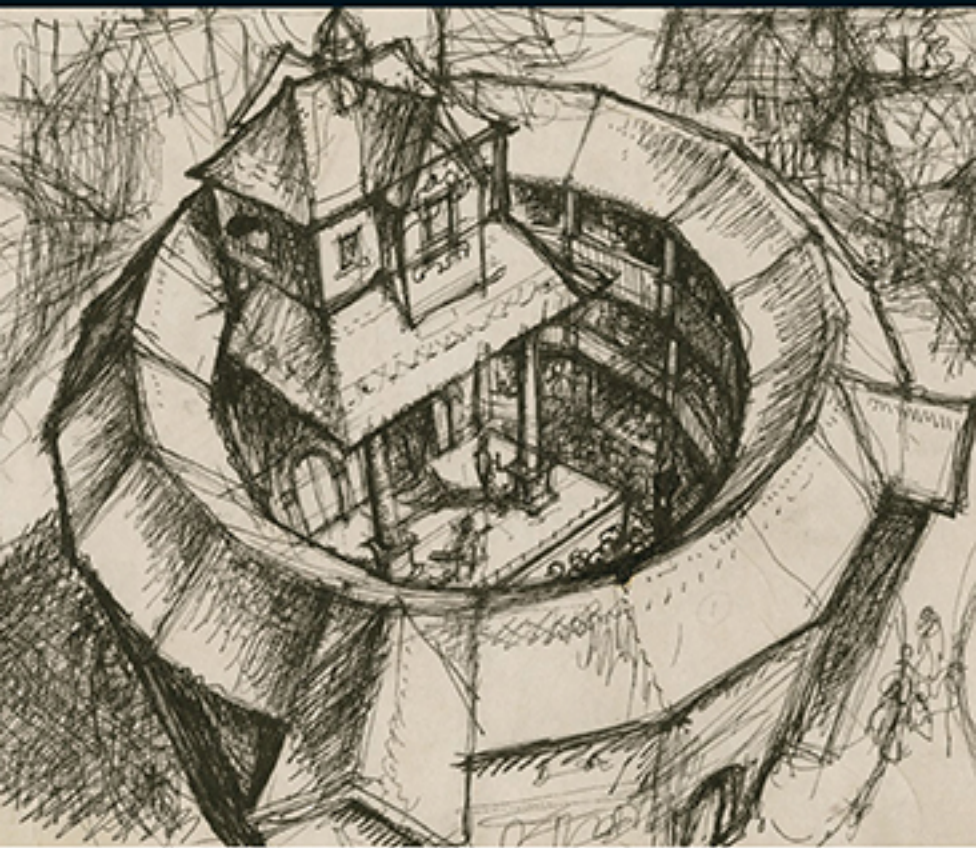


THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE



SHAKESPEARE
IN THE THEATRE:
THE KING'S MEN

Lucy Munro



Shakespeare
in the Theatre:
The King's Men

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ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTE ON THE TEXT

Abbreviations

BL	British Library, London
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
<i>Shakespeare Documented</i>	Folger Shakespeare Library et al. (2016–), <i>Shakespeare Documented</i> , Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu
TNA	The National Archives, Kew

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from the works of the central dramatists of the King's Men are from the following editions: the Arden Shakespeare Third Series; Fredson Bowers, gen. ed., *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, 10 vols, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966–97; David Bevington, Martin Butler and Ian Donaldson, gen. eds, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, 7 vols, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012; Philip Edwards and Colin Gibson, eds, *The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger*, 4 vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976; Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino, gen. eds, *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. Dates of plays, unless otherwise noted, are from Martin Wiggins, in association with Catherine Richardson, *British Drama 1533–1642: A Catalogue*, 9 vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011–18, and information about the biographies of individual actors is from Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941–68, volume 2, unless another source is cited.

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SERIES PREFACE

Each volume in the *Shakespeare in the Theatre* series focuses on a director or theatre company who has made a significant contribution to Shakespeare production, identifying the artistic and political/social contexts of their work.

