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Amateur Theatre at the Early Modern Inns of Court? The Implications of a Performance Copy of Jonson's 1640 Folio

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Article abstract

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This article discusses a recently rediscovered copy of Ben Jonson's 1640 Workes *that contains seventeenth-century annotations to* Epicene *that suggest preparations for performance. We trace the folio copy's provenance with the Powell family in Nanteos, Wales, and consider the possibility that it may have been annotated when in the possession of Sir Thomas Powell, a lawyer and judge who spent much of his life in London. We argue that the annotated play-text can be connected to four other playbooks by William Shakespeare and James Shirley that have been previously associated with seventeenth-century amateur theatricals, and that the new evidence provided by the Jonson text points plausibly to a practice of amateur performance at and around Gray's Inn in the middle of the century.*

Two inconvenient facts — and two complementary assumptions — have long hampered scholars interested in the early modern performance history of Ben Jonson's plays. First: none of Jonson's plays, with the possible exceptions of *The Case is Altered* and the co-authored *Eastward Ho!*, has come down to us through theatrical rather than authorial mediation. Scholars have sometimes viewed even printed texts whose stage directions seem to record specifics of performance — *The Devil Is an Ass*, for example, which notes that a scene between Wittipol and Mrs Fitzdottrel be acted '*at two windows as out of two contiguous buildings*' and that Wittipol '*plays with her paps, kisseth her hands, etc.*' (2.6.36, 70 sds) — as containing suspiciously 'literary' embellishments designed to increase readerly appreciation rather than being accurate records of performative moments.[1] Second: no early texts witnessing specifically to performance have seemed to survive. The assumptions are related: firstly, the oft-repeated claims (some of them originating

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with Jonson himself, of course) that many of his plays 'failed' in performance, from *Poetaster* to *The New Inn*, which might seem to suggest that the stage was not the best or most favourable mode of presenting his dramatic work; secondly, the now retreating perception that Jonson was primarily interested in appealing to readers rather than audiences, to the extent of actually disparaging theatrical performance itself.[2] Both assumptions help to obscure the space that the study of Jonsonian performance might occupy, leading us to look at Jonsonian play-texts as sometimes far removed from the context and circumstances of performance, and perhaps — in comparison to those of his contemporaries — particularly so.

The evident *theatrical* popularity of Jonsonian drama in his own time and for many years after his death, along with his influence on later generations of dramatic writers, contradict such views. His finest comedies swiftly became fixtures in the repertoire, subject to many revivals and imitations: *Epicene*, for example, was one of the first plays to be professionally revived after the Restoration and it became a staple of comic performance for decades afterwards. The critical resistance to the claim of 'anti-theatricality' also began to be felt not long after Jonas Barish's fullest articulation of his thesis, with such 1980s books as Anne Barton's *Ben Jonson: Dramatist* and Peter Womack's *Ben Jonson* firmly focusing on the performance potential and centrality of this part of the Jonsonian canon. Following this lead Richard Cave, Elizabeth Schafer, and Brian Woolland's collection *Ben Jonson and Theatre* draws on the responses of actors, directors, and designers to reassert a performance-based contemporary appreciation of Jonson's theatricality, and the more recent *Ben Jonson and Posterity*, edited by Martin Butler and Jane Rickard, demonstrates how the legacy of Jonson in performance extends from his contemporary moment through to our present day.[3]

For these reasons, the recent appearance of a copy of Jonson's second folio of 1640 with the text of *Epicene* extensively marked up for performance offers a key opportunity to see how early theatre practitioners used the printed text of one of Jonson's chief dramatic works as a basis for performance. In this regard, it joins a significant corpus of printed early modern plays with theatrical annotations dating from the period, a corpus which itself augments the surviving examples of early modern dramatic manuscripts which can be shown to have theatrical connections. Some among these texts have a very clear association with particular companies, and their precise relation to theatrical practice — whether they were used as promptbooks or otherwise — seems to be clear. But others among them are much more ambiguously situated as evidence of specific theatrical occasions and purposes. We contend that the evidence supplied by this Jonson folio enables us to specify the particular milieu in which it was marked up for use, and that

many — though certainly not all — of its peculiarities are explicable in this light. The same evidence also allows us to revisit some other marked up printed plays from the seventeenth century which have previously been the focus of critical attention and speculation, and to suggest how, when, and where they might have been used.

Pathways of Provenance

The copy of Jonson's second folio with performance annotations first emerged into public view when it was sold at auction in 2017, and was then acquired and digitized by Edinburgh University Library a year later.[4] Helpfully, something of its provenance is evident from the book itself: inside the front cover there is a heraldic bookplate in the name of W.T.R. Powell, with a further label pasted in below reading 'It is requested that *whoever* borrows *this book* will return it to the owner, as soon as finished', printed with Powell's name and initials and his location, Nanteos, a country estate a few miles outside Aberystwyth. William T.R. Powell was born in 1815 and attended Winchester School before joining the imperial army and being stationed in Jamaica. In 1839 he returned to Britain and married shortly thereafter. On his father's death in 1854 he inherited the family estates, including the main residence at Nanteos and all its accoutrements — including the Jonson folio. He was elected as a Conservative member of parliament in 1859 and was none too popular with his tenants, partly because he tried to pressure them to vote Tory in the highly contentious election of 1868.[5]

Another reason for his unpopularity was that he was the first of the Powell scions of Nanteos not to speak or read Welsh, a significant breach in dynastic continuity.[6] The family had lived at Nanteos since William Powell (1658–1738) married Avarina, the heiress of Cornelius and Anne le Brun, in 1699. Descent had not always been lineal: William's heir Thomas died without issue in 1752, so the estate devolved to his younger brother, another William (1705–80), a clergyman, who inscribed his name on the top right border of the Jonson folio frontispiece.[7] So the folio has clearly been in the Powell family since at least the mid-1700s. Other evidence of usage appears in the book's early pages. A seventeenth-century note describing a coat of arms on the verso of the title page in exactly the style that it might be rendered in a formal pedigree might be a useful lead, but the arms there described match none found in the records of the College of Arms.[8] Scrawled verses in a cursive seventeenth-century hand appear on the verso of the portrait engraving at the front of the volume. Arthur Freeman transcribes these as follows:

> Come ffreind for En[gland]- Come away my deare [deleted]
> lest we beg Gould wth body staying heare
> heres nothing to be had, yt we tearme good
> Noe Sacke att all, though wee would spend our blood
> ffor Mony we have non; yett by hand
> We must have Sacke, although we have noe land.

Two lines in the same hand, running vertically along the gutter of the page, appear to read '[?To purtious (?purchase)] but a bowle of yt same nectar / Non can you gett were you as stout as Hector'.[9] Freeman wonders whether these lines might 'suggest the complaint of a dispossessed royalist self-exile — even a member of a fugitive acting company, shedding "blood" soldiering for a foreign nation — thinking wistfully of a return to England, and something to drink',[10] though this, as we shall see, is unlikely.

Martin Butler offers a contrasting image of the volume's early life, asking whether it shows that 'Jonson's plays [were] already circulating in Wales during the Civil War? Might there, in fact, have been an amateur Welsh *Epicene* planned at Nanteos in the 1640s?'[11] This possibility is more realistic, given what we know of country house theatricals in the period. The estate's owner from 1636–6 was John Jones, Anne le Brun's father and 'a substantial landowner with friends in high places', as well as head of household to a family of between twelve and sixteen people.[12] Such a community would likely be capable of staging plays for their own amusement. Jones managed to navigate a passage through the wars of the three kingdoms that left his estates substantially intact, seemingly raising regiments for both king and parliament at different points in the conflict. Butler, though, also suggests the possible pertinence of the elder William Powell's father — though in making this suggestion he mistakes this man, Thomas Powell, for his near namesake, Sir John, whose career closely paralleled that of Thomas until the climacteric year of 1688.[13] Thomas Powell was born in 1631, and presumably spent his early years in Wales: his family home was at Llechwedd-Dyrys, just a kilometre or so over the Paith river from Nanteos. At the age of sixteen, he matriculated at St Alban's Hall, Oxford, from whence he obtained a BA in December 1651, by which time he appears already to have had a son.[14] He then gravitated towards London, spending some time at Staple Inn before being admitted to Gray's Inn in March 1656. He was called to the bar on 9 July 1660, two years after his second son and eventual heir William was born, and served consistently enough to be called to the select Company of Ancients, a body and rank unique to Gray's Inn, on 26 November 1680.[15] Thomas enjoyed a significant

rise in fortunes and prominence during the 1680s, becoming a serjeant-at-law in 1683, and a judge on the northwest Wales circuit two years later; the king knighted him at Whitehall on 1 May 1687, the same year that he was appointed baron of the exchequer and a justice of the king's bench.[16] He achieved a degree of fame as one of the judges who presided over the acquittal of the Seven Bishops in 1688, alongside Sir John Powell.[17] But despite his alignment here with the opposition to James VII and II, the regime change of 1688–9 was too much for him to countenance: as the antiquarian Edward Lhwyd bluntly puts it, 'he could not comply with the Revolution'.[18] William's phrasing on the memorial that Lhwyd originally designed for his father in the parish church of Llanbadarn Fawr was more expansive: 'when conscience forbade him to comply with the state's change of circumstance, [he] spent sixteen years of his remaining life in alleviating the poor and the oppressed with free counsel'.[19] He died on 22 January 1705.

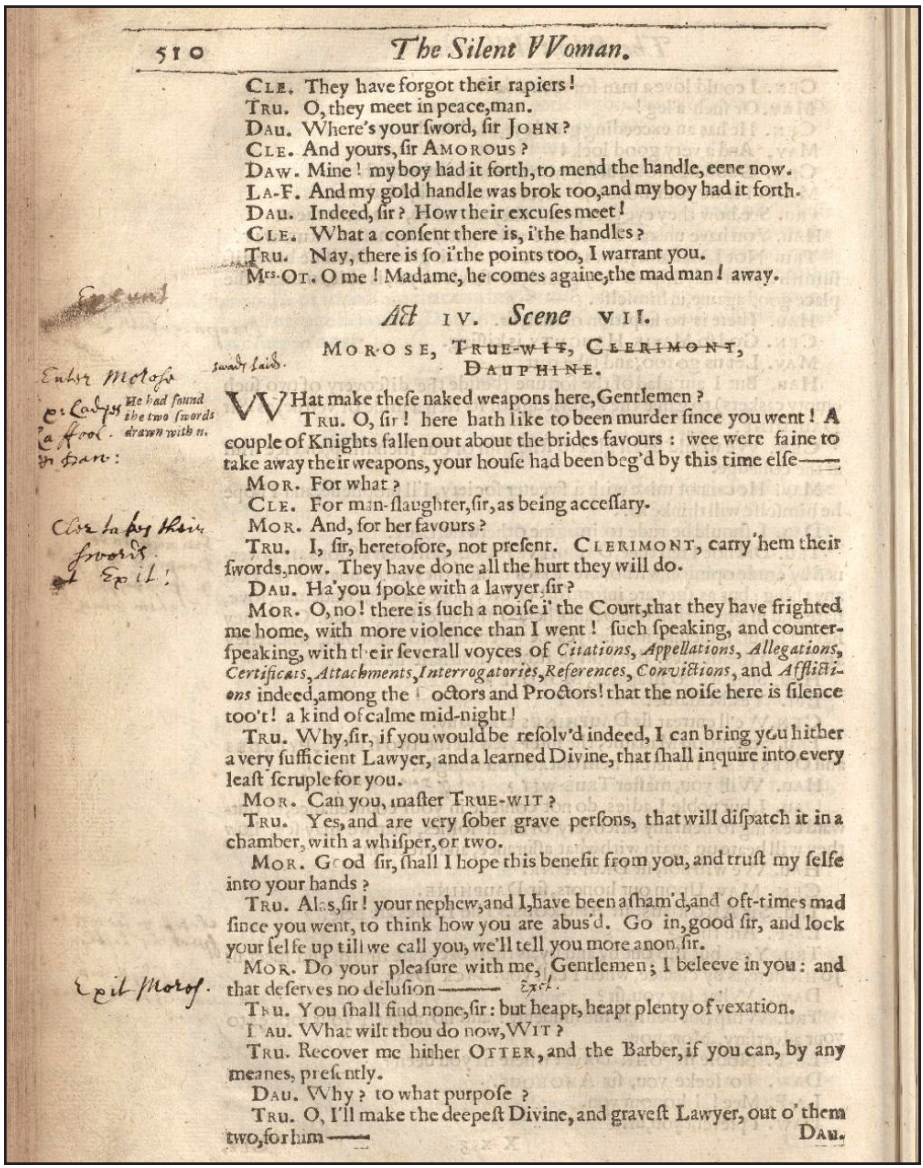
Sir Thomas Powell, then, was at least to some degree a Jacobite, apparently acting pro bono for others of the same convictions after his (self-)exclusion from his role as a judge. It was an allegiance that only intensified in his heir: William and his kinsman Lewis Pryse were described as 'the greatest incendiaries and most disaffected persons in the principality of Wales' after the risings of 1715.[20] The family's immersion in Jacobite networks might offer another explanation for the scrawled verses we find in the Jonson folio, speaking now not of banished player-soldiers in the mid-seventeenth century but of a later generation's encounter with exile. But it also speaks to their ongoing connections with national political affairs, a continuation in another key of the participation in the public sphere which their immersion in metropolitan life prior to 1688 demonstrated. The trajectory followed by Sir Thomas, at least until his rise and fall under King James, was not at all unusual for a gentleman of his sort: a life symbolically focused on a country estate, but practically lived in the city of London and through the customs and institutions of civil society located there. Indeed, as James Harris suggests, for Welsh men such as Powell 'the law provided the best opportunity for political advancement due to the scarcity of Welsh parliamentary constituencies'.[21] Thomas's sons, Richard and William, at first followed roughly in their father's footsteps. Richard, the elder, matriculated at St John's, Oxford, on 6 July 1669, aged eighteen; he was admitted to the Inner Temple on 10 November the same year, was called to the bar in 1676, and was still resident there in the early 1680s — either he predeceased his father, or he was not in fact his legitimate heir, both plausible reasons for his all but total disappearance from the family record.[22] William matriculated at St John's on 18 December 1674, and was admitted to the Inner Temple thirteen months later; his eventual marriage to Avarina

le Brun brought together the two families' estates, and allowed William 'to live as a gentleman squire rather than pursue a career', an option also enabled by the family's increasingly profitable involvement in the extractive industry of lead mining.[23] Although, as we note above, the earliest demonstrable owner of the Jonson folio was his grandson, born the same year Powell died, we might expect that had this William Powell or his father wished to buy a copy of Jonson's works they would most likely have chosen either the 1692 third folio or the six–volume edition of 1716/17. So the possibility that the folio came to Nanteos along the habitual pathways of Thomas Powell's life is certainly worth entertaining; and indeed, as we hope to show, further evidence supports just such a suggestion.

Annotating *Epicene*

There are good reasons to believe that this copy of the 1640 folio contains the earliest known texts of plays by Jonson marked for performance. We say 'texts' in the plural, because in addition to the heavily annotated text of *Epicene* it also includes a few marginal notes on *The Alchemist*. These suggest that the annotator had the initial idea to develop a production of the play, but either abandoned it or transferred their attentions to another copy. The Folger Shakespeare Library holds a copy of the 1616 folio in which the text of *Every Man Out of His Humour* is marked up for performance with stage directions, textual cuts, and attendant alterations of dialogue; we can plausibly date the hand in which these theatrical annotations are made to the later seventeenth century.[24] The only known seventeenth-century production of *Every Man Out* after 1616 was staged in 1675 by the King's Company, but the annotating hand in the Folger copy and the style of annotation used bear no resemblance to that of Thomas Killigrew nor to any other to be found in a surviving King's Company playscript, making it impossible to associate it with any dateable professional performance on those grounds.

