

Chi-fang Sophia Li

Thomas Dekker Revealed in the Henslowe–Alleyn Papers

In current scholarship the obscurity of the early years of Thomas Dekker is akin to his opacity in Philip Henslowe's *Diary*, which awaits full analytical interpretation. While the *Diary* usefully tells us about Henslowe's theatre business, it also imparts interwoven stories about many playwrights whose works are being rigorously tested in today's theatres. In this essay Chi-fang Sophia Li offers a theatre-based critique of the early life of Dekker, when, she argues, he quickly became a 'fully paid-up member' of the theatrical community. Thus his theatrical strengths, productive potential, writing interests, collaborative patterns, earning power, and working relationships with Michael Drayton, Anthony Munday, and Henry Chettle can be interpreted afresh. The *Diary* supplies frequent, intensive sightings of Dekker, whose biographical implications mutually inform a cultural life of Dekker's peers. This is the first attempt to elucidate in full Dekker's presence in the Henslowe–Alleyn papers alongside other historical and literary documents. Chi-fang Sophia Li is Associate Professor in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at National Sun Yat-sen University in Taiwan. She has published in *Shakespeare Bulletin*, *Notes and Queries*, *English Studies*, *New Theatre Quarterly*, and in Chinese in *Review of English and American Literature*. She gave public lectures for the anniversaries of Shakespeare's birth and death for the Globe Theatre on tour to Taiwan in 2014 and for the Shakespeare Exhibition in 2015 for the National Museum of Taiwan Literature and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

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I WANT to begin with the Jacobean woodcut reproduced opposite, which was used as frontispiece to a popular pamphlet titled *Dekker His Dream* (1620). It shows a man lying in a four-poster bed, the curtain tied back. He is bearded. He wears a nightcap and a nightshirt, and it looks as if he's leaning on his elbow, contemplating. But is he awake or asleep? Is he looking out from the picture, gazing at his readers, or are his eyes closed? It's difficult to tell. And it's hard to read his facial features. The crudeness of the printing hardly qualifies as a portrait: the woodcut provides no artistic insight into the man's identity or personality. Perhaps what the woodcut best illustrates is a person in absence.¹

Paradoxically, the very reticence of this woodcut informs my research. Like the absence of the image, I need to admit, starting to reconstruct a theatrical life of this playwright, that most of the materials I need to

document the life are also absent. We do not know when or where Dekker was born or christened; we do not know who his parents were or where he was educated. His first twenty years are, in the surviving records, mostly a blank. Even so, this is a man who, in the late 1590s, turned up in Philip Henslowe's so-called *Diary* writing for the Admiral's Men at the Rose and working on plays with titles like *The Wars of Henry I*, *Black Batman of the North*, *Hannibal and Hermes*, the *Civil Wars of France* tetralogy, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Patient Grissil*, and *Fair Constance of Rome*. This is a man who, in a playwriting career lasting more than thirty years, had a hand in at least sixty plays, making him one of the most productive public theatre writers of the period.

This is a man who lived a London life; who spent all the years that we can account for in the city and its suburbs; who significantly re-imagined Geoffrey Chaucer and



Woodcut from the title page of *Dekker His Dream* (1620). © British Library Board General Reference Collection C.39.c.6.

John Stow in the plays; who saw the end of Queen Elizabeth and the beginning of King James, eulogizing her passing and celebrating his entry (with a civic pageant titled *The Magnificent Entertainment*); who survived the catastrophic plague of 1603–1604 and wrote about it (in *The Wonderfull Yeare*); who seems to have lived beyond his means, was arrested for debt, in and out of the Counter in the Poultry, bailed sometimes by the Admiral's Men, then for seven years confined to the King's Bench, with his silence broken only by two surviving letters.²

Dekker does not seem, from our point of view, to have lived a very eminent life. His subsequent reputation does not rank him even close to Shakespeare, or, for that matter, to Jonson and Marlowe. His contemporaries, however, reckoned him at a higher rate: Francis Meres placed him among 'our best for Tragedie' (Meres, *Palladis Tamia*, 1598, fols. 283–4), Webster called him 'happy and

copious' ('To the Reader', *The White Devil*, 1612, Sig. B^v), and Edmund Howes considered him one of our 'modern, Excellent Poets' (Howes, *Annales*, 1632, f. 811) – assessments I will return to as I attempt to bring back to life a playwright who has been, if not forgotten, then certainly neglected.

To reconstruct Dekker's early career, I want to situate him among his contemporaries: Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, Thomas Middleton, and John Webster. To do so, I piece together Dekker's life from historical and literary archives and from Dekker's complete works. If Stanley Wells is right to see Shakespeare 'not as a lone eminence but as a fully paid-up member of the theatrical community of his time',³ then Thomas Dekker should be remembered as another 'fully paid-up member' of that community – someone who 'earns a place i'th' story' (*Antony and Cleopatra*) of the early modern playhouse.

Mostly, this is a writer's life that I will reconstruct from the writing – a project legitimated by Richard Wheeler's approach (borrowed from Simon During) based on the notion that 'transactions between texts and lives' constitute 'proper knowledge'.⁴ To re-evaluate Dekker's theatrical achievement, I start from his presence in Henslowe's *Diary*. Nevertheless, as I begin, I have in front of me the image of a man in a nightcap in bed.

Beginnings

'Dekker' is a common surname in the Low Countries – 'roofer' in Dutch; 'thatcher' in English – which suggests Dekker's Dutch parentage. His parents were perhaps religious refugees who fled to England from the 'Hispaniolized' Netherlands (*Worke for Armourours*, 1609, Grosart, IV, p. 104),⁵ as Dekker calls them. His exact birth date is unknown, but in the dedicatory epistle to the eighth edition of *English Villanies . . . Discovered by Lanthorne and Candle-light*, published in 1632, Dekker describes himself as 'threescore yeeres'⁶ in age. He would have been born, then, c. 1572, a significant year when religious conflicts dominated the European world stage.

This was the year in which the English Parliament launched a bill that barred the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, from the English throne; the year when the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre took place in Paris on 24 August, aggravating the French wars of religion; this was the tumultuous year when the Dutch War of Independence against Spain began. Fleeing these wars, many Protestant Europeans escaped the Continent and settled in Protestant England. There had been refugee communities in London and Ipswich in the mid-sixteenth century, King Edward VI having granted permission to the Dutch Protestants to establish a parish church within the city walls of London in Austin Friars in 1550.⁷ If Dekker's parents were refugees, it is possible that they would have settled in one of these communities. Unfortunately, no record of their residence survives; neither is there any parish record in London or Ipswich of Dekker's baptism.⁸

But Thomas Dekker is not entirely absent from parochial registers: a brief documentary life can be assembled – starting with his death.

Dekker: Documented Life

The single church record that scholars from E. K. Chambers to F. P. Wilson to M. T. Jones-Davies agree identifies Thomas Dekker the playwright is an entry in the burial register that shows one 'Thomas Decker, householder', buried on 25 August 1632 at St James's, Clerkenwell.⁹ Other records in the same parish church probably refer to the same Thomas: a woman called 'Mary, wife of Thomas Deckers', was buried there on 24 July 1616.¹⁰ Ten years later, 'Deckers' was named (with nine others) in a bill citing his failure to attend church:

1 December, 2 Charles II [1626] – True Bill for not going to church &c. during one month beginning on the said day, against . . . Thomas Deckers gentlemen, . . . all ten late of St. James's Clerkenwell.¹¹

A year or so later, on 1 March 1628, he was cited again for the same failure to attend church.¹² Four years later, on 4 September 1632 one 'Elizabetha', named 'relicta' – that is, widow – of 'Thomae deckers' of St James's, renounced the administration of her husband's estate.¹³

Beyond these bare entries are a scattering of additional records that may refer to the playwright – but, equally, may not. They are the baptismal records registered at St Giles, Cripplegate, respectively on 27 October 1594, 29 November 1598, and 24 October 1602, for Dorcas, Elizabeth, and Anne – the daughters respectively of 'Thomas Dicker, gent', 'thomas Dykers, yoman', and 'thomas Dicker yeman'. The burial register at St Botolph's, Bishopsgate, on 19 April 1598 of 'Thomas Diccars' was believed by J. P. Collier to be the playwright's son.¹⁴ None of these, however, indisputably refers to the playwright.

What do these records tell us? Piecing them together and considering the fact that Dekker's literary output discontinued after 1632,¹⁵ I think it is clear that Chambers *et al.*

are right: that the ‘Thomas Decker’ of St James’, Clerkenwell, was Dekker the playwright and pamphleteer; that he married twice; that he probably had children; and that he probably died a debtor. Those citations in 1626 and 1628 indicate, I believe, that he was avoiding church not because he was a recusant¹⁶ but because he was dodging his creditors: compare, for example, John Shakespeare, similarly cited in Stratford-upon-Avon.¹⁷

Schooling: c. 1579–c. 1586

Thomas Dekker does not appear in any of the matriculation records of Oxford or Cambridge universities. Neither do schools in London hold any registers naming him. However, as Peter Mack points out, to be a writer in the Renaissance, Dekker must have had at least a grammar school education,¹⁸ and *Dekker His Dream* (1620) seems to suggest as much, revealing on the surface of the published text the kinds of rhetorical skills he would have obtained in a grammar school. This text is glossed with marginal notes (in English and Latin) that give the sources of his readings, primarily from the Bible, but that also connect Dekker to a commentary tradition that he would have learned in the grammar school.

