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LUCY MUNRO

*“As it was Played in the Blackfriars”: Jonson, Marston,
and the Business of Playmaking*

In the later months of 1605, a play appeared on the bookstalls of London. Its title-page proclaimed:

EASTWARD
HOE.
As
It was playd in the
Black-friers.
By
The Children of her Maiesties Reuels.
Made by
GEO: CHAPMAN. BEN: IONSON. IOH: MARSTON.¹

In many ways this statement is unremarkable: the title-page of *Eastward Ho!*, like many others, presents the play as a desirable commodity, the product of a specific set of theatrical, institutional, and writerly interactions. That said, it is also remarkable in presenting with considerable insouciance a play that roundly offended King and court, landing at least two of its authors in prison. Look, it says, this is *Eastward Ho!*, the play that caused a scandal when it was played in the Blackfriars by the Children of

I am hugely indebted to Tanya Pollard, Charles Cathcart, and Clare McManus for reading and commenting on drafts of this essay, and to the participants in the conference “Ben Jonson: Literary Transactions across Cultural Environments,” Universität Würzburg, June 29–July 1, 2017—especially Martin Butler and the organizer, Isabelle Karremann—for their feedback and encouragement. I am also very grateful to Gabriella Edelstein for sharing with me her essay, “Collaborating on Credit: Constructing Ben Jonson’s Authorship in *Eastward Ho!*,” which also appears in this volume of *ELR*.

1. George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston, *Eastward Hoe* (1605).

the Queen's Revels, and these are the offending playmakers: Chapman, Jonson, and Marston.

The collaboration of Chapman, Jonson, and Marston on *Eastward Ho!* has received a good deal of critical attention, much of it focused on the sheer unlikelihood of this group of dramatists working together, given the fact that each appears generally to have preferred to write alone and to value his integrity as the sole creator of his works. Gregory Chaplin, for example, argues that "collaborative playwrighting, which dispersed textual authority and control among several playwrights as well as the actors and owners of the acting company, presented the primary obstacle to Jonson's desire to control his plays and have them considered literary works," while Shona McIntosh has suggested that a later Blackfriars play, *The Alchemist*, which depicts the uneasy relationship between the con-artists Doll, Face, and Subtle, is "to some extent a recantation or a qualification of [Jonson's] own 'venture tripartite,'" the composition of *Eastward Ho!* with Marston and Chapman.² Suzanne Gossett further observes that "recent scholarship has problematized the issue of collaboration in other parts of the Marston canon and, indirectly, the likelihood of his participating willingly in a three-man production."³ The collaboration has raised questions about writerly authority, theatrical rivalry, and the mechanics of playwrighting, but the play has rarely been viewed in terms of the institutional contexts that are brought to the fore on the printed title-page.

Important exceptions to this rule can be found in Gabriella Edelstein's essay elsewhere in this volume, which argues that *Eastward Ho!* "represents the collaborative mechanisms behind the theater," and in the work of Heather Hirschfeld, which explores in detail the commercial context of the playing company and playhouse, arguing that collaborative work in *Eastward Ho!* "signifies the complicated and vexed response of private theater playwrights to the democratic mode and mood of their public theater counterparts."⁴ Gossett also notes in a recent essay that the dramatists' "first community was theatrical, and to some extent the authors' troubles

2. Gregory Chaplin, "'Divided Amongst Themselves': Collaboration and Anxiety in Jonson's *Volpone*," *ELH* 69 (2002), 57–81 (58); Shona McIntosh, "Space, Place, and Transformation in *Eastward Ho!* and *The Alchemist*," in *The Idea of the City: Early-Modern, Modern and Post-Modern Locations and Communities*, ed. Joan Fitzpatrick (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009), 65–77 (66).

3. Suzanne Gossett, "Marston, Collaboration, and *Eastward Ho!*," *Renaissance Drama*, n.s. 33 (2004), 181–200 (182).

4. Heather Hirschfeld, "'Work Upon That Now': The Production of Parody on the English Renaissance Stage," *Genre* 32 (1999), 175–200 (179–80). See also her *Joint Enterprises: Collaborative Drama and the Institutionalization of the English Renaissance Theater* (Amherst, 2004), 29–51.

arose because of it.”⁵ Building on their work, this essay pushes further at the precise institutional contexts that informed *Eastward Ho!*, drawing on new evidence that expands our knowledge of the Queen’s Revels company, its financial structures, and the roles of Jonson and Marston within them.

In 1608, the men at the center of the Blackfriars enterprise, Henry Evans and his son-in-law, Alexander Hawkins, sued another investor, Edward Kirkham, over a series of financial interactions among them in the years 1604–1606. Although many other lawsuits involving these men have been picked over in detail by scholars, this suit has remained unpublished and almost entirely unnoticed. It demonstrates that two of the men who wrote *Eastward Ho!*, Jonson and Marston, had a financial stake in the enterprise that went beyond the composition of plays, detailing for the first time Jonson’s involvement in the structures of investment on which the theater industry depended. It also expands our knowledge of the other individuals who invested in the company—some of whom have previously been known only by their surnames—allowing a more complete assessment of their relationships and social ties.

In analyzing this material and the light that it may shed on the production of a play like *Eastward Ho!*, this essay participates in the ongoing attempt in early modern studies to bring theater-historical frameworks to bear on the interpretation of plays, building on the work of scholars such as Scott McMillin, Sally-Beth MacLean, Roslyn Lander Knutson, Lawrence Manley, Mary Bly, Siobhan Keenan, and Tom Rutter.⁶ My work here is also in dialogue with Charles Cathcart’s recent exploration of new information about Marston’s cousin William and his apprenticeship to a goldsmith, Edward Greene, and its impact on our understanding of *Eastward Ho!* Like Cathcart, I avoid offering playwright biography as a “key” to the plays, and I share his interest in “how the involvement of one member of a collaborative team may have an effect upon the corporate

5. Suzanne Gossett, “Collaborative Playwrights and Community-Making,” in *Community-Making in Early Stuart Theatres: Stage and Audience*, ed. Anthony W. Johnson, Roger D. Sell, and Helen Wilcox (Abingdon, 2017), 95–113 (102).

6. See, for instance, Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean, *The Queen’s Men and Their Plays* (Cambridge, Eng., 1998); Mary Bly, *Queer Virgin and Virgin Queens on the Early Modern Stage* (Oxford, 2000); Roslyn Lander Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare’s Time* (Cambridge, Eng., 2001); Lawrence Manley and Sally-Beth MacLean, *Lord Strange’s Men and Their Plays* (New Haven, 2014); Siobhan Keenan, *Acting Companies and Their Plays in Shakespeare’s London* (London, 2014); Tom Rutter, *Shakespeare and the Admiral’s Men: Reading Across Repertories on the London Stage, 1594–1600* (Cambridge, Eng., 2017).

endeavour.”⁷ The new material that I explore here also enables me to explore a broader set of interactions between individuals connected with the Blackfriars enterprise, and to re-examine the fusion of commercial and creative interests that fueled London’s stages.

The essay thus places *Eastward Ho!* at the heart of a set of textual, theatrical, and financial negotiations, using the new lawsuit to probe the broader collaborative structures within which the play was written. In doing so, it reappraises three important contexts for the production of *Eastward Ho!* First, it revises our understanding of the Blackfriars enterprise and its investment structures, synthesizing and extending our knowledge of the individuals who gave it life during the period between 1600 and 1608. Second, it reassesses the careers of Jonson and Marston in the years 1604–1606, offering a perhaps surprising new picture of Jonson as a company man. The institutional contexts that it reveals shed light on a set of events that have puzzled scholars: the apparent reconciliation of Jonson and Marston around 1604; their collaboration with Chapman on *Eastward Ho!* in 1605; and the revision of Jonson’s *The Case is Altered* and *Every Man in his Humor*, which I will argue probably dates to 1604–1606.

Third, it offers fresh insights into the portrait of London offered in *Eastward Ho!* and the emergence of the city as a regular, almost compulsive, focus of playwrights’ satiric interest, which was to be a characteristic of urban comedy between 1604 and 1614. As Brian Gibbons points out in his foundational study, *Jacobean City Comedy*, “[t]he genre grew out of a process of creative imitation and cross-fertilization between playwrights competing both as individuals and as servants of rival companies.”⁸ Yet although the role of competition in these processes has been accepted by scholars, the equally important role of collaboration has often been overlooked. It was not inevitable that Jonson and Marston should both turn to the City of London as a creative stimulus around 1604–1605, and their actions cannot be explained solely through their rivalry with each other, or with playwrights writing for other companies, such as Thomas Middleton.

Instead, the involvement of Jonson and Marston in the intricate and highly collaborative financial structures of the Blackfriars—an enterprise that depended on the precarious cooperation of people of different trades

7. Charles Cathcart, “Edward Greene, Goldsmith; William Marston, Apprentice; and *Eastward Ho!*,” *Early Theatre* 19 (2016), 81–100 (83).

8. Brian Gibbons, *Jacobean City Comedy: A Study of Satiric Plays by Jonson, Marston, and Middleton* (London, 1968), 28.

and social rank—left its mark on the structures of their plays and on city comedy in general. In this context, I will argue, *Eastward Ho!* epitomizes and scrutinizes a set of social and literary transactions that did not stop with the writing of a play but encompassed a broader collaborative network: it is both the climax of a convergence between the writing lives of Jonson and Marston and a work that thematizes the social exchanges on which the Blackfriars enterprise depended. By way of a coda I will turn to Jonson's *The Alchemist*, a play that exploits both its fictional and real-life location in the Blackfriars, revisiting the work of Theodore B. Leinwand, Andrew Gurr, and Melissa D. Aaron on the play's theatrical politics to suggest that it glances back at Jonson's own contractual and emotional involvement with Evans' "venture" and its entangled financial structures.

II

It has long been known that John Marston had a financial interest in the Blackfriars playhouse and the Children of the Queen's Revels. In 1910, Charles William Wallace published documents from a lawsuit brought in the Court of Requests in 1610 by a London goldsmith, Robert Keysar, against Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, John Heminges, and Henry Condell.⁹ The suit focused on the Blackfriars playhouse, which Richard Burbage had leased to Henry Evans in 1600, and on claims that Evans had divided his rights in the lease and the Children of the Queen's Revels with other investors. Keysar claimed that he had paid Marston £100 for

right, Tytle, and interest, of in and to the full Sixt parte of the ^lease afforesaid & of all & singuler his right & interest of in & to the said sixth parte of ye' said goodes, apparell for players, propertyes, playe books & other thinges which then he had or which afterwarde was to be had by reason of his ioynt partnershipp with others theirin, and of the Sixt parte of all the proffitt and Commoditie to be made theirof and theirby dureinge the Contynuanee of the said lease¹⁰

9. Charles William Wallace, "Shakespeare and his London Associates," *Nebraska University Studies* 10 (1910), 261–360 (336–60). The bill, answer, replication and rejoinder are now catalogued as The National Archives (hereafter TNA), REQ 4/1/1; digital facsimiles of the major documents connected with this case are available on *Shakespeare Documented*, <http://shakespearedocumented.org>.

10. Bill of complaint in Keysar v. Burbage et al., TNA, REQ 4/1/1/1; Wallace, "Shakespeare," 341.

Although Burbage and his fellow actors dismissed Keysar's claims, a new set of documents from a suit brought two years earlier confirm that Marston invested in the Blackfriars enterprise. They also indicate that another "partner" in that enterprise was Ben Jonson.