The Edinburgh copy contains two hands annotating the play for performance, one of which (henceforward Hand A) is more obviously mixed in its use of some secretary characters in a small and concise, predominantly italic script. While it is notoriously difficult to date hands with any great precision, the mixed nature of Hand A might dispose us towards a dating in the middle of the seventeenth century, not too long after the book's publication. Hand B is looser or untidier, and with some exceptions such as miniscule 'e' it is mostly italic (see Figure 1). The ink used by Hand A is paler and browner in colour than the dark ink used by Hand B; Hand A's nib is in a better state than that of Hand B. Hand A makes their first interpolation in the 'Dramatis Personae', adding 'Trustie' to the characters where



510 *The Silent VVoman.*

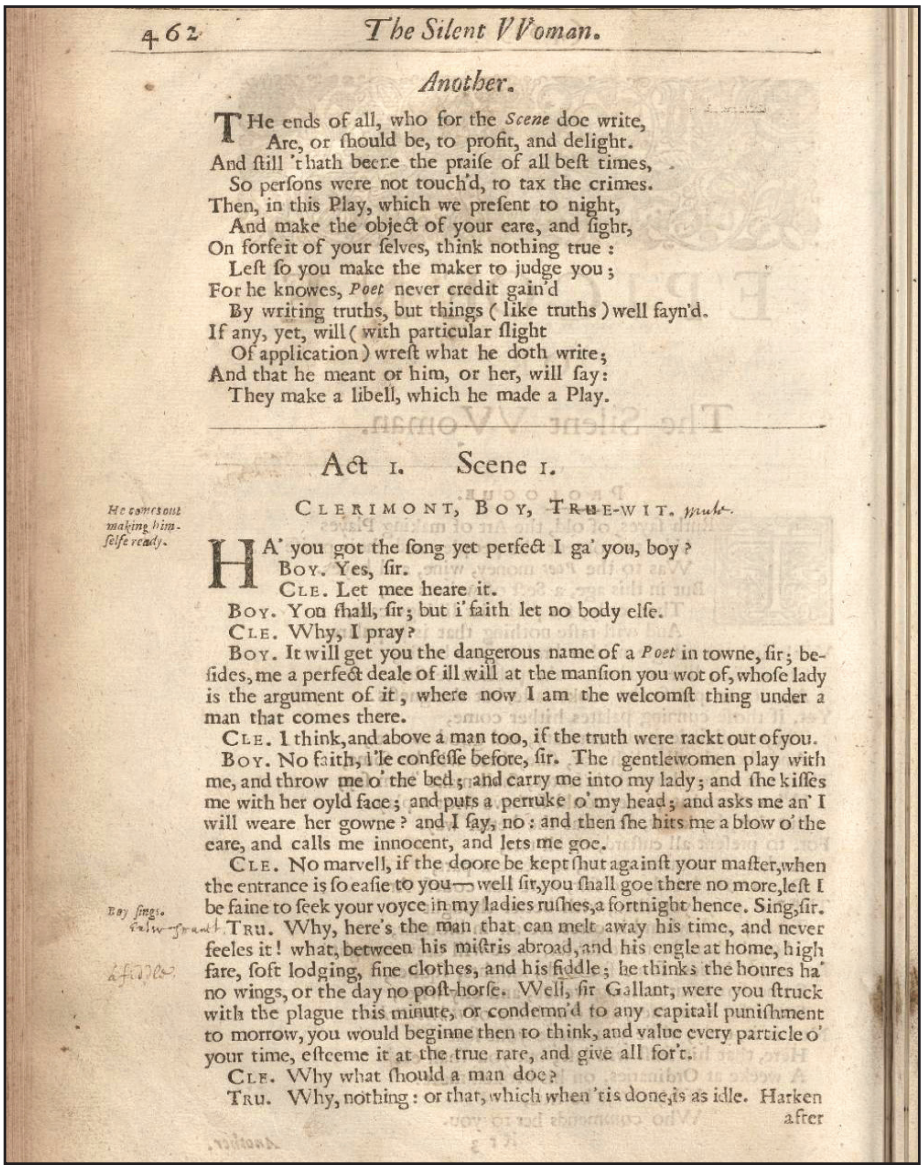
CLE. They have forgot their rapiers!
TRU. O, they meet in peace, man.
DAU. Where's your ſword, ſir JOHN?
CLE. And yours, ſir AMOROUS?
DAW. Mine! my boy had it forth, to mend the handle, eene now.
LA-F. And my gold handle was brok too, and my boy had it forth.
DAU. Indeed, ſir? How their excuſes meet!
CLE. What a conſent there is, i'the handles?
TRU. Nay, there is ſo i'the points too, I warrant you.
Mrs. OT. O me! Madame, he comes againe, the mad man! away.

Act IV. *Scene* VII.

MOROSE, TRUE-WIT, CLERIMONT, DAUPHINE.

WHat make theſe naked weapons here, Gentlemen?
TRU. O, ſir! here hath like to been murder ſince you went! A couple of Knights fallen out about the brides favours: wee were faine to take away their weapons, your houſe had been beg'd by this time elſe——
MOR. For what?
CLE. For man-ſlaughter, ſir, as being acceſſary.
MOR. And, for her favours?
TRU. I, ſir, heretofore, not preſent. CLERIMONT, carry 'hem their ſwords now. They have done all the hurt they will do.
DAU. Ha'you ſpoke with a lawyer, ſir?
MOR. O, no! there is ſuch a noiſe i'the Court, that they have frighted me home, with more violence than I went! ſuch ſpeaking, and counter-ſpeaking, with their ſeverall voyces of *Citations*, *Appellations*, *Allegations*, *Certificats*, *Attachments*, *Interrogatories*, *References*, *Convictions*, and *Affliti-ons* indeed, among the Doctors and Proctors! that the noiſe here is ſilence too't! a kind of calme mid-night!
TRU. Why, ſir, if you would be reſolv'd indeed, I can bring you hither a very ſufficient Lawyer, and a learned Divine, that ſhall inquire into every leaſt ſcruple for you.
MOR. Can you, maſter TRUE-WIT?
TRU. Yes, and are very ſober grave perſons, that will diſpatch it in a chamber, with a whiſper, or two.
MOR. Good ſir, ſhall I hope this benefit from you, and truſt my ſelfe into your hands?
TRU. Alas, ſir! your nephew, and I, have been aſham'd, and oft-times mad ſince you went, to think how you are abus'd. Go in, good ſir, and lock your ſelfe up till we call you, we'll tell you more anon, ſir.
MOR. Do your pleaſure with me, Gentlemen; I beleeve in you: and that deſerves no deluſion——— Exit.
TRU. You ſhall find none, ſir: but heapt, heapt plenty of vexation.
DAU. What wilt thou do now, WIT?
TRU. Recover me hither OTTER, and the Barber, if you can, by any meanes, preſently.
DAU. Why? to what purpoſe?
TRU. O, I'll make the deepeſt Divine, and graveſt Lawyer, out o' them two, for him—— DAU.

Figure 1: p. 510 of the Jonson folio, showing both annotating hands.



462 *The Silent VVoman.*

Another.

THe ends of all, who for the *Scene* doe write,
Are, or ſhould be, to profit, and delight.
And ſtill 't hath beene the praiſe of all beſt times,
So perſons were not touch'd, to tax the crimes.
Then, in this Play, which we preſent to night,
And make the obiect of your eare, and ſight,
On forfeit of your ſelves, think nothing true:
Leſt ſo you make the maker to judge you;
For he knowes, *Poet* never credit gain'd
By writing truths, but things (like truths) well fayn'd.
If any, yet, will (with particular ſlight
Of application) wreſt what he doth write;
And that he meant or him, or her, will ſay:
They make a libell, which he made a Play.

Act I. Scene I.

He comes out making himſelfe ready.

CLERIMONT, BOY, TRUE-WIT. *meete.*

HA' you got the ſong yet perfect I ga' you, boy?

BOY. Yes, ſir.

CLE. Let mee heare it.

BOY. You ſhall, ſir; but i' faith let no body elſe.

CLE. Why, I pray?

BOY. It will get you the dangerous name of a *Poet* in towne, ſir; beſides, me a perfect deale of ill will at the manſion you wot of, whoſe lady is the argument of it, where now I am the welcomſt thing under a man that comes there.

CLE. I think, and above a man too, if the truth were rackt out of you.

BOY. No faith, I'le confeſſe before, ſir. The gentlewomen play with me, and throw me o' the bed; and carry me into my lady; and ſhe kiſſes me with her oyld face; and puts a perruke o' my head; and asks me an' I will weare her gowne? and I ſay, no: and then ſhe hits me a blow o' the eare, and calls me innocent, and lets me goe.

CLE. No marvell, if the doore be kept ſhut againſt your maſter, when the entrance is ſo eaſie to you—well ſir, you ſhall goe there no more, leſt I be faine to ſeek your voyce in my ladies ruſhes, a fortnight hence. Sing, ſir.

Boy ſings.

TRU. Why, here's the man that can melt away his time, and never feeles it! what, between his miſtris abroad, and his engle at home, high fare, ſoft lodging, fine clothes, and his fiddle; he thinks the houres ha' no wings, or the day no poſt-horſe. Well, ſir Gallant, were you ſtruck with the plague this minute, or condemn'd to any capitall puniſhment to morrow, you would beginne then to think, and value every particle o' your time, eſteeme it at the true rate, and give all for't.

CLE. Why what ſhould a man doe?

TRU. Why, nothing: or that, which when 'tis done, is as idle. Harken after

Figure 2: p. 462 of the Jonson folio.

the printed list has given the name of 'Lady Haughties woman' as 'Mavis' by mistake (p. 460). All the other individual roles are marked with a dash, most likely in the same hand. Such marked lists are not uncommon in Restoration performance copies, and obviously relate to issues of casting. Many of Hand A's interventions concern entrances, exits, and movements on stage. For all but two of the entrances they mark, Hand A uses the Latin 'intrat', a more unusual complement to 'exit' or 'exeunt' than its English equivalent. Only at Truewit's first appearance in 1.1 is 'enter' used (p. 462); interestingly, the substitution of 'introit' for 'intrat' at La Foole's entrance in 3.3.75 (p. 485) adds an unexpected liturgical flavour. If this choice is not just variation for the sake of it, then it perhaps reflects the fact that La Foole is here entering 'like a sewer', and thus in a stylized manner.

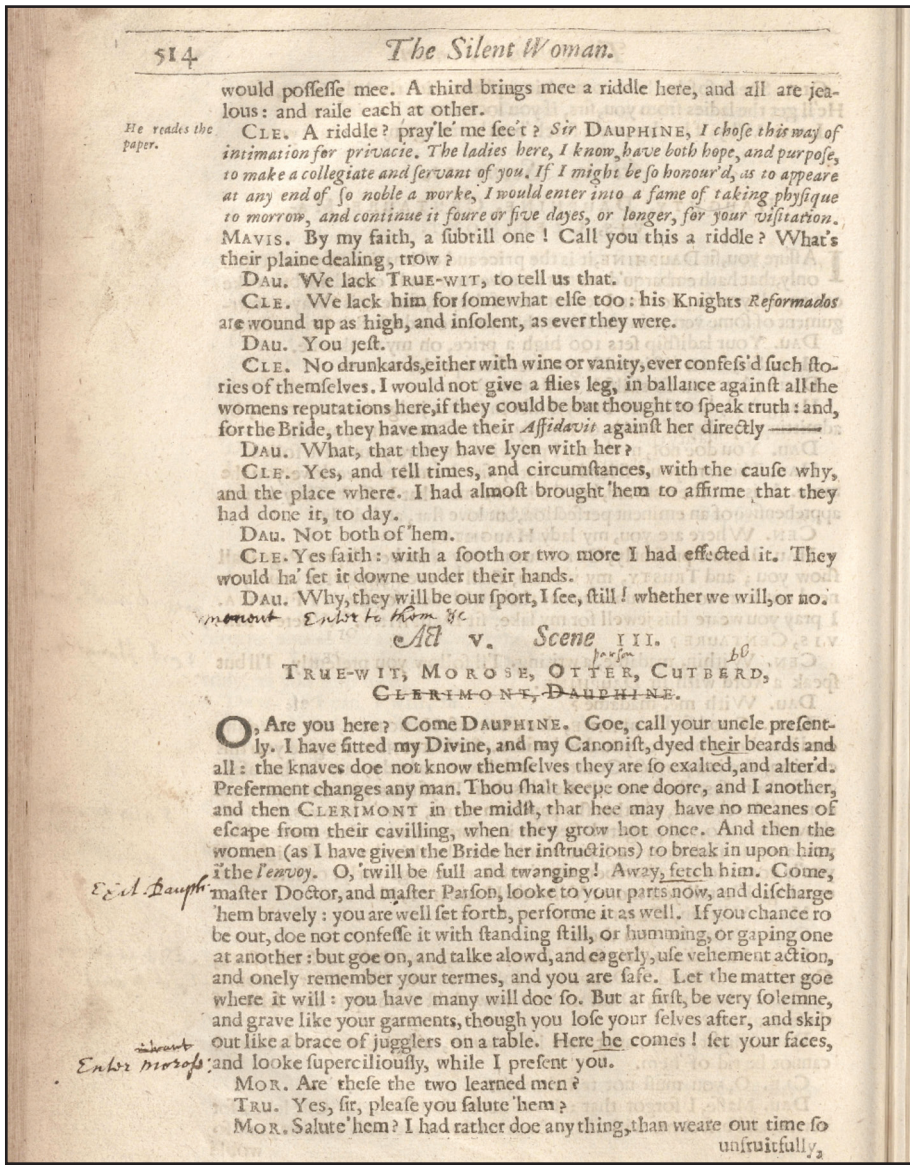
Jonson's printed text lists all characters involved in any scene in a single massed stage direction at its beginning, so Hand A's additions are crucial to determining exactly when actors might be needed. Some of the inclusions reveal the thought processes apparently at work in such deliberations. At 1.1.149, Hand A has underlined Clerimont's line, 'And this fellow waites on him', then added in the margin, 'Mutes [sic], man to Morose' (p. 465). Taking 'this' as a deictic to suggest Mute's presence on stage has led the annotator to include him with Clerimont and the Boy as entering at the start of the scene and remaining on stage throughout (p. 462; Figure 2), a performance choice which would have a significant impact on the plot dynamics of the play. Mute is Morose's servant and first appears in the printed text in his master's home in 2.1, so his presence in the opening act — in which the three gallants discuss how they will gull Dauphine's uncle — has an extraordinary implication: what is presented in the play as a collusion of young men against an old miser becomes inflected with the suggestion of domestic conspiracy. The thought of Morose's 'man' working actively against his master through the rest of the play is a fascinating one, but unfortunately the opening scene is all we hear of it: the only other significant reference to Mute comes in 2.2 (p. 470), where Hand A has accurately noted that Mute should remain on stage with Morose, notwithstanding the printed text omitting him from the massed entrance with which the scene begins. Despite the tempting idea of a radical reinterpretation of the play's opening, we may more reasonably suppose that the suggested appearance of Mute in 1.1 is a misreading of the text that was never corrected; indeed, a number of deleted entrances and exits elsewhere in the text suggest that the annotator quite often found the process of reaching such decisions neither simple nor straightforward.

