of pre-Commonwealth drama; he takes seriously the generic distinctions between comedy and interlude and, more importantly, exemplifies his skill as an enumerative bibliographer, which further contributes to his reputation as an early theatrical historian.

Kirkman's 1661 catalog identifies nineteen plays as interludes. Ten of these were listed as another genre in Archer's catalog, while another seven had not been included. This indicates a greater attention to interludes as a distinct genre on Kirkman's part. By examining some of the plays recategorized as "interludes" in 1661, we gain a sense of how Kirkman defines the genre and why he makes the changes he does. Table 2 lists these plays.

59. W. W. Greg suggests Kirkman was the compiler, a view endorsed by Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 147. See Greg, *Bibliography*, 3:128.

60. For the organization of Kirkman's catalogs, see Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 148–51.

61. Hooks, *Selling Shakespeare*, 152–53. For the triumvirate, see also Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769* (Oxford, 1992), 28–31.

62. In the preface, Kirkman states, "[N]o nation ever could glory in such Playes, as the most learned and incomperable *Johnson*, the copious *Shakespeare*, or the ingenious *Fletcher* compos'd." Du Perier, *Clerio and Lozia*, 53. Similarly, see also Kirkman's prefatory poem to I. D. Gent., *The English Lovers* (London, 1662).

TABLE 2. Plays listed in Edward Archer's 1656 catalog as they are recategorized in Francis Kirkman's 1661 catalog

| 1661 catalog title (and author)               | Publication year              | Archer | Kirkman 1661 |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| <i>Aristippus</i> (Thomas Randolph)           | 1630                          | T      | I            |
| <i>Acteon and Diana</i> (Rob. Cox)            | 1656                          | C      | I            |
| <i>Band Ruffe &amp; Cuffe</i>                 | 1615                          | C      | I            |
| <i>Disobedient Childe</i> (Tho. Ingelond)     | 1570                          | C      | I            |
| <i>Darius Story</i>                           | 1565 or 1570                  | H      | I            |
| <i>Like Will to Like</i> (Ulpian Fulwel)      | 1568 or 1587                  | C      | I            |
| <i>Lusty Juuentus</i> (R. Wever)              | 1550?                         | C      | I            |
| <i>New Custome</i>                            | 1573                          | C      | I            |
| <i>The Play of the Weather</i> (John Heywood) | 1533, 1544<br>1559?, ca. 1573 | C      | I            |
| <i>Tom Tyler and His Wife</i>                 | 1661                          | C      | I            |

From table 2, it becomes clear that, when compiling his 1661 catalog, Kirkman looked at copies of many, if not all, of these plays to revise their categories. This can be inferred because all of the sixteenth-century plays listed, save one, are called “interlude” or “enterlude” on their title pages. The exception is apparently *Tom Tyler* (assuming the 1661 title page reproduces the text of the lost first edition, as with *Gurton*). In this case, Kirkman likely based his decision to amend *Tom Tyler*’s genre from his reading of the text itself, deciding that its content was better classified as an interlude than a comedy. Some additional author attributions also indicate that Kirkman used bibliographic evidence for this catalog. Kirkman names the authors of *Disobedient Childe* and *Like Will to Like*, whose authors are mentioned on the title page, and *Lusty Juuentus*, which adds “quod R. Weuer” between the end of the play and the colophon.<sup>63</sup> None of these authors was named in Archer. It seems possible that Archer’s catalog was made at a remove from or with inadequate attention to actual printed copies and that the compiler guessed about each play’s genre from the title

63. See *An Enterlude called Lusty Juuentus* (London, 1550), sig. E2v. It may also be relevant that Kirkman 1661 reads “Lusty,” the spelling on the early title pages, rather than “Lustie,” as it appears in Archer.