These documents derive from a lawsuit in which Evans and Hawkins sued Edward Kirkham because—they claimed—he was refusing to surrender a bond that they had made for £60 even though the monies that it guaranteed had been repaid. The bill of complaint and a replication (that is, a legally required response) to Kirkham's lost answer in this suit survive among the Chancery records for the reign of Charles I, catalogued as C 2/Chas I/E31/43. The documents are bound—somewhat confusingly—with Kirkham's answer in another suit brought by Evans against Kirkham in 1608 on a separate matter, a bond for £100.¹¹ Both suits appear to be part of the fall-out after the Children of the Queen's Revels got into serious political trouble in March 1608 over two plays—Chapman's *The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles, Duke of Byron*, which offended the French ambassador, and a lost play satirizing King James and his project for a silver mine in Scotland—eventually leading Evans to surrender the Blackfriars lease to Burbage in August 1608.¹² The fact that these Jacobean documents have been mistakenly catalogued among the Caroline records apparently accounts for their being overlooked by scholars. As far as I can tell, the only other people to have consulted them are Wallace and his fellow-researcher and wife, Hulda Berggren Wallace, who appear to have seen them late in their period of research in the London archives and merely recorded a brief summary of their contents in passing.¹³

The case dealing with the £60 bond is remarkable not only because it names Jonson as an investor in the company, but also because it offers new information about a range of individuals who were involved with the Blackfriars around 1605–1606. In their bill of complaint, dated April 27,

11. This document involves a different phase in the history of the Blackfriars. I explore some of its implications in "Living by Others' Pleasure": Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, and Theatrical Profit," *Early Theatre*, forthcoming 2020.

12. For a summary of events see Lucy Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory* (Cambridge, Eng., 2005), 20–23.

13. I examined the documents at TNA on September 1, 2016, and then found references to them in the Wallaces' unpublished notes in the Charles William Wallace Papers, 1900–1920, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, later that month: see Box 6, BIV3 (an index book dated "1913–" on the flyleaf) and Box 17 (miscellaneous notes). The Wallaces were resident in London between 1909 and 1916: see J.W. Robinson, "Shakespeare and Nebraska: Charles William Wallace, 1865–1932, and the 'Great Index of the World,'" *Nebraska History* 60 (1979), 1–20.

1608, Evans and Hawkins claim that in May 1605 they and Benjamin Jonson, John Marston, Edward Gibbons, and Edward Nowell “by there obligacion Joyntlie & severally became bownden” to Kirkham, agreeing that they would pay him £60 if they did not deliver £31 10s. to him on or before November 5, 1605.¹⁴ The debt of £31 10s. represented £30 “originally taken vp at vse by the saide Kirckham for the good and benefitt aswell of him selfe as of your orrators & the rest the obligors in the saide obligacion named and bounden beeing in deede all partners and equally interested aswell in that debte as in divers other thinges” plus interest totaling 30 shillings. The partners were not “then furnishe” to repay the £31 10s. before November 1605, but they paid to Kirkham “there partes of the intrest mony for the vj months past.” At some point before the debt became due, they then asked Kirkham if he would arrange a deferral of the payment of the original £30 for a further six months until May 1606, which Kirkham agreed to “effect & accomlishe,” the partners “or of some of them” having agreed to pay “there partes of that xxx^s to paie and satisfie therewithall the vse and Intrest then due of and for that xxx^{li}.”

The partners appear not to have been content merely to continue paying the interest due on the loan, “havige then & before hand of that second six monthes, a care and desire to paie and Satisfie to the saide Kirckham the saide xxx^{li} & vse for that last six months,” and they therefore arranged with Kirkham that he would be given his money by Thomas Woodford, who had a separate arrangement to pay the partners and Kirkham the sum of £40 by weekly instalments of £5. Woodford was to pay the full £40 to Kirkham, who was to keep the residue of £8 10s. after the sum of £31 10s. was paid for the use of himself and the partners. But, Evans and Hawkins claim, even though Kirkham has received the full sum of £40 from Woodford, he insists that money is still owed to him, refusing to cancel the bond and threatening to sue Evans and Hawkins at the common law.

Although Kirkham’s answer to these charges is lost, some of its content can be deduced from Evans and Hawkins’ replication. Kirkham apparently conceded some of the charges and denied others: he stated that there was still £3 15s. to pay on the bond, offering to cancel it if this sum was

14. Bill of Complaint in Henry Evans and Alexander Hawkins v. Edward Kirkham, Court of Chancery, 1608, TNA, C 2/Chas I/E31/43. See Appendix A for a transcription of the complete text. When Kirkham sued Evans over the same bond at King’s Bench in 1611, he claimed that the obligation was dated May 3, 1605 (see TNA, KB 27/1428, rot. 1134).

paid, and he also appears to have made specific allegations about Woodford's part in the affair. Evans and Hawkins go into some detail in their rejection of Kirkham's claims. They argue that it is not their fault if Kirkham is still owed money, as he chose to release Woodford and his surety, one "John Davys," from a bond of £50 that guaranteed the payment of the £40, not only returning the bond but also releasing Woodford's "playinge apparell," allegedly worth the considerable sum of £120, which was being kept in the playhouse as security.¹⁵ They also claim that Evans, Gibbons, Jonson, and Marston have all paid Kirkham an extra 50 shillings, and that Kirkham has endorsed the receipt of Jonson's 50 shillings on the obligation itself and has "acquited and discharged" Marston of his share of the debt "by wrytinge vnder his hand." Evans' 50 shillings is described as "ffytie shillinges for the moytie of ffyve poundes by the said Evans receyved of the said Woodford for the first weke he playd in the said playhowse," and it is implied that the other sums of 50 shillings came from the same source.

While Thomas Woodford's associations with the Children of Paul's, the Children of the King's Revels at Whitefriars, and the Red Bull playhouse are well known, his involvement with the Blackfriars has been more obscure.¹⁶ Hitherto, we have known only that Woodford was one of those who took an inventory of the company's goods in April 1606 and that he was present at a "conference" between the shareholders that probably also took place in 1606.¹⁷ Evans and Hawkins' comments in their replication suggest that he was actively involved in the performances of the Children of the Queen's Revels. However, while these allusions to playing and playing apparel might be taken to mean that Woodford was himself performing at the Blackfriars, it seems unlikely both that Woodford, who was twenty-six, was performing alongside the company's boy

15. Replication in *Evans and Hawkins v. Kirkham*, TNA, C 2/Chas I/E31/43. See Appendix A for the complete text. Although John Davi(e)s was a very common name in London at this time, Woodford's surety may have been the writing master and poet John Davies of Hereford, whose interactions with many individuals connected with the Blackfriars are recorded in *The Scourge of Folly* (1610).

16. The most detailed account of Woodford's involvement with the theater is William Ingram, "The Playhouse as an Investment, 1607–1614: Thomas Woodford and the Whitefriars," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 2 (1985), 209–30. On his links with the Children of Paul's see also C.H. Sisson, *Lost Plays of Shakespeare's Age* (Cambridge, Eng., 1936), 58–71.

17. See Depositions of David Yeomans and Thomas Hedgeman in *William Rastall, Edward Kirkham, and Thomas Kendall v. Henry Evans and Alexander Hawkins*, Court of Chancery, 1605–1607, TNA, C 24/327/22.

actors, and that he would have been paying Evans and his partners for the privilege.¹⁸ The reference to Woodford's "assignes or deputies" also makes it more likely that he was managing the company, just as he appears to have managed the Children of Paul's around 1602–1604, and paying the partners a share of the profits that he was taking at the boys' performances.

Although the bill of complaint, replication and answer in C 2/Chas I/E31/43 are all dated 1608, the progress of both cases appears to have stalled. Eventually, in Trinity Term, 1611, Kirkham sued Evans over the £60 bond in the Court of King's Bench. Hawkins having died in autumn 1609 and the other partners apparently having been discharged, Evans was left to face the suit alone; however, when the case was postponed until Michaelmas Term one of his sureties was Margaret Hawkins, Alexander's widow and administratrix, and Evans' own daughter.¹⁹ Kirkham's suit appears to have catalyzed events in Chancery, and on October 30 a decree was issued that dealt with both of the suits now bound together in C 2/Chas I/E31/43.²⁰ It reports that Evans had agreed to pay the "three or fower poundes" that Kirkham claimed was unpaid on the £100 bond and the £3 15s. owed on the £60 bond; Evans is ordered to pay £10—representing the combined debts plus damages—to Kirkham, on receipt of which Kirkham must discharge him and give up the bonds to be cancelled. This agreement in Chancery seems to have brought to a halt the proceedings in King's Bench, and the three suits all appear to end here.

The surviving documents in the lawsuit over the £60 bond thus offer a remarkable new insight into the finances and organization of the Blackfriars enterprise around 1605–1606. They provide additional information about Gibbons and Nowell, who have previously been known to scholars only by their surnames, and they also suggest that Woodford's involvement with the company was more extensive than other documents have indicated. Overall, they add to our knowledge of the labyrinthine financial arrangements that seem to have surrounded the Blackfriars during

18. Woodford was baptized at St Peter, Cornhill, on January 15, 1578, the parish register also giving his date of birth as January 13. See London Metropolitan Archives (hereafter LMA), P69/PET1/A/001/MS08820.

19. See *Kirkham v. Evans*, TNA, KB 27/1428, rot. 1134; this entry was transcribed by the Wallaces (Box 7, BIV11). Margaret Hawkins took out letters of administration for Alexander on October 28, 1609 (PROB 6/7).

20. Chancery Decrees and Orders, Michaelmas, 9 Jas I (1611), TNA, C 33/121, ff. 100v–01; C 33/122, f. 96v (duplicate entries). For a transcription of the full text see Appendix B. The joint decree may be the reason why the two cases have been kept together.

Evans' tenure and present an even clearer picture of the legal fall-out from the company's dissolution in 1608. Most important, perhaps, is the new light they shed on the involvement of playwrights with the company's financial structures. They confirm Marston's financial investment in the company, something previously known only from Keysar's testimony in 1610. They also demonstrate that Jonson, too, had a stake in the company, and raise the possibility that, like Marston, he held a "full Sixt parte of the lease" and the "goodes, apparell for players, propertyes, playe books & other things." Suspicious of collaboration as they may have been, in 1605–1606, Jonson and Marston were "partners" and "obligors" in a mutual financial enterprise.

III

To examine more fully what it means that Jonson and Marston were "partners" in the Blackfriars enterprise, it is important to spend a little time exploring the backgrounds of those who had a stake in it. As I will contend, it is only by understanding the entangled social and creative structures at Blackfriars that we can comprehend the fragile and contingent collaboration of Marston and Jonson in 1604–1606 and its impact on *Eastward Ho!* and the development of urban drama. The suit over the £60 bond adds substantially to our knowledge of the individuals who invested in the Blackfriars between 1600 and 1608; they can now be listed, with the dates of their known involvement, as follows:

Henry Evans: 1600–1608
 Alexander Hawkins: 1600–1608
 Edward Kirkham: 1602–1608
 Thomas Kendall: 1602–1608
 William Rastall: 1602–1608
 William Strachey: c.1604
 John Marston: c.1604–1606
 Ben Jonson: c.1604–1606
 Edward Gibbons: c.1604–1606
 Edward Nowell: c.1604–1606
 Martin Peerson: c.1606
 Robert Keysar: c.1606–1608

Henry Evans trained as a scrivener in the 1560s and had been involved with the earlier generation of boys' companies in the 1580s and early

1590s.²¹ Although earlier scholars linked him with Wales, he was actually the son of Edward Evans, citizen and merchant tailor of London, and his wife Kinborough; Henry's stepfather, Thomas Wheeler, in whose will he is mentioned, was a draper, suggesting the extent to which Henry was embedded in the city's structures of trade.²² Alexander Hawkins, who is only ever described as a "gentleman" in surviving records, was the son of George Hawkins and grandson of Stephen Hawkins, citizen and pewterer of London.²³ He married Henry Evans' daughter, Margaret, at Holy Trinity, Minorities, on August 31, 1598.²⁴ Edward Kirkham, Thomas Kendall, and William Rastall all became involved with the Blackfriars around April 1602, when they entered into an agreement with Evans and Hawkins in which they arranged to pay half of the Blackfriars rent of £40 per annum and take half of the profits from the enterprise.²⁵ Originally a tailor by trade, Kirkham had served as a Yeoman of the Revels since 1581; he also kept an inn called the White Bell in the Strand.²⁶ Kendall was a haberdasher and Rastall was a merchant with interests in overseas trade.²⁷

21. See M.E. Smith, "Personnel at the Second Blackfriars: Some Biographical Notes," *Notes and Queries*, n.s. 25 (1978), 441–44 (444); Charles William Wallace, *The Evolution of the English Drama to Shakespeare* (Berlin, 1912), 157–77; Harold Newcomb Hillebrand, *The Child Actors: A Chapter in Elizabethan Stage History* (Urbana, 1926), 133–36.