Hand A's annotations are not concerned solely with entrances and exits, however. Throughout the text of the play marginal additions note props required in

performance, from the Boy's fiddle of 1.1 (p. 462; Figure 2) through to the jewel presented to Dauphine by Lady Haughty at 5.2.18 (p. 513). Some of these are of particular interest — the 'trunk' or speaking tube referenced at 1.1.150 and 2.1.2 is described in the margin at this latter mention, when it would need to be visible to the audience, as a 'trunk staffe' (p. 469), an unusual compound perhaps indicating something more rigid than a flexible tube.[25]

Hand A is also careful to list what might, or might not, be costume requirements, so that La Foole's reference to his family's 'coat' at 1.4.32 (p. 468) is accompanied by the clarifying marginal annotation 'Coat armoir [ie armour]'. At the mention of a 'ruff' at 3.2.20 (p. 483), the annotator has first of all underlined the word, then added the marginal note 'a ruffe', then deleted it when they realized the ruff is not in fact needed on stage. La Foole's entrance 'like a seuer [sewer]' at 3.3.75 (p. 485) is also underlined, as is Clerimont's accompanying reference to the 'towell' La Foole is wearing in this guise, while Hand A's final contributions to the text are costume notations accompanying the mention of both Otter and Cutbeard in the stage direction which opens 5.3 (p. 514; Figure 3).

Hand A, then, is involved in a range of different tasks with the play-text that point towards practical preparation for staging, particularly exits and entrances, props, and costumes. Interestingly, Hand A is joined in such tasks by Hand B at the outset of 3.7 (p. 491). Hand B's first intervention deletes Hand A's emendation of Jonson's headnote stage direction listing the characters required for the scene, and supplies a more directly phrased entrance for Clerimont and Dauphine. From this point in the text onwards, Hand B is responsible for nearly all such stage directions, but since Hand A continues to contribute prop and costume notations in particular this transition perhaps indicates that the work of determining who needed to be on stage when was divided roughly evenly between the two annotators. Hand B contributes prop, sound, and costume notations of their own, often in a more expansive or permissive style than that of their collaborator: thus, a headnote for '⌜Wine⌝^& Cupps sett on a stoole or table' is supplied at the beginning of 4.2 (p. 495), while 'Trumpett or Drum' accompanies Otter's line 'Sound, Tritons of the Thames!' in the same scene (4.2.56; p. 496; Figure 4). Indeed, Hand B is attentive elsewhere to musical accompaniment: the massed entry at 3.7 notes that characters enter 'with Musick' (p. 491), and the 'Ex*eunt* Omnes' that marks the end of act 4 is followed by a note for 'Musick' at the start of act 5 (p. 511; Figure 5). Perhaps this second note signalled an intermission in an intended performance, although it comes curiously late in the play, with no similar notations at previous act breaks. The question of what was played, and who played it, remains a mystery, but 'Musick' at this point would serve a broader thematic



514 *The Silent Woman.*

would poſſeſſe mee. A third brings mee a riddle here, and all are jealous: and raile each at other.

He reades the paper. CLE. A riddle? pray'le me ſee't? *Sir* DAUPHINE, *I choſe this way of intimation for privacie. The ladies here, I know, have both hope, and purpoſe, to make a collegiate and ſervant of you. If I might be ſo honour'd, as to appeare at any end of ſo noble a worke, I would enter into a fame of taking phyſique to morrow, and continue it foure or five dayes, or longer, for your viſitation.*

MAVIS. By my faith, a ſubtill one! Call you this a riddle? What's their plaine dealing, trow?

DAU. We lack TRUE-WIT, to tell us that.

CLE. We lack him for ſomewhat elſe too: his Knights *Reformados* are wound up as high, and inſolent, as ever they were.

DAU. You jeſt.

CLE. No drunkards, either with wine or vanity, ever confeſs'd ſuch ſtories of themſelves. I would not give a flies leg, in ballance againſt all the womens reputations here, if they could be but thought to ſpeak truth: and, for the Bride, they have made their *Affidavit* againſt her directly ——

DAU. What, that they have lyen with her?

CLE. Yes, and tell times, and circumſtances, with the cauſe why, and the place where. I had almoſt brought 'hem to affirme that they had done it, to day.

DAU. Not both of 'hem.

CLE. Yes faith: with a ſooth or two more I had effected it. They would ha' ſet it downe under their hands.

DAU. Why, they will be our ſport, I ſee, ſtill! whether we will, or no.

Exeunt Enter to them &c

Act V. *Scene* III.

TRUE-WIT, MOROSE, OTTER, CUTBERD, CLERIMONT, DAUPHINE.

O, Are you here? Come DAUPHINE. Goe, call your uncle preſently. I have fitted my Divine, and my Canoniſt, dyed their beards and all: the knaves doe not know themſelves they are ſo exalted, and alter'd. Preferment changes any man. Thou ſhalt keepe one doore, and I another, and then CLERIMONT in the midſt, that hee may have no meanes of eſcape from their cavilling, when they grow hot once. And then the women (as I have given the Bride her inſtructions) to break in upon him, i'the *l'envoy*. O, 'twill be full and twanging! Away, fetch him. Come, maſter Doctor, and maſter Parſon, looke to your parts now, and diſcharge 'hem bravely: you are well ſet forth, performe it as well. If you chance to be out, doe not confeſſe it with ſtanding ſtill, or humming, or gaping one at another: but goe on, and talke alowd, and eagerly, uſe vehement action, and onely remember your termes, and you are ſafe. Let the matter goe where it will: you have many will doe ſo. But at firſt, be very ſolemne, and grave like your garments, though you loſe your ſelves after, and skip out like a brace of jugglers on a table. Here he comes! ſet your faces, and looke ſuperciliouſly, while I preſent you.

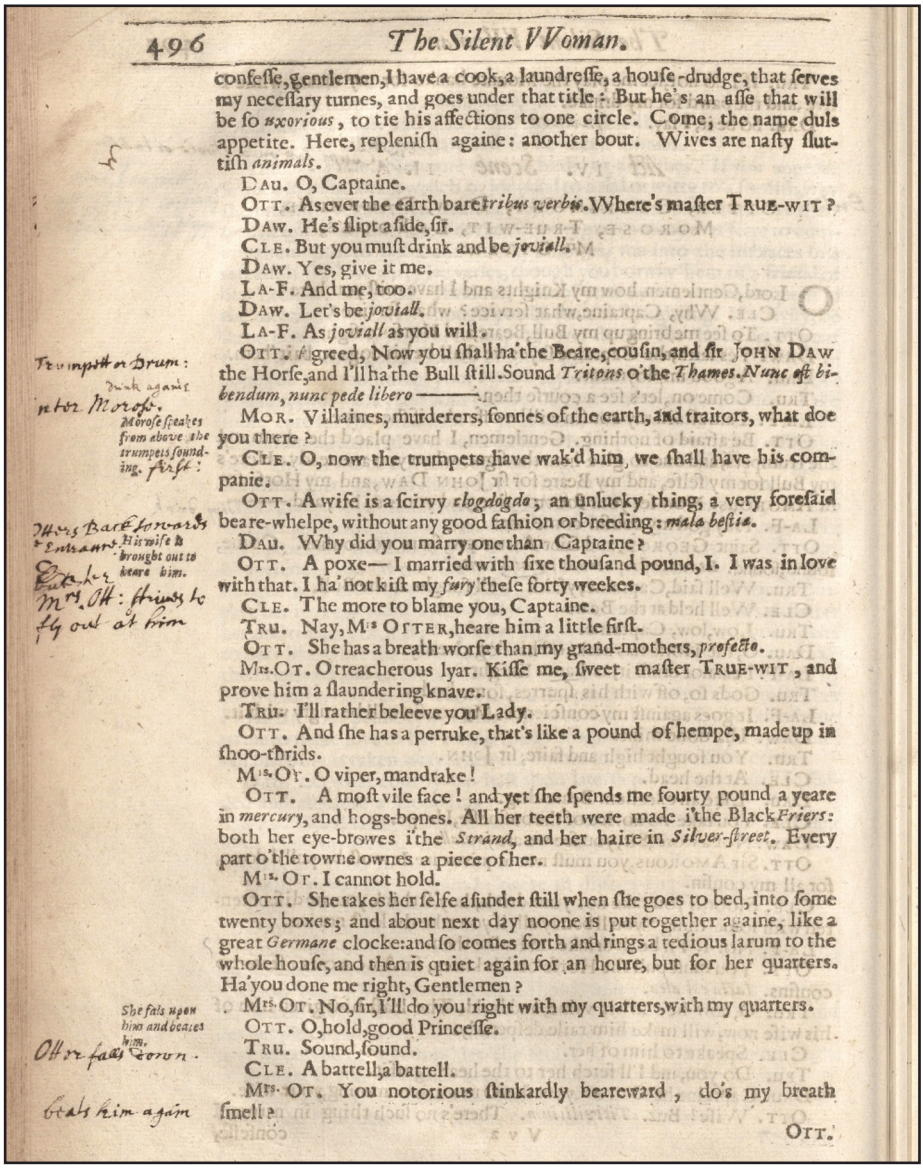
Exit Dauph. *Enter Morose.*

MOR. Are theſe the two learned men?

TRU. Yes, ſir, pleaſe you ſalute 'hem?

MOR. Salute 'hem? I had rather doe any thing, than weare out time ſo unfruitfully,

Figure 3: p. 514 of the Jonson folio.



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confeſſe, gentlemen, I have a cook, a laundreſſe, a houſe-drudge, that ſerves my neceſſary turnes, and goes under that title: But he's an aſſe that will be ſo *uxorious*, to tie his affections to one circle. Come, the name duls appetite. Here, repleniſh againe: another bout. Wives are naſty ſluttiſh *animals*.

DAU. O, Captaine.

OTT. As ever the earth bare *tribus verbis*. Where's maſter TRUE-WIT?

DAW. He's ſlipt aſide, ſir.

CLE. But you muſt drink and be *joviall*.

DAW. Yes, give it me.

LA-F. And me, too.

DAW. Let's be *joviall*.

LA-F. As *joviall* as you will.

OTT. I greed, Now you ſhall ha'the Beare, couſin, and ſir JOHN DAW the Horſe, and I'll ha'the Bull ſtill. Sound *Tritons* o'the *Thames*. *Nunc eſt bibendum, nunc pede libero* ———.

MOR. Villaines, murderers, ſonnes of the earth, and traitors, what doe you there?

CLE. O, now the trumpets have wak'd him, we ſhall have his companie.

OTT. A wife is a ſcirvy *clogdogdo*; an unlucky thing, a very foreſaid beare-whelpe, without any good faſhion or breeding: *malæ beſtiæ*.

DAU. Why did you marry one than Captaine?

OTT. A poxe— I married with ſixe thouſand pound, I. I was in love with that. I ha' not kiſt my *fury* theſe forty weekes.

CLE. The more to blame you, Captaine.

TRU. Nay, Mrs OTTER, heare him a little firſt.

OTT. She has a breath worſe than my grand-mothers, *profecto*.

MRS. OT. O treacherous lyar. Kiſſe me, ſweet maſter TRUE-WIT, and prove him a ſlaundering knave.

TRU. I'll rather beleeve you Lady.

OTT. And ſhe has a perruke, that's like a pound of hempe, made up in ſhoo-thrids.

MRS. OT. O viper, mandrake!

OTT. A moſt vile face! and yet ſhe ſpends me fourty pound a yeare in *mercury*, and hogs-bones. All her teeth were made i'the Black *Friers*: both her eye-browes i'the *Strand*, and her haire in *Silver-ſtreet*. Every part o'the towne ownes a piece of her.

MRS. OT. I cannot hold.

OTT. She takes her ſelfe aſunder ſtill when ſhe goes to bed, into ſome twenty boxes; and about next day noone is put together againe, like a great *Germane* clocke: and ſo comes forth and rings a tedious larum to the whole houſe, and then is quiet again for an houre, but for her quarters. Ha'you done me right, Gentlemen?

MRS. OT. No, ſir, I'll do you right with my quarters, with my quarters.

OTT. O, hold, good Princeſſe.

TRU. Sound, ſound.

CLE. A battell, a battell.

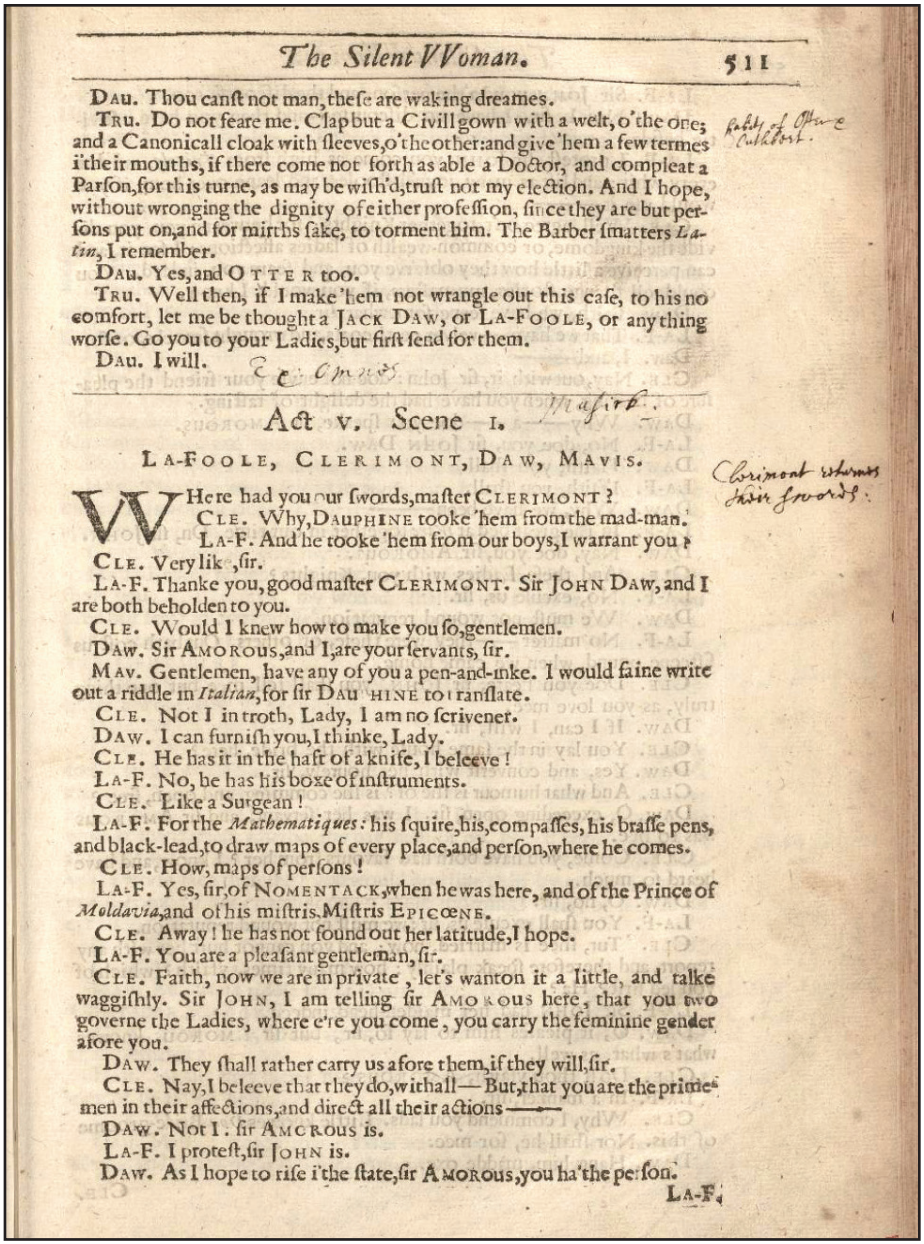
MRS. OT. You notorious ſtinkardly beareward, do's my breath ſmell?

OTT.

Figure 4: p. 496 of the Jonson folio; annotations detailing stage directions and props.

purpose, pointing to the increasing encroachment upon Morose's repose that has in previous scenes been disturbed by the blaring of a post-horn, the noisy arrival of the wedding breakfast and its guests, and the 'Trumpett or Drum' for Otter's drinking game. With 'Musick' to herald the beginning of act 5, the annotators thus bring the play's action to a literal crescendo.