The series introduces readers to the work of significant theatre directors and companies whose Shakespeare productions have been transformative in our understanding of his plays in performance. Each volume examines a single figure or company, considering their key productions, rehearsal approaches and their work with other artists (actors, designers, composers). A particular feature of each book is its exploration of the contexts within which these theatre artists have made their Shakespeare productions work. Thus, the series not only considers the ways in which directors and companies produce Shakespeare, but also reflects upon their other theatre activities and the broader artistic, cultural and socio-political milieu within which their Shakespeare performances and productions have been created. The key to the series' originality, then, is its consideration of Shakespeare production in a range of artistic and broader contexts; in this sense, it de-centres Shakespeare from within Shakespeare studies, pointing to the range of people, artistic practices and cultural phenomena that combine to make meaning in the theatre.

Series editors:

*Peter Holland, Farah Karim-Cooper
and Stephen Purcell*

PREFACE: 1603

In May 1603, a document was issued that transformed the status of the playing company that had hitherto been known as the Lord Chamberlain's Men. In the name of the new king, James I, it addressed 'all Justices Maiors Sheriffes Constables hedborowes [parish officers] and other our Officers and louinge Subiectes', informing them that

Wee of our speciall grace certeine knowledge & mere motion haue licenced and auctorized and by theise presentes doe licence and authorize theise our servauntes lawrence ffletcher William Shakespeare Richard Burbage Augustyne Phillippes John Heninges Henrie Condell William Sly Robert Armyrn Richard Cowly and the rest of their Associates freely to vse and exercise the Arte and faculty of playenge Commedies Tragedies Histories Enterludes Moralls pastoralles Stageplaies and suche others like as theie haue alreadie studied or hereafter shall vse or studie aswell for the recreation of our loving Subjects as for our Solace and pleasure when wee shall thincke good to see them duringe our pleasure And the said Commedies [...] and suche like to shewe and exercise publiquely to their best Commoditie when the infection of the plague shall decrease aswell within their nowe vsuall howse called the Globe within our County of Surrey, as alsoe within anie towne halls or moute halls or other conveniente places within the liberties and freedome of anie other Cittie vniversitie towne or Boroughe.¹

In issuing such 'letters patent', James reinstated the idea that the monarch should exercise direct patronage over a leading company of players, which had lapsed somewhat in the 1590s, when troupes such as the Chamberlain's Men

and the Admiral's Men began to eclipse Queen Elizabeth's own company. The king would also extend the idea of royal patronage to other companies: the Admiral's Men became Prince Henry's Men and another leading company, Worcester's Men, became Queen Anna's Men; the queen also took on the patronage of one of the all-boy playing companies hitherto associated with the choir schools and grammar schools, the Children of the Chapel becoming the Children of the Queen's Revels (Gurr 1996: 168–9).

The relationship between the company that James took under his patronage in 1603 and the second man named in the list of 'our servauntes', William Shakespeare, is the subject of this book. *Shakespeare in the Theatre: The King's Men* explores points of connection between theatre history and literary criticism and interpretation: the moments at which the 'Arte and faculty of playinge' – as the letters patent term it – has a direct impact on the character and composition of the theatrical repertoire. It argues that the King's Men, as theatre-makers in their own right, exercised a generative and transformative influence on Shakespeare's plays, and that their practices over four decades shaped traditions that would define Shakespearean performance. The King's Men, it suggests, shaped what we now know as 'Shakespeare', in terms not only of our understanding of the player-dramatist's career but also of the uses of his plays as theatrical commodities.