Thus, allusions to Matthew, Mark, Luke, Psalms, John, Apocalypse, Exodus, and Job emerge page after page (Grosart, III, p. 20–46); there are also abundant references to classical writers (‘Virgil’ and ‘Ouid’) and to early Christian fathers (‘Bede’, ‘S. Hierome’, ‘Hugo Victorinus’, ‘Saint Augustine’, ‘Iustinianus’, ‘Anselmus’, ‘Innocentius’) (Grosart, III, p. 46–50). When he writes, in a marginal gloss, that something is ‘in imitation of that of Virgil’ (Grosart, III, p. 21), he may have had in mind one of the standard grammar school writing exercises, the ‘imitatio’.¹⁹ These writers and their writings furnished Dekker’s adult mind. As he himself wrote, ‘My memory (me thought) amongst these [writers] mustred’ (Grosart, III, p. 47).

If the surface of *Dekker His Dream* suggests that the writer was educated in a grammar school, the stories he recounts in the dream-

vision provide more evidence of the same: he tells of meeting one poor reprobate soul who remembers his own schooling when he suffered miserably from birching and intimidation. His tutors’ ‘frownes’ and ‘Rods’, their ‘sternliest’ looks and menacing ‘controll’, and the frequency with which the pupils’ exercise books were ‘Rent’ (Grosart, III, p. 57), all suggest the common experience of the early modern grammar school boy.

Dekker certainly appears to have been fluent in Latin: Latin mottoes, quotations, and inscriptions appear everywhere in his plays and pamphlets (where the marginal notes are usually in Latin). His civic pageants, written in Latin and English (and relying on boys to recite his verses in both languages) demonstrate his command of the classical language. In addition, Dekker seems to have read Greek authors, but only in English translations. He cites ‘*Aristophanes* in his *Frog*’ and knows in the epistle dedicatory to *The Wonderful Year* (1603) the names of ‘Homer, Hesiod, Euripides’ (Grosart, I, p. 79, 81). What emerges from the writing is a picture of a man who received the same kind of education as Shakespeare.

Undocumented Life: 1572–1598

In the absence of fuller records, I want to attempt to reconstruct Dekker’s first twenty-five years by citing some of the most significant events that might have shaped him as a boy and a youth, before he entered the world of theatre and became a playwright. His sixty years, it turns out, almost exactly spanned the birth, maturity, and decline of the early modern London playhouse. In 1576, when the child was four, the first purpose-built playhouse in London – the Theatre in Shoreditch – was erected by James Burbage, giving plays and players, for the first time, a permanent home in the metropolis. The next year the Curtain was built on a plot nearby, followed by a third playhouse at Newington Butts.²⁰ The decade of the 1570s produced, along with Dekker, a number of boys (his future collaborators) who would go on to work in this new industry: Wentworth Smith (1571), Ben Jonson (1572), John Day (1573/4),

Thomas Heywood (1573), William Haughton (c. 1575), and John Marston (1576).

In the early 1580s, while Dekker the school-boy was probably conjugating Latin verbs, and perhaps living in Clerkenwell, on the south bank of the Thames, Philip Henslowe, a dyer by trade, was embarking on entrepreneurial ventures that would have significant consequences for the adult Dekker. In January 1587, Henslowe signed a contract to build a theatre in the Liberty of the Clink – the Rose, the first Bankside playhouse. This project would shift the centre of London theatre from the north to the south. For the first time, there would be a playhouse easily accessible to the heart of the city, yet also, being built in the suburbs, lying outside the City's jurisdiction.

This is the playhouse where, years hence, Dekker would learn his craft. The following year, 1588, when Dekker had probably left school, the sixteen-year-old youth with the whole of England experienced the terrifying threat of Spanish invasion. He remembered and wrote about 'that same terrible "88"' twenty-five years later in *The Wonderfulfull Yeare* (1603/04). England then, he wrote, 'stood in bodily feare' of an Armada that 'made men's hearts colder than the frozen Zone, when they heard but an inckling of it', a time so full of 'horrible predictions' that the 'Almanack-makers' feared they would be 'vtterly ouerthrowne' (Grosart, I, p. 94).

In the final years of the 1580s, if Dekker frequented the playhouse he could have seen Christopher Marlowe's complete works to date, played (probably) by the famous tragedian, Edward Alleyn at the Theatre: *Tamburlaine* (1587), *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1587), *Doctor Faustus* (1588), and *The Jew of Malta* (1589). He could have seen George Peele's *The Arraignement of Paris* (1584), and Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso* (1588), Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, and perhaps *Henry VI* (1589–90) by a playwright new to the scene: in part William Shakespeare. These dramatists and actors of the time were ones Dekker remembered later, in his 1607 pamphlet, *A Knights Conjuring*: 'Learned Watson',²¹ 'industrious Kyd', 'Inimitable [John] Bentley', 'Marlow, Greene and Peele', and 'sharpe and

Satyricall . . . Nashe' all appear in Dekker's memorial roll-call of an English Elysium²² (Shakespeare, of course, was not deceased).

It was in the 1590s that the life of young Dekker and the life of the London playhouse converged. In February 1592, Philip Henslowe opened a newly enlarged and refurbished Rose and Edward Alleyn began playing there with the Admiral's Men and their repertoire: *The Jew of Malta*, *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, *Tamburlaine*, and *Henry VI*. The following year, the Rose's 'house dramatist' Christopher Marlowe was murdered.

In 1595, when Dekker was 23, Francis Langley opened the Swan,²³ a second playhouse on the Bankside; four years later, a third appeared: the Globe, built from the dismantled timbers of the Theatre. In 1598 Dekker first appeared in a public record working as a playwright and offering a play to the Admiral's Men: a cluster of near-consecutive entries dated between January and February 1598 appears on f. 44 of Henslowe's *Diary*. I give them in full:

lent vnto Thomas dowton the 8 of Jenewary 1597 [1598] twenty shillings to by a boockes of m^r dickers lent [xxs]

lent vnto the company the 15 of Jenewary 1597 [1598] to bye a boocke of m^r dicker called fayeton fower pownde I say lent . . . iiij^{li}

lent vnto Thomas dowton for the company to paye the m^r of the Reuells for lysensynge of ij boockes xiiij s a bated to dowton v^s so Reaste ix s

lent vnto Thomas dowton for the company to bye a sewte for phayeton & ij Rebates & j fardengalle the 26 of Jenewary 1598 the some of three pownde I saye lent . . . iiij^{li}

Lent vnto Thomas dowton the 28 of Janewary 1598 to bye a whitte satten dublette for Phayeton forty shylenge I saye lent . . . xxx^s

lent vnto the company the 4 of february 1598 to dise charge m^r dicker owt of the cownter in the powltrey the some of fortie shillings I saye dd to thomas dowton. . . . xxx^s

What can we make of these records that provide a snapshot of an eventful month? On 8 January 1598 Dekker's first instalment was submitted and accepted by Thomas Downton, who seems to have been acting as the

literary manager of the company. A week later, on 15 January, Dekker was paid £4 for a finished playbook called *Phaeton* (no longer extant).²⁴ *Phaeton* was probably one of the ‘ii boockes’ licensed by the Master of the Revels in the next two weeks as, on 26 and 28 January, £5 having been spent on costumes, the play evidently went into production. (We will see later that *Phaeton* was a success, as two years later it would be revised by Dekker and performed again for a different audience in 1600.)

Having written *Phaeton*, Dekker should have had £4 in hand in this month, which was equivalent to a skilled workman’s (say a shoemaker’s) annual salary by statute.²⁵ Yet something happened: between 31 January and 3 February, Dekker was sent to the Counter in the Poultry, the debtors’ prison, but within twenty-four hours, on 4 February, the company had paid £2 to discharge him. What was going on this month? What happened to Dekker’s money? We can, perhaps, infer from these bare entries that the Lord Admiral’s Men, who were prompt to discharge Dekker, could not afford to lose a young and promising playwright whose work had just appeared on the stage: the company needed Dekker.

This is indeed a story that deserves to be told, as the record sheds light on Dekker’s life. First, Dekker’s play having been written, approved, licensed, and produced within three weeks, he had proven himself a capable writer who, unlike those who defaulted on plays (Chettle, for example), could meet the company’s demands for new work. Second, the company that needed new plays week after week certainly considered Dekker useful, so someone paid his bail. Not only were they willing to employ a young man, but they also believed Dekker could update the playhouse’s repertoire. In some ways Dekker was a valued writer: he was a playwright who could complete his work in time, who could work on classical themes (*Phaeton* a story retold probably from Ovid), and who appeared to be a good bet, worthy of the company’s investment.