22. Edward Evans "merchanttayler" was buried at St Mary Aldermary on November 9, 1574; on February 10, 1575 his estate was assigned to his widow "Kinborow" (see LMA, P69/MRY3/A/001/MS08990/001; TNA, PROB 6/2). After his death, she married first Thomas Wheeler and then Thomas Harvey, and was buried on September 1, 1584, at St Mary Aldermary as "Mistress Harvie sometyme wife of Edward Evans." Her first husband's estate was reassigned on October 28, 1584, to Henry Evans (PROB 6/3). For Thomas Wheeler's will, dated November 24, 1578, see PROB 11/60/593.

23. Stephen Hawkins' will, dated March 7, 1534, leaves to his widow, Margery, and son, George, "those londes & tenementes caulled the bysshopp lying in the perysshe of Saint Sepulcre with out new gate of London" (TNA, PROB 11/31/18); these properties were owned in the 1640s by Alexander's widow, Margaret, and their son, also called Stephen (see, for example, TNA, E 214/1185).

24. LMA, P69/TR12/A/001/MS09238.

25. For detailed discussion of these arrangements, with extracts from the relevant documents, see Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse: Its History and its Design* (New York, 1964), 186–88, 509–11.

26. See W.R. Streitberger, *The Master of the Revels and Elizabeth I's Court Theatre* (Oxford, 2016), 196, 294. Kirkham was described as a tailor when he was sued by John Wannell in the Court of Common Pleas in 1593 (TNA, CP 40/1507, rot. 1556d), and as an innholder when he was sued by Derrick Helden (a beer-brewer) in 1595 (TNA, CP 40/1559, rot. 2086d). On the White Bell, see the depositions in Anthony Hurst and Edward Kirkham v. William Cowper, Court of Chancery, 1598–1601, TNA, C 24/263/61 and C 24/292/23.

27. See Kirkham's Answer in Evans and Hawkins v. Kirkham, Court of Chancery, 1608, TNA, C 2/Chas 1/E31/43, and the final decree in Richard Maplesden v. William Rastall and Thomas

Other investors came into the enterprise in the following years. William Strachey, a man with literary interests who was later to serve as Secretary to the Virginia Company, testified in another suit in Chancery on July 7, 1606, that “having some interest in the busynes belonging to the *said* howse” he had contributed “a sixthe parte”, amounting to £3 13s. 14d., to the cost of repairs to the building “abowte some two yeres now past.”²⁸ This comment suggests that he had become involved with the company around 1604, and that he—like Marston—held a sixth share, but it does not indicate whether his investment was current in 1606. Martin Peerson, a composer and musician who collaborated with Jonson on *The Private Entertainment at Highgate* in May 1604, is known to have sold his share in the Blackfriars operation to Kendall for £45 on December 11, 1606. It is not clear, however, when he acquired it, or from whom.²⁹

This set of shareholders suggests that the Blackfriars enterprise was fueled by a cross-class collaboration of citizens, tradesmen, and men with more obvious creative interests. The new information in the suit over the £60 bond enables us to add more detail to this picture. Gibbons and Nowell were already known to scholars from the testimony of David Yeomans and Thomas Hedgeman, two men who gave evidence at Chancery alongside Strachey in 1606.³⁰ Hedgeman describes a “conference” among “Kirkham, Kendall, Hawkyens, Gibbins, Woodford and the *said* Evans wief” over monies owed for repairs to the playhouse. Yeomans, who was employed as a tireman at the playhouse, deposed that he had heard Evans demand the money owed to him “for dyvers weekes of the *said* Kirkham Nowell Gibbyns and such sharers.” He also claimed that Kirkham, Hawkins, Woodford, and “one Nowell” had assessed and inventoried the goods belonging to the Blackfriars company about six or eight weeks before he made his deposition on June 3—that is, around April 1606—the inventory being taken as a result of an offer by Evans to Kirkham, Nowell,

Dobson, Court of Chancery, 1605, TNA, C 78/147, no. 8, a suit concerning Rastall’s behavior as Maplesden’s factor overseas in 1596.

28. Deposition of William Strachey in Rastell, Kirkham, and Kendall v. Evans and Hawkins, TNA, C 24/327/22. See S.G. Culliford, “William Strachey 1572–1621” (unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1950), 69; Mark Eccles, “Martin Peerson and the Blackfriars,” *Shakespeare Survey* 11 (1958), 100–06 (103).

29. See Edmund and Anne Kendall v. Martin Peerson, Court of Requests, 1609, TNA, REQ 2/462, pt. 1; Eccles, “Martin Peerson,” 101.

30. See Depositions of David Yeomans and Thomas Hedgeman, June 5, 1606, in Rastell, Kirkham and Kendall v. Evans and Hawkins, TNA, C 24/327/22.

and Gibbons “that every one should have his share delivered to him.” Furthermore, he also asserts that an earlier inventory had been taken by Kirkham, Kendall, Hawkins, “and one Gibbysn.” The suit over the £60 bond confirms that Nowell and Gibbons indeed had a financial stake in the Blackfriars, and it provides their full names for the first time, enabling us to speculate about their identities.

Nowell is described by Yeomans as “assignee to the *said* Kendall as it is reported.” This link with Kendall, a haberdasher, makes it likely that Nowell was the Edward Nowell who was apprenticed to the haberdasher Richard Pettie in September 1586 and made free of the company in January 1594, the son of Edward Nowell of Petts Wood, Essex.³¹ Edward Gibbons may be the musician and composer of that name who was baptized at Great St Mary’s, Cambridge, on March 21, 1568, and was a brother of Orlando Gibbons. Edward served as instructor of the choristers at King’s College, Cambridge, between 1592 and 1598; by 1607, he had relocated to Exeter, where he was instructor to the choristers at Exeter Cathedral from 1608.³² His biographers have had trouble locating him between 1599 and 1607, and they have been confused by the description of him in the 1603 will of another brother, Ellis, as “of Acton”—that is, the village of Acton in Middlesex—one going so far as to argue that “Acton” is a slip for “Exon.”³³ But the parish register at St Mary, Acton, records the baptisms of Joan Gibbons (November 3, 1600), Jane Gibbons (November 21, 1601), and Murray Gibbons (July 29, 1604), all of whom later appear in the records of Exeter Cathedral.³⁴ Edward Gibbons was thus living within easy reach of London at the time at which an Edward Gibbons was involved with the company at the Blackfriars, and this is not an especially common name.

31. Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, Register of Apprentice Bindings 1583–1591, LMA, CLC/L/HA/C/011/MS15860/001; Register of Freedom Admissions 1526–1613, CLC/L/HA/C/007/MS15857/001. The Haberdashers’ records also include an Edward Newell, son of John Newell of Reading, Berkshire, who was apprenticed to John Evans in 1584, but he does not appear to have been made free of the company. Another possibility is Edward Nowell of Edmonton, Middlesex (d. 1650), son of the Edward Nowell who was granted the estate of Claverings in 1563. See T.F.T. Baker and R.B. Pugh, ed., *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 5* (London, 1976), 157.

32. See E.H. Fellowes, *Orlando Gibbons: A Short Account of his Life and Work* (Oxford, 1925); John Harley, *Orlando Gibbons and the Gibbons Family of Musicians* (Aldershot, 1999), 18–24.

33. See Harley, 18–19.

34. Parish Register of St Mary, Acton, LMA, DRO/052/001; Fellowes, 25–26; Harley, 270.

If these identifications are correct, Nowell and Gibbons fit the pattern of other known shareholders such as Kendall and Peerson: haberdashers who could contribute to costuming the boy actors, and composer-musicians who could train them in singing and write music for their plays. This combination of shareholders is a potent reminder of the ways in which early modern playhouses traded not only in plays and music, but also in clothes, jewelry, and other commodities. The Blackfriars enterprise was both a financial and creative outlet, and haberdashers, tailors, or goldsmiths may have found it as fulfilling as playwrights or musicians did. This new material also has intriguing implications for our understanding of the careers of Jonson and Marston. According to Evans and Hawkins, the two dramatists were among their “partners” and “equally interested” in the bond for £60 “as in divers other thinges,” and both appear to have been profiting from the boys’ performances. Indeed, given the depth of engagement that Gibbons, Nowell, and Marston all seem to have had in the Blackfriars, it is conceivable—as noted above—that Jonson also held a “full Sixt parte” in the enterprise. It is striking, in this context, that Evans, Hawkins, Jonson, Marston, Gibbons, and Nowell number precisely six “partners,” although it is difficult then to see precisely where Kirkham’s continued involvement with the Blackfriars fits in.

The apparent timing of Marston and Jonson’s involvement with the Blackfriars is suggestive. Evans and Hawkins do not say that the partnership originated with the agreement with Kirkham to pay £31 10s. Indeed, they say that the obligation was signed because Kirkham had borrowed £30 at use on behalf of himself and the partners, on which they had paid only the 30 shillings interest “for the vj months past.” It thus seems likely that the £30 was borrowed six months before May 1605, that is, in November 1604. It is noticeable—as I will explore below—that the formerly frosty relationship between the two playwrights seems to have thawed by late summer or autumn 1604, when Marston dedicated *The Malcontent* to Jonson. The latter’s succession of high-profile commissions in 1603–1604—*A Particular Entertainment at Althorp* (June 1603), his part in *The King’s Entertainment* marking the delayed coronation of James I (March 1604), *A Private Entertainment at Highgate* (May 1604), and speeches for a Lord Mayor’s Show (October 1604)—may also have meant that for the first time he had the capital to make such an investment.³⁵

35. I am very grateful to Martin Butler for suggesting that I follow the money in trying to work out the date of Jonson’s investment.

However, given that both Jonson and Marston had connections with the Blackfriars as playwrights before 1604, and that—according to Evans and Hawkins—the partners were not only “equally interested” in the bond for £60 but also “in divers other thinges,” their financial involvement with the Blackfriars enterprise may have begun even earlier than November 1604.

It may be possible to identify more precisely the moment at which Marston and Jonson disassociated themselves from the Blackfriars, as there are clear signs of both crisis and reorganization in the company in early-mid 1606. Mid-February 1606 saw a disastrous performance of John Day’s satiric comedy *The Isle of Gulls*, after which, according to Sir Edward Hoby, “sundry were comitted to Bridwell.”³⁶ The “sundry” targeted by the authorities might have included the actors, the author(s) of the play, the company’s managers, or even shareholders such as Jonson and Marston themselves. It would not be surprising if the pair grew nervous about their investment in the company after this debacle, especially following their own problems with *Eastward Ho!* The debt guaranteed by the £60 bond was due to be paid in May 1606, perhaps providing them with a spur to disengage themselves from any other financial commitments they had at the Blackfriars.