In their focus on practical preparation for staging, Hand B's labours are continuous with those of Hand A. Both annotators, however, also contribute a substantial number of advisory stage directions, focused not on matters pertinent to the job of a bookkeeper but directing the onstage actions of the players instead. Fully fifty-seven of the 220 annotations fall under this heading. Some of the directions provided are fairly basic, especially those furnished by Hand A, such as 'Salutes them' at 1.4.1 (p. 468), accompanying La Foole's entrance, and 'kisses her' for Morose and Epicene at 2.5.68 (p. 479). Others, though, are more interestingly descriptive. Hand A, for example, adds the annotation 'Ra*m*ps his fing*er*s' alongside Clerimont's speech describing Cutbeard's attendance on Morose, 'The fellow trims him silently, and has not the knack with his sheeres, or his fingers' (1.2.32–3; p. 466). The annotation is accompanied by an underscore on 'his fingers', clearly indicating that Clerimont is to make a fitting gesture at this point in the speech. More expansively, Hand B provides careful choreography of the altercation between Otter and his wife in 4.2. At Mrs Otter's entry on to the stage, the annotation 'Otters back towards <. .>e entrance' clarifies her husband's position on stage; two lines later, the annotator has added 'Mrs Ott*er* strives to fly out at him' alongside Truewit's line 'Nay, Mrs Otter, heare him a little first' (4.2.66; p. 496; Figure 4). When husband and wife finally come to blows, Hand B adds directions for Otter to fall down, and three separate instructions for Mrs Otter to beat him. Sometimes the advisory stage directions prescribe action to be undertaken by characters when they are not involved in the main action or dialogue. The 'duel' between La Foole and Daw in 4.5 is carefully plotted, with notes for when swords and a scarf are to be deployed and instructions for actors, including that Truewit 'thrusts at ye door' of the closet where Daw is hiding (p. 505), and that 'Cler*imont* and ye Ladyes begin to peep in' at the action (p.507). In the next scene, a lengthy exchange between the Collegiates is accompanied by the instruction 'Dauphine all this while seemes whispering to Clerim*ont*' written vertically down the left hand margin (p. 508). Sometimes, too, the directions focus on the delivery of lines. At 4.6.54, Hand B adds 'Truewitt takes Dauphin to ye side & speakes this by them selues', and shortly afterwards, at 4.6.71, 'Tru*witt* steps to the closett and seemes to speak this softly' (p. 509). 'They speak low' has been added alongside a brief exchange between Mavis and Haughty at 3.6.49, followed



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DAU. Thou canſt not man, theſe are waking dreames.

TRU. Do not feare me. Clap but a Civill gown with a welt, o'the one; and a Canonicall cloak with ſleeves, o'the other: and give 'hem a few termes i'their mouths, if there come not forth as able a Doctor, and compleat a Parſon, for this turne, as may be wiſh'd, truſt not my election. And I hope, without wronging the dignity of either profeſſion, ſince they are but perſons put on, and for mirths ſake, to torment him. The Barber ſmatters *Latin*, I remember.

DAU. Yes, and OTTER too.

TRU. Well then, if I make 'hem not wrangle out this caſe, to his no comfort, let me be thought a JACK DAW, or LA-FOOLE, or any thing worſe. Go you to your Ladies, but firſt ſend for them.

DAU. I will.

Act v. Scene I.

LA-FOOLE, CLERIMONT, DAW, MAVIS.

WHere had you our ſwords, maſter CLERIMONT?

CLE. Why, DAUPHINE tooke 'hem from the mad-man.

LA-F. And he tooke 'hem from our boys, I warrant you?

CLE. Very lik'ly, ſir.

LA-F. Thanke you, good maſter CLERIMONT. Sir JOHN DAW, and I are both beholden to you.

CLE. Would I knew how to make you ſo, gentlemen.

DAW. Sir AMOROUS, and I, are your ſervants, ſir.

MAV. Gentlemen, have any of you a pen-and-inke. I would faine write out a riddle in *Italian*, for ſir DAUPHINE to tranſlate.

CLE. Not I in troth, Lady, I am no ſcrivener.

DAW. I can furniſh you, I thinke, Lady.

CLE. He has it in the haft of a knife, I beleeve!

LA-F. No, he has his boxe of inſtruments.

CLE. Like a Surgean!

LA-F. For the *Mathematiques*: his ſquire, his, compaſſes, his braſſe pens, and black-lead, to draw maps of every place, and perſon, where he comes.

CLE. How, maps of perſons!

LA-F. Yes, ſir, of NOMENTACK, when he was here, and of the Prince of *Moldavia*, and of his miſtris. Miſtris EPICŒNE.

CLE. Away! he has not found out her latitude, I hope.

LA-F. You are a pleaſant gentleman, ſir.

CLE. Faith, now we are in private, let's wanton it a little, and talke waggiſhly. Sir JOHN, I am telling ſir AMOROUS here, that you two governe the Ladies, where e're you come, you carry the feminine gender afore you.

DAW. They ſhall rather carry us afore them, if they will, ſir.

CLE. Nay, I beleeve that they do, withall — But, that you are the primes men in their affections, and direct all their actions ——

DAW. Not I, ſir AMOROUS is.

LA-F. I proteſt, ſir JOHN is.

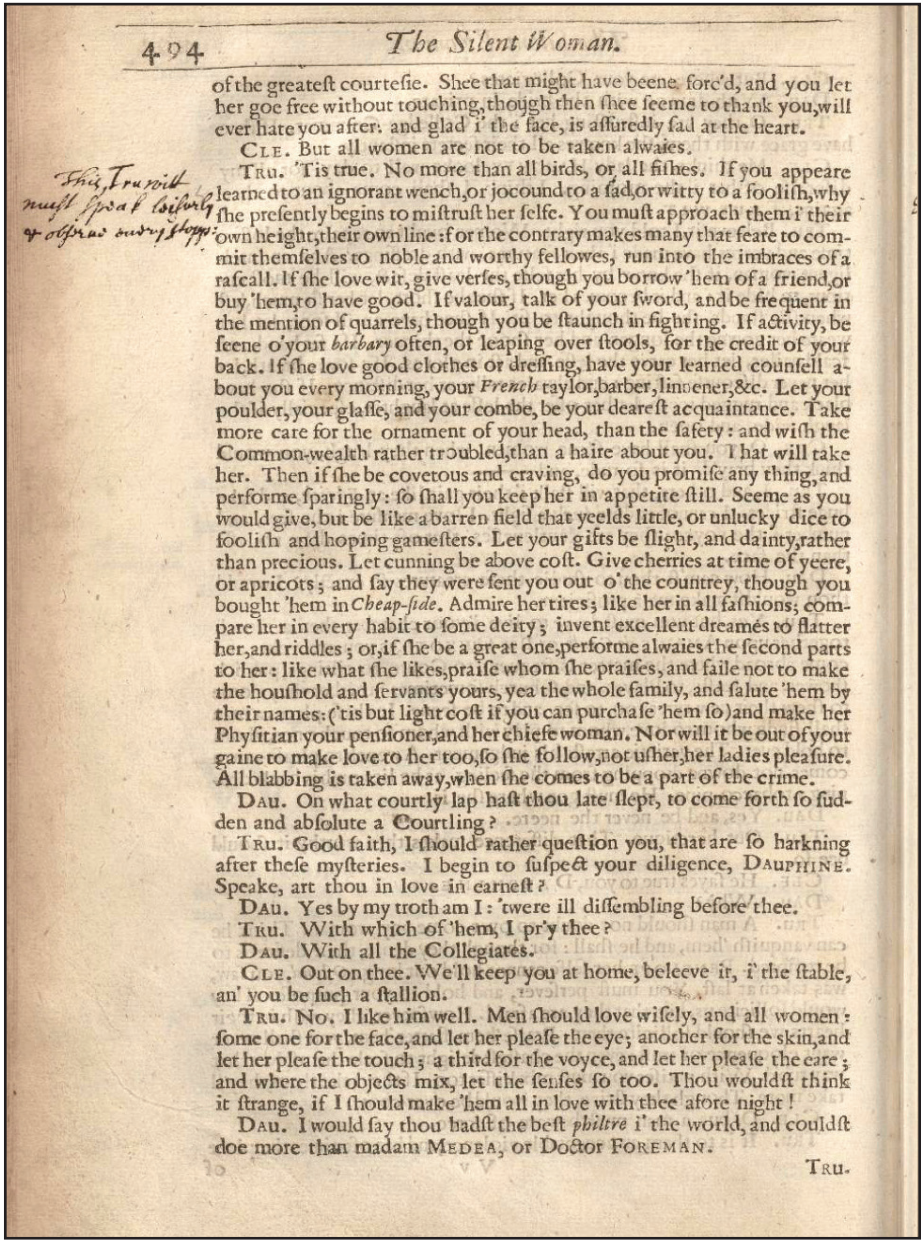
DAW. As I hope to riſe i'the ſtate, ſir AMOROUS, you ha'the perſon.

LA-F.

Figure 5: p. 511 of the Jonson folio; annotations detailing stage directions, costume, props, and music.

by 'high' at Haughty's next line (3.6.56), indicating the shift in pitch and volume necessary to make sense of the dialogue (p. 490). Most interestingly, as we discuss below, Hand B adds the instruction 'This, Truwitt must speak leisurly & obserue euery stoppe' alongside the opening line of the character's lengthiest misogynistic utterance in 4.1 (68–95; p. 494; Figure 6).

Despite the evident concern for staging shown by these annotations, the annotators' labours are possibly incomplete. Three scenes — 1.3, 2.3, and 3.1 — lack the kinds of annotations that we find elsewhere, and while none of them requires the marginal addition of any entrances or exits mid scene, 2.3 at least calls for a prop in the form of a piece of paper that the usually thorough Hand A does not note. Is this merely an accidental omission or oversight, or a sign that the play has not been thoroughly prepared for staging? An absence of cuts might further incline us to see this copy as at one or more removes from performance, a view that could be reinforced by the fact that none of the added directions is anticipatory, which could also rule the copy out as being suitable for use by prompter or bookkeeper. While scholars rightly judge the presence of such forms of intervention to indicate direct use in performance, reliable judgment on the base of their absence is not necessarily easy to make.[26] A copy of the 1647 Beaumont and Fletcher *Comedies and Tragedies* in the collections of Pennsylvania State University, which Edward Langhans has associated with John Rhodes's short-lived company of 1660, contains substantial performance annotations in a single mid-seventeenth century hand on *The Spanish Curate*, *The Loyall Subject*, and *A Wife for a Moneth*.[27] Nearly all of these annotations are anticipatory stage directions occurring between fifteen and twenty lines ahead of the denoted entrance, usually featuring the phrase 'be ready', and followed at the actual entrance by a cross hatch mark familiar from later prompt books associated with the King's Company. This evidence is consistent with this copy of the folio being used to prompt performance, but at the same time, the text of each play is entirely uncut. The absence of cuts, therefore, can coincide with the presence of other features which strongly point towards an actual staging. By the same token, an absence of anticipatory or transferred directions for entrances and exits does not necessarily imply that a text is incomplete as a performance copy and can therefore be identified only with an abortive production or preparatory stage. As William Long and Paul Werstine have shown in their examination of playhouse manuscripts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such annotation is by no means universal, nor even consistent within any single playbook.[28] While such directions become more common in the promptbooks of the Restoration theatres, even here



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of the greateſt courteſie. Shee that might have beene forc'd, and you let her goe free without touching, though then ſhee ſeeme to thank you, will ever hate you after: and glad i' the face, is aſſuredly ſad at the heart.

CLE. But all women are not to be taken alwaies.

TRU. 'Tis true. No more than all birds, or all fiſhes. If you appeare learned to an ignorant wench, or jocound to a ſad, or witty to a fooliſh, why ſhe preſently begins to miſtruſt her ſelfe. You muſt approach them i' their own height, their own line: for the contrary makes many that feare to commit themſelves to noble and worthy fellowes, run into the imbraces of a raſcall. If ſhe love wit, give verſes, though you borrow 'hem of a friend, or buy 'hem, to have good. If valour, talk of your ſword, and be frequent in the mention of quarrels, though you be ſtaunch in fighting. If activity, be ſeene o' your *barbary* often, or leaping over ſtools, for the credit of your back. If ſhe love good clothes or dreſſing, have your learned counſell about you every morning, your *French* taylor, barber, linnener, &c. Let your poulder, your glaſſe, and your combe, be your deareſt acquaintance. Take more care for the ornament of your head, than the ſafety: and wiſh the Common-wealth rather troubled, than a haire about you. That will take her. Then if ſhe be covetous and craving, do you promiſe any thing, and performe ſparingly: ſo ſhall you keep her in appetite ſtill. Seeme as you would give, but be like a barren field that yeelds little, or unlucky dice to fooliſh and hoping gameſters. Let your gifts be ſlight, and dainty, rather than precious. Let cunning be above coſt. Give cherries at time of yeere, or apricots; and ſay they were ſent you out o' the countrey, though you bought 'hem in *Cheap-ſide*. Admire her tires; like her in all faſhions; compare her in every habit to ſome deity; invent excellent dreames to flatter her, and riddles; or, if ſhe be a great one, performe alwaies the ſecond parts to her: like what ſhe likes, praiſe whom ſhe praiſes, and faile not to make the houſhold and ſervants yours, yea the whole family, and ſalute 'hem by their names: ('tis but light coſt if you can purchaſe 'hem ſo) and make her Phyſitian your penſioner, and her chiefe woman. Nor will it be out of your gaine to make love to her too, ſo ſhe follow, not uſher, her ladies pleaſure. All blabbing is taken away, when ſhe comes to be a part of the crime.

DAU. On what courtly lap haſt thou late ſlept, to come forth ſo ſudden and abſolute a Courtling?

TRU. Good faith, I ſhould rather queſtion you, that are ſo harkning after theſe myſteries. I begin to ſuſpect your diligence, DAUPHINE. Speake, art thou in love in earneſt?

DAU. Yes by my troth am I: 'twere ill diſſembling before thee.

TRU. With which of 'hem, I pr'y thee?

DAU. With all the Collegiates.

CLE. Out on thee. We'll keep you at home, beleeve it, i' the ſtable, an' you be ſuch a ſtallion.

TRU. No. I like him well. Men ſhould love wiſely, and all women: ſome one for the face, and let her pleaſe the eye; another for the skin, and let her pleaſe the touch; a third for the voyce, and let her pleaſe the eare; and where the objects mix, let the ſenſes ſo too. Thou wouldſt think it ſtrange, if I ſhould make 'hem all in love with thee afore night!

DAU. I would ſay thou hadſt the beſt *philtre* i' the world, and couldſt doe more than madam MEDEA, or Doctor FOREMAN.

TRU.

Figure 6: p. 494 of the Jonson folio.

they remain a sufficient but not necessary feature of a playbook associated with an actual, rather than merely planned, performance.

The really distinctive feature of this copy of *Epicene*, though, from the perspective of staging, is the provision of many advisory stage directions covering onstage speech and action. This, combined with the absence of scene settings and diacritical marks used to mark entrances, is decidedly unlike the common theatrical practice evidenced in Restoration promptbooks or playhouse texts used by the post-1660 professional companies. In his survey of pre-1640 playhouse manuscripts William Long associates such stage directions specifically with amateur playwrights such as John Clavell, whose *The Soddered Citizen* was performed by the King's Men in 1630. In Clavell's text, writes Long, 'players are instructed specifically what actions to take and how to comport themselves at certain moments — just the sort of advice no professional needs from an amateur'. As he puts it earlier, 'the amateurs, as a rule, will tell *how*, not just *what*'.[29] We might imagine that this distinction carries through into the annotation of printed plays, too — whereas the bookkeepers of the professional stage will be focused on the practical business of the absolutely necessary *what*, amateurs staging a production might find themselves diverted into the specification of a *how* that cannot be left in the safe hands of trained players — in which case, the extensive presence of such advisory stage directions might be thought to point to an origin in an amateur production of the play otherwise unknown to us. If such a production is not rooted in the practice of the professional companies, it is however imaginatively continuous with the practice evidenced by the printed text itself. *Epicene*, like other plays in the folios of 1616 and 1640, is annotated by Jonson with frequent marginal advisory stage directions, printed in italic type and a smaller font to the main text. Indeed, it includes thirty-two such directions, perhaps because it required, as Peter Wright puts it, 'precise movement as well as a great range of emotion and expression'.[30] The annotators, then, substantially expanded on Jonson's own practice, sometimes interleaving their marginal annotations with his without merely repeating them, but more often pointing to stage action that the playwright left implicit.