By the time Dekker reached 26 in 1598,²⁶ he was already an important asset for the

theatre company. However, as the entries show, this was a man who could regularly go from remarkable achievements to immediate destitution and his record of debt would be repeated over and over again. The highs and lows of 1598 were to be the pattern of his whole career and a similar story was already unfolding in the following year. An entry dated 18 January 1598/9 in the *Diary* shows that Dekker was paid £1 as a first instalment on a playbook called *Truth’s Supplication to Candlelight* (*Diary*, f. 67), while at the same time he borrowed £3 from Henslowe, despite the fact that he had been working industriously for the company for the whole of the previous year.²⁷

18 Januarij. 1598 [1599] Receaved by mee Thomas Dekker at the handes of M^r Phillip Hynchlow the Some of three powndes to bee repayd at the end of one Moneth next ensuing I say received iij^{li}. / Thomas Dekker. /
wittnes
Thomas Downton
wittnes
Edward Jubye

Surprisingly, twelve days later, Dekker was again in trouble:

Lent vnto Thomas downton the 30 of Janewary 1598 [1599] to descarge Thomas dickers from the a reaste of my lord chamberlenes men I saye lent . . . iij^{li} xs
Diary, f. 53

30. die Januarij. 1598 [1599] Receaved by mee Thomas Dekker of Mr Phillip Hynchlow the some of Three Powndes Ten shillings to bee repayd [vpo] vnto Him or his Assignes vpon the last of February next ensuing. For payment whereof I bynd mee my Heyres executors, and Administrators,. / Thomas Dekker. / *Diary*, f. 101

This time Dekker was arrested by the rival company, the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, from which we can speculate that Dekker may have written for them, or defaulted on them, or it may have been that Dekker had borrowed from them to cover his money problems. Considering Dekker’s tremendous output the previous year, the Admiral’s Men in 1599 simply could not do without him, so on the same day that Dekker was arrested, the company immediately paid £3 10s to discharge their playwright (and asset) from their rival’s hand. These debt scenarios, as

we shall see much later in Dekker's life, were not unusual, and recurred regularly in his writing career.

Dekker in Henslowe's *Diary*: 1598–1604

Since *Phaeton* (1598), Dekker had been working industriously for Henslowe's playhouses with playwrights who were mostly his contemporaries, though some were ten years older. (Heywood appeared in Henslowe's *Diary* in October 1596; Munday in December 1597; Haughton in November 1597; Drayton, Munday, and Jonson in December 1597; Chettle in February 1598; Wilson in 1598; Hathway in April 1598; Day in July 1598).

The *Diary* runs out after 1604. Dekker's last entry was noted there on 14 March 1604, when he and Thomas Middleton were paid £5 for *The Patient Man & the Honest Whore* (*Diary*, f. 110). This suggests that during 1598–1604 Dekker was heavily involved with the Admiral's Men at the Rose, and then with Worcester's Men and Prince Henry's Men at the Fortune (1600), Henslowe and Alleyn's second project on the northern boundary of the City close to Clerkenwell.

During those six years, Dekker worked almost exclusively for the two playhouses, except that in 1600–1601 he wrote *Blurt Master-Constable* (1601) with Middleton for the Children of Paul's and a play entitled *Satiromastix* (1601) for the equally prestigious Chamberlain's Men at the Globe and later for the Children of Paul's during the 'War of the Theatres'. In that heyday of London theatre, Dekker was certainly valued by the most distinguished playing companies of the time.

During these busy collaborative years where Henslowe documents 280 play titles in his *Diary*, Dekker had a hand in at least 45 of these, among which ten were single-authored works, and thirty-one were collaborative.²⁸ If we look into the payment details, we shall see that in 1598 Dekker (with others) wrote seventeen plays; in 1599, eleven plays; in 1600, seven to eight plays; and in 1601–1602, eleven plays. On average, Dekker and collaborators produced nearly a play a month.

Working mainly as a collaborator, in 1598 Dekker's annual income was around £36 6s;

in 1599, £31–£34; in 1600, £10 12s; in 1601, £5; and in 1602, £23 8s.²⁹ That he was paid only £5 during 1600–1601 may be due to the fact that the *Diary* runs out and that Dekker was perhaps working elsewhere, as he had done in 1601–1602. As to his earning power outside Henslowe's playhouses, we shall never know. Nevertheless, calculating Dekker's payments in Henslowe's *Diary*, my tabulation shows his average annual income was at least £25.

Thus, compared to a schoolmaster's (and cleric's) income, which was £10–£15 a year, and a brewer's, which was £10 per annum by statute,³⁰ Dekker's, though not 'princely',³¹ was far above average. But the company's accounts in the *Diary* tell us much more than just the income. Judging from the titles, we can usefully speculate on Dekker's productive potential, his writing interests, his collaborative patterns, and most importantly his working relationships with other playwrights. All this will illuminate Dekker's life between 1598 and 1604.

Dekker's Sole-authored Plays

Dekker's sole-authored plays reflect the range of interests and genres in which he could capably work. He was in every way a versatile playwright who could dramatize classical mythology (*Phaeton*; *Orestes Furies*), French history ('Introduction' to the *Civil Wars of France* tetralogy), domestic plays (*Triplicity of Cuckolds* and *A Medicine for a Curst Wife*),³² city comedy (*The Gentle Craft*), folk tale (*Fortune's Tennis*, *Fortunatus*), and English history (2 *Lady Jane*; *Truth's Supplication*).³³

Although only *The Gentle Craft* (later retitled *The Shoemaker's Holiday*), *Fortunatus* (also called *Old Fortunatus*), and *Lady Jane* (later titled *Sir Thomas Wyatt*) survive,³⁴ some of the lost works written in Dekker's most productive period were, as Stanley Wells speculates, possibly 'of the highest quality', and should be considered equally important. Wells goes on to argue, with insight, 'there is no reason to suppose that lost plays were necessarily less good than those that got into print, or than the few by any writer that survive in manuscript'.³⁵

Significantly, two of the only three extant plays received prestigious performances at Court. *The Gentle Craft* was 'acted before the Queene' in 1599, marking the fortieth anniversary of her coronation.³⁶ Having completed *Fortunatus* in November 1599, Dekker was paid a further £1 'for the altreng of the book' and an additional £2 to revise the ending of the play 'for the corte' in December, making a total payment of £9. The purchase of 'j tree of gowlden apelles' for 1 *Fortunatus* (an earlier version of *Old Fortunatus*) listed on 3 February 1595/6, probably indicates his early involvement in the original production,³⁷ yet the company in December 1599 invested more: they paid a considerable sum of £10 to 'by thinges for ffortunatus' (*Diary*, f. 66). With such a heavy investment in theatrical properties, *Old Fortunatus* was certainly performed on a sensational scale and, as the title page of the 1600 published text proudly proclaimed, all this laborious preparation was 'for the Queene'.

Moreover, in September 1600 Dekker was paid £2 to revise his old play, *Phaeton*, 'for the corte' (*Diary*, ff. 70^v, 71), with the company's further investment of £1 in 'diuers things' (*Diary*, f. 71). With the old props and costumes that had been acquired (*Diary*, f. 44) and those documented in a 1598 inventory of properties belonging to the Admiral's Men – 'ij leather antecks cottes with basses', 'viii lances, j payer of stayers [stairs]', 'Faetones lymes [limbs]' and 'charete [chariot]', and 'j Fayetone sewte'³⁸ – *Phaeton* appears to have been another large-scale theatrical production heavily relying on 'visual effects and sophisticated machinery'.³⁹ In 1599 and 1600, writing for a privileged audience and evidently valued by the company, Dekker indeed 'had every right to be proud'.⁴⁰ His conspicuous success was much beholden to the trust and recommendation of Philip Henslowe, who went 'vp & downe' to enlist the best writer he could trust to sustain his position at 'the corte' (*Diary*, f. 38). S. P. Cerasano usefully reminds us that Court performances were limited every year.⁴¹ Besides, none of Dekker's peers – Munday, Jonson, Heywood, Chettle, and Middleton – ever received Henslowe's patronage in equal measure.⁴²

Henslowe's *Diary* usefully informs us of a playwright's value in the eye of a theatre impresario.

From these records, too, we can, if we consider what Shakespeare was writing in 1599 and 1600, sense some competition between the Rose and the Globe. Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* was, in James Shapiro's words, 'a rambunctious citizen comedy that glorifies not St Crispian's Day but Shrove Tuesday',⁴³ shedding ironic light on Shakespeare's *Henry V* from a plebeian perspective. Theatregoers who frequented both houses could, therefore, have seen these plays that emphasized the 'national identity'⁴⁴ from both ends of the spectrum.

Nor is this the only example of competition between the two companies at this time. In 1599 when *Sir John Oldcastle* (with Dekker's addition in 1602) was produced, the Chamberlain's Men staged Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, whose Falstaff was originally called Oldcastle. The Admiral's Men's folk drama, *Old Fortunatus* and *Patient Grissil* (both Dekker's, the latter with help from collaborators), also seem to have been in dialogue with Shakespeare's pastoral comedy *As You Like It*.