Jonson certainly seems to have diverted his attention away from the Blackfriars early in 1606. The Folio text of *Volpone* states that the play was “first acted, in the yeere 1605. *By the Kings Maiesties SERVANTS*.”³⁷ However, Richard Dutton makes a strong case that this is old-style dating, in which the year did not end until March 24, and that the play was written and performed early in 1606, new style.³⁸ The swift composition of *Volpone*—which the prologue claims was “fully penned” in five weeks (16)—may itself have been fueled by Jonson’s loss of income from the

36. Letter of Sir Edward Hoby to Thomas Edmondes, March 7, 1606, British Library, MS Stowe 168, fol. 363r.

37. Ben Jonson, *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson* (1616), 2X4v.

38. Ben Jonson, *Volpone*, ed. Richard Dutton, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson* (hereafter *CBJ*), gen. ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson, 7 vols. (Cambridge, Eng. 2012), 3.4–5. Subsequent citations from *CBJ* are provided within the text. Dutton points to the references in the dialogue between Sir Politic Would-Be and Peregrine to “three porpoises seen above the Bridge” and “a whale discovered in the river / As high as Woolwich” (2.1.40, 46–47), an event Peregrine dates to the “very day” he left London “seven weeks” earlier (2.1.44–45, 16). Sightings of a porpoise and a whale on the Thames in January 1606 are described in John Stow’s *Annals* (see 2.1.40, 46–47n).

Blackfriars as both playwright and investor. Marston appears to have disengaged himself around the same time. Two of his plays, *Parasitaster* or *The Fawn* and *Sophonisba*, were entered in the Stationers' Register in March 1606, and evidence suggests that he cut off his connections with the commercial stage in the same year.³⁹

Furthermore, there is other evidence of disturbance in the shareholding and management of the company around this time. As noted above, David Yeomans claimed on June 3, 1606, that an inventory had been undertaken about six or eight weeks previously, after Evans offered that the Blackfriars' syndicate's goods be assessed "that every one should have his share delivered to him." The actions of Robert Keysar, who claimed to have bought Marston's share, also suggests that this period saw a broader reorganization of the company's structures. In early summer 1606 Keysar conducted a series of financial transactions with playwrights. On May 6 Thomas Middleton bound himself in the sum of £16 to pay Keysar £8 10s. by June 15; when Keysar later sued him over this bond Middleton claimed that he had discharged it by delivering a tragedy called *The Viper and her Brood* on May 7.⁴⁰ On June 4 Thomas Dekker signed two bonds with Keysar, for £10 and £14, and on September 27 Robert Daborne bound himself to Keysar in the sum of £50.⁴¹ Together, this evidence suggests that Keysar was using bonds to guarantee the delivery of plays, a system also used by Philip Henslowe, and building up a new stable of writers following Day's indiscretion over *The Isle of Gulls* and Jonson and Marston's withdrawal from the Blackfriars.⁴²

The new documents thus increase our understanding of the people who wanted to participate and profit in the Blackfriars enterprise. There

39. See Munro, *Children*, 182; James Knowles, "Marston, John (*bap.* 1576, *d.* 1634)" (ODNB).

40. See Robert Keysar v. Thomas Middleton, King's Bench, Trinity 7 Jas I (1609), TNA, KB 27/1416, rot. 1056d, transcribed by Harold Newcomb Hillebrand, "Thomas Middleton's *The Viper's Brood*," *Modern Language Notes* 42 (1927), 35–38.

41. See Robert Keysar v. Thomas Dekker, King's Bench, Hilary 10 Jas I (1613), TNA, KB 27/1437, rot. 997; Robert Keysar v. Robert Daborne, King's Bench, Trinity 5 Jas I (1607), KB 27/1404, rot. 904d. On the Dekker suits see also David Mateer and Alan H. Nelson, "'When sorrows come': John Webster v. Thomas Dekker in the Court of King's Bench," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 65 (2014), 199–208. Mark Eccles, "Brief Lives: Tudor and Stuart Authors," *Studies in Philology* 79 (1982), 1–135 (29), cites a later entry in the King's Bench records, in which Keysar pursues Daborne's sureties for his debt (KB 27/1414, rot. 422d), but he appears to have missed the earlier entry. In their unpublished notes (Box 17), the Wallaces identify the 1607 entry and two further entries (see KB 27/1411, rot. 398; KB 27/1423, rot. 401d) but they did not realize that this was the playwright.

42. For Henslowe's use of bonds see W.W. Greg, ed., *Henslowe Papers: Being Supplementary to Henslowe's Diary* (London, 1907), 67–68, 80.

were twelve known investors, split evenly between city tradesmen on the one hand and playwrights and musicians on the other. The management of the Children of the Queen's Revels may therefore have been closer than we have realized to that of the Children of the King's Revels, which briefly inhabited the Whitefriars playhouse in 1607–1608; the investors in the King's Revels appear to have been mostly less experienced than those involved with the Queen's Revels company, but they present a similar mixture of social backgrounds.⁴³ These companies depended on the financial and artistic interaction of playwrights and tradesmen, but these risky collaborations could also lead to dissention and legal dispute. The quarrel between the Blackfriars investors over the £60 bond provides additional insights into the place within the company structures of these investing playwrights, who are listed alongside their fellow “obligors,” opening up fresh perspectives on both their personal, creative, and financial dealings.

IV

The knowledge that Jonson and Marston were both financially involved with the Blackfriars and that they were “partners” in 1604–1606 enables us to reappraise both their personal interactions and their activities as playwrights at this crucial point in the development of city comedy. A few years earlier, in 1600–1602, they were on opposite sides in the *poetomachia* or “War of the Theatres” and writing for different companies, Marston for the Children of Paul's and Jonson for the Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars.⁴⁴ During this period, each man appears to have lampooned the other on stage. Jonson's clearest portrait of Marston is the pompous would-be poet Crispinus in *The Poetaster* (1601), a specimen of whose work includes the memorable lines “Ramp up, my genius! Be not retrograde, / But boldly nominate a spade, a spade” (5.3.232–33). Marston's portraits of Jonson may include the dramatist Chrisoganus in

43. On the investors in the King's Revels see Hillebrand, 220–33; Ingram; Bly, *Queer Virgins*, 116–18, 128–29. They included a number of playwrights, a tallow-chandler, a silk-weaver and a haberdasher; one of the playwrights, Lording Barry, claimed freedom of the Fishmongers by patrimony. See David Kathman, “Grocers, Goldsmiths, and Drapers: Freeman and Apprentices in the Elizabethan Theater,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55 (2004) 1–49 (18–19).

44. For varying views of the *poetomachia*, see Matthew Steggle, *Wars of the Theatres: The Poetics of Personation in the Age of Jonson* (Victoria, BC, 1998), 21–61; Knutson, *Playing Companies*; James P. Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Poets' War* (New York, 2001); Charles Cathcart, *Marston, Rivalry, Rap-prochement and Jonson* (Aldershot, 2008).

Histriomastix (c.1598–1602), if Marston indeed contributed to this play, Brabant Senior in *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (1600), and Lampatho Doria in *What You Will* (1601), “a fustie caske, / Deuote to mouldy customes of hoard eld.”⁴⁵ Doria's assessment of his own writing, “faith 'tis good,” echoes the declaration attributed to the “maker” at the end of the epilogue to Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*: “By God, 'tis good, and if you like't, you may” (Epilogue, 20). Antagonism between the two men is also suggested in Jonson's references to Marston in his conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden in 1619: “He beat Marston, and took his pistol from him. [. . .] Marston wrote his father-in-law's preachings, and his father-in-law his comedies. [. . .] He had many quarrels with Marston: beat him, and took his pistol from him; wrote his *Poetaster* on him. The beginning of them were that Marston represented him in the stage” (*Informations*, ll. 117, 154–55, 216–18). Two aspects of these reported memories are especially arresting: the ways in which Jonson's recollections of Marston intertwine writing and physical violence, and the repeated implication that an unarmed Jonson was able to beat Marston and take away his weapon. The same configuration appears in Jonson's epigram, “On Playwright,” who “convict of public wrongs to men, / Takes private beatings, and begins again” (1–2), and it has been suggested that Marston is again the target here.⁴⁶

Yet by autumn 1604 Marston and Jonson had apparently become reconciled, in a move that scholars have found difficult to explain. Marston's *The Malcontent*, entered in the Stationers' Register on July 5, 1604, is dedicated to Jonson in all three of the editions published later that year:

BENIAMINI IONSONIO
 POETÆ
 ELEGANTISSIMO
 GRAVISSIMO
 AMICO
 SVO CANDIDO ET CORDATO,
 IOHANNES MARSTON
 MVSARVM ALVMNVS
 ASPERAM HANC SVAM THALIAM

45. John Marston, *What You Will* (1607), D4v. The most detailed case for Chrisoganus as Jonson is that of Bednarz, 83–104; for his summary of the details linking Brabant Senior and Lampatho Doria to Jonson see 138–44, 165–70.

46. See Colin Burrow's commentary in *CBJ* 5.146n68.

D[AT] D[EDICATQUE]⁴⁷

[“To his forthright and judicious friend, the most polished and weighty poet Ben Jonson, John Marston, disciple of the Muses, gives and dedicates this, his rough comedy”]⁴⁸

Marston flatteringly suggests not only Jonson’s independence and tough-mindedness but also the classical heft of his writing. There is, however, perhaps a hint of satire in this exaggerated praise and the playful aural shift between the repeated “o” sounds of the lines focusing on Jonson to the harsher quality of those focusing on Marston and his play. Moreover, the echo of the names of Cordatus and Asper, two of the characters who voice Jonson’s opinions about the workings of comedy and satire in *Every Man Out of his Humour*, may either suggest that Marston now accepts Jonson’s capacity to judge his work, or hint at underlying tensions.⁴⁹ More straightforwardly amicable is the dedicatory poem that Marston wrote for Jonson’s *Sejanus*, published in late 1605 or early 1606, which is addressed “*Amicis, amici nostri dignissimi, dignissimis*” (“To the most worthy friends of our most worthy friend”) (2.226). Yet Evans and Hawkins’ comments in their bill of complaint and replication suggest that the relationship between Marston and Jonson around 1604–1606 was even more complex than these dedications confess. Marston’s “friend” Jonson was also his “partner” and fellow “obligator,” to whom he was bound financially. If, as Rebecca Yearling suggests, “[i]n the years 1598–1601, Jonson and Marston were very similar types of writer, who were trying to occupy almost the same dramatic space,” it now seems that a few years later they were inhabiting, and profiting from, precisely “the same dramatic space.”⁵⁰ This knowledge has particular implications for their collaboration with Chapman on *Eastward Ho!*, performed and, apparently, suppressed in summer 1605 and printed, not without difficulty, later that year, but it also opens up new perspectives on their other activities at this time.

Marston wrote three solo plays for the Blackfriars during this period: *The Dutch Courtesan*, first performed around 1604, entered in the Stationers’ Register on June 26, 1605, and published that year; *Parasitaster* or *The*

47. John Marston, *The Malcontent* (1604), A3.

48. W. David Kay, ed., *The Malcontent* (London, 1998), 3.

49. I am very grateful to Charles Cathcart for suggesting this connection to me, and to Tanya Pollard and William Stenhouse for discussions about the dedication.

50. Rebecca Yearling, *Ben Jonson, John Marston and Early Modern Drama: Satire and the Audience* (Houndmills, 2016), 7. Yearling does not discuss *Eastward Ho!* in detail, for reasons that she discusses on page 11.

