PHILIP HENSLOWE AND JOHN HEMINGES:

PROFITS AND THE PLAYHOUSE, 1587—1630

by

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Abstract

This thesis takes an original approach to a frequently overlooked aspect of professional London theatre in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries: its undoubted commercial success, especially for those who owned the playhouses. A forensic examination of the playhouse careers of Philip Henslowe and John Heminges demonstrates that there was the potential for very substantial profits to be made through owning and operating playhouses. Uniquely, the thesis brings together documentary and archaeological evidence to estimate audience capacities for Henslowe's Rose and Fortune, and the playhouses of the King's Men (of which John Heminges was a co-owner), the Globe and the Blackfriars. Using simple spreadsheet templates (contained in an Appendix) current commercial theatre practice is then applied to these audience capacity figures to create estimates of the maximum amount each playhouse could earn at a single performance, or week, or year.

Chapter 1, The Context, provides the background for Henslowe's and Heminges's playhouse careers with research into their wider lives and networks to determine the relative importance of the playhouse to each. Chapter 2, Philip Henslowe – Playhouse Entrepreneur, traces Henslowe's development from novice builder of the Rose to intensely disliked owner and operator of the Hope at the end of his life, and offers calculations of the costs of constructing and running his playhouses. Chapter 3, John Heminges – 'Business Manager' of the King's Men, views the well-known narrative of Shakespeare's acting company through the growing responsibilities of Heminges as actor, business manager, co-owner of playhouses and, potentially, operator of ancillary sales at the Globe and Blackfriars. Chapter 4, Income and Profitability, synthesizes the information from the preceding chapters to produce estimates of income and profit, both corporate and individual. It calculates potential figures

for Henslowe and his son-in-law and partner Edward Alleyn at the Rose and Fortune and for individual members of the King's Men at their playhouses: Richard Burbage, William Shakespeare and John Heminges. The resulting estimates provide an original method of demonstrating the financial success of the industry as a whole and illustrate that, when the playhouses were operating in a period of stability, there was what Heminges himself described as 'good yearly profit' to be made.



For David

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Abbreviations

ADC	Archive of Dulwich College
BL	British Library
Diary	Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary,* ed. R. A. Foakes, 2nd edition (Cambridge University Press, 2002)
ES	E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. (Clarendon Press, 1923)
HADP	The Henslowe Alleyn Digitisation Project <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/>
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography https://www.oxforddnb.com
REED	Records of Early English Drama online https://ereed.org/
TLA	The London Archives (formerly London Metropolitan Archives)
TNA	The National Archives, Kew

Glossary

The terms 'playhouse', 'player' and 'playing company', are generally used in place of 'theatre', 'actor' and 'theatre company'.

Other words and phrases used frequently in association with playhouse finance and playing company structure are:

- Company sharer, or sharer: more senior playing company member who had purchased a 'share' in a company and who therefore shared risk and reward (e.g. Alexander Cooke, John Rice).

- Housekeeper: owner of a share in a playhouse consortium, who owned a proportion of the physical building and shared in an allocation of the daily takings (e.g. Cuthbert Burbage).
- Player-housekeeper: company sharer who was also a housekeeper (e.g. John Heminges, William Shakespeare).
- Hired man: waged employee of a playing company with no financial stake in that company (e.g. John Sinklo, Thomas Goodale).
- Amortisation: the process of gradually writing off the initial cost of an asset, such as a building, over a period of time, generally the years remaining of the lease.
- Recoup: to earn back from profits the amount initially invested.
- Recoupment: the point at which the amount originally invested has been earned back from profits.

Notes

Years are given in new style, 1 January – 31 December, unless otherwise noted.

All manuscript transcriptions are my own, unless otherwise noted.

Pre-decimal British currency is used throughout and written as £ s d (pounds, shillings, and pence).

Percentages, weights and measures are given in figures, e.g. 10%, 1.2 kg, 16 ft 6 in.

Calculations used for charts in the body of the thesis are contained in a separate Appendix as an Excel file.

Introduction: 'The said Playhowses […] haue yielded good yeerely proffitt'*

Around twenty years ago, I sat in a darkened auditorium during a technical rehearsal. I was the Executive Producer on yet another show that, statistically, would probably fail when it transferred to the West End, when I found myself wondering about my predecessors.[1] Who were the people who had owned and run theatres, and been responsible for others' livelihoods, during Shakespeare's working lifetime? Were they single-minded theatre professionals or entrepreneurs involved in a range of money-making ventures? (Or was the picture more nuanced?) How did theatre ownership work? And how commercially successful were their ventures? Two decades later, this thesis attempts to answer the questions that I asked myself during the longeurs of that technical rehearsal. It does so by focusing on two individuals: Philip Henslowe and John Heminges. Philip Henslowe was a very obvious example of a theatre owner who built and ran three playhouses between 1587 and 1616, the Rose, the Fortune and the Hope. He left behind an enormous repository of information about both methods and finance in the form of an account book now known as Henslowe's 'Diary'. John Heminges was, in many ways, Henslowe's opposite number at competitor playhouses as the business manager of the King's Men. He was a performer himself, and co-owner with Shakespeare and others of the Globe and Blackfriars playhouses. Having identified these two, I had answered my first question.

The thesis aims to answer the remaining questions by looking first at the wider lives and careers of Henslowe and Heminges to see whether it is possible to evaluate the

* The will of John Heminges, The National Archives, PROB10/484 in *Playhouse Wills, 1558-1642: An Edition of Wills by Shakespeare and His Contemporaries in the London Theatre*, ed. by E.A.J. Honigman and Susan Brock, Revels Plays Companion Library (Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 167.

[1] The (anonymous) production in question ran in the West End for eight months but lost all its investment.

importance of the playhouse to each of them in a broader context – i.e. were they entrepreneurs or single-minded professionals? It then looks in detail at the playhouse careers of both men, with its main emphasis on the playhouses with which each was involved. To assess how successful Henslowe and Heminges were commercially, it is necessary to estimate both the costs of running each playhouse and what the potential income may have been. Whilst costs are relatively simple to identify, assessing income requires an understanding of the physical capacity of a playhouse, that is how many people it could accommodate. This is dealt with in Chapters 2 (Henslowe) and 3 (Heminges), so that in the fourth and final chapter, that information can be used to work out the financial capacity of each playhouse, i.e. what the maximum potential income could have been. With this information, it is possible to review the likely profits earned by each of them. Working out the maths of playhouse profitability is one thing; understanding what the figures meant at the time is rather different. However, a benchmark is given by Heminges himself, in his will, when describing his shared ownership of the Globe and Blackfriars: 'the said Playhowses […] haue yielded good yeerely proffitt'.[2] Having spent a career running (albeit not personally owning) theatres, and making theatre that aimed to be both artistically and commercially successful, I want to understand what represented 'good yearly profit' to Henslowe and Heminges in the period from the building of Henslowe's Rose in 1587 to Heminges's death in 1630. The thesis will establish the potential for earning profits from the playhouse (still the driver behind any commercial theatre operation) and will demonstrate that playhouse profits added significantly to the wealth of Philip Henslowe and made John Heminges 'of great living, wealth and power'.[3]

[2] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills, 1558-1642*, p. 167.
[3] TNA, REQ 4/1/2/1 quoted in Charles W. Wallace, *Shakespeare and His London Associates as Revealed in Recently Discovered Documents* (University of Nebraska Press, 1910), p. 51.