In addition to concentrating on his single-authored plays, Dekker also from time to time revised the work of other playwrights, adding prologues and epilogues. The scope of his revisions and output covers a wide range of European history: in 1602 Dekker was paid 10s for writing the prologue and epilogue for *Pontius Pilate* (*Diary*, f. 96), £4 for the alteration of Tasso's *Melancholy* (*Diary*, ff. 96, 108), and £2 10s for the addition to 2 *Sir John Oldcastle* (*Diary*, ff. 115, 116). None of these plays is extant, but their titles suggest that Dekker could write both Roman and English histories and Italian literary biography. The historical origins of *Pontius Pilate* are evident, and Sir John Oldcastle was an English Lollard dissenter hanged for treason in 1417. *Tasso's Melancholy* was probably a story of Torquato Tasso (1544–1595), a handsome and prolific contemporary Italian poet whose madness impeded his royal preferment: the play may have explored the contemporary interest in (political) melancholy.⁴⁵

As the payments suggest, Dekker's contributions to *Tasso's Melancholy* and *Oldcastle* were substantial (the standard payment for a play was £6), indicating that his service was not just polishing up someone's work, but re-writing. Dekker was indeed a professional playwright who could not only work under pressure but could also deliver on a range of subjects, including French history, Roman history, English history, and Italian literary biography in short order. Such is a picture of Dekker's independent output.

Dekker and His Major Collaborators

Following the deaths of Kyd, Greene, and Peele (the 1550s generation), and the premature death of Marlowe, the next generation of playwrights met at Henslowe's Rose, where their talents began to cross-fertilize. During six busy collaborative years Dekker worked on at least thirty-one plays with Drayton, Chettle, Wilson, Munday, Haughton, Day, Jonson, Webster, Heywood, Middleton, Smith, and Hathway. Most of the plays are no longer extant, yet the titles and diverse collaborative patterns do inform the nature of the projects, signifying the playwrights' individual strengths.

The diverse collaborative models range from just two playwrights sharing a project, to as many as five, giving an impression of Dekker's development as a playwright.⁴⁶ For example, after completing *The Triplicity of Cuckolds* in March 1598, Dekker, the young man of 26, worked during the rest of the year with collaborators who were senior in age and experience: Drayton (35), Chettle (in his late thirties), Wilson (in his fifties), and Munday (38). During this year, at least, it appears that Dekker was learning from his older colleagues.

Wars of Henry I (March 1598) – a history project presumably staging the battle of Tinchebray, where King Henry I (the fourth son of William the Conqueror) defeated his own brother, the Duke of Normandy – was perhaps the first collaborative project undertaken by Dekker, Chettle, and Drayton at the Rose. Their subsequent projects (*1 & 2 Earl Goodwin*, *Pierce of Exton*, *1 Black Batman of the*

North) involved one more person, Robert Wilson, a much senior and dauntingly experienced actor-playwright, known as a principal actor with the Earl of Leicester's Men (the most prominent theatrical company in the 1570s) and with Queen Elizabeth's Men (in the 1580s),⁴⁷ and whose talent was comparable to that of the comedian and extemporizer Richard Tarlton. Wilson's acting experience was a significant asset to non-player writers, such as Dekker, Chettle, and the more literary Drayton. Wilson may not only have overseen the workability of the playscript but might also have sharpened Dekker's sense of writing for the theatre, for actors, and for audiences.

The titles of the Dekker-Chettle-Drayton-Wilson projects tell us something else: they were mostly early English histories. *Earl Goodwin*, as Walter W. Greg points out, was 'Earl West Saxtons': 'outlawed under Edward the Confessor', he was 'later restored to favour and died in 1053';⁴⁸ Sir Piers Exton,⁴⁹ the murderer of Richard II, was also a key figure in *Pierce of Winchester*, a political history; *Black Batman of the North*, with Chettle's substantial input,⁵⁰ was probably a historical legend or folk play, whose leading character, 'James Bateman of Notts',⁵¹ was like a Robin Hood figure. Does this indicate that Dekker learned to write history plays with Drayton and Chettle?

In July 1598 Chettle stopped collaborating with others and concentrated on his own plays,⁵² leaving Dekker, Drayton, and Wilson to work on *Madman's Morris*, *1 Hannibal and Hermes*, and *Pierce of Winchester* – once again these were mainly history projects. In August, Munday (deemed by Meres in 1598 to be 'our best plotter' in *Palladis Tamia*, 1598, f. 283^v) joined them and co-wrote *Chance Medley* (now lost), which was possibly a murder tragedy.⁵³

As Dekker was still the youngest and the least experienced among these writers – though he'd been working steadily at the Rose for seven months – and as he only received 15s in payment, this may suggest that Munday was the senior collaborator and that he was teaching Dekker something about plot construction. In the second half of 1598,

Dekker collaborated solely with Drayton on five projects which covered a full sweep of Roman history (2 *Hannibal and Hermes*), French contemporary history (the *Civil Wars of France* tetralogy), and English history (*Prince of Connan*: possibly the warrior and founder of Cornwall, as documented in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*).

Dekker clearly wrote more histories than in any other genre with Drayton and, while this may reflect a public taste for the history play, it presumably also reflects a successful and personally satisfying working relationship. Drayton had attempted several different forms in his early years, including pastoral, sonnet, epyllion, and legend, but history was clearly important to him. His *Poly-Olbion*, a 30,000-word epic poem which offers a historical vision of the British landscape, was being written while the Dekker-Drayton stage history collaborations were in progress.⁵⁴

As evidence of their equal contributions to the work of creating the historical tragedies, Dekker and Drayton had an even share of £3 each in payment, which probably indicates the balance of their collaborative partnership. In 1598, after working on historical tragedies, Dekker was recognized alongside Drayton, Chapman, and Jonson as 'our best for Tragedie', according to the contemporary, Francis Meres (*Palladis Tamia*, 1598, ff. 283–4).

Between April and October 1599, Chettle came back, and Dekker continued to work with him on their two-man collaborations: *Troilus and Cressida*, *Agamemnon*, and *The Stepmother's Tragedy*. As we shall see, the Dekker-Chettle collaboration was resumed later in 1601 when they worked on *King Sebastian of Portugal*. Other projects in which Dekker and Chettle had a hand also include *Patient Grissil* (1599, also with Haughton), *The Seven Wise Masters* (1600, with Day and Haughton), *The Golden Ass, or Cupid and Psyche* (1600, also with Day), *1 Lady Jane* (1602), and *Christmas Comes but Once a Year* (1602). Only *Patient Grissil* and *Lady Jane* survive.

Excluding those history plays we have already examined, the collaborations in which Dekker and Chettle had a hand were mostly plays with distinctive folk elements, plays

about popular culture. These include tales about common people and their miraculous virtue. There were also test plays and quest plays that concern classical and folk heroes who had fabled legends develop about them. Disguises and transformations, the triumph of virtue, feigned death, and the use of magical properties were also frequent ingredients on the same basis.

Troilus and Cressida (1599) was possibly a refashioning of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*; *Agamemnon*, probably a dramatizing of the tragic ending of the Greek hero. *Patient Grissil* was a folk legend about a country lass, her aristocratic husband, and his test of her virtue, indebted to Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale*.⁵⁵ *The Seven Wise Masters* might relate to the seven sages of Rome, a popular medieval story (or collection of tales) that exploited the mystical number.⁵⁶ Later, in the 'Proæmium' to a pamphlet titled *The Gull's Horn-Book* (1609), Dekker also briefly alludes to 'the Seven Wise Masters' as offering a moral contrast to London's vainglorious gulls whom he himself surveys (Grosart, II, p. 202).

The Golden Ass, or Cupid and Psyche, was a story about a young man whose curious obsession with magic accidentally transforms him into an ass, a piece of classical tale teeming with folk elements originally told in Lucius Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, written in the second century. *King Sebastian of Portugal* was probably about the remarkable, near-contemporary, eponymous soldier-monarch (1554–1578).⁵⁷ Known, like England's King Arthur, as the 'sleeping king' who never dies, his sensational life, 'curious histories', incredible valour, and 'auncient prophesies' were already refashioned into folklore, myth, and drama, and circulating by 1601.⁵⁸

The Stepmother's Tragedy, another folk drama, may well have exploited the most abiding motif of a step-dame, which is closely bound up with folk fantasy. *Lady Jane*, a play about the nine-day queen, was obviously a history play, but it also contains strong folk elements: 'the Judas-like betrayer of his master', 'the selfish ambition of fathers that destroys their children',⁵⁹ and *Lady Jane* herself being the subject for contemporary ballad and song.⁶⁰

As the titles suggest, these plays all contain some folk elements, which mark a difference from history plays. If we look back upon Dekker's independent work, we will also discover that Dekker was himself interested in dramatizing popular culture: *The Shoemaker's Holiday* has a few scenes of disguise; *Old Fortunatus* heavily exploits the themes of fortune and magic, travel, and transformation; *Satiromastix* includes motifs of feigned death, the test of fidelity, and the use of a sleeping potion.

Dekker's collaboration with Chettle suggests a different stage of his career. While folk drama may have appeared to be a popular genre of the time, it may also reflect a personally compatible working relationship between Dekker and Chettle, as dramatizing folk elements were not only Chettle's speciality but Dekker's interest. Their collaborations demonstrate that the two playwrights could successfully bring folk elements to the fore.