An intertwined set of concerns – authority, service, commodity and collaboration – are central to both the letters patent and this book. When the King's Men showed their copy of this document to the local authorities in Surrey, the City of London or the country at large, they re-inscribed their position as dependent upon royal favour. In the text itself, James licenses and authorizes the performances of the King's Men 'of our speciall grace certeine knowledge & mere motion [individual inclination]', and the letters refer twice to the company as 'our servauntes'. The 'recreation of our loving Subjectes' appears to be subordinated to the king's 'Solace and pleasure'. Yet the very reference to 'public' performance and

the use of the resonant term ‘Commoditie’ – which carried a range of meanings including income, revenue, benefit and convenience – admit that commercial performance is crucial to the company’s activities. As David Schalkwyk notes in the context of Shakespeare’s own representations of service, the actor ‘embodies his enabling relationship to the master by whose grace his personations are permitted; as a member of a commercial theatre dependent on a paying audience, he enacts service in a more modern, market sense’ (2008: 10). As I will explore further in the chapters that follow, this double sense of ‘service’ was crucial to the operations of the King’s Men, and it inflected their repertory in a variety of ways.

The list of the actors’ names registers the importance of their collaborative ‘art’ – their combined creative and practical skills – in the work of the King’s Men. These were the company’s ‘sharers’, the men who had invested their money into it and drew a regular share of its profits, and some of them also held shares in the company’s playhouse. Collectively, they controlled the company and were crucial to its success as performers, playwrights (in the case of Shakespeare and, possibly, Armin), investors and administrators. The reference to ‘the rest of their Assosiates’ also points to the other theatrical labour that underpinned the company’s activities – for instance, that of the hired men, who were paid by the week to take smaller roles and did not share in the company’s profits, or the apprentices who played female and juvenile roles.² In what follows I will explore the contribution of these men and boys to the theatrical enterprise. I will also attend to the regular shifts in the membership of the company, which were an issue even at the moment at which the letters patent were drawn up. The company was shortly to lose a leading performer, Thomas Pope, who died in July 1603 and does not figure in the letters patent, but in the same year it recruited John Lowin, who was to be central to its activities in the coming decades.

In their reference to ‘their nowe vsuall howse called the Globe’, the letters patent also signal the importance of this outdoor playhouse near the south bank of the Thames, which

the company had occupied since 1599. In 1608 the King's Men also gained access to an indoor playhouse, the Blackfriars, which was situated on the western edge of the City of London, north of the Thames. This book will explore in detail impact of the company's playhouses on their theatrical output. At the same time, it will also look at a striking example of a moment at which they exercised their right to play in 'other conveniente places': the performances of Shakespeare's *Othello* and Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* in Oxford in September 1610, another time at which the 'infection of the plague' placed limits on the company.

The stipulation that the company are licensed to perform 'Commedies Tragedies Histories Enterludes Moralls pastoralles Stageplaies' and the reference to pieces 'theie haue alreadie studied or hereafter shall vse or studie', also point to the importance of repertory construction and design to the King's Men. A successful roster of plays necessitated a combination of different modes of drama, plays produced by different writers, new plays and old plays. Between 1603 and 1642 the King's Men commissioned plays from most of the leading dramatists of the period: Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, Beaumont, Fletcher, Webster, Ford, Massinger, Brome, Davenant and Shirley. They also employed intriguing figures such as George Wilkins, Shakespeare's collaborator on *Pericles*, whose playwrighting career appears to be confined to a brief period around 1606–8, John Clavell, a reformed highwayman turned dramatist, who wrote *The Soddered Citizen* for them around 1630, and courtier-dramatists such as Lodowick Carlell and Thomas Killigrew. The combined output of these playwrights represents one of the richest bodies of drama produced in the period.

Shakespeare was at the heart of the company's activities for nearly four decades, as player, playwright and theatrical commodity, and this book explores in detail these three interconnecting versions of 'Shakespeare'. The first is the actor who held shares in his playing company and its playhouses and was 'fellow' to a tight-knit group of actors, one of whom, Phillips, named him in his will and others of whom – Burbage,

Heminges and Condell – are named in his own will (Honigmann and Brock 1993: 73, 107). Shakespeare may not have been as central to company's business dealings as Burbage or Heminges, but he features prominently in the 1603 patent and had earlier been named alongside Burbage and an actor who had since left the company, William Kemp, as a payee for the performances of the Chamberlain's Men at court during the Christmas season of 1594–5.³