Beneath the formulaic language, John Heminges's will reveals much about his personality and his concerns. By 1630, he had spent four decades in the playhouse world, almost entirely with the company that became the King's Men where, for more than twenty years, he was a co-owner of the Globe and Blackfriars playhouses. The shares in the ownership of the playhouses were all he had to bequeath to his heir. He made a few material and financial bequests (cushions that had belonged to their mother, to his daughters; portraits of two of those daughters to their respective husbands; £5 to a favourite grandson to buy books; legacies to his unadvanced children not already provided for) but there were no properties, no leases, no large cash reserves. There was simply the income from the two playhouses, which had provided a good annual income – as he hoped they would continue to do.[4] The playhouse is front and centre in his will as in his life. The will might suggest a family in harmony, but after John Heminges's death the extended Heminges family went to law not only over the provisions of the will, but also the circumstances surrounding its drafting and composition. The clue to the bitterness of that litigation lies in the formulation, 'good yeerely proffitt'.

Philip Henslowe's will similarly discloses a great deal about him and his perception of the estate he was bequeathing. He had built and operated playhouses for thirty years by the time he dictated his will in January 1616, but his primary concern was the disposal of a substantial property portfolio. Following his death, this was modestly valued (by parish officials who included his sometime associate and employee, Gilbert East) at £1700.[5] It was almost certainly worth a great deal more, something borne out by the litigation that ensued between his wider family, and his business partner and son-in-law, Edward Alleyn. Alleyn was

[4] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* p. 167.
[5] W.W. Greg, *Henslowe's Diary Part II Commentary* (A. H. Bullen, 1908), p. 20.

appointed not only overseer of the will but also final arbiter of any dispute. Yet from the will itself it is not even obvious that Henslowe was involved in the world of the playhouse. The sole theatrical reference is to the 'Messuage mansion house and lease called the Beare garden', that is, the lease of the land and the premises which he then operated in partnership with Jacob Meade as the dual-purpose Hope playhouse and bear-baiting arena.[6] There is no reference to his 50% share in another playhouse, the Fortune, and no reference to the theatrical community. The individuals named in the will are all family members (his wife Agnes was both heir and executrix) or prominent fellow residents of Southwark. The playhouse may have occupied much of his time in the preceding thirty years, but the commercial core of his life was the property he owned, mostly in Southwark, ranging from tenements (buildings in multiple occupation) to the grand mansion house he and Alleyn had constructed on the Bear Garden estate. These rental properties raised substantial regular income for little or no effort; making money from the playhouse was much more demanding.

Philip Henslowe's so-called Diary is the centrepiece of the Henslowe Alleyn Archive at Dulwich College, and of its online presence, the Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project.[7] It is also the primary material source for my research, so I have visited it twice in situ. It is a substantial volume, 31 cm by 22 cm (a little larger than A4 size); this is an historic paper size known as pott, confirmed by the pot watermark in evidence throughout its leaves.[8] The book is 6 cm deep and weighs 1.2 kg without its nineteenth-century binding.[9] Its weight and size suggest that this was something kept on a desk or table rather than easily portable. Its original

[6] Will of Philip Henslowe, TNA, PROB10/327 in Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* p. 102.
[7] The Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/> [accessed 4 November 2024].
[8] Old English Paper Sizes, *British Association of Paper Historians*, <https://baph.org.uk/resources/reference-material/old-english-paper-sizes/> [accessed 4 November 2024].
[9] Weighed with the assistance of Calista Lucy, the Keeper of the Archive, at Dulwich College on 15 May 2019. The not insubstantial paperback of Foakes's edition weighs 750g.

cover was a soft vellum wrapper with a flap to protect the cut page edges, and the inside front and back of this wrapper contain extensive jottings, doodles and trial signatures. Conservation in 2006 revealed writing from earlier use underneath the folded flaps of the cover; the conservator surmised the volume may have originally been fastened with a leather buckle.[10] The conservation report noted that the book is in remarkably good condition showing 'no damage, not even accidental liquid staining or evidence of poor storage'.[11] The report also notes that it was not sold as a bound blank book but instead as leaves to be bound by its first owner. As a result of its excellent preservation, most leaves remain flat, only a handful have folded corners, probably marking an entry or entries that Henslowe needed to find easily. One such corner marks loans to his Sussex friend Arthur Langworth, but the heaviest fold is on the leaf containing the acknowledgment of a huge £300 debt to Henslowe. This was accumulated by the resident playing company, the Admiral's Men, and is signed by eleven company members.[12] Materially, it is an impressive volume.



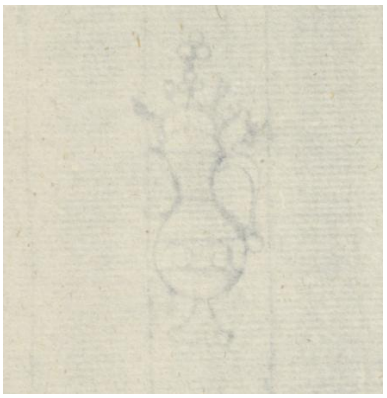


Figure 0.1 Left, ADC, MSS 7, Henslowe's 'Diary' minus 19th century binding, photo from Christopher Clarkson's 2006 conservation report.
Right, fol. 144r showing pot watermark. Photo M. Faiers, by kind permission of the Governors of Dulwich College.

[10] Christopher Clarkson, Conservation Report Dulwich College, London: The Diary of Philip Henslowe 1592 – 1609 Ms VII Project 155a (Oxford, 2006).
[11] Clarkson, Conservation Report.
[12] HADP, MSS 07, fol. 70r.

The unnamed book is accurately described by its first known researcher, Edmond Malone in 1800, as 'a large folio volume of accounts kept by Mr. Philip Henslowe' and only acquired the misnomer, 'diary', later during the nineteenth century.[13] The OED defines 'diary' as 'a daily record of events or transactions, a journal; specifically, a daily record of matters affecting the writer personally, or which come under his personal observation'.[14] Henslowe's Diary fails this test; the many family-related entries all have financial implications and even the sole truly personal entry, the marriage of Henslowe's stepdaughter Joan to Edward Alleyn in October 1592, possibly marked a financial settlement on Joan.[15] If not a diary, what is it and what might Henslowe himself have called it? As a businessman dealing with accounts in the 1590s, Henslowe would have been familiar with the standard sequence of financial recording: first, an inventory of possessions and debts; second, the memorial of transactions as they occurred; third, these entries regularised every few days into a journal; and finally, the ledger, the 'great booke of accompte', which might be recognised as a profit and loss account today.[16] Adam Smyth characterises the memorial in this sequence as 'rushed, flabby and somewhat disorganised, a mixture of prose and numbers', which certainly describes Henslowe's book, so may well be how he thought of it.[17] It is a halfway house in the management of his theatrical

[13] Edmond Malone and George Steevens, *Historical Account of the English Stage: Emendations and Additions* (H. Baldwin, 1790), p. 362 <https://archive.org/details/steevenshist00malo/page/362/mode/2up?view=theater> [accessed 4 November 2024].
[14] 'Diary, N*', Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/6325491256> [accessed 4 November 2024].
[15] Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, 2002) fol. 2^{r}, p. 6.
[16] Alan Sangster and others, 'Pacioli's Forgotten Book: The Merchant's "Ricordanze"', *The Accounting Historians Journal*, 39.2 (2012), pp. 27–44 (pp. 29-30) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43486714> [accessed 4 November 2024].
[17] Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 64.

and other enterprises, containing details ready to be transferred to a formal ledger periodically, or simply cancelled. 'Diary' is a misnomer but nevertheless, it is how the volume is now almost universally known and therefore the term that will be used in this thesis.