Dekker and His Minor Collaborators

Since 1600, Dekker had started to collaborate with junior playwrights, such as Day (c. 1574–1640), and Haughton – 'yonge horton', as Henslowe calls him in the *Diary* (f. 37). The three of them co-wrote *Lust's Dominion, or the Lascivious Queen* (also called *The Spanish Moor's Tragedy*).⁶¹ This revenge tragedy – possibly close to Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*⁶² – survives in a text from 1657. The central figure of the play is a Machiavellian villain, Eleazar the Moor, who coerces his lover Eugenia (the Queen Mother of Spain) into murdering her son Philip. Eleazar advances evil plans to remove the crown and kill King Ferdinando.

Taking into account the fact that, according to Henslowe's *Diary*, Day and Haughton produced two sensational domestic murder tragedies (*The Tragedy of Cox of Collumpton* and *The Tragedy of Thomas Merry*)⁶³ before February 1600 (*Diary*, ff. 65^v, 66), we might conclude that they were both skilled in the genre. Considering Dekker's reputation – 'our best for Tragedie' – their collaboration may be viewed not only as an alliance of

compatible strengths, but as a transition from grand historical tragedies to folk plays determined by audience taste.

By the end of 1603, Dekker at the age of 31 had become an experienced writer, and could now begin to work with much junior writers in the play-making trade, such as Middleton and Webster. For instance, the Roman history project, *Two Shapes* (May 1602, also called *Caesar's Fall*), was written in collaboration with those who were already experienced in histories (Dekker, Drayton, Munday) and the new hands (Middleton and Webster) whose playwriting careers had just begun. After this project, Middleton started to write by himself until, in 1604, he shared half the effort with Dekker in *The Patient Man and The Honest Whore*.

Five months later, in October 1602, another history play, another folk drama, *1 Lady Jane*, was undertaken by the highly experienced Dekker and Chettle, and those (Heywood, Smith, and Webster) who occasionally worked for Henslowe's playhouses. Heywood was not only a highly successful and prolific actor-playwright, but also a shareholder in Worcester's Men. His participation in *1 Lady Jane* may signify an actor-playwright's involvement in the play, in a manner similar to that of Robert Wilson before he died in 1600.

Only occasionally did Dekker work with Ben Jonson and Wentworth Smith, whose styles were dissimilar from his. As is well known, for one year these two playwrights (with others) engaged in a very public rivalry – or perhaps 'publicity stunt'⁶⁴ – that came to be known as the 'poetomachia' or 'war of the theatres'. As we can see, these collaborative patterns usefully show the development of Dekker's playwriting career and his writing capacity. While a young playwright of 26 to 28, Dekker had to rely on his senior colleagues' diverse expertise: with Drayton, he would have learned to write histories; with Munday, he may have acquired the skills of plotting, and with Chettle, he could have further explored his interest while dramatizing folk motifs.

At the age of 28, after becoming fully independent in dramaturgy, he was commis-

sioned to undertake large-scale projects intended for the Court, such as *Old Fortunatus* (1600) and the remake of *Phaeton* (December 1600). At 31 Dekker began to share his experience and expertise with the more junior Middleton and Webster. His playwriting skills burgeoned, matured, and flourished at Henslowe's playhouses. More importantly, working for the Admiral's Men, the playwrights allied their talents according to the different natures of the projects, and when necessary, if their colleagues died or left, they disbanded and reshuffled the collaborative groupings. This is indeed an effective and intelligent scheme. The aforementioned patterns suggest that the Lord Admiral's Men did have a diverse pool of playwrights, and this diversity and collaborative flexibility typifies the professional life of Thomas Dekker between 1598 and 1604.

Friendships: Dekker and Chettle

Dekker the dramatist was certainly not a loner, but a 'fully paid-up member' of the London playhouse writing fraternity. Working in the same place, on the same projects, it is impossible that Dekker did not get to know his colleagues. But where can we find the evidence of their friendship or rivalry? Does Henslowe's *Diary* provide any clues? Where else can we see the traces of Dekker and his relationships with fellow writers?

One of the loan receipts in the *Diary* does reveal a hint of friendship between Dekker and Chettle. Their story starts with Chettle's frequent loans from the company. While at the Rose, Chettle, though a highly prolific collaborator, was constantly in debt and often advanced money from the company. During 1598–1599 he borrowed at least six times from the Lord Admiral's Men (*Diary*, ff. 46, 52^v, 54, 61, 62), putting himself in debt for at least £17: a figure that was at least four times as much as a workman's (such as a draper's) statutory annual income. An exchequer record also shows that 'an attempt was made in 1601 to recover from Chettle a debt of £40'.⁶⁵

There is no way to know why Chettle was habitually in financial trouble. However, once on 2 May 1599 Dekker personally borrowed

20s from the company to 'descarge harey chettell of his A Reste frome Ingrome' (*Diary*, f. 62). As we have seen, Dekker himself was regularly in debt (*Diary*, ff. 44, 53, 101, 114), which may suggest a certain affinity with Chettle's lifestyle, and his loan of 20s, though minimal, may attest to the closeness of their bond. Their friendship is further reflected in Chettle's final work, *Englands Mourning Garment* (1603), a poem that eulogizes 'the deceased Queen' (title page) and a number of his contemporaries, given classical pseudonyms, setting them in a pantheon where their excellence is remembered:

Quicke antihorace though I place thee heere,
Together with yong Maelibee, thy frend
And Hero's last Musaus, all three decre,
All such whose vertues highly I commend,
Prove not ingrate to her that many a time
Hath stoopt her Maiestie to grace your rime.
Englands Mourning Garment, 1603, Sig. D3

Here, Dekker is addressed as 'antihorace' – a nickname derived from his *Satiromastix* (1601–02), in which he lampooned his sparring partner Ben Jonson as 'our English Horace'. 'Young Maelibee' refers to the youthful John Marston with whom Dekker co-wrote *Histriomastix*, which satirizes Jonson onstage.

These nicknames clearly indicate familiarity and perhaps a friendship. In 1607, the year Henry Chettle probably died, Dekker published a pamphlet, *A Knight's Conjuring* (1607), in which Chettle is portrayed with a witty touch. Dekker creates an imaginary English Elysium, where reside Chaucer, Spencer, Kyd, Bentley, Marlowe, Greene, Peele, and Nashe. He then envisages Chettle, newly dead, joining them:

in comes Chettle sweating and blowing, by reason
of his fatness; to welcome whom, because hee was
of olde acquaintance, all rose vp, and fell presentlie
on their knees, to drink a health to all the
louers of Hellicon.

A Knight's Conjuring, 1607, Sig. L1^v

This description evokes a delightful picture in which Chettle, a young ghost, yet remaining vividly alive in body, arrives in Dekker's classical Elysium where only native writers

reside. These are the writers whom Dekker feels to be most congenial – ‘congenial’ in the sense that, like Dekker, they were mostly native Londoners akin in cultural origins and agreeable to Dekker, especially for their keen interest in the city and its inhabitants.

Dekker and Munday

Another receipt on f. 114 of the *Diary* may also suggest a friendship between Dekker and Munday (‘our best plotter’). Upon the completion of a playbook called *Jephthah* (a biblical story) on 5 May 1602, for which Dekker and Munday were paid £5 (*Diary*, f. 105^v), it appears from the *Diary* that the playwrights got a joint loan of £5 from Henslowe. The date on the loan receipt was in Dekker’s hand,⁶⁶ signifying a signed debt, which does not seem to fit into the payment of *Jephthah*.

Quinto die Maij. 1602

Bee it knowne vnto all men by theis pnte that wee Anthony Munday & Thom^as Dekker doe owe vnto Phillip Hynchlay gent the Some of five powndes of lawfull mony of England to bee payd vnto him his executo^s or assignes vppon the xth of June next ensuing the date hereof

In wittnes hereof herevnto wee haue Sett o^r handes

dated the day & yere above
written /

Diary, f. 114

What this seems to suggest is that the payment for *Jephthah* was simply not enough for Dekker, so he had to borrow again. This time, with the help of Munday, they successfully procured £5. This entry may help us speculate that one of the borrowers – possibly Dekker, whose credit rating was poor, perhaps due to previous debt, defaults, or missed payments – may have been refused a loan in just his name, so he had to find someone whose clean record may well have assisted. Nowhere in the *Diary* does Munday borrow from Henslowe,⁶⁷ so their financial association could have been an indication of friendship rather than nodding acquaintance.

Munday, like Drayton, also had diverse literary interests: in the early 1590s he was travelling extensively in Europe, and in the

late 1590s translating continental romances into English. *The first [-second] parts, of . . . Palmerin of England* was completed in 1596 and, while working at Henslowe’s playhouses during 1597–1602, he also completed *The third and last part* published in 1602. It was during 1598–1602 that Dekker collaborated with Munday and others on *Chance Medley*, *Fair Constance of Rome*, and *Two Shapes*.

Dekker would have known that Munday was at the same time translating the romances, because he and Webster respectively wrote their own dedications to *The Third and Last Part, of . . . Palmerin of England* (1602). In the epistle Dekker considers Munday, his ‘good friende’, an excellent and masterful translator of texts.

To his good friende, Ma. An. Munday

If Pure translation reach as high a glory
As best inuention (to denie’t were sinne),
Then thou (deere friend), in publishing this story
Hast grac’d thy selfe and thy queint Palmerin;
Thou much by him, he most by thee shall win.

For tho in courtly French he sweetly spake,
In fluent Thuscane, graue Castilian,
A harder labor thou dost vndertake
Thus to create him a fine Englishman,
Whose language now dare more then any can.