alone, perhaps with a vague recollection of acquaintance with the play.<sup>64</sup> Kirkman's decision to reclassify the three seventeenth-century interludes, which do not identify themselves as interludes on their title pages, probably, as with *Tom Tyler*, reflects his own understanding of the genre: he seems to have used "interlude" to describe more contemporary work that did not clearly identify its genre and that, for whatever reason, did not fit the conventions of stage comedy. *Band Ruffe & Cuffe* is probably the most explainable; identified on the title page as a "merry dialogue," a genre not otherwise noted, it is grouped by Kirkman with interludes, which are often similarly short and dialogue heavy. A "*Prælvdivm*" in Randolph's *Aristippus*—printed together with another work, *The Conceited Pedler*, itself identified as "a Strange Show"—notes "Shewes hauing been long intermitted, and *forbidden by authority for their abuses, could not be raised but by coniuring*." In the short dialogue that follows, a Prologue offers to give the personified Show "leauē to Walke the Stage againe" and to "Cast off thy maske of darknesse, and appeare / As glorious as thy sister Comedy."<sup>65</sup> These references to the play as a generic "show" and the implication that such shows are modestly inferior to their generic "sister" comedy appear to have encouraged Kirkman to categorize Randolph's show as an interlude. Kirkman also uses "interlude" to include drolls, some of which are collected in Robert Cox's reclassified *Acteon and Diana*. Many of Cox's "Conceited Humours" (so identified on the title page) would be collected in the droll collection *The Wits*. The post-1600 plays reclassified as interludes seem generically consistent with the dramatic texts later included in *The Wits*, perhaps suggesting that Kirkman saw, or was making an argument for, the lineage from early interludes to court comedies to the drolls performed during the Interregnum.<sup>66</sup>

Kirkman's use of bibliographic evidence in his catalog may also be seen in the fifteen plays listed as interludes in *Archer* that Kirkman either reclassifies or omits genre classification for entirely, listed in table 3. Some corrections are obvious: a look at a Shakespeare folio may have informed Kirkman's reclassifying *All's Well That Ends Well* as a comedy and *Timon of Athens* as a tragedy.<sup>67</sup> Kirkman corrects the

64. A title that may support this supposition is *Darius Story*; called *Darius Storie*, it is listed as "H" for history in *Archer*. Presumably *Archer*'s compiler was, at the time, familiar with the historical King Darius but not the play. The early title pages identify it as "A pretty new enterlude, both pythie and pleasaunt, of the story of King Daryus."

65. Thomas Randolph, *Aristippus* (London, 1630), sigs. E1r, A2r, A2v.

66. On drolls as a genre that resulted from the Interregnum ban on acting, see Emma Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence: Politics, Print and Alteration, 1642–1700* (Cambridge, 2018), 16–23.

67. In *Archer*, *Timon of Athens* appears without authorial attribution, which seems odd, because other Shakespeare folio-only plays are correctly categorized in the list. *Timon* appears immediately above *Two Noble Kinsmen*, attributed to "Will Shakespeare." Four entries later, following correct attributions of *Taming of a Shrew* (presumably "the" shrew) and *Titus Andronicus*, the list erroneously credits Shakespeare with Thomas Middleton's *A Trick to Catch the Old One*. (Kirkman corrects to Middleton in 1661.) This is further evidence of the unreliability of *Archer*'s list, but can we entertain the possibility that it may refer to the Inns of Court play

TABLE 3. Plays in Edward Archer's 1656 catalog listed as interludes as they are reclassified in Kirkman's 1661 catalog