Henslowe's Diary contains a mixture of all the elements of his business life across diverse enterprises from which it is possible to extract details to build up a richly detailed picture of financial and organisational aspects of his theatrical career. The theatre-related entries comprise:

- a proportion of box office income on a daily basis 1592 to 1597;
- a proportion of weekly box office income 1598 to 1600;
- cash advances to playing companies to purchase playbooks, commission new plays, have costumes made and props built;
- expenses for playreadings at the local tavern;
- payments to transport the company to court performances;
- costs of improvements to the Rose and construction of the Fortune with payments to builders, carpenters, thatchers and painters, as well as for the thousands of nails bought from the Southwark ironmonger's known as the Frying Pan;
- payments to the Master of the Revels for licensing plays (on behalf of the playing company) and the playhouse (on Henslowe's own account);
- loans to individuals including players, playwrights, and his fellow court servants;
- bonds with players to perform only at his playhouse;
- payments to release players and poets from prison, usually for debt.

These varied theatrical transactions constitute 65% of the total. The remaining 35% includes:

- an odd selection of recipes and spells;
- property transactions in Sussex, home to the extended Henslowe family;
- Henslowe's pawnbroking business;

- collection of rents from investment properties;
- money spent bringing up his orphaned niece and nephew;
- annual costs for maintaining his sponsored soldier, Peter;
- and financial records of his brother John's mining business (these occupied the book for the first five years of its life and start from the other end of the volume, appearing, now, upside down).

Visually, there are some very clear and regular pages, including those where he entered the date, play title, and then what is generally assumed to be his share of box office income on the right in pounds, shillings and pence (£ s d). These pages are likely to have been copied from another source, possibly the gathering book, which may have detailed income received from the gatherers taking money at the entrance doors.[18] (After five years of recording his theatre income like this, he changed to using five columns for the financial information. Scholars have tried to wrestle the meaning out of these columns for years without any definite result. There is general agreement that these probably record the company's income as well as Henslowe's as landlord but that cannot be absolutely demonstrated.) There are also pages of pawnbroking receipts, individually crossed out, probably when the items are redeemed; and pages of expenditure on behalf of the playing companies, crossed through en bloc when the company's running account has been periodically balanced. However, the majority of the leaves are not especially neat and many have disparate entries covering various subjects over a wide timespan. It is a place where a transaction can be quickly recorded in the moment, with entries grouped together by type rather than date, some to be transferred to the next stage of financial reporting, and some just deleted.

[18] See pp. 266—8 for details on gatherers. An early (1528) gathering book is mentioned in The London Archives, P69/ALH5/B/003/MS05090/001, fol. 41*, by Callan Davies, *What Is a Playhouse?: England at Play, 1520-1620* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2022), p. 39.

At the start of the twentieth century, W. W. Greg edited Henslowe's Diary in two volumes, the text (excluding some of the non-theatrical entries) in 1904, followed by an extraordinarily detailed commentary in 1908.[19] In 1961, R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert produced a complete edition, subsequently updated by Foakes in 2002. The editions by Greg and Foakes are complementary and together form a great resource. The sheer range and depth of detail that Greg offers remains unrivalled, whereas Foakes uses typography (allied with notes) to offer a full transcription of all 238 folio pages, including the entries omitted by Greg. In 1977, Foakes went on to edit a folio-sized facsimile of the original, thus permitting those unable to visit the archive at Dulwich the opportunity to see for themselves the varied and complex styles of entry. This accessibility has been further enhanced by the online iteration of the archive, The Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project.[20] The Diary is neither truly a diary nor a ledger but through its diverse leaves provides the source for our knowledge of more than 250 plays now lost to us and the operation of a playhouse owner and his tenant playing companies. (As Henslowe seemingly erected the Rose with no previous experience of players or playhouses he is more likely to have followed procedures already standard in other playhouses and with other companies than to have initiated new practices. This thesis therefore assumes that those described in the Diary are, broadly, standard across the burgeoning industry, rather than exceptional.)[21]

Foakes's extended introduction details the Diary's provenance and materiality, and outlines its different types of content, for example, John Henslowe's mining accounts and Philip's pawnbroking records, in addition to the theatrical entries. A helpful guide to

[19] W. W. Greg, *Henslowe's Diary: Part I Text* (A.H. Bullen, 1904); W.W. Greg, *Commentary*.
[20] The Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/> [accessed 4 November 2024].
[21] 'The Diary remains our best guide to company practice': Janette Dillon, *The Cambridge Introduction to Early English Theatre*, Cambridge Introductions to Literature (University Press, 2006), p. 75.

Henslowe's inconsistent orthography also features. In the revised edition (2002) Foakes largely follows Greg's *Commentary*, and also E. K. Chambers' *The Elizabethan Stage,* for his narrative. However, he eschews Chambers's view of the Lord Chamberlain's/King's Men as the dominant artistic and creative company of its time, instead appreciating that both they and Henslowe's primary tenants, the Admiral's Men, were artistically competitive and commercially driven. The revised edition also identifies much of the work that appeared between 1961 to 2002 which has rehabilitated Henslowe, including Neil Carson's *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary* (1988), which Foakes praises, whilst also noting that Andrew Gurr 'has continued to present a less sympathetic view of Henslowe's activities'. Carson tabulates a voluminous range of information from the Diary. Seventy tables occupy almost half the book: listing play titles; providing a performance calendar; detailing literary and production expenses; and concluding with consolidated company accounts. These comprehensive figures synthesise much of the detail of the Diary, and are supported by Carson's introductory commentary, which is cautious in tone, careful not to form judgements, whilst elucidating the multiple threads of the Diary. Holger Schott Syme has recently explored a hitherto little noticed observation made by Carson, namely that certain performances mysteriously designated 'ne' by Henslowe may represent those where the licensing fee of 7s, paid by the playing company to the Master of the Revels, is added to the 50% of gallery income assumed to be due to the company.[22] It is an interesting and highly plausible thesis for the 'ne' marker which has vexed scholars for decades.

Foakes singles out another scholar, S. P. Cerasano, for her reappraisal of Henslowe; he cites six examples of her work and she has continued to produce further research on

[22] Holger Schott Syme, *Theatre History, Attribution Studies, and the Question of Evidence* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), pp. 10—19.