Nor thou nor Palmerin in choice doe erre,
Thou of thy scholar, he his schoolmaster.

*The Third and Last Part
of Palmerin of England*, 1602, Sig. A4^v

Here Dekker subscribes to Munday’s principle that ‘translation’ is as ‘high’ an art as ‘invention’, and that the best of translation and invention weigh equal. Commenting that Munday has achieved that level, Dekker asserts that to deny such a hypothesis is a ‘sinne’. A remarkable translator not only works on the language – what Palmerin ‘spake’ – but also on character. Munday’s Palmerin, in Dekker’s opinion, has been refashioned into a ‘fine English gentleman’ – a cultural translation that honours Munday, the creator.

What is significant in this excerpt is not only their friendship, but the fact that while complimenting his good friend by saying that translating Palmerin into English is the toughest task of all, Dekker privileges Eng-

lish over other European tongues. From Dekker and Munday's first collaboration on *Chance Medley* (1598) to *Fair Constance of Rome* (1600) and *Jephthah* (1602) to the joint loan of 1602 and Dekker's dedicatory epistle (1602), these textual traces offer a picture of Dekker and Munday's friendship. Moreover, Munday the translator, might have offered Dekker a model for his own work in translation: a 1603 French pamphlet, *Les Quinze Joyes de Mariage* which he translated into *The Batchelars Banquet* (1603).⁶⁸

Nuances of Collaboration

The collaborative patterns I have examined suggest the ways playwrights constantly fed off and learned from one another. The common ground of Dekker's collaborators is that they were all highly prolific and versatile. It was at Henslowe's playhouses that Dekker learned the ways of collaboration – a method which would continue to be applied in his late years.

However, collaboration *per se* is a subtly nuanced concept. At one level, play-writerly collaboration not only elicited the very best value of competitive advantage, but indicated that collaboration required mutual trust, shared values, complementary skills, and commitment. But at another level, a different meaning of collaboration came into play. It was as enemies that Dekker, Ben Jonson, and John Marston 'collaborated' on the curious exchange of satirical plays they energetically traded in the so-called War of the Theatres (1599–1601), yet afterwards evidently returned to friendship. Marston collaborated with Jonson on *Eastward Ho* in 1605 and wrote admiringly of him in other works.⁶⁹

It was during 1599/1600 that Dekker got involved in their quarrel. Dekker then appeared to be Marston's 'lorneyman' (*Poetaster*, III.4.323; *Satiromastix*, I.2.137–8, I.2.334) in *Histrionastix* (1599) while working on the satirical portrait of Jonson as the 'golden-born', 'golden-fact' Chrisoganus.⁷⁰ From then on, Marston and Dekker were caricatured on stage as a pair in *Everyman Out of His Humour* (1599): they are Clove/Marston and Orange/Dekker (1599). A year later in *Cynthia's Revels*

(1600), they are Hedon/Marston ('a light voluptuous reveller') and Anaides/Dekker ('a strange arrogating puff' – III.24–7). In *Poetaster* (1601) they appeared again as Crispinus/Marston and Demetrius Fannius/Dekker.⁷¹

Dekker and Jonson, although they had collaborated on only two historical tragedies in 1599 – *The Lamentable Tragedy of Page of Plymouth* and *The Tragedy of Robert the Second King of Scots* (*Diary*, (f. 64) – do not well fit into either category of collaboration – of mutual experience and treachery. Jonson appears infrequently in only a few entries in Henslowe's *Diary*, and was more interested in sole authorship, as is evidenced in Jonson's Folio collection published in his lifetime (1616), which excludes all his collaborative works. Jonson was also more committed to the Globe, the Blackfriars, and the Court.

Besides, after killing Gabriel Spencer in 1598, a player the Admiral's Men highly valued, Jonson was no doubt *persona non grata* with the company and its playwrights. In a letter dated 26 September 1598, Henslowe wrote to Alleyn that Spencer's death was a tremendous loss, and it 'hurteth' him 'greatly' that 'gabrell' 'is slayen' 'by the hands of benge<men> Jonson bricklayer' (*Diary*, Article 24). It may be Spencer's death that Dekker is glancing at when he calls Jonson an 'Anthropophagite' in *Satiromastix*, someone, who 'must eate men aliue' (IV.2.62–3).

Dekker's playwriting career was closely bound up with the decline of the ageing Rose playhouse⁷² and the rise of the relatively new Fortune (1600) in Clerkenwell. After Henslowe gradually abandoned the Rose in the early 1600s, most of the plays were transferred to the Fortune – and some of Dekker's works then seem to have centred on the idea of 'fortune' at her playhouse. His interest in portraying the goddess of Fortune is initially seen in *Old Fortunatus* and the test of Fortune in *Patient Grissil*, while *Fortune's Tennis* (*Diary*, f. 70^v), written in the summer of 1600 but no longer extant, may have been specifically commissioned to celebrate the opening of the new playhouse in the autumn of 1600.

After 1604, the *Diary* runs out and we lose our frequent sightings of Dekker. He evid-

ently continued to work for the Children of Paul's. His *Westward Ho* (1605) and *Northward Ho* (1607), performed by the Children of Paul's, were written in collaboration with the young John Webster, to rival Jonson, Chapman, and Marston's *Eastward Ho* at the Blackfriars.⁷³ While Dekker and Webster in their *Ho* plays candidly view a sick London self-absorbed with dangerous games, playing out tentative desires and illicit doings, Jonson, Chapman, and Marston in *Eastward Ho* (1605) present a corrective picture of what London ought to be. Dekker's and Jonson's styles and play-writerly principles once again differ from each other in the field of city comedy.

Dekker the Resident of the King's Bench

Despite Dekker's continued success in the first decade of the 1600s, 1603 marked a remarkable transition between the old and new life of Dekker. Having documented the new King James I's royal entry into London in *The Magnificent Entertainment* (1604) – probably because of Henslowe's recommendation as Edward Alleyn also played in it the Genius of the City – Dekker's writing life post-1603 was interrupted by various returns of the plague in 1603–1604, 1606–1609, 1625, and 1630, and by his long imprisonment in the King's Bench during 1613–1619, which cut off the opportunity to thrive. In his autobiographical pamphlet, *Dekker His Dream* (1620), Dekker says that he spent 'almost seven years' (Grosart, III, p. 11) in prison. Even if it is unquestionably true, what accounts for his long imprisonment? To attempt an answer, we need to revisit the years 1603–1613. During this decade, there were four years (1603, 1606–1609) when London was, as Dekker writes in *The Seven Deadly Sins of London* (1606), 'no place at all' (Grosart, II, p. 8) – a city sick with plague whose citizens, if they could, fled to the country to avoid infection.

This suggests that in the plague years Dekker must have used his savings or would have had to borrow. In the other six healthy years when the theatres were open and needing new material, Dekker appears to have

produced only three plays by himself (2 *Honest Whore*, *The Whore of Babylon*, and *If This Be Not a Good Play, the Devil Is In It*) and four in collaboration with others (1 *Honest Whore*, the two *Ho* plays, *The Roaring Girl*), as well as one civic pageant, *Troia-Nova Triumphans* (1612). Considering that during the plague years everyone in the metropolis had to contend with sickness and sudden death, we must bear in mind that these works were written when Dekker was under extraordinary financial pressure.

In 1606, Dekker's financial problems worsened. Two lawsuits against him were filed in Michaelmas Term. The first concerns a bond of £14 (with one Keysar) that Dekker entered on 4 June 1606 in St Mary le Bow, promising repayment of a loan. But he defaulted and then failed to appear in court to defend himself in Hilary Term. Judgement was therefore 'given against him for £14, plus 20 shillings damages'. The second bond of £10 was registered on the same date. Again, Dekker defaulted; again, he failed to appear; again, 20 shillings damages were awarded.⁷⁴ Midway through the year, then, Dekker was in debt to the tune of £26: that is, he owed his creditors a year's income at the Rose.

His penury, already satirized in *Poetaster* (where Demetrius/Dekker is 'out at Elbowes', I.2.325), became crippling in 1611, when a complaint was made against him by John Crown and John Smithwick.⁷⁵ Their case once again concerned money: 'On 3 October 1611 Dekker had entered into a bond for £10 which he had since failed to honour.' The Middlesex County Records show that Dekker and his solicitor, William Edwardes, 'confessed a judgment and the Court proceeded to award the plaintiffs their £10 together with £1 damages'. A year later, he was back in court, in a dispute with Thomas Cator (a tailor) to whom he allegedly owed £4 6s for a doublet and pair of hose.⁷⁶

The ultimate cause of Dekker's imprisonment was yet another King's Bench lawsuit filed against him in 1613 by John Webster, the dramatist's father, to whom Dekker owed a considerable sum of £40.⁷⁷ Observing that Webster was a coachmaker, Leslie Hotson (writing in the 1960s) wondered whether the

debt related to the 'rolling Pageants' or 'Triumphs'⁷⁸ used in Dekker's *Troia-Nova Triumphans* in 1612. Had Dekker 'plunged hopefully into debt . . . in the belief that the City would reimburse him', as speculated by Mary Edmond?⁷⁹

All these debt scenarios clustered in 1611 and 1613 came in the wake of the difficult plague years. Clearly, Dekker lived beyond his means. In the surviving records alone, he was sued five times during 1606–1613, owing his creditors a total of £79 6s. No one could possibly clear his debts, not even Henslowe. In 1613, Dekker was sent to the King's Bench prison. The seven long years he spent there left an indelible mark on his writing.