The second 'Shakespeare' is the writer retained by the company as its leading dramatist, whose plays emerged from a dialogue with other writers and were shaped by the skills of the actors who performed them. The third is the theatrical commodity, a set of plays that would continue through their regular revival to fuel actors' ambitions and playwrights' imaginations for decades to come. These two aspects of 'Shakespeare' are not always easy to untangle. Between 1603 and 1613, the plays that Shakespeare newly composed, often in collaboration with dramatists such as Wilkins, Middleton and Fletcher, were essential to the aesthetic and financial health of the King's Men. These plays sat in the repertory alongside other newly commissioned works and older plays by Shakespeare and others. Evidence of this interplay between old and new Shakespearean plays can be seen in two of the most complete sets of records of court performance that have survived, for 1604–5 and 1612–13.⁴ *Othello* and *Measure for Measure* were performed at court in the Christmas season of 1604–5 alongside *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Henry V* and *The Merchant of Venice*, while *The Tempest*, *Cardenio* and *The Winter's Tale* were performed there in 1612–13 alongside *Julius Caesar*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Othello*, 'The Hotspur' (1 *Henry IV*) and 'Sir Iohn Falstaffe' (either 2 *Henry IV* or *The Merry Wives of Windsor*). It is likely that the court seasons of other years, which are not nearly so well documented, saw similar line-ups of old and new Shakespearean works.⁵

After Shakespeare's retirement, his plays continued to be central to the court and commercial repertoire, and to the

ongoing identity and practices of the King's Men. The period between 1613 and 1660 is often glossed over by scholars, but it was crucial to the development of traditions that would shape Shakespearean performance in the Restoration and beyond. This book is interested not only in performance 'firsts' – Burbage's appearance as Othello around 1604, for example – but in what happened when a play was revived and new actors took on its roles. This is the first period in English theatre history at which we possess sufficiently detailed information to be able to track in detail the movement of roles between actors; the successive performance contexts of individual plays, and the 'Shakespeare' that they produced, would leave a long shadow.

In exploring these various versions of 'Shakespeare', this book seeks to bring together questions relating to repertory design and performance practice, and to forge connections between theatre history and other currents within Shakespearean and early modern studies. In his important recent work on the 'textile black body' in *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*, Ian Smith has demonstrated the ways in which 'an initial inquiry largely identified with the theatre historian's research' can have wider ramifications for the ways in which we interpret early modern plays (2016: 170; see also Smith 2013). This book responds to Smith's challenge, pursuing a set of inquiries that start with theatre historians' questions – Who performed this role? Where was this play performed? What does this eyewitness response mean? – then drawing on a wider range of interpretative techniques in order to address them.

In addition, this book repeatedly asks questions of the documentary materials on which it draws, questions that should also be asked of the letters patent that I have explored here. For example, it is noticeable that the list of the actors' names is headed not by a longstanding member of the company such as Shakespeare or Burbage, but by Lawrence Fletcher, a favourite actor of King James who appears to have newly arrived in London. It has often been thought that Fletcher's

presence was merely nominal, a mark of respect to the new king that had little impact on the company itself, but he also appears in a 1607 list of the men to whom payments were due as James's 'Players of Interludes', and his membership of the company may have been more significant than we have so far realized.⁶ Fletcher's presence in these documents is a reminder, therefore, that the paper trail on which theatre history depends is both fractured and complex.

The documentary record is also central to this book because it provides us with material not only for its five main chapters but also a series of mini-chapters – a Prologue and four Interludes – that give it a chronological spine. Each of these mini-chapters explores the shifting relationship between Shakespeare's plays and those of his colleagues and successors through a single resonant document: a record of the plays performed at court in a specific season. Richard Dutton (2016) has recently made a powerful case for the impact of court patronage on Shakespeare's plays. My interest in the court seasons here lies in what they tell us about the company's repertory. Plays selected for performance at court indicate what the King's Men thought would please the monarch and his family, but they also offer evidence about what the King's Men offered their broader public because court plays appear generally to have been selected from the current commercial repertory.⁷ I therefore use these records to chart the impact of individual actors' careers and life-events, the arrival of new dramatists, shifts in theatrical patronage as the children of James I reached political maturity and changes in the tastes of playgoers. For readers who would like an even broader overview, an Appendix presents a summary of the evidence for the performance of Shakespeare's plays by the King's Men between 1603 and 1642.