A Cluster of Playbooks?

But is it possible to identify these putative amateur annotators? And in pursuing this question, can we perhaps further our understanding of the idiosyncrasies of their practices? We believe that answers can indeed be proposed that might give us a sense of the performance practice traceable in the marks left on this copy of

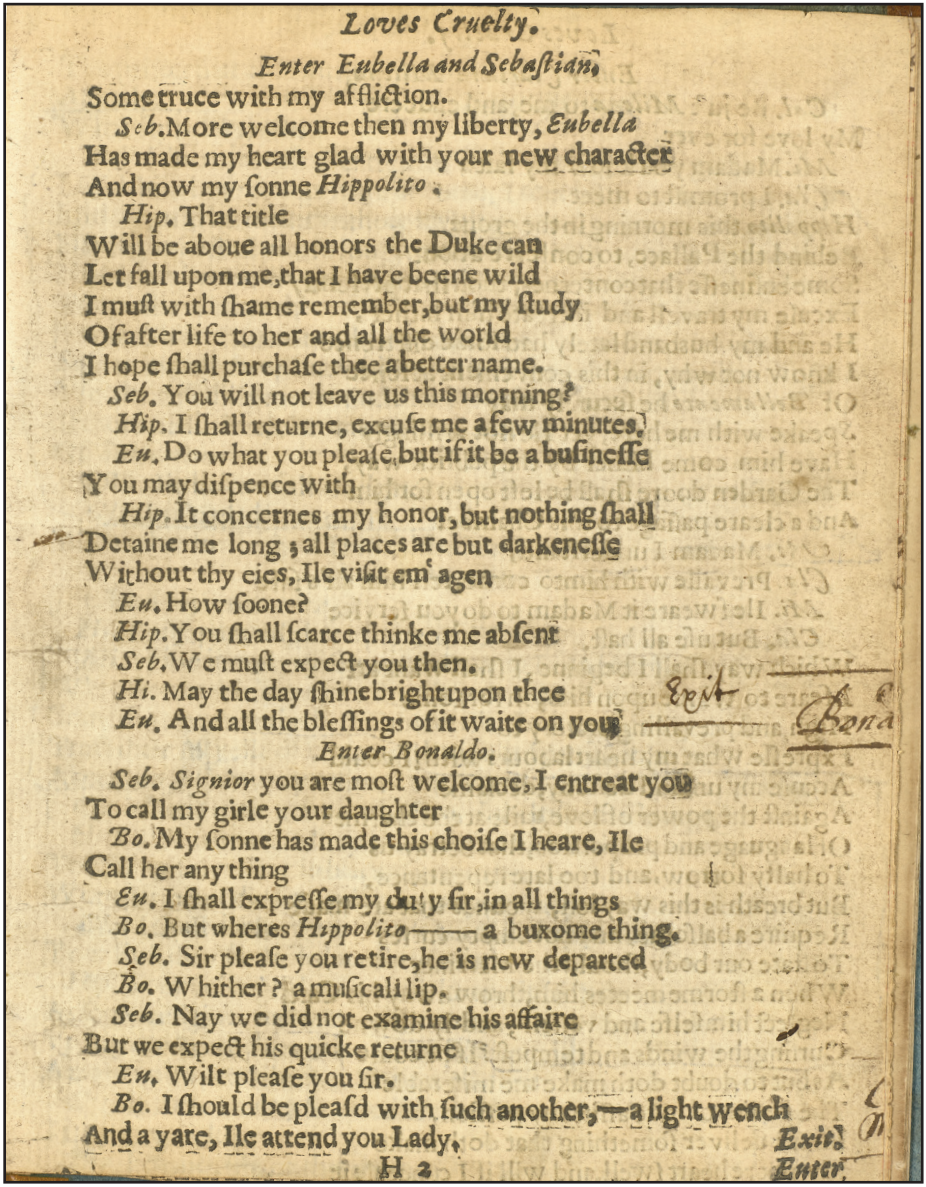
Epicene. However, the route towards such answers must be indirect: first, we must understand that the annotations left in such play-texts illuminate a practice that is both individual and collaborative. And this understanding, in turn, requires us to look beyond the Jonson folio to other printed plays marked up for performance which can usefully be examined alongside it.

Perhaps the most important of these documents for our purposes is a copy of the 1640 quarto of James Shirley's *Loves Crueltie* now held by the National Library of Scotland (NLS Bute.559). This copy was acquired with the rest of the Bute collection in the 1950s, and was first brought to critical attention by G. Blakemore Evans in a 1967 article noting the presence within it of annotations for performance.[31] Evans suggested that there were three hands at work in the copy; in our view, there are in fact five.[32] One is a crude, perhaps childlike, hand that contributes the single annotation 'women as false' at the side of a speech by Hippolito in act 3 (sig. E2v) — clearly not a performance annotation, which is no doubt why Evans overlooked it. A second hand would appear to be responsible for the marginal comments 'Cause' (sig. C3v), 'woman' (sig. D3v; scribbled over in pencil), 'sorrow' (sig. F2; also crossed out), 'wife' (sig. [Hv]), and 'chambermaid' (sig. H3). Between these insertions we find significant variation in style, but the fact that they are all followed by a brevigraph for 'and' may indicate that they were all added by the same writer. Other copies of plays by Shirley in the Bute collection contain similar annotations, though often in other hands, and Evans has suggested, reasonably, that these are signs of (non-theatrical) readers using the books for commonplacing.[33] The three remaining hands in *Loves Crueltie* are more obviously connected to possible performance. The first is a rounded, secretary script, written with a very thick line, which adds the three advisory stage directions, 'Hi*ppolito* drawes his s< … >d' (the middle letters in 'sword' are blotted out), 'stabs him', and 'hee kills her' alongside the relevant lines in act 5 (sig. I). These annotations are clearly intended to explicate action, but whether that explication is theatrical is not easy to say, for the reasons explored above. Evans suggested that the remaining annotations were all made in the same hand (hence his total of three); but we think, as we will explain below, that two hands can in fact be distinguished within these annotations.

In order to show why this matters, however, we need to look at why Evans concerned himself with this copy of *Loves Crueltie* in the first place. His article is focused on the contributions to the copy made by his third annotator, whose marginal markings were unfortunately for the most part lost when the book was cropped for binding at some point in its history. As Evans recognized, this hand is also responsible for marking up *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure* in a copy of

the Shakespeare first folio held by the University of Padua — and it is performing the same tasks.[34] Both the Shakespeare and the Shirley texts use the margins to supply stage directions, principally entrances and sound notations. Some of these are quite unusual, such as the 'Treade' supplied to the right of the Third Murderer's line 'Hearke, I heare Horses' in *Macbeth* 3.3 (TLN 1228) which appears to be calling for a particular sound effect to match the implicit requirement of the line (though see below). Prop notations also feature, such as the 'Cauldorne' specified for the beginning of *Macbeth* 4.1, and the 'Head' called for in *Measure for Measure* 4.3. These annotations sometimes make explicit a prop requirement implicit in the printed dialogue, and sometimes repeat in a more obviously visible form a prop requirement stated in a stage direction, but some printed stage directions for props (such as the requirement for Macduff to enter with Macbeth's head in 5.8) are not repeated in this fashion. The stage directions for entrances are not obviously anticipatory, for the most part: however, in *Measure for Measure* we find two such directions, a 'Bee ready Abhorson' at the beginning of 4.3, and a 'Bee ready' added eighteen lines prior to the entrance of 'Duke, Provost, Isabella' in 5.1. Similarly, in *Loves Crueltie* the cropping has not entirely obscured a 'Bee [ready]' in act 5 (sig. I2r; only the 'Bee' survives) that anticipates an entrance for multiple characters some twelve lines later. These latter two stage directions are particularly significant, since in both cases the entrance occurs at the top of the verso leaf following the annotation; we should therefore read these as transferred stage directions.[35] This evidence further supports the idea that these copies were intended not just to prepare performance but to be used by a prompter or bookkeeper, since they serve to ensure that the bookkeeper, and the actors they are overseeing, are not surprised by an immediate entrance of one or more characters when they turn a page. Similarly, the supplied entrances for characters and the sound notations that duplicate those provided by the printed text indicate that these copies are intended to prompt performance, as such annotations provide visual indications of actors' required positions that cannot as readily be provided by the small type of the printed page.

Strikingly, given such strong parallels, *Loves Crueltie* also includes six stage directions for exits that Evans assumed are in the same annotating hand (see Figure 7, for example).[36] At no point in the text of either *Macbeth* or *Measure for Measure* does the Padua annotator add such an exit direction even where the printed text omits one that is clearly needed (as at 2.2.161 in *Measure for Measure*, for example, where Isabella must leave the stage after her line 'Save your honour' in order for Angelo to articulate his awareness of his sudden desire for her to himself and the audience). This lack of exit directions is not necessarily an oversight — the



Loves Cruelty.

Enter Eubella and Sebaſtian.

Some truce with my affliction.
Seb. More welcome then my liberty, *Eubella*
Has made my heart glad with your new character
And now my ſonne *Hippolito*.
Hip. That title
Will be aboue all honors the Duke can
Let fall upon me, that I have beene wild
I muſt with ſhame remember, but my ſtudy
Of after life to her and all the world
I hope ſhall purchaſe thee a better name.
Seb. You will not leave us this morning?
Hip. I ſhall returne, excuſe me a few minutes.
Eu. Do what you pleaſe, but if it be a buſineſſe
You may diſpence with
Hip. It concernes my honor, but nothing ſhall
Detaine me long; all places are but darkeneſſe
Without thy eies, Ile viſit em agen
Eu. How ſoone?
Hip. You ſhall ſcarce thinke me abſent
Seb. We muſt expect you then.
Hi. May the day ſhine bright upon thee — *Exit*
Eu. And all the bleſſings of it waite on you — *Bona*

Enter Bonaldo.

Seb. *Signior* you are moſt welcome, I entreat you
To call my girle your daughter
Bo. My ſonne has made this choiſe I heare, Ile
Call her any thing
Eu. I ſhall expreſſe my duty ſir, in all things
Bo. But wheres *Hippolito* —— a buxome thing.
Seb. Sir pleaſe you retire, he is new departed
Bo. Whither? a muſicall lip.
Seb. Nay we did not examine his affaire
But we expect his quicke returne
Eu. Wilt pleaſe you ſir.
Bo. I ſhould be pleaſd with ſuch another, — a light wench
And a yare, Ile attend you Lady. *Exit.*

H 2 *Enter*

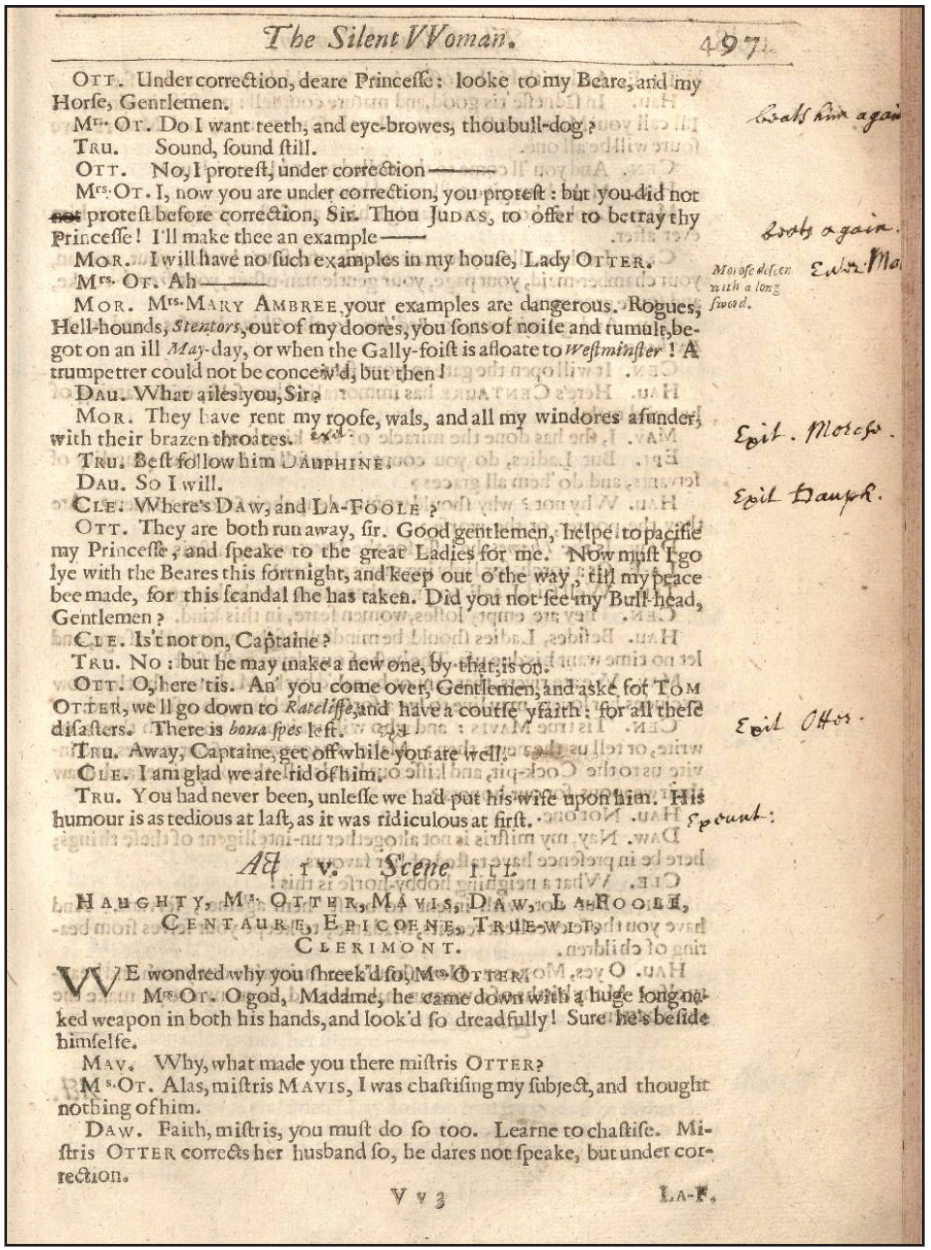
Figure 7: H2 from James Shirley, *Loves Crueltie* (London, 1640; STC: 22449), NLS Bute.559.

majority of annotations made in these two Padua plays are intended to mark the text to ensure that entrances are especially visible, usually by doubling the printed entry direction, presumably to assist themselves or another bookkeeper. Knowing when to exit might well be seen as much more the actors' responsibility.

Furthermore, palaeographical features cast doubt on whether the Padua annotator supplied these 'exits', as Evans assumed. For a start, as Figure 7 indicates, a clear dissimilarity exists between the hand in which they are written and those of the Padua annotator. Secondly, where they occur close to other stage directions their position on the page and relation to the text nearby does not suggest they were part of the same act or acts of annotation. Moreover, the Padua annotator's directions are almost without exception enclosed by a rule both above and beneath. Four of the supplied 'exits' in *Loves Crueltie* have no accompanying line at all; one has a single line beneath, while the remaining one, in the right margin of sig. B3, may well have been added in to a ruled stage direction already present: it occurs beneath a ruled line and above the remains of the annotation 'Courtier' (only the first two letters have survived the cropping to which the book has been subjected), which is itself underlined. The now vanished presence of an additional notation for Hippolito, who here enters with the Courtier, explains the gap between 'Co' and the line above 'Exit', though. It seems likely, therefore, that this 'Exit' too was entered separately, and with no accompanying rules.