Silence Broken

Between 1613 and 1619 Dekker does not appear to have published anything, except a pamphlet called *The Artillery Garden* and the fourth edition of *Lanthorne and Candlelight*, both published in 1616, if one discounts the unlikely attribution to Dekker of six characters in the pamphlet titled *Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife* (1616).⁸⁰ The fourth edition of *Lanthorne* has additional prison scenes, which may suggest that he was turning his prison experience into sellable stories. At the same time one Mary Decker was buried on 24 July 1616 at St James, Clerkenwell. If Dekker were briefly out of prison in 1616, it may well suggest that he perhaps needed to arrange his wife's funeral. Could he have afforded it?

While the rest of the world moved on with the younger generation of playwrights such as Middleton, Beaumont, and Fletcher faring well in the theatre, Dekker's long prison silence was otherwise broken by two letters written in the King's Bench, addressed to Edward Alleyn (Henslowe's son-in-law and Dekker's former colleague at the Rose and the Fortune) because Henslowe himself had died in 1616.

One of these letters (Dulwich MS 108), undated, bearing Dekker's autograph, was dictated by Dekker himself but evidently written by a prison scribe. The other (Dulwich MS 109), dated 12 September 1616, was in Dekker's hand.⁸¹ The two letters are

authentic testimonies to Dekker's imprisonment. Unfortunately, they give us no sense of how he spent his days. They are not begging letters for himself; rather, the first is a letter of preferment, recommending to Alleyn the services of a young man whose father was an inmate at King's Bench, also Dekker's companion. Such a recommendation was no small favour. Dekker refers to Alleyn three times, which may signify that Dekker (who calls himself a 'lovinge friend') and Alleyn had a certain foundation of trust and friendship. It is perhaps remarkable, and a sign of his generosity, that, in such straits himself, Dekker took an interest in the yeoman's son. His language is respectful and cordial, and his tone full of tenderness and compassion – which may indicate Dekker's affability, or his desire to get Alleyn's goodwill.

The letter of 12 September 1616 (Dulwich MS 109) thanks Alleyn for his bountiful kindness, praising the 'Pillar of yo^r owne erecting', 'So noble and pious a Work, as This, yo^r last and worthiest is'. Dekker continues that 'I am the first consecrate to Memory So noble and pious a Work', and he had 'a passionate desire of expressing gladness to see Goodness so well delivered' that 'it best becomes mee to sing any thing in praise of charity'.

Is Dekker referring to the establishment of Dulwich College, whose chapel, schoolhouse, and almshouses had just been completed in the autumn of 1616?⁸² Could Alleyn have assisted Dekker's family after the death of Mary Dekker? We can usefully speculate that Dekker, having received Alleyn's kindness, sang the 'Eûlogium' of Alleyn's 'noble Act'. Indeed, living 'amongst the Gothes and Vandalls' and having 'few handes warm thorough that complexion' while held in custody, Dekker surely felt infinitely grateful to Alleyn for his 'Goodness'. He says in *Lanthorne and Candlelight* (1616) that 'Letters are but bladders to fill which a prisoner keeps a-puffing and blowing' and that 'Letters are a meat only to make hope fat and to starve a prisoner'.⁸³ The two manuscripts show the opposite: Alleyn, for whom Dekker held deep 'Affections', did not disappoint his friend.

From the Henslowe–Alleyn papers and the historical documents emerges a portrait

of Dekker, whose life brings together his own life with those of his characters and contemporaries. Mainly, reconstructing a life that connects Dekker with other playwrights, I aim to dispel any assumptions that might remain, now that Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino's Oxford *Thomas Middleton: the Collected Works* (2007) has so thoroughly rehabilitated the notion of collaboration, that playwriting was a lone business and that the Rose playwrights were 'merely' jobbing writers who 'churned out' play after play.

So this article is an attempt to open up more opportunities for the study of lesser-known writers, through whom we will discover much historical and theatrical evidence about a whole community of playwrights whose works are being rigorously tested at today's Swan and Shakespeare's Globe. Through Dekker's life story which unravels more back stories, we find the art of cross-fertilization, and historical, theatrical evidence of early modern performances. Perhaps from there, Dekker's legacy will have a larger life, a renewed life, a life that provides insight into early modern culture.

Appendixes

Supplementary materials for this article, as referenced in notes 27, 28, 29, 46, 50, and 52 below, can be accessed at

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Notes and References

This essay wouldn't have been made possible without the guidance of Prof. Carol Rutter, who took me under her wing to decipher Dekker's parts in Henslowe's *Diary*. I'm deeply indebted to her knowledge in theatre practice and feel infinitely beholden to her trust and kindness. Over the years Dr Susan Brock (Warwick) and Dr Gillian White (Warwick) have been two guardian angels of my life, whose scholarly advice and friendship I can't possibly repay. I especially want to thank Professor Peter Mack, who, years ago during my *viva*, told me that my Dekker research was of important value and that I should endeavour to publish it. My research is built on the monumental legacy of E. K. Chambers, W. W. Greg, R. A. Foakes, William Ingram, and Marie Thérèse Jones-Davies, who spearheaded archival research before the digital age. The recently accessible Henslowe-Alleyn Digitization Project in many ways also benefited my interpretation. If this article finds approval, the honour belongs to them. All faults are of course mine.

1. This essay is a revised, abridged version of Chapter One of my unpublished doctoral dissertation entitled *Thomas Dekker and Chaucerian Re-Imagings* (University of Warwick, 2009), in which I present a new biography of Dekker (1572–1632) and investigate the ways in which he re-imagines Chaucer onstage. It was a project co-funded by the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance of the University of Warwick and the National Science Council of Taiwan. The dissertation was supervised by Prof. Carol Rutter and examined by Prof. Peter Mack (Warwick) and Dr Richard Rowland (York). In this article I focus on the early life of Dekker (c. 1572–1604) until we lose sightings of him when the *Diary* runs out after 1604.

2. London, Dulwich College Archive MSS 108, 109.

3. Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare and Co.* (London: Allen Lane, 2006), p. ix.

4. Richard Wheeler, 'Deaths in a Family: the Loss of a Son and the Rise of Shakespearean Comedy', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, LI, No. 2 (2000), p. 127–53.

5. Unless otherwise indicated, references to Dekker's plays are from Fredson Bowers, ed., *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953–1961), and to prose works from A. B. Grosart, ed., *The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, 5 vols. (London: Aylesbury, 1884–86).

6. STC (2nd ed.) / 6491, A2^v.

7. <www.dutchchurch.org.uk>.

8. Thomas Dekker, *A Knight's Conjuring*, ed. Larry M. Robbins (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), p. 18.

9. E. K. Chambers, G. E. Bentley, F. P. Wilson, and Marie Thérèse Jones-Davies all agree that 1572 is the most likely year of Dekker's birth, and 1632 of his death. See F. P. Wilson, 'Three Notes on Thomas Dekker', *Modern Language Review*, XV (1920), p. 82–5; E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), III, p. 289; G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941–1968), III, p. 241; Mark Eccles, 'Thomas Dekker: Burial-Place', *Notes and Queries*, CLXXVII, No. 9 (1939), p. 157; and M. T. Jones-Davies, *Un peintre de la vie londonienne: Thomas Dekker* (Paris: Didier, 1958), I, p. 32–76.

10. *Ibid.*, Wilson, p. 84; Jones-Davies, I, p. 58–60.

11. J. C. Jeaffreson III, ed., *The Middlesex County Records*, p. 12, 19–20; quoted in Wilson, *ibid.*, p. 85.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Eccles, p. 157.

14. Wilson (1920), p. 84; Jones-Davies, I, p. 58–60.

15. Dekker's last publication is *English Villanies . . . Discovered by Lanthorne and Candlelight* (1632).

16. Wilson claims (1920) that Dekker was a Catholic, p. 85. However, Julia Gasper affirms that Dekker was a staunch Protestant in *The Dragon and the Dove: the Plays of Thomas Dekker* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

17. Robert Bearman, 'John Shakespeare: a Papist or Just Penniless?', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, LVI, No. 4 (2005), p. 411–33.

18. In conversation with Professor Peter Mack.

19. Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 24–5.

20. Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry, and William Ingram, ed., *English Professional Theatre, 1530–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 404.

21. Thomas Watson (1556–1592) was a poet translator (*Oxford DNB*), and possibly fellow-spy of Christopher Marlowe. See Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning* (London: Vintage, 2002), p. 218.