The Prologue and first Interlude focus on the court seasons of 1604–5 and 1612–13, in which Shakespeare could himself have actively participated as playwright and, possibly, player. The first of these seasons is documented by an extensive manuscript account drawn up for the Master of the Revels, Sir Edmund Tilney, which details the various expenses for

which the Revels Office sought repayment. Now catalogued as AO 3/908/13 in the National Archives, Kew, it has a colourful history of its own. In the 1840s it was taken from the official archive by a theatre historian, Peter Cunningham, and not returned until the 1860s; in the decades that followed it was routinely accused of being a forgery (see Streitberger 1986: xxx–xxx; Freeman and Freeman 2004: 403–10).⁸ Information about the 1612–13 season comes from a document deriving from a later stage in the official paperwork, having been drawn up for the Treasurer of the Chamber, Sir John Stanhope, Baron Stanhope of Harrington, whose office was responsible for issuing payments to Tilney's successor Sir George Buc (Taylor 2012: 22). It would have drawn its information from a document similar to the 1604–5 account. This document has also had a chequered history. The manuscript of which it is part, now housed in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and catalogued as MS Rawl. A. 239, ended up in the papers of Samuel Pepys. Along with a number of Pepys's official papers, it was rescued from waste-paper dealers by the antiquarian Richard Rawlinson (Lupić 2012: 102–4). Rawlinson then bequeathed his collection to the Bodleian on his death in 1755.

The second Interlude, which focuses on the court season of 1619–20, takes us to a very early stage of the process of court performance. It explores the contents of a set of fragmentary notes made by Buc, in which he appears to have listed the plays that he thought would be appropriate for court performance. He then reused the paper for making notes on corrections to his history of the career of King Richard III, and the notes are preserved with the manuscript of his draft in the British Library, where it is catalogued as Cotton MS Tiberius E.X (Marcham 1925; Chambers 1925). The third Interlude takes us to the moment of performance itself, albeit in a heavily mediated form. It draws on a set of notes on the plays performed in 1633–4 by Buc's successor, Sir Henry Herbert, that were transcribed by the eighteenth-century theatre history Edmond Malone and published by him in 1821 (Shakespeare 1821, 3: 233–4; see Bawcutt 1996: 184–8, Collins 2013: 30–41). The fourth and final interlude explores

the court season of 1636–7, which is documented by a list of plays drawn up by the King's Men themselves and then attached by a court official to the warrant for payment.⁹ Now catalogued in the National Archives as AO 3/908/22, it was also among the documents taken by Cunningham in the 1840s, but its authenticity has been less frequently called into question. The fragmentary nature of the documentary record is demonstrated by the fact that, while all or most of these documents would have been produced for each court season, they only survive sporadically.

The Interludes are interspersed between five full-length chapters, each of which deals in a different way with the questions of authority, service, commodity and collaboration outlined above. Chapter 1, 'The Art and Faculty of Playing: The King's Men and Their Roles' summarizes the information that has come down to us about the roles played by individual actors and explores the skills on which they were able to draw in performance. It focuses in turn on three key groups of performers: leading actors, specialist performers of comic roles and apprentice players who took female and juvenile roles. In doing so, it starts to trace the relationship between the company's plays and the 'repertory' of roles performed by individual actors, a relationship that will be crucial to the chapters that follow.