Henslowe since 2002.[23] One of her major articles, 'The Geography of Henslowe's *Diary*', appeared in 2005.[24] In it, she traces the geography of the physical volume, moving from John Henslowe in Sussex to Philip in Southwark, in parallel with following Philip Henslowe's own geography. Noting that entries in the Diary were often made several days (or even weeks) at a time, she explores the gaps in Henslowe's record keeping, linking them to his periods of service at court as Groom of the Chamber, and later Gentleman Sewer. In so doing, she creates a portrait very different from that presented by earlier historians, no longer the 'illiterate and moneyed man' of Fleay and others, but leading a dual life as a businessman and playhouse owner in Southwark, and regularly attending the monarch on a rostered basis.[25] Foakes also praises Carol Chillington Rutter's edition of *Documents of the Rose Playhouse* as 'a very useful chronological commentary', and addition to the literature on Henslowe.[26] Rutter employs substantial extracts from the Diary and other documentary sources to distil the life of the Rose chronologically, from construction, through its decade of success, to gradual degradation and abandonment, complementing the Diary itself.[27]

[23] Foakes lists S. P. Cerasano, 'Philip Henslowe, Simon Forman, and the Theatrical Community of the 1590s', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 44.2 (1993), pp. 145–58, doi:10.2307/2871136; S.P. Cerasano, 'Revising Philip Henslowe's Biography', *Notes and Queries*, 32.1 (1985), pp. 66–72, doi:org.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/10.1093/nq/32-1-66; S. P. Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn's "Retirement" 1597-1600', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England; New York*, 10 (1998), pp. 98–112; S. P. Cerasano, 'The Patronage Network of Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn', *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, 13 (2001), pp. 82–92; S. P. Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn: 1566-1626', in *Edward Alleyn: Elizabethan Actor, Jacobean Gentleman*, ed. by Aileen Reid and Robert Maniura (Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1994); S. P. Cerasano, '"Borrowed Robes". Costume Prices and the Drawing of "Titus Andronicus"', *Shakespeare Studies*, 22 (1994), pp. 11–31.[All online articles accessed 4 November 2024].

[24] S. P. Cerasano, 'The Geography of Henslowe's Diary', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 56.3 (2005), pp. 328–53, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3844083> [accessed 4 November 2024].

[25] Frederick Gard Fleay, *A Chronicle History of the London Stage 1559-1642* (Reeves and Turner, 1890) p. 117 <http://archive.org/details/cu31924026121263> [accessed 30 July 2024]; see also Greg, *Commentary*; Chambers, *ES,* II; Robert Boies Sharpe, *The Real War of the Theatres: Shakespeare's Fellows in Rivalry with the Admiral's Men, 1594-1603: Repertories, Devices and Types* (D C Heath & Co: Oxford University Press, 1935).

[26] *Diary,* p. x.

[27] *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, ed. by Carol Chillington Rutter, Rev. ed. (Manchester University Press, 1999).

Although the Diary has been extensively reviewed and researched over decades, it remains open to interpretation. In parallel with working with the Diary as artefact, my own method of interpretation has been via the creation of a range of spreadsheets:

- producing profit and loss accounts for the Rose 1592 to 1597 using Henslowe's own figures to guide my later calculations of the Rose's potential for profit – the motivating factor in Henslowe's ownership;
- establishing the chronology and subject matter of each leaf so it is easier to view the complex picture of Henslowe's activities;
- identifying and (where possible) physically locating individuals named within the Diary, as well as identifying Henslowe's own locations, to help build a picture of his networks in Southwark and beyond;
- employing spreadsheets for a close reading of the pawnbroking entries to enable me to demonstrate a clear link between pawnbroking and playhouse.

Where there is an abundance of scholarship on Henslowe's Diary, there is a corresponding lack of material on what either he, or Heminges, might have earned from the playhouse. William Ingram's *The Business of Playing,* which elucidates the decades prior to Henslowe's construction of the Rose, is a masterly demonstration of how to use documentary research elegantly in a narrative but covers a period too early for my purposes. Ingram's biography of Henslowe's Southwark competitor, Francis Langley, *A London Life in the Brazen Age,* provides a partial model for my approach to the lives of my subjects, but does not look in detail at Langley's playhouse income.[28] In 'On the Economics of the Theater in Renaissance London', Oates and Baumol site the activity of theatregoing in a rapidly expanding city, and

[28] William Ingram, *The Business of Playing: The Beginnings of the Adult Professional Theater in Elizabethan London* (Cornell University Press, 1992); William Ingram, *A London Life in the Brazen Age: Francis Langley, 1548 - 1602* (Harvard University Press, 1978).

delve deeply into the economic and social context.[29] They make an estimate of the percentage of population attending playhouses (although they do not then quantify the income this may have brought in) and cite both Henslowe and Heminges as examples of financial success in a highly risky field. In his 1990 article, 'Art Imitates Business: Profit and Business Practices as Forces in the Elizabethan Theater', James H. Forse assesses the financial status of the theatre industry in wider society.[30] He identifies sixty-eight upwardly mobile theatre practitioners including Shakespeare, Henslowe and Heminges, and offers some broad calculations of the King's Men's income and expenditure, providing helpful figures against which to measure my own. He then turns his focus to Shakespeare as both a playwright with an eye on current trends in books and translations, and a shrewd investor in land. Nearly forty years ago Herbert Berry, in *Shakespeare's Playhouses*, recognised what other scholars of playhouse finance have ignored, namely the importance of lease length in calculating risk and, consequently, estimates of profit.[31] Elsewhere, Berry usefully scrutinises playhouse income and, in particular, the allocation between owner(s) and playing company at the Boar's Head, providing a reference point for my own calculations.[32]

Included in the richly varied chapters of Richard Dutton's edited collection, *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre,* is Cerasano's 'Theater Entrepreneurs and Theatrical Economics'.[33] She outlines the many difficulties of practice (and biography) which are faced when trying to understand the commercial arrangements of playhouse operation and which

[29] Mary I. Oates and William J. Baumol, 'On the Economics of the Theater in Renaissance London', *The Swedish Journal of Economics*, 74.1 (1972), pp. 136–60 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3439014> [accessed 4 November 2024].
[30] James H. Forse, 'Art Imitates Business Profit and Business Practices as Forces in the Elizabethan Theater', *Journal of Popular Culture*, 24.2 (1990), p. 165.
[31] Herbert Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses* (AMS Press, 1987), pp. 193–94.
[32] Herbert Berry, *The Boar's Head Playhouse*, Folger Books (Folger Shakespeare Library; Associated University Presses, 1986), pp. 121—22.
[33] S. P. Cerasano, 'Theater Entrepreneurs and Theatrical Economics', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, ed. by Richard Dutton (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 380–95.

she notes, 'seem to make it almost impossible to discuss the economics of the early modern theater in any coherent manner'. In the chapters that follow, this thesis addresses these difficulties to reconstruct both biography and playhouse finance to participate in 'the discourse surrounding theatrical commerce [which] is still in its infancy… continu[ing] to shift and develop'.[34]