Fawn, performed around 1605, entered in the Register on March 12, 1606, and published that year; and *Sophonisba*, performed in 1605–1606, entered in the Register on March 17, 1606, and published after *The Fawn* in 1606.⁵¹ A fourth play, *The Insatiate Countess*, which has a double plot fusing erotic tragedy with city comedy, appears to have been left unfinished when he withdrew from the company in early 1606.⁵² Jonson's dramatic output in this period is more varied, including private entertainments, a civic pageant, plays for the commercial stage, and court masques. The first of these masques, *The Masque of Blackness*, commissioned by Anna of Denmark and performed at Whitehall on January 6, 1605, may also point to his Blackfriars connections. Leeds Barroll has plausibly suggested that Jonson was brought to Anna's attention by his influential patron, Lucy, Countess of Bedford.⁵³ However, it is possible that holding a financial stake in the company that bore the queen's name may also have been a factor in Jonson's appointment, especially given that we now know that Anna made use of the Blackfriars company in her first masque, Samuel Daniel's *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, in January 1604.⁵⁴

Jonson's treatment of his older plays may also have been shaped by his interactions with the Blackfriars. In 1609, *The Case is Altered*, which was probably first performed around 1597, was entered in the Stationers' Register and published in an apparently revised form—its title-page reads, "*As it hath beene sundry times acted by the children of the Blacke-friers.*"⁵⁵ The date of the revision is unclear; however, given Jonson's financial stake in the Blackfriars operation in 1604–1606, it may have been undertaken around this time. The possibility is strengthened by the fact that the play's Antonio Balladino, a satiric portrait of Anthony Munday, is specifically described as "pageant poet to the city of Milan" (1.1.45). Munday had already written and supplied costumes for the 1602 Lord Mayor's pageant, but it was his early Jacobean work for the city of London that brought

51. On the performance dates see Martin Wiggins in association with Catherine Richardson, *British Drama, 1533–1642: A Catalogue: Volume 5: 1603–1608* (Oxford, 2015), 120, 175, 248. The prefatory material to *The Fawn* advertises the forthcoming publication of *Sophonisba*.

52. See Munro, *Children*, 173; Knowles.

53. Leeds Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England: A Cultural Biography* (Philadelphia, 2001), 69–70.

54. See John Pitcher, "Samuel Daniel's Masque *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*: Texts and Payments," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 26 (2013), 17–42.

55. Ben Jonson, *his Case is Altered* (1609), STC 14757. A second edition published in the same year (STC 14758) revises some of the title-page's text but retains this information about its performance. On its original date and composition see *CBJ* 1.3–4. All quotations are from this edition.

him into contact with men connected with the Blackfriars enterprise: Jonson and Thomas Kendall. In 1604, when the haberdasher Sir Thomas Lowe was Lord Mayor, Munday was paid £2 “for his paines,” Jonson was paid £12 “for his device, and speech for the Children,” and Kendall was paid £22 for “furnishing the Children wth apparrell and other thing[es] needfull for the shewe” and £2 7s. “for making the caparisons & the Bac[es] & for buckeram & other thing[es].”⁵⁶

In contrast, a year later, in October 1605, Munday was the sole author of the entertainment *The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia* for the inauguration of Sir Leonard Halliday, Merchant Taylor; he was also reimbursed for torches, costumes, and the child-performers’ breakfasts, and for arranging the printing of the speeches.⁵⁷ Closer examination of the text of *The Case is Altered* strengthens an impression that Jonson’s portrait of Balladino, as it appears in the 1609 quarto, is a product of this moment, and Munday’s renewed hold on the pageant. Not only does the play refer explicitly to Balladino’s pageant-writing, but these references are also presented as topical allusions. Balladino asks Onion, “Did you see the last pageant I set forth?” Onion replies, “No, faith, sir, but there goes a huge report on’t” (1.1.61–3). The revision of *The Case is Altered* thus appears to speak directly to the moment in autumn 1605 when Munday was consolidating his position as “pageant poet” on both the streets of London and the city’s bookstalls and Jonson was devoting his attention to the commercial stage, perhaps uncertain whether his commissions to compose masques and pageants would survive the scandal that *Eastward Ho!* had provoked.⁵⁸

Jonson’s theatrical investments also shed light on his revision of another play, *Every Man in his Humor*. The original version, first performed by the Chamberlain’s Men at the Curtain in 1598 and published in 1601, is set in Italy, but the revised version printed in the 1616 Folio edition of Jonson’s *Works*, which was presumably intended for the King’s Men, is relocated to London. The date of the revision is not clear. E.K. Chambers influentially argued that it was carried out around 1605, noting that

56. Jean Robertson and D.J. Gordon, ed., “A Calendar of Dramatic Records in the Books of the Livery Companies of London 1485–1640,” *Malone Society Collections* 3 (1954), 63. For a detailed study of Munday’s pageants see Tracey Hill, *Anthony Munday and Civic Culture: Theatre, History, and Power in Early Modern London, 1580–1633* (Manchester, 2004).

57. Robertson and Gordon, 68–69.

58. In the event, Jonson’s career as a court dramatist resumed with *Hymenaei* in January 1606, but he does not appear to have contributed to another Lord Mayor’s pageant.

the play was performed at court on February 2 that year, while C.H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, among others, have argued for a date around 1612, following the London-set plays *Epicoene* (Queen's Revels, 1609–1610) and *The Alchemist* (King's Men, 1610).⁵⁹ The new evidence of Jonson's Blackfriars investment may strengthen a case for the earlier date. One of the key revisions that Jonson makes in the Folio text is the Anglicization or complete reworking of characters' names: Bobadilla becomes Bobadill, Guiliano becomes Downright, Musco becomes Brainworm, Thorello and Bianca become Kitely and Dame Kitely, and so on. Amongst these changes, Lorenzo Senior and his son Lorenzo Junior become old and young Edward Knowell. Therefore, the knowledge that Jonson was "partner" around 1604–1606 with a man named Edward Nowell, who probably himself had a father called Edward, argues that the revision was carried out around this time, when the in-joke would be more potent.

The unusually specific local detail of Edward Knowell's name is one way in which Jonson's financial and personal involvement with the Blackfriars appears to have seeped into his work. A broader range of interactions around narrative and genre can also be traced not only in his plays but also in those of Marston. Jonson's use of London as both the explicit setting and thematic driving force for plays such as *Epicoene*, *The Alchemist*, and *The Devil is an Ass* (King's Men, 1616) can look inevitable with the benefit of hindsight. However, in 1604 the closest he had come to a London setting was the "*Insula Fortunata*" of *Every Man Out of his Humor* (Chamberlain's Men, 1599), a fairground-mirror version of the city in which place-realist references to London locations sit uneasily with the Italianate or Latin names of most of the characters. Marston's *What You Will*, written for the Children of Paul's a couple of years later, alludes to city locations but its setting is Highgate, then a village five miles away from the City of London.⁶⁰ In contrast, the period of Jonson and Marston's financial involvement with the Blackfriars around 1604–1606 was the time at which Marston wrote his first and only play set in the city itself, *The Dutch Courtesan*, the time at which *Every Man in his Humor* was probably revised

59. E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1923), 3.360; C.H. Herford, Percy Simpson, and Evelyn Simpson, ed., *Ben Jonson*, 11 vols (Oxford, 1925–52), 1.332. The evidence is summarized in *CBJ* 4.620–21.

60. See Edward H. Sugden, *A Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and his Fellow Dramatists* (Manchester, 1925), s.v. Highgate.

to its London setting, and the time at which the two men collaborated in *Eastward Ho!* In place of the alternative modes of comical satire that the playwrights presented in 1600–1602, we find a shared project. In writing and revising these plays, Jonson and Marston played a central role in city comedy's topographical and social engagements, a development fueled by their exposure to the financial structures of the Blackfriars enterprise.

V

Eastward Ho! is, of course, the most important moment of connection between Marston and Jonson's dramatic careers, a moment at which the two men did not just write about each other's work or build on one another's innovations but, together with Chapman, wrote in tandem on the same play. The new information that Jonson and Marston were "partners" in the theatrical enterprise at the Blackfriars allows us to situate *Eastward Ho!* in a broader context of financial and institutional transactions and obligations. Specifically, it gives us a fresh insight into the ways in which the play uses its location. Mediating satirically between London's different social factions, it sits at the center of a set of negotiations between playwrights, "partners," playhouses, and locations, and between the different urban cultures from which the Blackfriars investors emerged. Just as Jonson and Marston were negotiating with different social factions within the shareholding structures at Blackfriars, so their play—and the version of city comedy they were developing—both depicted and anatomized these business interactions.

This analysis begins as early as the prologue attached to *Eastward Ho!* in the three editions published in 1605, which negotiates satirically with the Children of Paul's, their recent play *Westward Ho!*, written by Thomas Dekker and John Webster, and with the City of London itself. The Children of Paul's were, of course, themselves experimenting with city comedy in 1604–1606, via not only *Westward Ho!*, staged in late 1604 or early 1605, but also a cluster of London plays by Thomas Middleton: *Michaelmas Term*, *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, and *A Mad World My Masters*.⁶¹ The prologue to *Eastward Ho!* presents its play as a corporate response to the Children of Paul's and *Westward Ho!*, and it is difficult to tell whether

61. *Westward Ho!* was entered in the Stationers' Register on March 2, 1605. On the dates of Middleton's plays, see Wiggins, 154, 205, 230.

its use of “we” represents the playwrights or the playing company. It claims—somewhat disingenuously—that the production of *Eastward Ho!* is not motivated by envy, a desire to imitate, nor to outdo “that which is opposed to ours in title, / For that was good, and better cannot be” (Prologue, 5–6). In a gesture of sardonic self-effacement, it even claims that the title is irrelevant: “We might as well have called it, ‘God you good even’” (8). Yet the title is important, and an edge remains in the prologue’s treatment of Dekker, Webster, and the Children of Paul’s when it instructs playgoers that “eastward westwards still exceeds— / Honour the sun’s fair rising, not his setting” (9–10), before conceding that the title *Eastward Ho!* is not “utterly enforced” (11) but relevant to elements within the play. The concluding lines, “Bear with our willing pains, if dull or witty; / We only dedicate it to the city” (13–14), reinforce this idea, as the company looks eastward from its vantage point in the Blackfriars toward London itself.

The prologue’s negotiation between east and west points to the ways in which *Eastward Ho!* reworks the concerns of its predecessor. *Westward Ho!* concerns itself mainly with the city and its citizens, its nameless Earl functioning more as a proxy for the elite’s sexual exploitation of the middling sort than a specific critique of the Jacobean court. In contrast, *Eastward Ho!* localizes its satire of court and city, positioning itself precisely between these two cultural centers, just as the liberty of the Blackfriars was itself positioned geographically. Moreover, the play’s representation of contingent and financially precarious relationships between citizens and those with pretensions to gentle and courtly status also glances sardonically at the financial arrangements surrounding the Blackfriars itself. Suzanne Gossett and W. David Kay rightly note that the play is “tightly tied to its precise moment” (*CBJ* 2.532), a statement that applies as much to its fictional world as to its position in relation to *Westward Ho!* and the circumstances of its (hostile) reception. In the opening lines of 2.3, following his marriage to Touchstone the goldsmith’s daughter, Gertrude, Sir Petronel Flash declares, “I’ll out of this wicked town as fast as my horse can trot. Here’s now no good action for a man to spend his time in. Taverns grow dead; ordinaries are blown up; plays are at a stand; houses of hospitality at a fall; not a feather waving nor a spur jingling anywhere. I’ll away instantly” (2.3.1–4). Sir Petronel’s discontent is motivated not only by his dissatisfaction with his marriage, but also by his discomfort with the city in the stultifying summer months when the court was on progress, the very absence that created the opportunity to perform *Eastward*

Ho!, which had apparently not been licensed for performance.⁶² Moreover, as a would-be courtier married to a citizen's daughter, he epitomizes the ways in which the play looks both east to the city—the home that Gertrude so longs to leave—and west to the court, the locus of the ambitions of men like Sir Petronel.