Like scholars such as Joseph R. Roach and Marvin Carlson, I am interested in relationships between the different roles played by the same actors, and between the same roles as they are played by different actors, relationships that they characterize in various terms as ghosting, surrogation and replacement. Carlson writes of the 'recycled body of an actor' whose performances 'will almost inevitably in a new role evoke the ghost or ghosts of previous roles' (2001: 8), while Roach notes that '[e]ven in death actors' roles tend to stay with them. They gather in the memory of audiences, like ghosts, as each new interpretation of a role sustains or upsets expectations derived from the previous ones' (1996: 78). Early modern audiences may not have expected the same level of

interpretative novelty from actors as their twenty-first-century counterparts, but they were nonetheless acutely aware of the process of transition that occurred when a role moved from one actor to another, or an actor took on a new role.

The remaining chapters build on Chapter 1 to explore in more detail a set of interactions between Shakespeare's plays and the broader performance practices of the King's Men. Drawing on documentary materials such as actor-lists and eyewitness accounts or reports of performances, they look at casting, revivals, repertory design and the ways in which specific plays exploit the capabilities of the company's two playhouses, the Globe and Blackfriars. Each of them focuses on a Shakespeare play or a pair of Shakespeare plays: *Othello*; *Pericles*; *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*; and *Richard II* and *Henry VIII*, or *All is True*. This miniature canon, consisting of some of the most successful plays of the period in terms of their recorded performances and influence, confirms what we think we know about the value of plays such as *Othello* and *The Tempest*, which still dominate the stage and school syllabi today. However, it also disrupts such expectations given the current relative lack of interest in *Pericles* and *Henry VIII*, and the fact that these two hugely popular plays were co-written with other dramatists – Wilkins and Fletcher – also unsettles some persistent myths about Shakespeare's artistic autonomy.

The chapters offer case-studies of the stage-lives of these plays and their successive interactions with other plays of the repertory, telling a set of interrelated stories about Shakespearean performance between 1603 and 1642. Chapter 2, 'Collaboration, Competition and Candlelight: *Othello* and *The Alchemist*', argues that these plays were popular because they offered outstanding showcases for the talents of successive actors, who must collaborate intensively in order to do justice to their representations of conflict and competition. Tracing in detail the evidence that survives of successive performances of the plays at the Globe and Blackfriars, it discovers that the casting of both plays was more complex than has often been recognized. Although Joseph

Taylor succeeded Richard Burbage as the leading actor of the King's Men, he did not take, or in some cases retain, all of the roles taken by his predecessor. The chapter explores the reasons why Taylor apparently preferred to play Iago and Face over Othello and Subtle, deploying his authority as the company's leading actor in ways that were different from those of his predecessor. In doing so, it argues that the technical demands posed by performance at the Blackfriars, and their impact on the plays' structures of collaboration and competition, have been underestimated.

Chapter 3, 'Painful Adventures: *Pericles* and the "Traffic" of the Stage', looks in detail at the stage-life of Shakespeare and Wilkins's hugely popular *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* over three decades, reading it through a set of later plays that respond to its narrative structures and theatrical conventions: Fletcher and Massinger's *The Custom of the Country* (c. 1619), Massinger's *Believe as You List* (1631) and Killigrew's *The Princess* (c. 1635–6). Looking at this group of plays together offers a fresh perspective on both the popularity and the textual problems of *Pericles* – the forms in which the play was itself 'trafficked'. More than this, however, the chapter also takes a broader view of workings of stage traffic, looking at the relationship between narratives of bondage and subjection within the plays and the trafficking structures of the company itself. The relationships of actors to their companies were regulated by financial bonds that restricted their freedom to operate independently; apprentices were 'bound' to their masters until their terms expired; and in 1633 the King's Men was awarded the right to take actors from other companies, a practice that may have existed also in earlier times. *Pericles* and its dramatic successors thus both embody and critique the King's Men's commercial 'trafficking' of plays, plots and players.