Melissa D. Aaron in *Global Economics*: *a History of the Theater Business, the Chamberlain's/King's Men and Their Plays, 1599-1642* (2005) collates financial details from several sources (Chambers, Forse, Carson and Knutson) to build an economic context for the King's Men.[35] She also uses figures from the legal dispute between Thomasine Ostler and her father John Heminges, concerning her late husband's playhouse shares, to provide estimates of gross (i.e. total) income and net profit (i.e. after the deduction of costs) at the Globe and Blackfriars. The book is a history of business aspects of the King's Men and, proceeding chronologically, Aaron provides a rich narrative of 'a company of businessmen, forever obsessed with the bottom line, complacent or nervous as economic circumstances warrant'.[36] Aaron takes in aspects including the opening of the Globe itself, *Hamlet,* court performances, and the production of the Shakespeare First Folio. She is rare, however, in having this commercial focus on the company as a whole. This level of detailed attention is more usually paid to calculating the earnings of one player, William Shakespeare (although many of the vast number of biographies contain only a glancing reference to his finances).[37] One of his

[34] Cerasano, 'Entrepreneurs', p. 381.
[35] Melissa D. Aaron, *Global Economics: A History of the Theater Business, the Chamberlain's/King's Men and Their Plays, 1599-1642* (University of Delaware Press; Eurospan distributor, 2005); Chambers, *ES* I, pp. 350—57; Forse, *Art Imitates Business*; Carson, *Companion*; Roslyn L. Knutson, 'The Repertory of the Chamberlain's Men, 1594-95, with Observations on Its Commercial Value', *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, 8–9.1 (1982), pp. 74–84, doi:10.1163/23526963-90000054.
[36] Aaron, *Global Economics*, p. 21.
[37] For example, a selection from my own bookshelves: S. Schoenbaum, *William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life*, Reprinted 1987 (Oxford University Press, 1977); Park Honan, *Shakespeare: A Life* (Oxford

earliest biographers, Edmond Malone, estimated that Shakespeare earned around £200 per year from the playhouse, a figure which has received general acceptance. The notable exception is Sidney Lee, who calculated that he was 'earning at the theatre a sum well exceeding £600 per year'.[38] (Lee's calculations were rebutted in detail twenty years later by Alwin Thaler, concluding that the correct figure was £240).[39] Many of Shakespeare's more recent biographers have instead focused attention on his non-theatrical wealth, his land and property purchases in Stratford, usefully surveyed by Paola Pugliatti.[40] It has been left to Andrew Gurr in *The Shakespeare Company* (2004) and, most recently, Robert Bearman in *Shakespeare's Money: How Much Did He Make and What Did This Mean?* (2016) to revisit his playhouse income.[41] Gurr is especially helpful as he creates a sequence of notional profit and loss accounts at various points in the history of the King's Men, which are particularly informative. Looking at Shakespeare's life through several phases as his earnings grew and consolidated, Bearman (who uses Gurr's figures) creates a fascinating new financial biography, offering a fresh interpretation of where, when and how, Shakespeare earned and spent his money. The income projections of all these scholars vary widely, from Lee's 'well exceeding' £600 per annum down to Bearman's/Gurr's £200 per annum from all playhouse

University Press, 1998); Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare for All Time* (Macmillan, 2002); Stephen Greenblatt, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare* (Jonathan Cape, 2004); Peter Ackroyd, *Shakespeare: The Biography* (Chatto and Windus, 2005); Jonathan Bate, *Soul of the Age: The Life, Mind and World of William Shakespeare* (Penguin Books, 2009); Lois Potter, *The Life of William Shakespeare: A Critical Biography* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012); Lena Cowen Orlin, *The Private Life of William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

[38] Schoenbaum, *Documentary Life,* p. 211; Sir Sidney Lee, *A Life of William Shakespeare*, 3rd edn (John Murray, 1922), pp. 196—203 (p. 203).

[39] Alwin Thaler, 'Shakspere's Income', *Studies in Philology*, 15.2 (1918), pp. 82–96 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4171726> [accessed 4 November 2024].

[40] Paola Pugliatti, 'Biography and Shakespeare's Money', *Critical Survey* (Oxford, England), 30.3 (2018), pp. 67–82, doi:10.3167/cs.2018.300306.

[41] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642* (Cambridge UP, 2004), pp. 108—11; Robert Bearman, *Shakespeare's Money: How Much Did He Make and What Did This Mean?* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

sources. However, all are (of necessity) extrapolating from non-theatrical sources, generally litigation, with its attendant exaggeration, under-estimation and ambiguity.

In 2009 an additional source of information became available with the publication of the reports of the Rose and Globe archaeological rescue digs, 1988 to 1991. The details contained in these reports offer the first opportunity there has been to examine playhouse finances (literally) from the ground up. Although the remains of the two playhouses are fragmentary (particularly in the case of the Globe) they may be sufficient to create what, professionally, I would call a 'gross potential' or 'total financial capacity', i.e. to calculate the theoretical maximum income for a single performance at a range of playhouses, the Rose, the Fortune and the Globe. This information is essential to any estimation of profit for owner and/or playing company. To use a total financial capacity as a tool of my methodology, I needed to familiarise myself with the outcome of the Rose and Globe digs 1988 to 1991. For this, the work of Julian Bowsher, lead archaeologist for Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) has been invaluable. In *The Rose and the Globe: Playhouses of Shakespeare's Bankside, Southwark: Excavations 1988-91* (with Pat Miller), and in a series of articles, he provides sufficient detail of measurements of the Rose and (to a lesser extent) the Globe for calculations to be made of standing, seating and hence financial capacities.[42] A journal article, 'Twenty Years On', is particularly useful in Bowsher's reconsideration of some dimensions previously given.[43] Although John Orrell's *The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe* was written before the digs took place, in at least two areas it has given me tools with which to work.[44] Firstly, Orrell dissects the highly detailed contract between Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, and

[42] Julian Bowsher and Pat Miller, *The Rose and the Globe: Playhouses of Shakespeare's Bankside, Southwark: Excavations 1988-91*, MOLA Monograph; 48 (Museum of London Archaeology, 2009).
[43] Julian M. C. Bowsher, 'Twenty Years on: The Archaeology of Shakespeare's London Playhouses', *Shakespeare*, 7.4 (2011), pp. 452–66, doi:10.1080/17450918.2011.625443.
[44] John Orrell, *The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe* (Cambridge University Press, 1983).

their carpenter Peter Street, for building the Fortune which provides essential information for establishing the capacities of both Globe and Fortune; secondly, Orrell supplies valuable details of the tiers of seating constructed for court performances.[45] These, in turn, provide me with a template for calculating a per person seating allowance in any playhouse.[46]

The dimensions of the archaeology of the Rose and Globe allow me to create a footprint of each playhouse, which can then be read against the contract for the construction of the Fortune, (which is explicit in several places that it is following the example of the Globe), to ascertain the position of entrances or staircases, and number of gallery levels. The formula for the allocation of seating space employed in the construction of temporary tiers of seats for court performances is then applied to the available area. This gives the number of rows that can be accommodated in each level, and the number of bodies that each row can contain. From this, the capacity of the seated galleries in any of these playhouses can be calculated. Working out the capacity of the standing yard requires a different approach. This uses the informal experiment carried out by Christine Eccles, under the supervision of Julian Bowsher, and described by Eccles in her 1990 book, *The Rose Theatre*.[47] In this, a tightly-packed maximum of 740 older boys of Dulwich College filled spaces marked out as the size of the yard of the Rose.[48] With this information, a formula can be written to calculate the standing capacity of any given area and thus of the yard of any other playhouse. Following this, it is possible to create a simple seating plan for a playhouse, of the kind that any contemporary theatre might display online for the purpose of seat selection. Thereafter the appropriate