22. Robbins, p. 156, 228.

23. William Ingram, *A London Life in the Brazen Age: Francis Langley 1548–1602* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 108.
24. This may not be Dekker's debut. His autograph (known as Hand E) appears in the manuscript fragment of *Sir Thomas More*, a play whose date is deeply contested. It is possible that Dekker began his career contributing to *Sir Thomas More* in the mid-1590s.
25. Carol Rutter, *Documents of the Rose Playhouse* (2nd edn, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 230.
26. Carol Rutter points out: 'Mid-twenties seems to have been the normal age for beginning playwrights; Ben Jonson, born the same year as Dekker, was first mentioned by Henslowe in 1597 (ff. 24, 234).' Carol Chillington, 'Playwrights at Work: Henslowe's, Not Shakespeare's, Book of *Sir Thomas More*', *English Literary Renaissance*, X (1980), p. 454.
27. For the loan receipt, see R. A. Foakes, ed., *Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 268; see also the payment details in Appendix A, 'Thomas Dekker, a Chronology'.
28. See Appendix A.
29. See Appendix A and Appendix B ('Dekker's Payment Details in Henslowe's *Diary*').
30. Scott McMillin, 'Professional Playwrighting', in David Scott Kastan, ed., *A Companion to Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 227; Wells, p. 110; Rutter, p. 231.
31. Wells, p. 110.
32. Although nothing is known about *The Medicine for the Curst Wife*, Dekker may have rewritten it in a different form in prose. A tale – 'A Medicine to Cure the Plague of a Woman's Tongue' – told in Dekker's pamphlet titled *The Raven's Almanac* (1609) might be of the same plot.
33. *Truth's Supplication* may be an earlier version of Dekker's *The Whore of Babylon* (1607). See W. W. Greg, ed., *Henslowe's Diary* (London: A. H. Bullen, 1904–1908), II, p. 210.
34. It's been accepted that *Sir Thomas Wyatt* – 'a memorially reconstructed text' – is the 'playe called *Lady Jane*'. See Cyrus Hoy, ed., *Introductions, Notes, and Commentaries to Texts in The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, edited by Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), IV, p. 311.
35. Wells, p. 107–8.
36. L. D. Timms, 'Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and Elizabeth's Accession Day', *Notes and Queries*, XXXII, No. 1 (1985), p. 58.
37. Foakes, p. 320.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 317, 322.
39. Rutter, p. 134.
40. James S. Shapiro, *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), p. 364.
41. Henslowe was a 'courtier' and 'Groom of the Chamber' during the reign of Elizabeth I. See S. P. Cerasano, 'The Patronage Network of Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, XIII (2001), p. 82–92; 'The Geography of Henslowe's *Diary*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, LVI, No. 3 (2005), p. 336–7, 343; and 'Philip Henslowe and the Elizabethan Court', *Shakespeare Survey*, LX (2007), p. 49–57.
42. During Elizabeth I's reign, Jonson wrote *Every Man Out of His Humour* for the Court in 1599; Chettle wrote a prologue and epilogue for a Court performance in December 1602; Middleton wrote a prologue and an epilogue for *Friar Bacon at Court* in December 1602; Heywood and Munday wrote none for the Court. See Mary Susan Steele, *Plays and Masques at Court during the Reigns of Elizabeth, James, and Charles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), p. 125, 128.
43. Shapiro, p. 364.
44. Wells, p. 113.
45. C. P. Brand, *Torquato Tasso: a Study of the Poet and of His Contribution to English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
46. See Appendix A.
47. Robert Wilson's acting talent was noticed by Gabriel Harvey, Francis Meres, and John Stow. See 'Robert Wilson' in the *Oxford DNB*.
48. Greg, II, p. 192.
49. *Ibid.*
50. See Appendix C, 'Henry Chettle's Payment Details in Henslowe's *Diary*'.
51. Greg, II, p. 193.
52. Chettle meanwhile was penning 2 *Black Batman of the North*, *A Woman's Tragedy*, and *Brute*. See Appendix C.
53. 'Chance medley' is a legal term, meaning 'an accident or casualty not purely accidental, but of a mixed character' (*OED*).
54. Meres in *Palladis Tamia* (1598) records that 'Michael Drayton is now in penning, in English verse, a Poem called "Poly-olbion"' (f. 281).
55. Ann Thompson, *Shakespeare's Chaucer: a Study in Literary Origins* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1978), p. 24–7.
56. Bonnie D. Irwin, 'The Seven Sages', in Carl Lindahl, John McNamara, and John Lindow, ed., *Medieval Folklore: a Guide to Myths, Legends, Beliefs, and Customs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); 'Seven Sages of Rome', in Douglas Gray, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Chaucer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 436.
57. José Maria de Queiroz Velloso, *D. Sebastião, 1554–1578* (Lisboa: Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, 1935).
58. See, for example, George Peele's *The Battell of Alcazar* (London, 1594), STC (2nd edn) / 19531. Nine months after Dekker and Chettle's *King Sebastian* was performed, there appeared an English prose work that concerned the Portuguese King published in London under the authorship of José Teixeira (1543–1604). It's titled *The strangest adventure . . . of the King of Portugall Dom Sebastian* (1601), STC (2nd edn), 23864.
59. George R. Price, *Thomas Dekker* (New York: Twayne, 1969), p. 39.
60. Hoy points out that 'At least two ballads dealing with her were entered in the Stationers' Register in the early 1560s', I, p. 312–13.
61. The attribution to Marlowe has been rejected by Bowers, IV, p. 117, and Hoy, IV, p. 56–72. Dekker's participation in the play is evidenced in his own *Satiromastix* (II.2.38–45).
62. Hoy, IV, p. 65–6.
63. Anthony Parr in the *Oxford DNB* article on 'William Haughton' states: '*Cox of Collumpton* is a bloody domestic tragedy that tells the story of Cox, who slays his uncle for his land but is himself slain seven years later to the day. Two of his sons subsequently kill their brother and later commit suicide.'
64. See James P. Bednarz, 'Representing Jonson: *Histrionmastix* and the Origin of the Poets' War', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, LIV, No. 1 (1991), p. 1–2.

65. 'Henry Chettle' in the *Oxford DNB*.

66. R. A. Foakes points out that the date is in Dekker's hand, though the 'signatures of Dekker and Munday, presumably cut from below this entry, are pasted into books in the Bodleian Library: "Tho: Dekker" in *Old Fortunatus* (Malone, 235) and "An. Munday" in *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon* (Malone, 248).' See Foakes, p. 212, 265. In fact, the *Diary* is a victim of autograph collectors: the fragments that survive in other collections – the book in the Bodleian – can, puzzle-like, be fitted back into the original.

67. This is the only loan receipt registered in Munday's name.

68. Dekker indicates in *Lanthorne and Candlelight* (1609) that he knows French: 'I will translate into English this broken French that follows in prose', C1^v.

69. Marston presents an epigram to Jonson's *Sejanus* (Q 1605) as a sign of his deep admiration; he also had his name Latinized in the dedication. Marston's *The Malcontent* was dedicated to Jonson, but a year later Marston attacked Jonson's pedantry in the prefatory epistle to *The wonder of women or The tragedie of Sophonisba* (1606) performed at the Blackfriars. This makes the Jonson-Marston collaboration very perplexing. See Bednarz, 'Representing Jonson', p. 1–30; and 'Marston's Subversion of Shakespeare and Jonson: *Histrionastix* and the War of the Theaters', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, VI (1993), p. 103–28.

70. Though not recognized on the title page of *Histrionastix*, Dekker is alluded to as a 'Torneyman' 'hired' by Marston to 'abuse Horace [Jonson]' in *Poetaster* (III.4.323). In *Satiromastix*, Dekker also attests to the fact that he, a 'Torneyman' (caricatured under the name of 'Demetrius Fannius') did contribute 'a scene or two in one of thy [Marston's] strong garlicke comedies' (I.2.137–8; I.2.334).

71. James P. Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Poets' War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 135–8, 159–64, 213–15.

72. The abandonment of the Rose was probably complete by 1606. See R. A. Foakes, 'Playhouses and Players', in A. R. Braunmuller and Michael Hattaway, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 8.

73. Dekker and Webster's *Ho* plays, as David Gunby points out, 'read more as Dekker's work than Webster's', and 'clearly the young man was still following the old man's lead': this suggests Dekker's influence on young Webster remained strong. See David Gunby, ed., *Webster: Three Plays* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 12.

74. Hoy, III, p. 138–41 with acknowledgement to E. D. Pendry.

75. See E. D. Pendry, ed., *Thomas Dekker . . . and Selected Writings* (London: Edward Arnold, 1967), p. 6.

76. *Ibid.*

77. Discovered by Leslie Hotson, quoted by Hoy, III, p. 140.

78. *Ibid.*

79. 'In Search of John Webster', *TLS*, 24 December 1976, p. 1621.

80. Jones-Davies, II, p. 131. Also the STC wrongly ascribes to Dekker *The Colde Year* (1615), a work plagiarized from *The Great Frost*, p. 383.

81. The two letters were first reproduced in W. W. Greg et al., ed., *English Literary Autographs: 1550–1650* (London, 1925–32), Parts I, VII, IX, X. Greg's verification of Dekker's hand is supported by F. P. Wilson. See F. P. Wilson in F. W. Bateson, ed., *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (Cambridge: University Press, 1940), p. 622. Digital images of the two letters are available at <www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-108/01r.html> and <www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-109/01r.html>.

82. Sheila Hodges, *God's Gift: a Living History of Dulwich College* (London, 1981), p. 3–5.

83. STC (2nd edn.) / 6488, L2.