Like many city comedies, *Eastward Ho!* satirizes citizens, but the play also glances at the court itself, mocking both its over-promoted hangers-on, like Sir Petronel, and King James's desire to reward and elevate his Scottish followers. As Gossett notes, the communities imagined in the play "are riven by linguistic, class, and social contestation, as well as by gender and generational divisions."⁶³ Some of the play's most notorious moments reflect these tensions, and the English resentment of their new rivals for honors and court offices. In 3.3, Captain Seagull claims that his passengers will "live freely" in Virginia, "without sergeants, or courtiers, or lawyers, or intelligencers," encountering "only a few industrious Scots, perhaps, who indeed are dispersed over the face of the whole earth" (29–31). Pushing the jibe against the Scots further, he wishes that "a hundred thousand of 'em were there"—that is, in Virginia—because "we should find ten times more comfort of them there than we do here" (33–35). Moreover, the worthless Sir Petronel is himself linked with James and his perceived abuse of the honors system when the First Gentlemen addresses the bedraggled knight, who has been washed up on the shores of the Isle of Dogs, with these words, seemingly delivered in a strong Scottish accent: "I ken the man weel, he's one of my thirty pound knights" (4.1.140). It is this willingness to engage in risky satiric jokes that appears to have led the Scottish courtier Sir James Murray to complain about *Eastward Ho!* to the King, leading not only to the imprisonment of Jonson, Chapman, and, perhaps, Marston, but also to the play's probable suppression from further performance for nearly a decade.⁶⁴

Given Jonson's apparently close relationships with Scottish courtiers such as the King's cousin, Esmé Stuart, Seigneur d'Aubigny, to whom the 1605 quarto of *Sejanus* is dedicated, and his dependence on the new

62. See Gossett and Kay's introduction in *CBJ* 2.531–36; Richard Dutton, *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (Iowa City, 1991), 171–79; Janet Clare, *Art Made Tongue-Tied by Authority: Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship* (Manchester, 1990), 139–45.

63. Gossett, "Collaborative Playwrights," 98.

64. The first known revival of *Eastward Ho!* was mounted by Lady Elizabeth's Men in 1613–1614.

regime for patronage, it may seem odd that he was prepared to take such a risk. Perhaps, as Gossett and Kay suggest, “collaboration had only strengthened the tendency of these three irrepressibly satiric writers to disregard well-understood, if sometimes unspoken, norms of political and social acceptability” (2.531). It is noticeable that while 3.3 is usually ascribed to Chapman, 4.1 appears to contain the work of all three playwrights; corporate authorship may have enabled Chapman to claim in a letter to the King pleading for clemency during his and Jonson’s imprisonment that the offensive elements in the play were “*but two clauses, and both of them not our own*” (Letter (a), ll. 4–5), but it may also have led them into danger in the first place.⁶⁵

Yet if we view *Eastward Ho!* from the perspective of its production rather than its reception, the controversy may also point to the position of Jonson and Marston as playwrights within the Blackfriars syndicate. With their financial stake in the liberty of the Blackfriars, they were in a position to view sardonically the activities of the city and the court. Moreover, in this company context, it is unsurprising that *Eastward Ho!* flirts with political commentary—by 1605 the Children of the Queen’s Revels had a well-deserved reputation for precisely this kind of satire, directed at both London and Whitehall.⁶⁶ While Samuel Daniel’s *Philotas* was thought to comment on the disastrous last phase of the court career of the Earl of Essex, the Citizen in Francis Beaumont’s *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, performed at Blackfriars around 1607, could claim, with some justification, “This seven years there hath been plays at this house [. . .] you have still girds at citizens.”⁶⁷ With an eye to pleasing their audience and protecting their investment, Marston and Jonson may have hoped that the daring but even-handed critique they had confected with Chapman would attract audiences from both city and court, a strategy that appears to have backfired when Murray failed to find their satiric commentary funny.

The new information that both Jonson and Marston had a financial stake in the Blackfriars also points, moreover, to the play’s interest in the

65. Gossett and Kay offer a cogent summary of scholarship on the collaboration: see *CBJ* 2.537–39.

66. See Albert H. Tricomi, *Anticourt Drama in England 1603–1642* (Charlottesville, 1989), 9–12; Munro, *Children*, 20–21.

67. Francis Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ed. Michael Hattaway (London, 1969), Induction, 6–8. On *Philotas* see John Pitcher, “Samuel Daniel and the Authorities,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 10 (1998), 113–48; Hugh Gazzard, “‘Those Graue Presentments of Antiquitie’: Samuel Daniel’s *Philotas* and the Earl of Essex,” *Review of English Studies*, n.s. 51 (2000), 423–50.

broader social and comedic dynamics of the relationship between the citizens and gentry. Like the revised version of *Every Man in his Humor*, *Eastward Ho!* appears to incorporate among its characters' names an allusion to a figure with connections to the Blackfriars syndicate. The parodically virtuous apprentice, Golding, shares his name with Percival Golding, son of the poet and translator Arthur Golding, who in May 1609 gave evidence in another Blackfriars lawsuit. Golding seems to have come into contact with the company through Thomas Kendall and his wife Anne; he testified that he had known Edward Kirkham and William Rastall since the early days of James's reign, Alexander Hawkins for two or three years and Henry Evans by sight for three or four years.⁶⁸ Although Golding is an appropriate name for a trainee goldsmith, it is not unlikely that the playwrights had come into contact with Percival Golding and amused themselves by appropriating his name.

If the joke itself is somewhat weak, the collision of apprentice and gentleman in the name "Golding" more valuably points to the interactions between social ranks on which both the play and the Blackfriars enterprise depended. As I have described above, the shareholders in the Blackfriars included at various times a scrivener (Henry Evans), a tailor (Edward Kirkham), at least one haberdasher (Thomas Kendall and, probably, Edward Nowell), a merchant (William Rastall), a goldsmith (Robert Keysar), musicians (Martin Peerson and, probably, Edward Gibbons), and men who would have described themselves simply as "gentleman," such as Alexander Hawkins, William Strachey, and Marston himself. Jonson, of course, had a foot in both camps: while he had pretensions to gentle status and was rapidly establishing himself as a court dramatist, he was also a "Citizen and Bricklayer of London" (as a lawsuit described him in 1600), even though he had last paid his dues to the Company of Tylers and Bricklayers in November 1602 and would not bring himself up to date until May 1611.⁶⁹ In Evans and Hawkins' replication in their 1608 case against Kirkham, Marston is referred to as "gentilman" and Jonson and Gibbons

68. Deposition of Percival Golding in *Edward Kirkham and Anne Kendall v. Henry Evans and Alexander Hawkins*, Court of Chancery, 1609, TNA, C24/351/48. See Eccles, "Martin Peerson," 103–04.

69. See *Robert Browne v. Benjamin Jonson*, Court of Queen's Bench, 1600, TNA, KB 27/1360, rot. 1075d; Mark Eccles, "Ben Jonson, 'Citizen and Bricklayer,'" *Notes and Queries*, n.s. 35 (1988), 445–46.

are not. It is noticeable, however, that practically all of the Blackfriars shareholders are referred to or refer to themselves as gentlemen in surviving documents, even if they could all not echo the claim of Quicksilver in *Eastward Ho!* to be a “gentleman born” (1.1.113).

The play itself views collaborations between citizens and gentry, which range from the marriages of Gertrude and Sir Petronel, and Mildred and Golding, to the alliance between Quicksilver and Security the usurer, with amused cynicism. While Gertrude disdains Mildred for marrying Golding, describing him as a “base prentice” (3.2.55), her sister’s marriage is also a social reach given that Golding is, like Quicksilver, a “gentleman born” (3.2.96). Indeed, Golding avowedly combines the virtues of his gentle birth and his apprenticeship to the prestigious company of the Goldsmiths, telling Mistress Touchstone, “I am born a gentleman, and by the trade I have learned of my master (which I trust taints not my blood) able with mine own industry and portion to maintain your daughter” (3.2.86–89). Unlike Jonson, who had to work hard for his status as a “gentleman,” Golding has both the inherited capital and the civic capital to fuel the periodically accelerated social rise from apprentice to deputy alderman he is granted by the later scenes of the play.

If Golding embodies one form of alliance between the citizenry and the gentry, the play’s ending presents another. In its final lines, the repentant Quicksilver requests that he “may go home through the streets” in the clothes he has been wearing in prison, “as a spectacle, or rather an example, to the children of Cheapside” (5.5.178–80). Quicksilver’s term, “spectacle,” reinforces our sense of the theatrical display on which his repentance has depended, and the Epilogue returns to the question of civic spectacle as he says to Touchstone,

Stay, sir, I perceive the multitude are gathered together to view our coming out of the Counter. [*He gestures at the theatre.*] See if the streets and the fronts of the houses be not stuck with people, and the windows filled with ladies as on the solemn day of the pageant! (Epilogue, 1–4)

Having cast the spectators in the playhouse pit and galleries as his own private civic audience, Quicksilver then addresses them directly:

Oh, may you find in this our pageant here
The same contentment which you came to seek;

And as that show but draws you once a year,
May this attract you, hither, once a week. (Epilogue, 5–8)

Quicksilver's epilogue collapses the city into the playhouse, and the civic pageant into city comedy, uniting the citizens and gentry onstage and within the auditorium in a profitable union that has both a festive and a financial basis. Furthermore, the payments the spectators may make as they arrive at the playhouse "once a week" will become the profits from which two of the playwrights take their weekly share, along with the other investors. Collaboration here is about mutual profit and the success of the Blackfriars enterprise, a success built on the risky common project of citizens and gentlemen born, and their collective willingness to test the boundaries of social and political satire.

VI

The alliance between Jonson and Marston was as short-lived as their writerly collaboration. In the preface to *Sophonisba*, published in quarto around March–April 1606, Marston appears to snipe at Jonson's heavily classicist treatment of the 1605 edition of *Sejanus*. "Know," he instructs the reader, "that I haue not labored in this poeme, to tie my selfe to relate any thing as an historian but to inlarge euery thing as a Poet, To transcribe Authors, quote authorities, & translate Latin prose orations into English black-verse, hath in this subiect beene the least aime of my studies."⁷⁰ Similarly, the tone of Jonson's comments to Drummond in 1619, quoted above, suggests that hostilities had been resumed, perhaps in part due to the fall-out from *Eastward Ho!* and the apparent reorganization at Blackfriars in the wake of *The Isle of Gulls*.

Yet the Blackfriars itself was to be an enduring presence in Jonson's work, not least in the first play that he wrote for the King's Men to perform there. The surviving text of *The Alchemist* is rooted firmly in time and place, "here, in the Friars" (1.1.17), its action taking place in a deserted house in the Blackfriars precinct on November 1, 1610. Helen Ostovich has pointed to the language of theatrical enterprise that Jonson animates in the acrostic argument that prefaces the printed play, in which Doll and Subtle, "only wanting some / House to set up," "contract" with Face

70. John Marston, *The Wonder of Women or The Tragedie of Sophonisba* (1606), A2.

“Each for a share, and all begin to act” (6–8).⁷¹ The Blackfriars house is also, simultaneously, the Blackfriars playhouse, the freewheeling performances of the three confederates, Doll, Face, and Subtle, aligning them with the very craft of acting itself.⁷² Furthermore, scholars such as Melissa D. Aaron, Andrew Gurr, and Theodore B. Leinwand have associated the play with the theatrical politics of the period leading up to the composition and performance of *The Alchemist*, and Richard Burbage’s decision to take back the Blackfriars when Evans and company finally pushed their luck too far in Spring 1608. Evans surrendered the Blackfriars lease, Burbage regained possession, and he decided to open up investment in the playhouse to other members of the King’s Men.