[45] Archive of Dulwich College, Muniment 22 in *Diary,* pp. 306—10; Orrell, *Quest*, pp. 127—38.
[46] Orrell, *Quest,* pp. 131—36.
[47] Christine Eccles, *The Rose Theatre* (Hern, 1990), pp. 134–36.
[48] 21st century older teenage boys are approximately equivalent to 16th century adult males, who were 2-3% smaller than adults now. Alex Werner, *London Bodies - the Changing Shape of Londoners from Prehistoric Times to the Present Day* (Museum of London Archaeology, 1998), p. 108.

price can be applied to each section, thus one penny per person for the yard, or twopence per person for a gallery seat, with certain 'extras', such as cushion hire, or access to a private room, in addition. From this point, it is simply a mathematical process to work out potential income per performance, per week, or beyond.

The scholars whose work on finances was reviewed above (Oates and Baumol, Forse, Lee, Thaler, Aaron, Gurr and Bearman) include the King's Men's indoor playhouse, the second Blackfriars, in their work. However, there is generally much less attention paid to commercial aspects of that playhouse. Instead, the focus is often on locating its precise position within the rambling Blackfriars complex: Chambers, for example, devotes almost forty pages to a forensic examination of the evidence of where it was sited.[49] More recent scholarship has been concerned with the effect of the space on performances where plays 'in part make their meaning from the darker, more intimate, candlelit and music-filled space of the second Blackfriars'.[50] Andrew Gurr and Farah Karim-Cooper's edited collection *Moving Shakespeare Indoors* provides an excellent array of chapters on these aspects, but there is much less scholarship on the physical playhouse and the income to be derived from it.[51] As Christopher Highley notes, 'little evidence survives about the day to day workings of the various companies that occupied the playhouse – their incomes and expenditures'; despite such absence of evidence this thesis illustrates that it is nevertheless possible to reconstruct sufficient detail to make estimates of both income and expenditure.[52] Irwin Smith's substantial volume, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse,* is now sixty years old and much of

[49] Chambers, *ES* II, pp. 475—515.
[50] Julie Sanders, *The Cambridge Introduction to Early Modern Drama, 1576–1642*, Cambridge Introductions to Literature (Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 77, doi:10.1017/CBO9781139004930.
[51] Andrew Gurr and Farah Karim-Cooper, eds., *Moving Shakespeare Indoors: Performance and Repertoire in the Jacobean Playhouse* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).
[52] Christopher Highley, *Blackfriars in Early Modern London: Theater, Church, and Neighborhood* (Oxford Academic, 2022), pp. 176-77. See Chapters 3 and 4 for details of estimated costs and income.

its information (and especially illustrations) is highly speculative, nevertheless it provides a starting point for estimating the audience capacity.[53] As a result, my own estimates of seating and financial capacities in that playhouse are more tentative. This is due in part to the lack of any physical remnant of the Blackfriars, and also to the more expensive and more complicated pricing structure known from contemporary references to have been in place here.[54] As far as possible, the same seating space principles have been applied to the recorded dimensions of the chamber used for performances; the pricing structure is subjective but follows that outlined by Smith and by Oliver Jones.[55] When summarised like this, the method may appear complex but all calculations have been made using simple, self-designed template spreadsheets in Excel so that any can be amended, should new information come to light. All results are illustrated in simple chart form within the text, with full details contained in the appendix.

To look at the wider, extra-playhouse lives and careers of Henslowe and Heminges has required engagement with a much broader canon of work on, to use Andrew Gurr's titular phrase, the Shakespearean stage. Chambers's *The Elizabethan Stage* (now over a century old) remains indispensable and, across four decades, Gurr himself has ranged widely, from *The Shakespearean Stage 1570-1642*, originally published in 1970, to more recent, narrower studies, such as *The Shakespeare Company 1594-1642* and *Shakespeare's Opposites: the Admiral's Company 1594-1625*.[56] Throughout, he argues strongly in favour of the

[53] Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse* (NY University Press, 1964).
[54] Smith, *Blackfriars,* pp. 297—300, cites examples from *The Gull's Hornbook* (Dekker); *Cynthia's Revels* and *The Magnetic Lady* (Jonson); *The Captain* (Beaumont and Fletcher) and *Wit Without Money* (Fletcher).
[55] Smith, *Blackfriars,* pp. 297—301; Oliver Jones, 'Documentary Evidence for an Indoor Jacobean Theatre' in *Moving Shakespeare Indoors: Performance and Repertoire in the Jacobean Playhouse,* Andrew Gurr and Farah Karim-Cooper, eds., (Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 68—69.
[56] E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage,* IV vols. (Clarendon Press, 1923); Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574-1642*, 4th edn (2009); Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); Andrew Gurr, *Shakespeare's Opposites: The Admiral's Company, 1594-1625* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

establishment of the Lord Chamberlain's Men and the Admiral's Men as an official duopoly, ordered by Privy Council members, in 1594. Although unproven, this has the advantage of seeing the Admiral's Men as appropriate competitors to the Lord Chamberlain's/King's Men, rather than allowing the King's Men to be preeminent, as they were viewed for so many years following Chambers. A genre of literature that has provided background for the Rose 1587 to 1592 is on individual playing companies, for example, *Lord Strange's Men and Their Plays* (Manley and MacLean); *The Queen's Men and their plays, 1583-1603* (McMillin and MacLean); *Leicester's Men and their Plays: An Early Elizabethan Playing Company and its Legacy* (Johnson); and, whilst not centred on one company, *Acting companies and Their Plays in Shakespeare's London* (Keenan).[57] As the titles indicate, company economics are not a focus but, allied with Gurr's detailed playing records in *The Shakespearian Playing Companies*, they collectively assist with the possible programming of the Rose in its earliest years.[58] A provocative recent addition to relevant literature is Callan Davies's *What is a Playhouse*, which expands the definition, and geography, beyond the traditional image of the London playhouse.[59] Davies's book offers a helpful wider perspective alongside my own study of three/four such metropolitan playhouses. It has encouraged me to question if the motives of Henslowe and Heminges as playhouse builders and operators extend beyond the purely commercial, to include their perceived social and community positions.