For these reasons, then, we are suggesting that there are five hands evident in *Loves Crueltie*, and that the work that Evans attributed entirely to his solo Padua annotator in fact belongs to two individuals. This possibility becomes more interesting still due to what looks like a clear similarity between the fourth hand, responsible for those 'exits', and the way in which Hand B of the Jonson folio forms the same word, to the same purpose (Figure 8).[37] There is a minor difference in slant, with the Jonson annotations for the most part leaning a little more to the right, but this feature is not present in all instances; in the Shirley text, by the same token, the ligature joining the 'e' and 'x' is more pronounced than in the somewhat rougher examples in the Jonson volume (Figure 7). Nonetheless, we find the resemblance suggestive, and while we should be very wary of suggesting on the basis of these examples alone that the same annotator is at work, other factors support such a claim. The first, of course, is that the two sets of annotations are doing the same thing: marking exits omitted in the printed text of which actors need to be aware, and this practice is not something that the Padua annotator does in the Shakespeare texts.

In addition, we have a telling annotation of a different sort in the NLS *Loves Crueltie* which is also echoed in the Jonson folio. Where Shirley's printed text has



The Silent VVoman. 497.

OTT. Under correction, deare Princeſſe: looke to my Beare, and my Horſe, Gentlemen.

Mrs. OT. Do I want teeth, and eye-browes, thou bull-dog?

TRU. Sound, found ſtill.

OTT. No, I proteſt, under correction——

Mrs. OT. I, now you are under correction, you proteſt: but you did not ~~not~~ proteſt before correction, Sir. Thou JUDAS, to offer to betray thy Princeſſe! I'll make thee an example——

MOR. I will have no ſuch examples in my houſe, Lady OTTER.

Mrs. OT. Ah——

MOR. Mrs. MARY AMBREE, your examples are dangerous. Rogues, Hell-hounds, *Stentors*, out of my doores, you ſons of noiſe and tumult, begot on an ill *May*-day, or when the Gally-foiſt is afloate to *Weſtminſter*! A trumpetter could not be conceiv'd, but then!

DAU. What ailes you, Sir?

MOR. They have rent my rooſe, wals, and all my windores aſunder, with their brazen throates. *Exit.*

TRU. Beſt follow him DAUPHINE.

DAU. So I will.

CLE. Where's DAW, and LA-FOOLE?

OTT. They are both run away, ſir. Good gentlemen, helpe to paciſſie my Princeſſe, and ſpeake to the great Ladies for me. Now muſt I go lye with the Beares this fortnight, and keep out o'the way, till my peace bee made, for this ſcandal ſhe has taken. Did you not ſee my Bull-head, Gentlemen?

CLE. Is't not on, Captaine?

TRU. No: but he may make a new one, by that, is on.

OTT. O, here 'tis. An' you come over, Gentlemen, and aske for TOM OTTER, we'll go down to *Ratcliffe*, and have a coutſſe yfaith: for all theſe diſaſters. There is *bona ſpes* left.

TRU. Away, Captaine, get off while you are well.

CLE. I am glad we are rid of him.

TRU. You had never been, unleſſe we had put his wife upon him. His humour is as tedious at laſt, as it was ridiculous at firſt.

Act IV. *Scene* III.

HAUGHTY, Mrs. OTTER, MAVIS, DAW, LA-FOOLE, CENTAURE, EPICOENE, TRUE-WIT.

CLERIMONT.

WE wondred why you ſhreek'd ſo, Mrs. OTTER.

Mrs. OT. O god, Madame, he came down with a huge long naked weapon in both his hands, and look'd ſo dreadfully! Sure he's beſide himſelfe.

MAV. Why, what made you there miſtris OTTER?

Mrs. OT. Alas, miſtris MAVIS, I was chaſtiſing my ſubject, and thought nothing of him.

DAW. Faith, miſtris, you muſt do ſo too. Learne to chaſtiſe. Miſtris OTTER corrects her husband ſo, he dares not ſpeake, but under correction.

Figure 8: p. 497 of the Jonson folio.

Hippolito describe the Duchess as 'too wise to be a whoore' (sig. [B3]), the final word has been scored out and the abbreviation 'M^{rs}' substituted. This instance closely resembles the way in which Hand B writes the same abbreviation repeatedly in *Epicene* (for example, at p. 483), though it would be fair to say that the letter forms here are not particularly distinctive. However, we do find an interestingly parallel emendation in the Jonson folio, with 'wife' substituted for the scored out 'heifer' at 2.5.53 (p. 479), though here Hand A is responsible. As these substitutions are interventions in, rather than corrections of, the text as printed, they clearly indicate the annotators' preferences. Both instances exhibit a manifest discomfort with language descriptive of female characters that is judged to be too crude, either for the actors or their audience. Notably, in this context, while both *Loves Crueltie* and the Padua plays contain ample cuts, and in both instances these are often aimed at editing out what clearly strike the annotators as vulgarities, nowhere in the Shakespeare folio does the Padua annotator seek to alter the printed text by substituting one word for another. Lines that are not cut are left unamended. This reluctance to emend or erase gives rise to some potential anomalies — in *Macbeth* 3.1, for instance, the protagonist's instruction to his servant to 'Bring them [ie the murderers] before us' is substituted with 'bid em stay there for me', since the whole encounter between Macbeth and his assassins is cut. The substituted line, however, is not scored through. In the same scene, cuts are also designated which remove any mention of Banquo and Fleance riding horses, perhaps over concerns with the practicalities of staging, but in 3.3 the second and third murderers' lines anticipating their approach retain their equine references. So the fact that both *Epicene* and *Loves Crueltie* do include annotations which strike out and then substitute individual words again points to differences in annotative practice — and, in the view we are developing here, the likelihood of a division of labour between different people.

One final strand to this argument potentially extends the case but can only be advanced very tentatively. The cuts in both *Loves Crueltie* and the Padua Shakespeare folio are indicated primarily by lines encompassing at top, bottom, or left the lines to be omitted. However, on one occasion in *Measure for Measure*, at 1.2.150–2, a suggested cut has been undone: the annotator making the excision has inserted a rule under lines 149–50 to make a shorter cut, and supplied the word 'stet' in the margin. In our view, this unique intervention is not in the hand of the 'Padua annotator', who Evans believed responsible for all the annotations in *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure*, but in one more closely resembling the kind of script used by Hand B in the Jonson folio.

Taking stock, and drawing out the implications of our analysis, we can say that we have here a cluster of five printed plays marked for performance (including the Padua *Winter's Tale*, given its occurrence in the same volume as the other two plays), in multiple hands and to multiple, but complementary, ends. Crucially, the distinctive annotative practices evident in *Epicene*, on the one hand, and the Padua folio, on the other, appear to overlap in *Loves Crueltie* — and an awareness of that overlap reinforces a sense that two of the annotating hands (*Epicene* Hand B, and Evans's Padua annotator) overlap here too. In doing so, they retain their particular sense of their practice or function, and seem indicative of collaborative endeavour within and across different plays. Of course, despite their evident complementarity we cannot immediately know from such overlap whether the different layers of annotation represent a single collaborative effort towards one moment of performance or sequential handling of the work at different times, with different stagings in mind. Certainly, detailed examination of the Jonson folio suggests that the two annotators are working together, or one closely after the other towards a shared end, so if *Epicene*'s Hand B is to be found in *Loves Crueltie*, as we suggest, and possibly even in the Padua *Measure for Measure*, it would be reasonable to assume that it too is evidence of collaborative and complementary work.

What might such a cluster mean? Is it possible to see a general practice behind or within these individuated but complementary activities? In his initial work on the Padua folio Evans suggested that it might have its origins in amateur performances staged by Sir Edward Dering in Kent in the 1620s.[38] The discovery of the NLS *Loves Crueltie* forced him in his 1967 article to retreat from that hypothesis: the 1640 date of publication for that edition indicated that the Padua annotations were probably also made rather later than the 1620s, and therefore were unlikely to record the activities of Dering's amateur troupe. As his article concludes:

> It must be clear by now, I think, that any alternative to the Dering provenience must remain, lacking new evidence, a matter of guesswork. As such an alternative I suggest that these four prompt-books belonged to some kind of splinter group touring in the provinces or abroad shortly before the closing of the theatres in 1642 or during the interregnum.[39]

The emergence of the Jonson folio adds a new text marked for performance to the promptbooks Evans had in view, and in doing so contributes some of the new evidence required. The key problem for Evans was a lack of any significant provenance evidence for either the Padua Shakespeare or the NLS Shirley. This

lack of evidence is not, as we have seen, as much of a problem with the Jonson folio. Its presence in the Powell family collections over such a long period, with no signs of ownership from beyond that family, makes its initial association with Sir Thomas Powell, or his sons Richard and William, entirely plausible. As we have seen, that could place the book in use in rural Wales, but it could also — and this seems more likely — situate it in the city where Powell, Sr, made his career, and where his sons at least initially followed him. More precisely, it could place it in the Inns of Court. And if this is the case for the Jonson folio, might it also be the case for the Padua Shakespeare and the accompanying Shirley quarto to which it is related? These are, at least, possibilities worth considering.

Private Playing at the Inns of Court

We do not need to rehearse here the long and extensively documented history of the connections between the Inns of Court and early modern theatrical activity.[40] Given the period of Thomas Powell's residence at Gray's Inn, it is perhaps worth mentioning the now well understood fact that professional dramatic activity continued after the official closing of the theatres in 1642, and that this took place in venues such as the Cockpit and Salisbury Court which were more proximate to the Inns than some of the older London spaces. Judith Milhous and Robert Hume have demonstrated how the revived King's Company saw itself in the 1660s as directly continuous with the company that had staged plays at the Cockpit and elsewhere in 1648.[41] Emma Depledge has drawn attention to the continuation of theatrical activity in the performance of drolls at fairs and taverns during the 1640s and 1650s, and their publication in forms that at least enabled, and possibly encouraged, amateur performance by those who purchased them.[42] There was a lengthy history of professional performance at the Inns, which resumed very soon after the return of the Stuarts. *Epicene* itself was played at the Middle Temple by the King's Company on 2 February 1664. There was also a long tradition of the gentlemen of the Inns performing for both an external audience and for themselves, the most spectacular instance of which was Shirley's *Triumph of Peace*, staged before the king and queen by the Inns collaboratively in 1633.

Indeed, James Shirley serves as a key exemplar of this dimension of the cultural life of the Inns and the area their presence helped to define. According to Anthony Wood's well-known biographical account, in the 1620s Shirley gave up a job teaching school in St Albans, 'retired to the metropolis, lived in Greys-inn, and set up for a play-maker'.[43] This narrative, however, is too clear cut. In 1627 Shirley was indeed living 'in Rose-Alley, at the upper end of Holborne, towards

Grayes-Inne Fields', and remained at that address into the 1630s.[44] But as Sandra Burner notes, references to him at this time indicate that he was still teaching, despite also working as a very productive playwright.[45] A record that appears to have escaped prior critical notice confirms that in 1629 Shirley was appointed as schoolmaster at the church school attached to St Andrew's, Holborn, which was then held in the Quest House of Middle Row, a block of houses set in the centre of High Holborn directly between Staple Inn and Gray's Inn.[46] So his later admission to Gray's Inn, 'absque fine [ie permanently]' in 1634 may reflect his institutional involvements in the Inns' parish as well as his service as the writer of *The Triumph of Peace*.[47] Despite periods of absence in the later 1630s, mid-1640s, and perhaps late 1650s, Shirley maintained his connections with both the area and the group that Burner calls 'the Gray's Inn circle' up to and beyond the Restoration.[48] His dramatic and theatrical works continued to circulate, and to be printed, long after his Caroline heyday, with a significant number of performance copies among the survivals. Both records of performance and marked up printed play-texts confirm that his plays were professionally staged once again after the theatres reopened. Indeed, *Love's Cruelty* was in the Red Bull repertory over the summer of 1660, and was performed by the King's Company on several occasions between November 1660 and April 1668; the NLS volume is not the only prompt copy of the play to survive.[49] Most tantalizingly of all, we know that some of Shirley's theatrical works were written for private, non-professional performance. *The Triumph of Beauty*, first published in 1646, is described on its titlepage as 'personated by some young Gentlemen, for whom it was intended at a private Recreation'.[50] Similarly, *The Contention of Ajax and Achilles* was printed in three separate editions of 1659 with the play *Honoria and Mammon*; in each it featured a title page declaration that 'it was nobly represented by young Gentlemen of quality at a private entertainment of some Persons of Honour'.[51] *The Triumph of Beauty* includes a cast of around fifteen characters; the longer *Contention* has similar casting requirements. Where was Shirley finding these companies of young gentlemen in his neighbourhood, if not at the Inns?

Possibly, then, we see in Shirley's immersion in the pedagogic and cultural life of Gray's Inn and its surroundings not just a connection to the world of professional theatre but a private practice of dramatic art within the Inns themselves, undertaken by their inhabitants. As the Innsmen's activities were not part of the formal life or business of the Inns they would not show up in the institutional records on which our knowledge of their theatrical involvements depends. But it might be visible in other ways: perhaps in the traces of theatrical attention given to a cluster of performance texts such as our surviving Shakespeare, Jonson,

and Shirley volumes. Notable, in this connection, is the plausible resemblance between our Hand B at work in the Jonson folio, which we also suggest is responsible for the 'exits' in the Shirley quarto and just possibly the 'stet' in the margin of the Padua *Measure for Measure*, and the hand of Thomas Powell as evidenced in surviving correspondence from the 1680s.[52] These are very different occasions for writing — sitting down at a desk to write a letter on a blank sheet of paper versus annotating the available spaces of a bound and printed book, most likely currente calamo and with performance in mind — and they may well have occurred as many as two decades apart. Indeed, the epistolary hand shows a tendency towards the predominance of some italic forms which are not always so strongly in evidence in the *Epicene* annotations, but in general the resemblance is suggestive, particularly in those items of correspondence which appear to have been written either in haste or in less than ideal conditions.[53] What is more, this correspondence also includes key evidence that Powell sustained an interest in drama which extended further than attendance at the theatre. His letter of 13 May 1683 to his son Richard, addressed to him at Shire Lane off Holborn, includes an intriguing postscript in which he asks, 'Pray desire Will*iam* Powell to informe me what he hath done with the Play called the Citty Politicks'.[54] John Crowne's anti-Whig satire was licensed for production in June 1682, but banned the same month; a licence was then granted in December, and the play was staged in January 1683. A quarto edition followed swiftly: Narcissus Luttrell's copy bears the date '23. Feb'.[55] With its clear political orientation, and an epistle 'To the Reader' by Crowne which includes a reference to *Bartholomew Fair*, *City Politiques* is precisely the kind of play in which Thomas Powell might well be interested.[56]

Further, though still circumstantial, evidence suggests that these books testify to a private practice of theatre at the Inns. Evans's chief reason for associating the Padua Shakespeare folio with Sir Edward Dering's 1620s Surrenden circle was the presence in that volume of names and initials for some of the individual performers. The annotations to *Macbeth* include actor calls for 'Mr Carlisle' (also given as 'Mr Carl'), a partially obscured name that Evans and others suggest most likely read 'Hewit', and the initials 'T.S.', 'E.H.', 'Mr G' and 'Mr K.'[57] The Shirley quarto repeats actor calls for 'T.[?S]' and for 'Mr H', further reinforcing the link between it and the Padua volume.[58] In the introduction to *Shakespearean Promptbooks*, Evans argued that the 'Mr Carlisle' of the Padua *Macbeth* could be identified with the 'Jhon Carlile' listed by Dering as a potential cast member for a domestic performance of Fletcher's *Spanish Curate*.[59] If so, then some of the other names or initials might correspond to other people listed by Dering — so 'T.S.' might well be Thomas Slender, and 'Mr K.' might be Dering's 'Mr Kemp'.[60] The

rest of the Padua names and initials proved much harder to associate with anyone in Dering's orbit, however, and the discovery of the NLS *Loves Crueltie*, with a terminus a quo of 1640 for its annotations, further weakened the plausibility of the identification. Attempts to find candidates among the professional players of the Caroline or Restoration stage also proved unsuccessful.[61]

However, we can locate this cluster of names among the close contemporaries of Thomas Powell at Gray's Inn. A Francis Carlyle was admitted on 25 April 1654, the son of a Prebend of Lincoln Cathedral who had been ejected from one of his livings in 1643, then fined for delinquency in 1648 after joining the royalist garrison at Newark. He was also, intriguingly, the owner of two taverns in and near Fleet Street, the Bolt and Tun (sometimes called Bolt in Tun), and the Three Tuns.[62] Francis was called to the bar in 1660, the same year as Thomas Powell, and then to the Company of Ancients on 26 November 1680 — the same day on which Thomas Powell was also accorded that honour. Like Powell, then, Francis Carlyle was a long-time inhabitant and barrister at Gray's Inn. There were several men named Hewitt admitted to Gray's Inn in the early 1650s: a George Hewett of Charlwood, Surrey, on 29 May 1650, and a man of the same name, the second son of William Hewett of Dunton Bassett, Leicestershire, on 6 November 1651.[63] One of these men was called to the bar in 1657, and a George Hewett was called to the Company of Ancients on 17 April 1676, making him, too, a long-serving barrister of Gray's Inn.[64] A Francis Hewett or Huett of Ampthill, Bedfordshire, appears to have been admitted to the Inn first in 1653, and then again in 1658, while a Robert Hewitt is recorded as in residence in 1657, when he was billed £3 towards building repairs.[65] Neither Francis nor Robert Hewitt, if he existed, are recorded as being called to the bar, perhaps suggesting that any period in residence at Gray's Inn was relatively short.