Aaron draws attention to the ways in which Keysar claims in his 1610 lawsuit—quoted above—that the King’s Men had cheated him out of what he was due as a Blackfriars investor. She argues that Jonson comments knowingly on the financial shenanigans of this theatrical moment: “*The Alchemist*, written by a man who knew all the circumstances involved in the takeover—the volatile economics, financial losses from the plague, and legal wranglings—is about forming a corporation, bilking the competition, and fleecing the customers: making up for lost time and money as rapidly as possible.”⁷³ The Blackfriars had been “an economic thorn in the Burbages’ side for more than ten years,” but in 1610 they and the King’s Men were able to launch their own “venture” and set about making profit for themselves.⁷⁴

Leinwand and Gurr read the evidence rather differently, and both focus on the final twist at the end of *The Alchemist*, when Lovewit, the owner of the house in the Blackfriars and Face’s master, returns and unexpectedly decides to profit from his servant’s disreputable projects. For Leinwand, focusing on the maneuvers through which the lease was surrendered and the subsequent lawsuits brought by both Keysar and Kirkham, the parallel

71. *Ben Jonson: Four Comedies*, ed. Helen Ostovich (London, 1997), 378. On theatrical language in the play see also Melissa D. Aaron, “‘Beware at what hands thou receiv’st thy commodity’: *The Alchemist* and the King’s Men Fleece the Customers, 1610,” in *Inside Shakespeare: Essays on the Blackfriars Stage*, ed. Paul Menzer (Selinsgrove, 2006), 72–79 (75–76).

72. On the play’s theatrical politics, see also Anthony J. Ouellette, “*The Alchemist* and the Emerging Adult Private Playhouse,” *Studies in English Literature* 45 (2005), 375–99; Elizabeth Rivlin, “The Rogues’ Paradox: Redefining Work in *The Alchemist*,” in *Working Subjects in Early Modern English Drama*, ed. Michelle M. Dowd and Natasha Korda (Farnham, 2011), 115–29.

73. Aaron, 72–73.

74. Aaron, 73.

is with Richard Burbage. "Like Lovewit," he writes, "Burbage was something of an absentee landlord who conveniently returned to the scene at just the moment the Blackfriars company was in shambles."⁷⁵ Gurr works the parallel in another way: "when the Blackfriars playhouse reopened in early 1610 [. . .] the owners of the Blackfriars playhouse had become those five Lovewits: Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, John Heminges, Henry Condell and, last but far from least, that most famous lover of wit, William Shakespeare."⁷⁶ In this reading, Lovewit is an avatar for Shakespeare himself in his apparent retirement from acting and possible withdrawal from London: Shakespeare, not Burbage, is imagined as the absentee landlord who returns and indulges the activities of those who are in his pay.

Together, the readings of Aaron, Leinwand, and Gurr make a compelling case that the action of *The Alchemist* is closely related to current theatrical and financial concerns at the Blackfriars. However, none fully reflects what we now know, in the light of the evidence outlined above, about the playhouse's financial structures and Jonson's place within them. For instance, Gurr's attractive reading does not quite fit the facts of the financial organization of the Blackfriars from 1608—Burbage still owned the playhouse, and he merely offered to his fellows 21-year leases on the property. Moreover, the leaseholders included Thomas Evans, who was not, and never had been, a member of the playing company, but was the son of the former Blackfriars impresario Henry Evans.⁷⁷ Most importantly, evidence from the lawsuit over the £60 bond argues that Jonson indeed "knew all the circumstances involved in the takeover"—as Aaron puts it—but that his position in relation to those circumstances was more involved than we have realized.

Indeed, our new knowledge of Jonson's financial stake in the earlier Blackfriars enterprise may enable us to see more clearly some of the factors

75. Theodore B. Leinwand, *Theatre, Finance, and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, Eng., 1999), 137–38.

76. Andrew Gurr, "Prologue: Who is Lovewit? What is He?," in *Ben Jonson and Theatre: Performance, Practice and Theory*, ed. Richard Cave, Elizabeth Schafer, and Brian Woolland (London, 2005), 5–18 (16).

77. Evans appears in a list of sharers in a lawsuit that Thomasine Ostler brought against her father, John Heminges, in 1616: see TNA, KB 27/1454/1, rot. 692. His will, drawn up on October 18, 1621, demonstrates his family connection with Henry through his legacies to siblings and nieces: see TNA, PROB 11/138/296. For discussion of his position as Blackfriars lessee and a summary of the allocation of the playhouse shares, see Lucy Munro, "Who Owned the Blackfriars Playhouse?," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, forthcoming 2019.

that influenced the shape of the play. The way in which Lovewit takes control of the house and its profits presents a fantasy of taking control at Blackfriars, one that conceals the financial maneuvers with which both Jonson and his “partners” and Burbage and the King’s Men were familiar. And if Lovewit represents on some level the King’s Men’s interest in the playhouse, triumphantly but somewhat fortuitously regained at the end of Act Five, then the tricksters who inhabit the house in the Blackfriars so entertainingly recall Burbage’s former tenants, the financially insecure and theatrically insurgent “venture” led by Henry Evans, some of whose former star performers—recruited to the Blackfriars during Evans’ tenure—were themselves taking on roles in Jonson’s new play.⁷⁸ As a former Blackfriars investor and current Blackfriars employee, Jonson straddles both camps, celebrating both the rackety con-artists and the ostensibly more respectable new regime that has both replaced and incorporated them. Like Face, he negotiates the change of regime at the Blackfriars. He plays his part in the financial wheeling and dealing, and the abrupt shifts between amity and feuding depicted in both the opening of *The Alchemist* and in the legal records that preserve the day-to-day dealings of Evans and his partners, but he eventually shifts his role in the pursuit of both safety and greater profit. Moreover, perhaps unexpectedly, given its author’s troubled history of teamwork with *Eastward Ho!*, *The Alchemist* presents collaboration as something that may be dangerous but is also exhilarating and oddly sustaining. It also presents its own rewards: Face and Jonson may not profit as much as they had hoped from their Blackfriars ventures, but their quick wits and willingness to renew old connections enable them both to keep their jobs and look forward to future gain.

VII

The title-page of *Eastward Ho!* promotes the play in print by drawing attention to the interaction between playhouse, company, and playwrights that originally brought it to stage. In the light of the new evidence presented in this essay, its bold statement, “As / it was playd in the / *Blackfriars*,” also helps to focus our ideas about the place of playwrights within this theatrical enterprise and the ways in which their financial and institutional involvements helped to shape both their own writing and the

78. The cast list printed with the play in the 1616 Folio includes John Underwood and William Ostler, both of whom had acted in Jonson’s earlier plays for the Blackfriars, Underwood in *Cynthia’s Revels* and *The Poetaster* and Ostler in *The Poetaster*. See Munro, *Children*, 40, 182, 184.

broader development of Jacobean urban drama. This essay has explored a species of what Leinwand calls “affective economies,” the emotional engagements that go hand-in-hand with economic investments and negotiations, placing *Eastward Ho!* at the center of the set of textual, theatrical, personal, and financial interactions that the new suit over the £60 bond opens up. The fluctuating personal relationships of Jonson and Marston, from the enemies of the *poetomachia* to the “friends,” “partners,” and “obligators” of the dedications and the Chancery suit, and—in all probability—back again, are part of a broader set of embattled yet creative and (potentially) profitable transactions at the Blackfriars. Not only was the Blackfriars enterprise dependent on interactions between citizens and gentlemen and those of different trades, but this interaction also helped to fuel aspects of the creative life of the company on stage, most notably in the locational engagements and satiric edge emerging in city comedy during this crucial phase of its development. If the institutional contexts for city comedy’s characteristic tropes have been undervalued, this new evidence helps us to see more clearly the shaping role of the theater industry’s fraught yet necessary cross-class interactions.

We may never know if Jonson, like Marston, in fact possessed a “sixth parte” of the Blackfriars lease and the “goodes, apparell for players, propertyes, playe books & other thinges” that belonged to the Children of the Queen’s Revels, or if his involvement with the Blackfriars was more limited. However, we now know that he had a significant financial interest in the Blackfriars enterprise, significant enough for him to have been drawn into the lawsuit over the £60 bond and to be considered a “partner” by Henry Evans and Alexander Hawkins. We must therefore reassess our ideas about the nature of his involvement with the theater industry and its collaborative structures: rather than keeping clear of investments in playing companies or playhouses, as we may previously have thought, he was apparently alert to the opportunities they might bring. Leinwand’s term, “affective economies,” is particularly apt in the context of the multiple relationships that Jonson and Marston had during this period, as “partners,” “obligors,” collaborators and “friends.” If Jonson’s interaction with the Blackfriars was more financial than we have realized, the ending of *The Alchemist* suggests that it also had a more emotional aspect. Inhabiting “the same dramatic space,” and the same financial structures, however briefly, left a lasting mark on the careers of both Jonson and Marston and on the ways in which the city told stories about itself on stage.

Appendix A

Henry Evans and Alexander Hawkins v. Edward Kirkham, Court of Chancery, 1608 (Bill of Complaint and Replication)

TNA, C 2/Chas I/E31/43

[Bill of Complaint]

To the right honorable, Sir Thomas Egerton knight Lord Elesmer, and Lord Chancellor of England

Vicesimo Septo April 1608

Wilkinson

In most humble and dutifull mannor complayninge sheweth vnto *your* good Lordship, *your* wronged orrators Henry Evans and Allexander Hawkins of London gentlemen That whearas *your* orrators together with Beniamin Jonson, John Marston, Edward Gibbons & Edward Nowell did all in or aboute maie, that was in the third yeare of the Raigne of *our* now Sovereigne Lord Kinge James, by there obligacion Joyntlie & severally became bownden, to one Edward Kirckham of the Strond in the Countie of midlesex gentleman in the full some of iij^{xxli} with Con-dicion vppon the saide obligacion indorsed, or ther vnto conveyed, for the trewe paiement of xxxj^{li} x^s to the saide Kirckham, at or vppon the fifte daie of november then next ensewinge, *which* saide bond was made in respect of xxx^{li} originally taken vp at vse by the saide Kirckham for the good and benefitt aswell of him selfe as of *your* orrators & the rest the obligors in the saide obligacion named and bounden beeing in deede all partners and equally interested aswell in that debte as in divers other thinges. And *your* orrators amonge the rest beeing very carefull to keepe and holde that there obligacion vnforfited, Therfore *your* orrators amonge the rest the saide obligors not beeing then furnishe for paiement therof didd paie vnto him there *partes* of the intrest mony for the vj months past, and did earnestly deale with the saide Edward Kirckham before the daie limited for paiement of that xxxj^{li} x^s that the same might bee yett forborne vppon vse one other halfe yeere, *which* hee the saide Edward Kirckham takinge vppon him to effect & accomlishe hee then had of *your* orrators and the rest the saide obligators or of some of them there *partes* of that xxx^s to paie and satisfie therewithall the vse and Intrest then due of and for that xxx^{li},