| 1661 catalog title (and author)                       | Publication year | Archer | Kirkman    |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------|------------|
| <i>Arden of Faversham</i>                             | 1592             | I      | C          |
| <i>Alls well that ends well</i> (Will. Shakespeare)   | 1623             | I      | C          |
| <i>Conflict of Conscience</i> (Nat. Woods)            | 1581             | I      | P          |
| <i>The Glass of Government</i> (Geo. Gascoign)        | 1575             | I      | TC         |
| <i>Hercules furiens</i> <sup>a</sup> (Jasper Heywood) | 1561             | I      | T          |
| <i>Hercules Oetus</i> <sup>b</sup> (John Studly)      | 1581             | I      | T          |
| <i>Iosephs afflictions</i> <sup>c</sup>               | unknown          | I      | —          |
| <i>Jacob and Esau</i>                                 | 1568             | I      | C          |
| <i>Niniveehs repentance</i> <sup>d</sup>              | unknown          | I      | —          |
| <i>Promises of God manifested</i>                     | 1547             | I      | —          |
| [ <i>Scots politick Presbyter</i> ] <sup>e</sup>      | 1647             | I      | not listed |
| <i>Supposes</i> <sup>f</sup> (Geo. Gascoign)          | 1587             | I      | C          |
| <i>Susanna's teares</i> <sup>g</sup>                  | 1578             | I      | —          |
| <i>Tymon of Athens</i> (Will. Shakespeare)            | 1623             | I      | T          |

a. *Hercules furious*, with no authorial attribution, in Archer. The title page of the 1561 Seneca collection from which this play comes reads, "Hercules furens," which may indicate that Kirkman corrected this entry against copy.

b. *Hercules Orteus*, unattributed in Archer. Presumably referring to John Studley's translation in *Seneca his tenne tragedies* (London, 1581; STC 397), titled *Hercules Oetæus*; possibly another example of a correction made with book in hand.

c. Possibly an error for Ralph Radcliffe's *Iob's Afflictions* (ca. 1550) or William Forrest's poem "The tragedious troubles of the most chaste and innocent Joseph." See W. W. Greg, *A List of Masques, Pageants &c. Supplementary to a List of English Plays* (London, 1902), lxxix.

d. Entered in the Stationers' Register in 1569, but no copy seems to have been made or has survived.

e. Title in brackets as given in Archer. Anonymous, *The Scottish politike Presbyter* (London, 1647; Wing S2097). Listed as "A Tragi-Comedie" on the title page, it is more political in intent and possibly excluded for that reason by Kirkman.

f. Listed on the title page of *The pleasauntest works of George Gascoigne Esquire* (London, 1587) as "the Comedie called Supposes."

g. Presumably Thomas Garter's *The Commodity of the most vertuous and Godlye Susanna* (London, 1578).

authorship of *Arden of Faversham* based on consultation with an early quarto, altering its genre from interlude to tragedy (all early printed editions call it a “lamentable and true tragedie”) and removing Archer’s attribution to “Rich. Bernard.” While it seems highly plausible that Archer intended to assign the play to William Shakespeare, Kirkman follows the bibliographically correct authorial attribution for the play.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, while recategorizing the 1581 play *The Conflict of Conscience* from interlude to pastoral, he also amends the author from “Sam Wood” in Archer to the correct “Nat. Woods” (“Nathaniell Woodes” appears on the play’s title page).<sup>69</sup>

Demonstrating how Kirkman’s genre changes within his 1661 catalog apparently use access to physical copies of printed books to confirm information—something that does not appear to have been done consistently in Archer’s list—reveals the extent of Kirkman’s efforts to create a history of the English theater and reinforces his reputation as an early enumerative bibliographer. Cognizant of the limitations of Archer’s catalog, Kirkman clearly turned to the books themselves to improve its contents. Kirkman’s catalog may be assumed to include books he owned or had access to. Such access also suggests that both changing *Tom Tyler* to an interlude and keeping *Gurton* a comedy in 1661 were deliberate choices founded on bibliographic and historical evidence.