We face much greater difficulty suggesting identities for the actors indicated only by their initials. There is no shortage of Messrs G and K among the young gentlemen entering the Inn during these years, and without any idea of their first initial efforts to narrow these searches are fruitless. There are what look like multiple candidates for the role of T.S. — thirteen men with these initials were admitted during the 1650s — but only three of them appear to have been called to the bar, and only two were later called to the Company of Ancients. One of these was a Thomas Sanford or Sandford, who was most probably admitted on 20 July 1654, and called to the Company of Ancients alongside Thomas Powell and Francis Carlyle on 26 November 1680.[66] He was the son of William Sanford, appointed rector of Eastwell in Kent in 1630, though by 1654 described as 'of White Rodding [ie Roding], Essex'.[67] The other was Thomas Shuttleworth, son

and heir of the late Kenelm Shuttleworth or Shuttlewood, of Braunston-in-Rutland; he matriculated from Emanuel College, Cambridge, on 1 February 1655, then was admitted to Gray's Inn on 16 May 1656, called to the bar on 25 May 1666, and also called to the Company of Ancients alongside Thomas Powell in 1680.[68] For 'E.H.' there are two plausible options, both of whom have interesting parental allegiances. The first is Edward Herle, son and heir of Charles Herle, Presbyterian rector of Winwick in Lancashire, pamphleteer, and a noted member of the Westminster Assembly.[69] Edward entered Gray's Inn on 30 January 1652, was called to the bar on 1 June 1660 (only a month before Thomas Powell), and admitted to the Company of Ancients on 17 April 1676, alongside George Hewett.[70] The second is Edward Hopton, who was admitted to Gray's Inn on 16 November 1652, having matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, nearly a year earlier; he was also called to the bar on 1 June 1660, and to the Company of Ancients on 17 April 1676.[71] His father, according to *Alumni Oxonienses*, was Morgan Hopton, another clergyman, who had livings first in Whitchurch and then in Tooting.[72] When Edward was admitted to Gray's Inn he was described as son and heir of Morgan, of St Andrew's Holborn, and in 1660 we find Morgan Hopton among the leading London Presbyterian clerics signing his name — as 'Minister of *Andrews Holborn*' — to *A Seasonable Exhortation of Sundry Ministers in London to the People of their Respective Congregations*.[73]

Here, then, we have the tentative outline of a group of similarly educated contemporaries who might have been active in the unofficial performance cultures of the Inns of Court; while they are from different backgrounds in terms of confessional politics, they come together at Gray's Inn as the cultural and political realignments of the later 1650s and 1660s make their impact — most Presbyterians, after all, had disapproved of the regicide and subsequent regimes, and some, such as the London minister Christopher Love, had even joined Charles I and other royalists in what their supporters saw as martyrdom.[74] Scholars might object that such a cluster could be just an artefact of the sheer number of men passing through the Inn, and that we could reproduce something like it at any point we choose to isolate, but this is not the case: Francis Carlyle is the only man with this surname to appear in the Gray's Inn *Register of Admissions*. So while the cluster we have identified remains conjectural, it is not illusory. If this, then, is evidence of a real cluster, the surviving marked up texts may help us to date their activities: *Epicene*, the most popular pre-war comedy of the 1660s; *Loves Crueltie*, a play by the old Gray's Inn writer in residence performed repeatedly by the King's Company in the same period; and then *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth*, both the basis for hugely successful adaptations by William Davenant and the Duke's

Company from 1662 and 1664 respectively (Davenant's texts were not printed until 1673 and 1674, so in the 1660s any aspiring amateur performers would only have had the Shakespearean original with which to work).[75] We can readily imagine a group of theatrically minded and perhaps experienced men in their later twenties and early thirties, able to witness these plays performed professionally in the new and revived theatres around them, gathering in their Gray's Inn rooms to plan, and in some cases clearly to stage, their own productions. If the young gentlemen were inspired to reproduce what they saw on the professional stages, the annotated texts possibly reflect in some ways the performance choices of those companies, making them potentially the record not just of private or amateur performance but of the professional productions which shaped them.

Furthermore, certain aspects of these collaborative or complementary practices of annotation make more sense in this possible frame. The lack of scene settings in any of them hints at a provenance beyond the professional Restoration stage, while the inconsistent use and form of anticipatory calls might also speak of a group aware of professional practice but not applying it in a thoroughgoing way. Evans's case for a 1620s Dering provenance for the Padua folio drew on his sense that the annotative practices there deployed were not post-Restoration in style, but the uncovering of the NLS *Loves Crueltie* quarto, with annotations no earlier than 1640, made that evidence into a puzzle.[76] Evans also thought that the use of the anticipatory call 'be ready' in the Padua Shakespeare indicated a pre-Restoration dating, but again the Beaumont and Fletcher folio mentioned above shows that such a phrasing was still in use around 1660.[77] Again, a group of Gray's Inn amateurs, perhaps influenced by Shirley himself (whose main professional experience dated from the 1630s), would offer a way of resolving any such puzzles. Features of the annotated *Epicene*, in particular, are illuminated, and illuminating, if placed in this possible performance context. For a start, Long's suggestion — noted above — that advisory stage directions were very much the province of the amateur performance text would here find further reinforcement. We might also note the unusual use of Latin creeping beyond its strictly theatrical function: thus, for example, we have Dauphine's entry at 4.1.13 annotated with 'intrat et ridet Dauph*ine*' (p. 492).

But there are also aspects of the annotations which seem to speak more specifically to the legal contexts and occasions in which our Gray's Inn men were immersed. The most substantial of these also comes in 4.1, when Truewit speaks to Dauphine and Clerimont about his views on women and wooing. Truewit acknowledges Clerimont's observation that 'all women are not to be taken all ways', and he responds that a man should adapt his actions and his behaviour

to the situation, but that ultimately 'A man should not doubt to over-come any woman' (4.1.53) and that force against them is 'an acceptable violence' (63). Truewit's display of cynical misogyny is disturbing, at least to a contemporary reader, and Hand B foregrounds the speech at 68–94 with the note 'This, Truwitt must speak leisurly & obserue euery stopp:' (p. 494; Figure 6). This speech and the preceding part of the scene include close paraphrases and adaptations from books 1 and 2 of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, in which the speaker instructs a young man on how to acquire and keep a lover, and book 3, in which similar precepts are offered to women. In Ovid's first two books, women are presented as sexually voracious, materialistic, and fair game to the predations of men, with the ravished women of classical myth (the Sabine women, Io, Pasiphae) cited as a precedent for sexual violence. In Ovid's poem we find the origin of some of the gallants' more unsettling statements: Truewit's claim of 'acceptable violence' is echoed by *Ars Amatoria's* direction that 'you may use force; women like you to use it' ('Vim licet appelles: grata est vis ista puellis'; 1.673), and the tone of the poem's extended metaphor of men-as-hunters, women-as-prey is pithily represented by Ovid's sententious 'all women can be caught; spread but your nets and you will catch them' ('cunctas / Posse capi; capies, tu modo tende plagas'; 1.269–70).[78]

The annotation that the speech is to be delivered 'leisurly' is ambiguous — does it refer to tone or pace? Either offers intriguing interpretive possibilities. A 'leisurly' tone for Truewit's speech may suggest a languid delivery, and if so accords well with the attitude of studied ease which the character displays throughout the play, an ease which remains in place even when he discovers he has been 'lurch'd … of better halfe of the garland' (5.4.182–3) in his tricking of Morose by the more cunning machinations of his friend Dauphine. If 'leisurly' refers to pace it also offers an interesting possibility, as the even spread of punctuation throughout the passage encourages a delivery that makes Truewit's words sound more measured. A 'stopp' is a term familiar to Renaissance rhetorical and grammatical theory, and refers to punctuation marks that help clarify meaning in sentences and mark breathing and rhythmic points for those reading a text out loud.[79] A slower pace by attending to 'euery stopp' — principally in the passage's nineteen periods, perhaps accentuated by lighter pauses on its other punctuation marks — draws attention to the speech's large number of imperatives ('You *must* approach them', '*Take* more care', '*Seeme* as you would give', '*Admire* her tires') and conditionals ('*If* you appeare learned', '*If* she love wit', '*if* she be covetous and craving') that mirror the instructional tone of the Ovidian original. Furthermore, the measured rhythm of the lines, disrupted by Truewit's 'That will take her', evokes the *Ars Amatoria*'s rhetorically disorientating switches between delicacy

and bluntness, made all the more apparent by Jonson's deliberate compression of the 'lightness and gentle comedy' that Ovid uses to leaven the harsher sentiments in his text.[80] Perhaps the annotator and his collaborators saw these stops as a way to highlight the Ovidian echoes of this passage, deliberately attending to the actor's delivery in order to accentuate the text's origin in a classical set piece. The most important effect of this note is that it helps underline the sinister eloquence of Truewit's speech by marking it off tonally from the rest of the dialogue, an impression then reinforced by Dauphine's perhaps startled or mocking response, 'On what courtly lap hast thou late slept, to come forth so sudden and absolute a Courtling?' (4.1.95–6). In other words, the rhetorical artifice in Truewit's Ovidian pastiche estranges the speech and its delivery from the easy conversation in which these characters normally engage, sets Truewit up as a figure for critique, and complicates the dynamics of the tripartite relationship between Dauphine and his two friends.

But if the measured tenor invited by the annotation squarely locates the speech in a milieu which is seemingly not the usual habitation of these young men as characters, it is suggestive of an alternative performance context more familiar to our putative lawyer-actors. With the annotation's heavy emphasis on observing punctuation, Truewit's advice to his friends acquires the cadences of a learned oration, a quality sympathetic to the *Ars Amatoria* that Ovid — himself trained in the law — frames as legal advice. The attention to style and pace accords with pronuntiatio or actio ('delivery'), the fifth canon of classical rhetoric defined by Cicero in *De Inventione* as 'the control of voice and body in a manner suitable to the dignity of the subject matter and the style' ('pronuntiatio est ex rerum et verborum dignitate vocis et corporis moderatio': 1.7).[81] Formal training in classical rhetoric — principally through the works of Cicero, Quintilian, and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium* — was more the province of the schools and universities than the Inns of Court, but the practice of mooting — a form of mock trial in which Innsmen would argue for or against a case in the presence of their peers — signals that rhetorical skills were acquired through 'practice and observation' rather than textbooks.[82] We wonder whether this speech has been highlighted because its annotators saw its potential interest for performers who may not only have recognized the classical allusions but also identified the rhythms and structure of an explicitly rhetorical oration, and saw an opportunity to align this moment of the text with a context that is more recognizably part of their actors' (and their possible audience's) professional training.

A second, more speculative, reference to a lawyerly milieu may be found in 5.3, when Truewit brings Otter and Cutbeard onstage in disguise, respectively, as a

canon lawyer and a civil lawyer to put Morose through the forensic wringer as he contends for a divorce. One immediately sees why the scene may be of particular interest to a group of lawyers, as Truewit encourages his accomplices to overwhelm Morose with a combination of bluster, abstruse language, and improvisation, all of which he implies are familiar behaviours in similar legalistic contexts:

> Truewit If you chance to be out [ie forget your lines], do not confesse it with standing still, or humming, or gaping one at another: but goe on, and talk alowd, and eagerly, use vehement action, and onely remember your termes [technical vocabulary], and you are safe. Let the matter goe where it will: you have many will doe so. (5.3.10–14)

Otter and Cutbeard fall to their task with relish, and their discussion of the '*duodecim impedimenta*' (59–60) to Morose's marriage is full of learned quibbling and absurd Latinisms, presumably mimicking the kinds of esoteric discussions on the finer points of law that would have been familiar to those with legal training, and who may have encountered them in real or moot court cases.

The annotations to the scene's opening are attentive to its comic action and its practical requirements. Truewit's 'Away, fetch him' is underlined in the text and accompanied by an 'Exit Dauph*ine*'; below this the text's 'Here he comes!' is also underlined, with an annotated 'intrant' deleted and replaced by an 'Enter Morose'. The print text is also underlined at 'dyed their beards' (5.3.2; p. 514; Figure 3), a reference to Otter and Cutbeard's disguise, and one hand, possibly Hand A, appears to register the nature of these disguises in the scene heading, labelling 'OTTER' with the superscript 'parson' and Cutbeard with a less legible annotation that most likely reads 'DC'. These two annotations could refer to the costumes that Otter and Cutbeard are dressed in to assume their roles as a divine and a canon lawyer: indeed, an annotation from Hand A next to an earlier reference to Otter and Cutbeard's disguise in 4.7 reads 'habits of Otter and Cuthbert [sic]' (p. 511), and indicates that our annotators were considering how these characters might be disguised. The otherwise mysterious 'DC' could plausibly be an abbreviation of 'Doctors' Commons', the society of lawyers who practiced the civil law, as opposed to the English common law of the Inns of Court;[83] alternatively, it could refer to a Doctor of Civil Law (abbreviated to D.C.L.), a degree held by many of that society's advocates, whose academic dress consisted of distinctive scarlet robes.[84] The premises of Doctors' Commons were like Gray's Inn based in London, located since 1568 at Great Knightrider Street near St Paul's. The advocates of the Doctors' Commons specialized partly in ecclesiastical law — including matrimonial matters — so Truewit might have appropriately summoned one

of their number to pronounce on Morose's marriage; placed alongside 'parson' Otter, the pair could carry an additional layer of humour as they voice the lettered and lower–ranking ends of the Church's views on Morose's predicament. For a group of Gray's Inn lawyers there may therefore have been comic potential in dressing Cutbeard in a costume both distinctive and appropriate to his pretended role. Notably, such a choice is sympathetic to the text: Truewit refers to Cutbeard as 'Doctor' throughout the scene, and considering that Doctors' Commons were associated with more recondite, Latinate legal procedures of the ecclesiastical courts, there is an amusing irony in one of its members being impersonated by the parvenu barber, a 'slave' who can unexpectedly 'Latine it' along with his social betters (2.6.21). As with the rhetorical framing of Truewit's speech in 4.1, such a costuming choice would serve the comic requirements of the scene while also incorporating a real-world allusion for satirical effect.