Literature specific to Henslowe's and Heminges's lives is rarer (and in an informal survey of my own bookshelves, Henslowe outnumbered Heminges in index references by a

[57] Lawrence Manley and Sally-Beth MacLean, *Lord Strange's Men and Their Plays* (Yale University Press, 2014); Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean, *The Queen's Men and Their Plays, 1583 - 1603* (Cambridge University Press, 1998); Laurie Johnson, *Leicester's Men and Their Plays: An Early Elizabethan Playing Company and Its Legacy* (Cambridge University Press, 2023); Siobhan Keenan, *Acting Companies and Their Plays in Shakespeare's London* (Bloomsbury, 2014).
[58] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies* (Oxford University Press, 1996).
[59] Callan Davies, *What Is a Playhouse?*

ratio of 2:1). Sally-Beth MacLean offers the most detailed account since Greg of Henslowe's playhouse and property dealing in the recent REED online records of the Rose and Cerasano has written extensively on non-playhouse aspects of Henslowe's life, for example, 'The Master of the Bears in Art and Enterprise' on his Bear Garden affiliation; 'Cheerful Givers: Henslowe, Alleyn, and the 1612 Loan Book to the Crown'; 'The Patronage Network of Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn'; and 'Philip Henslowe and the Elizabethan Court'.[60] In 'Revising Philip Henslowe's biography' she provides a minutely researched reassessment of known facts of Henslowe's earlier life and family, the first since Rendle's initial biographical article almost exactly a century earlier.[61] However, there is relatively little work on John Heminges with which to pair this, although the quatercentenary of the Shakespeare First Folio led to books by Emma Smith and Chris Laoutaris which explore Heminges's role as one of the key individuals associated with the folio's publication was explored.[62] (As this single facet of Heminges has been viewed so thoroughly, and so recently, I will not be looking at his involvement with the First Folio.) In *Shakespeare in the Theatre: the King's Men,* Lucy Munro's excellent account of the King's Men, she mentions Heminges most frequently as an apprentice master or payee for court performances, at the heart of the company.[63] Her recent article, 'The Names of the Actors: the First Folio and Theater History', scrutinises his involvement in litigation, via the previously ignored lawsuit he brought against the widow of

[60] Sally-Beth MacLean, The Rose Playhouse, *REED online*, https://ereed.org/collections/rosep/ [accessed 20 February 2025]; S. P. Cerasano, 'The Master of the Bears in Art and Enterprise', *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, 5 (1991), pp. 195–209; S. P. Cerasano, 'Cheerful Givers: Henslowe, Alleyn, and the 1612 Loan Book to the Crown', *Shakespeare Studies; New York, Etc.*, 28 (2000), pp. 215–19; Cerasano, 'The Patronage Network of Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn'; S. P. Cerasano, 'Philip Henslowe and the Elizabethan Court', *Shakespeare Survey*, 2007, doi:10.1017/CCOL052187839X.004.
[61] Cerasano, *Biography.*
[62] Emma Smith, *Shakespeare's First Folio: Four Centuries of an Iconic Book* (Oxford University Press, 2016; reissued 2023); Emma Smith, *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's First Folio* (Cambridge University Press, 2016); Emma Smith, *The Making of Shakespeare's First Folio* (Bodleian Library, 2015); Chris Laoutaris, *Shakespeare's Book: The Intertwined Lives behind the First Folio* (William Collins, 2023).
[63] Lucy Munro, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: The King's Men* (Bloomsbury, 2020).

a colleague, which Munro describes as testing 'the limits of both affection and community'.[64] Heminges does not come out of it well, but Munro's examination is a reminder of the value of legal disputes in research. Gabriel Egan examines the likelihood of Heminges as the tap-house operator at both first and second Globes, largely based on the evidence of a contemporary ballad on the Globe fire of 1613, and an unexpected reference to Heminges (and specifically to finance) occurs in Janette Dillon's *The Cambridge Introduction to Early English Theatre.*[65] As a *Cambridge Introduction*, Dillon's book is necessarily brief but is thorough and very readable. Heminges's name is included solely in a table comparing 'selected theatre-related costs with artisans' wages'.[66] Whilst interesting in itself, the table is not referred to in the text and there is no indication of its source. However, it gives Heminges's minimum income in 1623 as £1000: as the final chapter of this thesis will demonstrate, although this figure may be at the upper end of Heminges's earning potential, I believe it to be credible.[67] David Kathman's work, particularly the article 'Grocers, Goldsmiths and Drapers', shows a playhouse-adjacent facet of Heminges's life: his position as an apprentice master.[68] Kathman's extensive archival research provides evidence of at least ten boys or youths apprenticed by Heminges as a freeman of the Grocers' Company to be trained in the playing company as performers.

[64] Lucy Munro, 'The Names of the Actors: The First Folio and Theater History', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 74.4 (2023), pp. 314–38 <https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/sq/quad037> [accessed 4 November 2024].
[65] Janette Dillon, *The Cambridge Introduction to Early English Theatre*, Cambridge Introductions to Literature (University Press, 2006).
[66] Ibid., p. 259.
[67] See Chapter 4, 9.4, pp. 304—11.
[68] Gabriel Egan, 'John Heminges's Tap-House at the Globe', *Theatre Notebook*, 55.2 (2001), pp. 72–77; Peter Beal, 'The Burning of the Globe', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 20 June 1986, pp. 689-, The Times Literary Supplement Historical Archive; David Kathman, 'Grocers, Goldsmiths, and Drapers: Freemen and Apprentices in the Elizabethan Theater', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 55.1 (2004), pp. 1–49 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3844321> [accessed 4 November 2024].

It has been necessary to move beyond the walls of the playhouse to discover more of Henslowe and Heminges in their respective communities and much of this work has been with primary sources, either in the archive or online. Through the records of the Worshipful Company of Grocers, Heminges can be traced from his apprenticeship aged eleven in 1578 until he paid his final annual brotherhood (membership) money four months before his death in 1630.[69] In parallel, the records of the city parish of St Mary Aldermanbury, where he lived for more than thirty years, present him as an active participant in local governance, rising to the highest office of churchwarden.[70] Henslowe lived all his adult life in Southwark, where Heminges was also resident during some of his final decade. Therefore, Boulton's *Neighbourhood and Society: a London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century*, covering all aspects of life, work and death in the Boroughside area of Southwark, has proved valuable in understanding the society in which they lived and worked.[71] Steve Rappaport's *Worlds Within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth Century London* similarly illuminates the workings of the city guilds, allowing Heminges's career to be viewed through the lens of his status as 'citizen and Grocer', as he identified himself in his will.[72] The scholarship of Henry French, Keith Wrightson, and Alexandra Shepard on society, social worth and mobility provides a context in which to view the shifting social position of Heminges, in particular, and his trajectory towards the acknowledged status of gentleman.[73] A key to contemporary business

[69] TLA, Worshipful Company of Grocers, CLC/L/GH.
[70] TLA, St Mary Aldermanbury, City of London, P69/MRY2.
[71] Jeremy Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1987).
[72] Steve Lee Rappaport, *Worlds within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London*, Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy and Society in Past Time; 7 (Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[73] Henry French, '"Gentlemen": Remaking the English Ruling Class', in *A Social History of England, 1500-1750*, ed. by Keith Wrightson (Cambridge University Press, 2017); Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain 1470-1750*, The Penguin Economic History of Britain (Penguin, 2002); Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2002); Alexandra Shepard, *Accounting for Oneself: Worth, Status, and the Social Order in Early Modern England*, ed. by Alexandra Shepard (Oxford University Press, 2015).

practice is given by Craig Muldrew in *The Economy of Obligation,* in which he explores the personal and local credit networks that allowed a society short on coinage to function effectively. Thus, if Henslowe's credit was good, having cash to hand was less important when building a playhouse, a phenomenon he exploited to source supplies for the construction of the Fortune.[74]

Over four chapters, this thesis distils archival information (including new discoveries) and mathematical calculations to argue that Philip Henslowe and John Heminges had the potential to earn significant income from their playhouse interests, at least in some years. Applying my lived commercial experience to the archival information, and to evidence from earlier historians (ranging from the nineteenth to twenty first centuries), I present financial conclusions in the most straightforward way: the pounds, shillings and pence that it was possible to earn from the playhouse in this period. It must be remembered, however, that in these calculations I am only able make reasonable estimates of what they might each have been able to earn from their playhouse activity. In the same vein, I offer new biographical details of both men. These are not theatrical (the deaths of children, holding parish office, or what it meant to be a seacoal meter) but they add to the emerging picture of Henslowe's and Heminges's diversity of concurrent activity. Philip Henslowe and John Heminges lived through periods of extended playhouse closure due to plague, when income from this source all but evaporated. Yet the potential of earning large annual profits in better years must have been a motivating factor in continuing with their playhouse careers.