Chapter 4, 'Men, Women and Magic: Shakespeare, the Merry Devil and the Prophetess' follows the figure of the magic-worker from Peter Fabell in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (1603), through Shakespeare's Prospero and Paulina, to

Delphia, the title character in Fletcher and Massinger's *The Prophetess* (1622). Exploring the uses to which these plays put theatrical space and the actors available to them, it deconstructs familiar narratives about the relative prominence of the King's Men's two playhouses and returns to questions of authority, collaboration and service, exploring in detail the interplay between leading actors and apprentice players. Where plays such as *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* and *The Tempest* place the leading actor at the centre of attention, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Prophetess* instead demonstrate how boy actors and female characters might inhabit and control theatrical space.

Chapter 5, 'Summer Days at the Globe: *Richard II*, *Henry VIII* and the Politics of Playing', explores in detail the ability of the King's Men to negotiate not only the opportunities offered by the king's patronage but also its dangers. It analyses a remarkable but largely neglected aspect of the King's Men's repertory design: the performance of political and topical drama at the Globe over a span of forty years. Scholars have overlooked this tradition, and the role of Shakespeare's plays within it, because they have followed accepted wisdom that the Globe became a secondary, downmarket venue when the King's Men acquired the Blackfriars. Drawing on eyewitness accounts and reports of performances of *Richard II* and other plays on the same topic (1601, 1611 and 1631), *Henry VIII* (1613 and 1628), Fletcher and Massinger's *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt* (1619) and Middleton's *A Game at Chess* (1624), the chapter argues that the success of these plays was due not only to their controversial subject-material but also to the ways in which the King's Men used verbal and visual effects, and the casting of particular actors, to render politics and politicians 'familiar' to spectators.

The final chapter thus points to some of the political tensions that existed within the structures of the theatre industry, tensions that are visible in the attempt of the letters patent to balance the competing demands of 'the recreation of our loving Subjectes' and the king's own 'Solace and pleasure'.

The Epilogue pushes these questions further into the period of the Civil War, Commonwealth and Protectorate, tracing what happened to the Shakespeare and the King's Men when the structures of royal authority were removed. In doing so, it acknowledges that playing did not disappear in 1642, when Parliament ordered that the playhouses be closed as a way of maintaining public order in the early days of the Civil War, but it also registers the extent to which commercial playing was disrupted.

As a whole, then, this book argues that the King's Men's part in shaping the earliest Shakespearean performance traditions has been underestimated. Its explorations of patterns within the company's repertory and casting practices bring theatre history into dialogue with other areas of Shakespearean and early modern studies, providing a richer and more suggestive perspective on the plays and their performance. We cannot understand the place of Shakespeare's plays on the early seventeenth-century stage without understanding the uses to which the company put his plays, or their creative input into the ways in which they were staged. Shakespeare could not have known in 1603 that his plays would still be holding the stage many decades later. *Shakespeare in the Theatre: The King's Men* tells the story – or, rather, the multiple stories – of how they got there, and how they changed along the way.

Prologue: Playing the Court, 1604–5

A striking picture of the relationship between Shakespeare and the King's Men is offered by the set of accounts drawn up by the Master of the Revels, Sir Edmund Tilney, when he sought repayment for the expenses laid out on the court season of 1604–5 (Figures 1 and 2). Alongside lists of the charges for candles, benches, rushes for the floor, canvas for the tiring house, wages for the Revels office staff and other expenses is a list of the plays performed by three companies – the King's Men, the Queen's Men and the Children of the Chapel – between Hallowmas Day, 1 November 1604, and Shrove Tuesday, 12 February 1605.¹

The King's Men performed seven plays by Shakespeare: 'The moor of venis', now better known as *Othello*; 'the Merry wiues of winsor'; 'Mesur for Mesur'; 'The plaie of Errors', better known as *The Comedy of Errors*; 'Loues Labours Lost'; 'Henry the fift'; and 'the Martchant of venis'. The last was performed twice, the second time 'Againe Commanded By the Kings Majestie'. They also performed two plays by Ben Jonson, his hugely popular 'humours' comedies *Every Man out of his Humour* and *Every Man in his Humour*, and a lost play by an unknown author, 'A Tragidy of The Spanishe Maz', or 'Maze'. In addition to providing the names of the plays, the list offers