So we have here a text that is potentially traceable to a nexus of theatrically-minded lawyers at Gray's Inn, and some of whose peculiarities are explicable in relation to that milieu. We know that the stage directions are attentive to the practicalities of performance and aspects of staging that suggest that *Epicene* is at least being read with performance in mind, and likely indicate a preparation for real performance. The nature and distribution of the annotations may suggest that these preparations were incomplete or that another copy of the text was used as a promptbook; the focus of the stage directions on specifics of gesture and vocal delivery points towards performance in an amateur context, though perhaps influenced by professional productions witnessed by the annotators. Palaeographical evidence plausibly connects the Jonson folio with a cluster of four playbooks that has previously been seen as evidencing amateur performance practices, indicating that this planned production was not just a one-off. Were we ourselves lawyers, we would suggest that the evidence, while not perhaps conclusive, is at least strongly circumstantial, and to that extent, sufficient either to provoke or to persuade.

Notes

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1 Ben Jonson, *The Devil Is an Ass*, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson, 7 vols (Cambridge, 2012). All subsequent line references to Jonson's works are from this edition.

2 The image of Jonson as specifically 'antitheatrical' in at least one of his aspects was most influentially outlined in Jonas Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley, 1981), 132–54, while Jonson's investment in the possibilities of the printed book is explored in Joseph Loewenstein, *Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship* (Cambridge, 2002). Jonson's own comments on the apparent failure of his plays on the stage can be found in the 'Apologetical Dialogue' to *Poetaster*, in the prefatory material for the quarto of *Sejanus* published in 1605, and in the notorious 'Ode to Himself' that he printed with *The New Inn* in the octavo edition of 1631. In his *Informations* to Drummond he may well have quoted a contemporary joke intimating that *Epicene* too had not met with a warm reception — or that may be a jest at Jonson's expense that Drummond had picked up elsewhere. See *Informations*, lines 565–7.

3 Anne Barton, *Ben Jonson: Dramatist* (Cambridge, 1984), https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511518836; Peter Womack, *Ben Jonson* (Oxford, 1986); Richard Cave, Elizabeth Schafer and Brian Woolland, eds, *Ben Jonson and Theatre: Performance, Practice and Theory* (London, 1999), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203981375; Martin Butler and Jane Rickard, eds, *Ben Jonson and Posterity* (Cambridge, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108903967.

4 *Books and Readers in Early Modern Britain VI: Catalogue 1495* (London, 2017); the folio is now shelf marked at RB. F. 1083. All subsequent references to page numbers in connection to *Epicene* refer to this folio volume.

5 R.J. Colyer, 'Nanteos: A Landed Estate in Decline, 1800–1930', *Ceredigion: Journal of the Cardiganshire Antiquarian Society* 9 (1980), 58–79, 68–9.

6 Colyer, 'Nanteos', 69.
7 The volume has clearly been trimmed, presumably while being rebound, subsequent to the signature's inscription. A comparison of signatures of both William Powells in the Nanteos Estate Records at the National Library of Wales confirms that this belongs to the son rather than the father.
8 The note reads 'Hee beareth sable 2 lyoncells passant or armed langued gules on a Chevron of the second three ogresses'.
9 Both transcriptions are from Arthur Freeman, 'Notes on "Theatrical Working Copies" and Playhouse "Prompt-Books" for Pre-Restoration English Plays', in *Books and Readers in Early Modern Britain VI*, 167–73, 173.
10 Ibid, 173.
11 Martin Butler, 'Some New Jonson Books', *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online*, https://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/blog/some-new-jonson-books/.
12 Gerald Morgan, 'Nanteos: The Early Centuries', in Gerald Morgan, ed., *Nanteos: A Welsh House and its Families* (Llandysul, 2001), 1–44, 10 and 12.
13 Stuart Handley, 'Powell, Sir John (1632/3–1696), judge'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last modified 3 January 2008, https://doi.org/10.1093/odnb/9780192683120.013.22651.
14 Joseph Foster, ed., *Alumni Oxonienses 1500–1714* (Oxford, 1891), https://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714.
15 Joseph Foster, ed., *The Register of Admissions to Gray's Inn, 1521–1889* (London, 1889), 277; Reginald Fletcher, ed., *The Pension Book of Gray's Inn*, 2 vols (London, 1891–1910), 1.431 and 2.63; A.W.B. Simpson, 'The Early Constitution of Gray's Inn'. *The Cambridge Law Journal* 34 (1975), 131–50, esp. 143–6, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0008197300092102.
16 Morgan, 'Nanteos', 19. William Shaw, ed., *The Knights of England*, vol. 2 (London, 1906), 263.
17 Morgan, 'Nanteos', 19.
18 National Library of Wales, Nanteos Estate Records, L45.
19 The inscription is in Latin; the phrase reads 'Qui cum rei publicae vicissitudini morem gerere conscientia prohiberet per sedecim qui reliqui erant vitae annos, inopes; et oppressos consilio gratis sublevando'.
20 Eveline Cruickshanks, 'Pryse, Lewis (?1683–1720), of Gogerddan, Card.', *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1715–1754*, http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1715–1754/member/pryse-lewis-1683-1720. See also James Harris, 'Politics and Religion in Later Stuart Cornwall and South West Wales', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2018, 235.

21 Harris, 'Politics and Religion', 53.
22 NLW, Nanteos Estate Records, L15–31. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*; *The Inner Temple Admissions Database*, https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/browse/admissions; F.A. Inderwick, ed., *Calendar of the Inner Temple Records*, vol. 3 (London, 1901), 110.
23 Morgan, 'Nanteos', 23.
24 Folger Shakespeare Library, call mark STC 14751 copy 7. We are very grateful to Jane Rickard for sharing her research on this copy with us; it will be published in her forthcoming study, *Ben Jonson and the Construction of the Reader*.
25 For more on the meaning of 'trunk' in the period, see Will Ramsay, 'How Big is Morose's Trunk?' *Ben Jonson Journal*, 27.2 (2020), 247–52, https://doi.org/10.3366/bjj.2020.0287.
26 See Leslie Thomson, 'A Quarto "Marked for Performance": Evidence of What?', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 8 (1996), 176–210.
27 Edward Langhans, *Restoration Promptbooks* (Carbondale, 1981), 3–12.
28 William Long, '"Precious Few": English Manuscript Playbooks', in *A Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. David Scott Kastan (Oxford, 2012), 414–33, 422 and 427, https://doi.org/10.1111/b.9780631218784.1999.00026.x; Paul Werstine, *Early Modern Playhouse Manuscripts and the Editing of Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 2012), 243, https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139103978.
29 Long, '"Precious Few"', 429, 417.
30 Peter Wright, 'Jonson's Revision of the Stage Directions for the 1616 Folio *Workes*', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 5 (1991), 257–85, at 276.
31 G. Blakemore Evans, 'New Evidence on the Provenance of the Padua Prompt-Books of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Winter's Tale*', *Studies in Bibliography* 20 (1967), 239–42.
32 Evans, 'New Evidence', 240.
33 NLS Bute.540. Shirley, *The Gratefull Servant* (London, 1637; STC: 22455) contains such annotations at [G4] and [H4]; they appear in Bute.545, Shirley, *The Traytor* (London, 1635; STC: 22458) at sD1v [D4v] and I1v. See also Evans, 'New Evidence', 240.
34 Evans's initial discussion of this copy is found in the 'General Introduction' to G. Blakemore Evans, *Shakespearean Promptbooks of the Seventeenth Century*, vol. 1 (Charlottesville: Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, 1960–96), 5–11. Images from the Padua folio can be found online at https://bsuva.org/bsuva/promptbook/.
35 For the use of such directions and their interpretation, see W.W. Greg, *The Shakespeare First Folio* (Oxford, 1955), 138, and Werstine, *Playhouse Manuscripts*, 240. In his description of the annotations, Evans does not recognize these 'exits' as being in

a separate hand from the one with which he is most concerned. However, the letter forms and ductus of the hand differ considerably from the examples of this annotator's writing found in the Padua Shakespeare.

36 B3, C1, C4, E2v, H1, and H2.

37 See pp. 497, 501, 502, 506, 507, 508, 510, 513, 514, and 522.

38 Evans, *Shakespearean Promptbooks*, 1.8–11.

39 Evans, 'New Evidence', 242. Barbara Ravelhofer has recently concurred; see 'Shirley's Tragedies', in *James Shirley and Early Modern Theatre: New Critical Perspectives*, ed. Barbara Ravelhofer (Abingdon, 2017), 86–107, 89, https://doi.org/10.14324/111.1755-4527.091.

40 Most extensively documented in Alan Nelson and John R. Elliott, eds, *Records of Early English Drama: Inns of Court*, 3 vols (Martlesham, 2011), but see also A. Wigfall Green, *The Inns of Court and Early English Drama* (New Haven, 1931).

41 Robert Milhous and Judith Hume, 'New Light on English Acting Companies in 1646, 1648, and 1660', *Review of English Studies*, new series, 42 (1991), 487–509, https://doi.org/10.1093/res/xlii.168.487.

42 Emma Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence* (Cambridge, 2018), 16–23, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108648974.

43 Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (Oxford, 1692), 3.737.

44 Sandra Burner, *James Shirley: A Study of Literary Coteries and Patronage in Seventeenth-century England* (Lanham, 1988), 46.

45 Burner, *James Shirley*, 47.

46 *Clergy of the Church of England Database*, Person ID 42506, https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/; Caroline M. Barron, *The Parish of St Andrew Holborn* (London, 1979), 86.

47 Foster, *Register of Admissions*, 202.

48 Burner, *James Shirley*, 41–85.

49 Judith Milhous and Robert Hume, 'A 1660s Promptbook of Shirley's *Loves Crueltie*', *Theatre Research International* 11 (1986), 1–13, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0307883300011871; also Judith Milhous and Robert Hume, 'Manuscript Casts for Revivals of Three Plays by Shirley in the 1660s', *Theatre Notebook* 39 (1985), 32–6.

50 James Shirley, *The Triumph of Beauty* (London, 1646; Wing: S3488).)

51 James Shirley, *Honoria and Mammon* (London, 1659; Wing: S3473, S3474, and S3475).

52 NLW, Nanteos Estate Records, L15–24. We regret that we have not been able to secure permission to reproduce images of the Nanteos manuscripts in this article.

53 See, for example, NLW, Nanteos Estate Records L15, 19, 22, and 50.

54 NLW, Nanteos Estate Records L22.

55 John Crowne, *City Politiques*, ed. John Harold Wilson (London, 1967), ix.
56 Crowne, *City Politique*s, 'To the Reader', lines 12–16.
57 See Evans, *Shakespearean Promptbooks*, 1.8–9.
58 Evans, 'New Evidence', 240.
59 Evans, *Shakespearean Promptbooks*, 1.8–9. The cast list is pasted into Dering's adaptation of the *Henry IV* plays, Folger MS V.b.34, f.A1v.
60 Evans, *Shakespearean Promptbooks*, 1.8–9.
61 Evans, 'New Evidence', 240–2.
62 *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 6, 1648–1651* (London, 1802), 4. *British History Online*, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol6/. Arnold Gwynne Matthews, ed., *Walker Revised, Being a Revision of John Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy During the Grand Rebellion, 1642–60* (Oxford, 1948), 248.
63 Foster, *Register of Admissions*, 254 and 259.
64 Fletcher, *Pension Book*, 1.421, 2.40. These two George Hewetts may in fact be one: repeated admissions for the same individual were not uncommon, and the George Hewett identified with Charlwood also matriculated at Lincoln College, Oxford, on 12 November 1650, suggesting his initial stay at Gray's Inn was short; subsequent records locate him, too, in Leicestershire. See *Alumni Oxonienses*.
65 Foster, *Register of Admissions*, 264 and 287; Fletcher, *Pension Book*, 1.419. This latter reference might, of course, be an error for George.
66 This is rendered slightly uncertain by the fact that there were two Thomas San(d) fords of Gray's Inn, one of whom was admitted in 1647 (Foster, *Register of Admissions*, 246); one of them died in 1678 (TNA PROB 11/357/498).
67 *Clergy of the Church of England Database*, CCEd Person ID 38345; Foster, *Register of Admissions*, 268.
68 *A Cambridge Alumni Database*, https://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk/Documents/acad/2018/search-2018.html; Foster, *Register of Admissions*, 278; Fletcher, *Pension Book*, 1.452, 2.63.
69 See Elliot Vernon, *London Presbyterians and the British Revolutions, 1638–64* (Manchester, 2021), 71–4, https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526157812.
70 Foster, *Register of Admissions*, 259; Fletcher, *Pension Book*, 1.430, 2.41.
71 Foster, *Register of Admissions*, 262; Fletcher, *Pension Book*, 1.430, 2.41.
72 *Clergy of the Church of England Database*, CCEd Person ID 93703.
73 *A Seasonable Exhortation of Sundry Ministers in London to their Respective Congregations* (London, 1660), 24.
74 Vernon, *London Presbyterians*, 220–41.
75 Amanda Eubanks Winkler and Richard Schoch, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Sir William Davenant and the Duke's Company* (London, 2022), 21–44, https://doi.

org/10.5040/9781350130609. This does not, of course, account for *The Winter's Tale* in the Padua folio, with annotations in a different hand.

76 Evans, *Shakespearean Promptbooks*, 1.7–8.

77 Ibid, 2.4.

78 Ovid, *The Art of Love and Other Poems,* ed. G.P. Goold, trans. J.H. Mozley, rev. ed., 2 vols (Cambridge, MA, 2014).

79 For a discussion of punctuation in relation to rhetoric and grammar, see Neil Rhodes, 'Punctuation as Rhetorical Notation? From Colon to Semicolon', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 82.1 (2019), 87–106, https://doi.org/10.1353/hlq.2019.0004; Jennifer Richards, *Voices and Books in the English Renaissance: A New History of Reading* (Oxford, 2019), especially 37–75, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198809067.001.0001.

80 John Ferns, 'Ovid, Juvenal, and *The Silent Woman:* A Reconsideration', *The Modern Language Review* 65 (1970), 248–53, 251, https://doi.org/10.2307/3723525.

81 Cicero, *On Invention. The Best Kind of Orator. Topics*, trans. H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge, MA, 1949).

82 James McBain, '"Attentive Mindes and Serious Wits": Legal Training and Early Drama', *The Oxford Handbook of English Law and Literature, 1500–1700*, ed. Lorna Hutson (Oxford, 2017), 80–96, 85, https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199660889.013.7. For more on the relation of rhetorical training to law, see D.S. Bland, 'Rhetoric and the Law Student in Sixteenth-Century England', *Studies in Philology* 54.4 (1957), 498–508; Richard J. Schoeck, 'Lawyers and Rhetoric in Sixteenth-Century England', in *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley, London, 1983), 274–91.

83 For a general account of Doctors' Commons, see G.D. Squibb, *Doctors' Commons: A History of the College of Advocates and Doctors of Law* (Oxford, 1977).

84 For more on qualifications associated with Doctors' Commons, see Squibb, *Doctors' Commons*, 30–1. For details on robes, see J.H. Baker, *Monuments of Endlesse Labours: English Canonists and Their Work, 1300–1900* (London, 1998), 58–9, 90.