### ☞ The 1671 “Advertisement” and *The Wits* (1673)

While Kirkman’s catalogs promote a narrative of theatrical history centered around the triumvirate, they, and his play publications from the same period, reveal a more general interest in the history of the theater that preceded them. After almost a decade of sporadic work as a publisher with no further play publications, Kirkman returned to his theatrical interests by publishing a contemporary play, John Dancer’s Corneille translation, *Nicomede*, which included an expanded version of his 1661 play catalog that now promises all plays “ever yet Printed and Published, till the present year 1671.”<sup>70</sup> Per his promise, many of the new entries in Kirkman’s 1671 catalog list Restoration playwrights, including Dryden and Aphra Behn. However, for theater historians, the most interesting addition to this catalog is an “Advertisement to the

*Comedy of Timon* (ca. 1601; Wiggins #1378)? The Archer list does not include every play in Shakespeare’s folio, so the lack of Shakespeare’s *Timon* would not be unusual.

68. For the Archer catalog’s possible attempt to attribute *Arden* to Shakespeare, see W. W. Greg, “Shakespeare and *Arden of Faversham*,” *Review of English Studies* 21 (1945): 134–36.

69. Kirkman’s classification of the play as “P” pastoral, is difficult to explain. *The Conflict of Conscience* is a morality play from the first half of the sixteenth century that does not obviously identify with pastoral. See Celesta Wine, “Nathaniel Wood’s *Conflict of Conscience*,” *PMLA* 50 (1953): 661–78. The prologue to the printed text does, however, include conventional pastoral imagery. See Nathaniel Woodes, *The Conflict of Conscience* (London, 1581), sig. A2v.

70. Francis Kirkman, “A True, perfect, and exact Catalogue” (London, 1671), sig. A1r. The title page of Pierre Corneille, *Nicomede*, trans. John Dancer (London, 1671), notes the catalog. However, the catalog has a separate register, suggesting that, as with the 1661 catalog, it was also issued separately or appended to other books.

Reader” that offers a brief history of the English theater based on Kirkman’s observations about the play texts he examined and cataloged. Building on Hooks’s and Schoch’s work, I want to suggest that this “Advertisement” could be understood as the first part of a theatrical history that Kirkman continues in his 1673 second part of *The Wits*. While not the first history of English drama, the “Advertisement” may be the first one grounded in a comprehensive evaluation of a bibliographical archive and, as such, can be understood as Kirkwood’s final report on his antiquarian interests. The “Advertisement” addresses the history of the English stage from its origins to the present. In it, Kirkman identifies John Heywood as “the first Play-writer” and his contemporary John Dryden as among “the best of this Age.”<sup>71</sup> He refers to Heywood’s plays as “Interludes” and identifies them as a foundational genre, calling them “very old, being Printed with the first of our *English* Printing,” a definition supported by the sixteenth-century plays he reclassified as interludes in the 1661 catalog. Kirkman’s account of Heywood offers some historical background on the working practices of a pre-Restoration playwright: repeating Heywood’s claim to have had a hand in writing 220 plays, Kirkman explains his “small esteem” for Heywood’s “mean” plays by citing the fact that they were “composed and written loosely in Taverns.” This sort of historical detail has authority because Kirkman has “taken pleasure to converse with those that were acquainted with” playwrights of Heywood’s era, a similar approach to his 1652 dedication to William Beeston. Overall, the “Advertisement” reinforces Kirkman’s reputation as an antiquarian; he again mentions that he has “some quantity [of plays] in Manuscript” and combines his bibliographic interests with accounts from early theatrical practitioners to offer his history.

Kirkman’s preface to the second part of *The Wits* adds to the content of this “Advertisement” by offering some details about drama during the Interregnum, a topic his previous history did not address. A collection of drolls “fitted for the pleasure and content of all Persons,” as stated on the title page, *The Wits* bookended Kirkman’s theatrical publications. The first edition, in 1662, appeared alongside his own triumvirate of formerly lost plays and may be understood as an extension of his interlude, *Tom Tyler*, which is not included in either edition of *The Wits*. The second edition, published in 1673, follows his expanded 1671 catalog and prose history, and his introduction to this volume, addressing the Interregnum theater, picks up where his “Advertisement” left off. *The Wits* has most frequently been mined for what it might tell us about performance practices of the Commonwealth stage, and I will conclude by suggesting that this is precisely why these editions were published.<sup>72</sup>