and hee the saide Edward Kirckham then accordinglie promised *your* orrators and the rest the obligators to forebeare the paiment of that xxx^{li} principall debte for that other six moneths accordinglie And *your* orrators and the rest the saide obligators, havinge then & before hand of that second six monthes, a care and desire to paie and Satisfie to the saide Kirckham the saide xxx^{li} & vse for that last six months therfore *your* orrators and the rest did agree and compownd, to and with the said Edward Kirckham, That hee the saide Edward Kirckham should then take vp and receive from one Thomas Woodford out of Certaine mony (that also should have bin paie^d vnto *your* orrators & the rest the saide obligors[]) aswell that full some of xxxj^{li} x^s principall debte due to bee paie to the saide Kirckham at thend of that last six months as also that the saide Edward Kirckham should further take vp & receive of and from the saide Thomas Woodford one other some of viij^{li} x^s like lawfull mony of England beeinge in all fortie pounds & which hee the saide Woodford was to paie and Satisfie vnto *your* orators and the rest the saide obligators & the saide Edward Kirckham by five pounds weeklie vntill the saide whole some of xl^{li} should bee wholly paie which residue ore overplus of mony soe to bee received by the saide Edward Kirckham over and above the saide xxxj^{li} x^s was by the saide Edward Kirckham to bee kept to the equall vse and good of *your* orrators and of the rest of the obligors and the saide Kirckham. And *your* orrators verelie hopeinge that the saide mony beeinge so had and received or the saide xxxj^{li} x^s beeinge so had and receavid, by the saide Edward Kirckham, that hee accordinge to his promise made vnto *your* orrators in that beehalfe would then have delivered to *your* orrators the saide obligacion of iij^{xxli} to bee cancelled But so it is now if it please *your* most honorable Lordship, That not withstandinge hee the saide Edward Kirckham, or some his assignes hath trulie had or receavid of or from the saide Thomas Woodford or some his assignes or deputies the saide xxxj^{li} x^s in discharge of the saide obligacion of iij^{xxli} and so much more as will make vp the full some of xl^{li} and yett doth refuse to Cancell or redeliver vnto *your* saide orrators the saide obligacion or to agree and compound with *your* orrators ^{ore} in regard therof to rest satisfied for that debte of xxxj^{li} x^s ore to discharge therfore *your* orrators of & from that obligacion, and that *your* orrators sithence in very gentell and friendlie mannor have required him to give vp to bee cancelled that bond, & to make to *your* orrators some proportionable satisfacione of the viij^{li} x^s overplus, yett hee now not onelie vnconscionably refuseth so to doe, but carried a waie by some verry vncharitable hope or desire, hee hath of late threatned *your* orrators to put

in suite against *your* orrators at the common Lawe that obligacion of ^{xxxli}ij^{li} for none payment of the ^{li}xxxj^{li} xs, accordinge to the condicion therof, and meaneth and Intendeth therby as *your* orrators bee Informed, to recover and gett from yo^r orrators the whole penaltie thereof and all *which* no doubt hee will to the vttermost strive to bringe to pass and effect, and yett the saide Kirckham hath had and receavid of & from the rest or some of the ^saide^ obligators divers ^other^ somes of mony in respect of that bond and hath made vnto some of them releasses and vnto some others of the obligors promises of release and onlie seeketh to chardge *your* orratores therwith. In tender consideracion of all *which* and for that *your* orrators have no meanes to bee releaved heerin at or by the Common Lawes of this Realme, And that it shalbe against all good conscience the premises considered *your* orrators should bee so dealt withall, therefore maie it please *your* most honorable Lordship to graunt to *your* orrators the Kings majesties most gracious writt of Subpena vnto him the saide Edward Kirckham to bee directed him therby straightlie charginge and commaundinge at a Certaine daie and vnder a Certaine paine in that writt to bee limited and expressed personally to appeare beefore *your* good Lordship in the Kings majesties highnes court of Chancery, then and there to answeare the premises, and further vpon to stand vnto and abide such other order & direction heerin, as to *your* most honorable Lordship shall best seeme to agree with equitie and good Conscience, And *your* orrators, shall dailie praie to the allmightie for *your* Lordships good healthe with encrease of honnor,

Sy: Muskett

[Replication]

The replicacion of Henry Evans and Alexander Hawkins *Complainants* to the Answere of Edward Kirkham Defendaunt

Wilkinson

The *Complainants* savinge to them selves all advantages of exception in and vnto the insufficient matters in the said Answere conteyned when hereafter thes *Complainants* shall have occasion to vse or take the benefitt thereof, ffor full and perfett Replication vnto so muche the materiall partes of the said Answere as thes *Complainants* can replye vnto Thes *Complainants* saye, That thes *Complainants* said bill of Complaynt exhibited against the Defendaunt, ys sufficient in the lawe and the matters

therein conteyned are and be trewe and suche as the Defendaunt him selff dothe in manner confesse and acknowledge to be trewe, ffor he dothe acknowledge the debte of xxxj^{li} xs in the bill mentioned to be partable and the equall debte aswell of the Defendaunt as of thes *Complainants* and dyvers others and that he dydd vndertake for the vse money trewely to him payd, to procure the forebearaunce thereof, for half a yere after the daye of payment specified in the condicion of the said obligation in suche sorte as in the bill ys alleaged. / And the Defendaunt dothe likewise in his Answer acknowledge the receipte by the dyvercion and order of the *Complainants* and the rest theire *parteners* of so muche of the said principall debte of xxxj^{li} xs as dothe come or amounte vnto xxx^{li} And that there ys onely restinge as in his said Answer he sayeth he perswades him selff in his conscience the rest whiche he vniustly accomptes to be the some of iij^{li} xv^s which beinge payd him by one of the *Complainants* he the Defendaunt offereth to geve vpp to be cancelled the said bond of Threscore poundes. / Vnto which thes *Complainants* for replication saye That if the Defendaunt dydd acquite and discharge Thomas Woodforde of ffyve poundes a part of his wekely paymentes in the bill and Answer acknowledged to be assigned to him the Defendaunt for payment of the said debte, The same was his owne faulte and done by him selff as his owne proper debte without the assent or good likinge of thes *Complainants* or the rest of the said *parteners* / And thes *Complainants* saye that the Defendaunt havinge at his pleasure forborne the same and havinge at last for the true payment of so much therof as was behind ^' & ' vnpayde taken and gotten the obligation aswell of the said Woodford as of one John Davys his suertie beinge a man of very good sufficiencie and welth and that obligation beinge also forfytred and broken, The Defendaunt might yf he hadd pleased by that obligation and penaltie thereof beinge ffyftie poundes, have hadd full satisfaccion and recompence for the whole debte of ffortye poundes reserved and appointed to be payd by the said Woodforde to the Defendaunt. / But the Defendaunt havinge taken vppon him the sole and onely dyrectinge of that debte and busynes, yf he owt of his owne inclination or regard woulde onely for xxv^{li} to him payd as he affirmeth (where in truth he hadd and receyved of the said John Davys xxviii^{li} in discharge of his said obligation of lth) ^' not onely ' Geve vpp to the said Davys and Woodford the said obligation of ffyftie poundes to be cancelled. / But likewise also procured and caused the playinge apparell of the said Thomas Woodford well worth one hundred and Twentie poundes which laye and remayned in the said playhowse as a pledge for

the suer payment of the said xl^{li} by the said Woodforde agreed to be payde to the said *parteners* and for more securitie thereof attached by the said Defendaunt To be releassed and delyvered to the sayd Thomas Woodford. / The losse therein sustayned by the Defendaunt can not nor maye not be layd or ymputed to the faulte charge or burden of the *Complainants*. / But the losse the *Complainants* receyved thereby beinge the residue of the money receyved or discharged after the said xxxj^{li} xs allowed and satisfied, The Defendaunt ought in all good conscience to satisfie to the *Complainants* and the rest of the *parteners* And thes *Complainants* further replye and saye, That the Defendaunt ought not for the reasons and causes likewise hereafter followinge (yf he hadd onely receyved of the said Woodroff [*sic*] xxx^{li} in parte of that debte) kepe or holde the said oblacion [*sic*] of Threskore poundes to pay xxxj^{li} xs as aforesaid vncancelled. / ffor thes *Complainants* do absolutly affyrme and will they doubte not dewly prove That the Defendaunt besides the somes ^'so' hadd receyved and discharged as aforesaid yet he dydd also receyve, and hadd in further parte ^'and satisfaccion' of the said principall debte of and from the said Henry Evans one of the *Complainants* ffyftie shillinges for the moytie of ffyve poundes by the said Evans receyved of the said Woodford for the fyrst weke he playd in the said playhowse. / And of one Edward Gibbons also one other of the said *parteners* the full some of ffyftie shillinges. And that he hadd and dydd receyve also in further satisfaccion and payment of the said principall debte of Beniamyn Johnson one other of the said *parteners* in that debte ffyftie shillinges and hath indorsed the receipt thereof vpon some parte of the said obligacion as by the syghte thereof will appere / And the Defendaunt likewise hadd and dydd receyve also in further satisfaccion and payment of the said principall debt of John Marston gentelman one other of the said *parteners* one other some of ffyftie shillinges and that the Defendaunt hath in consideracion thereof by wrytinge vnder his hand acquitted and discharged the said John Marston of and from the said debte and the some of xxxj^{li} xs dewe and to be payd by force of the said obligacion of lx^{li} And vnto which severall receiptes though the Defendaunt be there with all burdened and charged in thes *Complainants* bill yet knowinge the truthe he hath and dothe refuse to Answer And therefore and for that the Defendaunt yf he have not receyved or hadd all the ffortie poundes (which he ought have receyved from Woodforde) hath done there in great wronge to thes *Complainants* and the rest there *parteners*. / And that the Defendaunt refuseth to answer the receyte of the severall somes of ffyftie shillinges, and severall somes of ffyve poundes

so sett downe by him also receaved and discharged in further satisfaccion of the said debte. And for that also that the Defendaunt him selff and dyvers others on his parte or syde was and are also to paye and discharge his and their partes of the said debte and that he dothe acknowledge the receipt of xxx^{li} beside the vse, Thes *Complainants* doo moost humbly desire as in there bill of complaint they have prayed and desired, That the Defendaunt maye be ordered and commaunded by this moost honorable Courte To bringe into this Courte to be cancelled the said obligacion of Threskore poundes and that thes *Complainants* maye be discharged of all further suche losse and trouble ^thereby^ and that the Defendaunt may satisfie to thes *Complainants* and there parteners the residue of the said somes of money so as aforesaid by him hadd receyved and discharged ^after^ The said xxxj^{li} xs fyrst allowed and satisfied) and as ^in^ all good conscience and honest dealinge betwene man and man he ought to doo / Without that that theirs any other matter or thinge materiall and effectuall in the lawe and in the said Answer conteyned and which ys trewe and to be replied vnto by thes *Complainants* vnto whiche they have not as they are advysed by their Councell either sufficiently replied confessed and avoyded traversed or denyed all which thes *Complainants* are moost redye to averr ^&^ prove as this most honorable Courte shall awarde, / And therefore humblye praye as before in there bill they have humbly prayed and desyred. /

Richard Symondes

Appendix B

Decree in Chancery

The National Archives, C 33/122, f. 96v; see also C 33/121, ff. 100v-101r (duplicate entries, except that the latter gives the amount owed on the £60 as “3^{li} 13^s”)

[October 30, 1611]

Henry Evans *plaintiff* fforasmuch as this Courte was this daie
Edward Kirkham and informed by master Muskett being of the *plaintiffes*
others *defendants* Counsell that the *plaintiff* became bounden to
the *defendant* in one bonde of 100^{li} for payment
of xxij^s for divers weekes and allsoe became bounden vnto the *defendant*
Kirkeham alone in one other bonde of 60^{li} for the payment of 31^{li} 10^s all
which *sommes* have bene paide althoughe not at the very daies and the de-
fendant Kirkeham Confesseth in his Aunswares that there is three or fower
poundes vnpaide vppon the saide bonde of 100^{li} and that he deteyneth the
saide bonde for the same and that there is 3^{li} 15^s vnpaide vppon thother
bonde of 60^{li} which said *sommes* the *plaintiff* rather then he will Contende
in suites will paie to the *defendant*. It is thereuppon ordered by this Courte
That vppon payment of 10^{li} by the *plaintiff* vnto the *defendant* Kirkeham
That then he the saide Kirkeham shall dischardge the *plaintiff* of the said
severall bondes and deliver them vpp to the *plaintiff* to be cancelled.