71. Kirkman, “True, perfect, and exact Catalogue,” sig. B4v.

72. Though very similar, the frontispieces in 1662 and 1673 *Wits* are distinct; the plate was reengraved for the second edition. See John H. Astington, “*The Wits* Illustration, 1662,” *Theatre Notebook* 47 (1993): 122–40 at 123–24. The inclusion of a literal paper stage in these volumes also contributes to Kirkman’s historical project, even if, as Elson and Astington agree, it does not literally portray the Red Bull or any other theater. See also *The Wits*, ed. Elson, 427.

The title page of the 1662 edition of *The Wits* indicates that it was published by Henry Marsh, Kirkman's frequent collaborator.<sup>73</sup> Marsh also copublished *Rump: Or an Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs Relating to the Late Times* with Henry Brome in 1662, perhaps indicating an interest in literature of the Interregnum that may also have informed *The Wits*. Although Kirkman is often attributed as the author-compiler of *The Wits*, his involvement with the production is unclear because he has no presence in the text. Marsh contributes the introduction, which is unlike contemporary prefaces from Kirkman; rather than presenting the book as a project of dramatic recovery, Marsh admits his desire for "Ready Money."<sup>74</sup> The only historical gesture in the preface is a perfunctory appeal to "pray remember the *Rump Drolls*."<sup>75</sup> Marsh, not Kirkman, includes a catalog of books available for sale at his Chancery Lane shop; the register of the catalog is continuous with *The Wits*, which suggests that the catalog is part of the book, and his work as bookseller is integral to its production. Kirkman's absence suggests that he had begun to step back from play publication by the time *The Wits* was produced, having by then developed a reputation as an unscrupulous publisher.

Kirkman presumably acquired rights to *The Wits* when he took over Marsh's business after his 1665 death. Not long after Kirkman resumed his bookselling career in the late 1660s, he brought out the expanded 1673 edition of *The Wits*, which offers his final contribution to English theatrical history. Kirkman's *The Wits* essentially reprints Marsh's edition and does not correct obvious errors in the "Catalog of the several Droll-Humours," such as the attribution of a droll taken from Shakespeare's *I Henry IV* to "Edw. IV,"<sup>76</sup> which might indicate that the accuracy he aspired to in his play catalogs did not extend to this text. In the 1673 edition, Kirkman makes some substantial changes to the prefatory material. Although he retains Marsh's 1662 text almost exactly, Marsh's name is replaced with Kirkman's, thereby crediting Kirkman with having collected the materials for the miscellany.<sup>77</sup>

73. On Marsh, see Henry R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1641 to 1667* (London, 1907), 123.

74. *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport. In Select Pieces of Drollery, Digested in Scenes by way of Dialogue* (London, 1662; Wing W3218), sig. A3r-v. Hereafter, *The Wits* (1662).

75. *The Wits* (1662), sig. A4r.

76. *The Wits* (1662), sig. A4r; Francis Kirkman, *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport. Being a Curious Collection of several Drolls and Farces* (London, 1673; Wing W3218), sig. A3r. Hereafter, *The Wits* (1673). Such errors in the 1662 *The Wits* may also serve as evidence of Kirkman's limited involvement with the first edition.

77. The only substantial change to the 1672 preface is the ending, "pray remember," which omits the final words from 1662: "the *Rump Drolls*, and for their sakes." *The Wits* (1662), sig. A4r. This has the effect of making only Kirkman, not the drolls, the desired object of remembrance.

Kirkman's new second part more radically recontextualizes the entire project.<sup>78</sup> Whereas the title page to the first part indicated the variety of people who would be entertained by the drolls, Kirkman's second part instead emphasizes performance, claiming that the "Drols and Farces" have been "Presented and Shewn" and "sundry times Acted in Publique, and Private" and listing locations where the drolls were purportedly performed. It also describes the sorts of actors who performed them—players, fools, fiddlers, and zanies—and claims that they were received "With loud Laughter, and great Applause," appropriate for staged texts. In short, the title page of the second part of *The Wits* continues Kirkman's historical work by providing context for the new collection as well as the old.

Kirkman's preface starts in the present, noting the increasingly long prefaces of printed Restoration plays and observing the literary debates taking place in them, such as those about the propriety of rhymed couplets in plays. In contrast to such "long Learned Discourse," Kirkman offers "a taste" of his "experience," after which he provides an account of the drolls included in *The Wits*. As with his 1671 catalog, he affirms the cultural primacy of the theatrical triumvirate while acknowledging a deeper theatrical history, mentioning "*Shake-spear, Fletcher, Johnson, Shirley, and others*" as "the ablest Artists that ever this Nation produced" and noting "other Authors as such as have been of great fame in the Last Age."<sup>79</sup> However, Kirkman also uses the preface to address the history of the theater during the Interregnum, a topic not covered in the "Advertisement." Noting the closure of the public theaters, Kirkman recalls that the "humours and pieces of Plays" included in *The Wits* were the only theatrical performances allowed, "and that but by stealth too." He recalls drolls performed at the Red Bull playhouse and focuses on one performer, Robert Cox, whom he identifies as "the Contriver and Author of most of these farces," presumably (though not necessarily) alluding to the texts included in both volumes. Kirkman's 1673 introduction makes it clear that *The Wits* is a history of Commonwealth—not pre-Commonwealth—drama. This justifies the lack of attributions to the original playwrights; the important authorial act during the Interregnum would have been to excerpt Cox's performances in isolating comic parts from plays in a variety of genres. The preface's detail about the historical circumstances of the included texts, their performers, and their authors, and its descriptions of the surreptitiousness of Interregnum performances offer valuable historical information. Newly explained as an edition focused on performances during (or purportedly during) the Interregnum, *The Wits* completes the brief history that had begun in Kirkman's play catalogs.

78. The second part of *The Wits* appeared in two formats in 1673, the first in octavo—presumably to be a set with the 1672 edition of the first part—and the second in quarto. For a bibliographic account of their publication, see Fredson Bowers, "The Wits," *Oxford Bibliographical Society Publications*, n.s. 1, fascicule 2 (1947): 135–39. The text is the same in both; I quote from the octavo.

79. *The Wits* (1673), sig. A2r–v, italics inverted.



By the end of the century, observations about the periodization of modern English theatrical history had begun to emerge, as the controversies concerning Richard Bentley's *A View of the Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris, Themistocles, &c.* and Jeremy Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality, and Profaneness of the English Stage* (both in 1698) appear to have inspired some reflection on the origins of English theater. Kirkman, who died sometime in the early 1680s, seems to have been recognized as a reliable source for such histories. Today, Kirkman is rarely placed among Humphrey Moseley, Henry Herringman, and Jacob Tonson as a Restoration publisher interested in constructing a canon of what was frequently called the "last age" or "past age" of English literature. This is understandable: his publishing career was too sporadic and somewhat unreliable, and his enthusiasm for drama was frequently diverted by his equally intense interest in romance. However, if we look closely at his scattered work on pre-Restoration English drama, we can see both an authentic interest in preserving plays that might otherwise have been lost and, by evidence of the careful generic categorizations in his catalogs, some legitimate historical and bibliographic method in his approach. Kirkman's interest in minor dramatic genres and authors would be overshadowed in his own time by the popularity of Shakespeare and his canonical cohorts by critics like Dryden, who took more frequently to print in order to shape both contemporary tastes and narratives of dramatic histories, and by the new fashions in Restoration drama that quickly developed. Nevertheless, Kirkman's antiquarian, bibliographic, and historical work on the English drama would be furthered by Langbaine, Winstanley, James Wright, and any number of writers of the next century as they constructed the paper stage of theatrical history.

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