The thesis restricts itself to the years from 1587 (the opening of the Rose) to 1630 (the death of John Heminges) and solely to commercial activity by the tenant playing company

[74] Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation* (Macmillan, 1998).

(thus excluding income from 'one-off' events on stage, such as fencing challenges) at the playhouses associated with Henslowe and Heminges.[75] The thesis also ignores touring undertaken by the companies of those playhouses in the financial conclusions drawn. For the purpose of these financial conclusions, touring is assumed only to cover its own costs, rather than deliver additional profit.[76] Also ignored is the income that must have been derived in some fashion from the hawkers outside any playhouse, and the mobile sellers within. It is simply not possible to know how such a system worked nor, therefore, to quantify it.

Chapter 1, The Context, offers a biographical context for the broader lives of Philip Henslowe and John Heminges to address the issue of the importance of their respective playhouse careers. It looks first at their early lives and family lives before moving beyond the playhouse. This section then reviews their wider careers, for Henslowe as a Southwark-based operator and a royal servant, and for Heminges through his longstanding membership of the Grocers' Company and consequent role as apprentice master. There is a particular focus on the intersections of these non-theatrical lives with the playhouse world. The final section examines their local networks and respective roles in the governing hierarchy of their home parishes. Through these representative lives, the chapter also illustrates the fluidity of social mobility as both men accumulated tangible wealth and less tangible prestige. A brief coda follows Heminges to Southwark before a final return to the city.

[75] 'Tenant company' is preferred in this context to 'resident company' for those performing at Henslowe's playhouses (especially in the period 1587 to 1592) as, in many instances, the length of their stay is unknown and/or may have been brief.

[76] Touring was probably as profitable in the period under review as now, when many productions make back losses incurred in the West End of London by touring regionally. See for example, Manley and MacLean, *Lord Strange's Men*; McMillin and MacLean, *The Queen's Men*; Johnson, *Leicester's Men*; Keenan, *Acting Companies*; William Ingram, 'The Costs of Touring', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 6 (1993), pp. 57–62.

Chapter 2, Philip Henslowe: Entrepreneur of the Playhouse, first provides a short general introduction to the playhouse world, with its precariousness and susceptibility to outside forces as well as to the fickleness of the audience. A section on the Rose analyses what was built, and then estimates the cost of construction, including a detailed consideration of the contract with John Cholmley governing the sale of food and drink on the playhouse estate. Henslowe's likely problems in securing tenants are reviewed, and a calendar of possible tenant playing companies is produced. In addition, the probable running costs of the Rose are calculated. The succeeding section, on the Fortune, similarly looks at what was built and what it cost to both build and run, using information from the original building contract, and Henslowe's own figures in the Diary. Following a shorter section on the Hope, the chapter concludes with an exploration of the evolving relationships between Henslowe and the playing companies occupying his playhouses.

The first half of Chapter 3, John Heminges: 'business manager' of the King's Men, looks at Heminges's career with the King's Men as, firstly, an actor, then business manager (and seeks a more precise definition of that term), and apprentice master. It then reviews his position as a housekeeper (co-owner) of the Globe, from 1599, and subsequently also of the second Blackfriars. The latter part of the chapter focuses on the playhouses of the King's Men. The first section looks at what can be deduced about the physical playhouse in each case, before questioning what each might have cost to build and how that expense was funded. The second section aims to establish the operating costs of each playhouse, for both the co-owners (housekeepers) and, as Heminges was also a sharer, the company sharers. It concludes by drawing together the cost of the joint Globe and Blackfriars operation for the company sharers of the King's Men. The final section of the chapter examines the issue of

ancillary sales within the playhouse, and John Heminges's almost certain involvement in this area.

Chapter 4, Income and Profitability, brings together information from the preceding chapters to demonstrate the possible commercial outcome in the various playhouses under consideration. The first half of the chapter, on Henslowe and his business partner and son-in-law Edward Alleyn, establishes the financial capacity of the Rose and the Fortune, then applies the costs accruing to the owner(s) and to the playing company, to produce a range of outcomes at varying levels of attendance. It then looks at the potential personal income of Philip Henslowe, as owner of the Rose and joint owner of the Fortune, and Edward Alleyn, as a player at the Rose, and as player and joint owner at the Fortune. The second half of the chapter provides the same analysis for the first and second Globes, as well as Blackfriars, producing estimates of financial capacity, costs and outcome for each. The final section of the chapter looks at examples of playhouse income for key individuals, Richard Burbage (as player and housekeeper); Cuthbert Burbage (as housekeeper); William Shakespeare (as player and housekeeper); and John Heminges (as player, housekeeper and probable operator of the King's Men's catering operation).

Focusing on the finances of building and running playhouses from 1587 to 1630, by examining the lives of two highly successful practitioners, across these chapters the thesis offers a unique perspective, from a current practitioner, on the profitability of professional London theatre four hundred years ago. Acknowledging that in many instances only vestigial evidence exists, it employs archaeology, maths and commercial common sense, to reconstruct and uncover the substantial income that could be earned from the playhouse – and the reason that Philip Henslowe and John Heminges risked so much across decades to build and rebuild theatres.

Chapter 1: The Context

Introduction

Philip Henslowe and John Heminges were both leading figures in the commercial London theatre by the time of their deaths in, respectively, 1616 and 1630. There are some striking similarities in their lives, and they broadly exemplify the categories identified in the opening paragraph of the thesis of multi-faceted entrepreneur or dedicated theatre professional. Henslowe epitomised the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century entrepreneur, a merchant adventurer of the playhouse, always seeking to expand his empire and make it yet more productive. But he was also a royal and a public servant and held a substantial property portfolio. Heminges, to a very limited extent, truly was a merchant adventurer, investing in at least one voyage to the East, and one to the West, Indies, but he was always primarily a man of the theatre. He remained loyal to one company for more than thirty years, operating almost exclusively within its bounds. He, too, was both a royal servant as one of the King's players, and public servant.

This chapter opens up the non-theatrical lives of Henslowe and Heminges to offer a wider context within which to consider their playhouse enterprises. It explores the breadth of their activities beyond the playhouse and, in so doing, establishes the importance of the playhouse in each of their wider lives. The first section, (1) Early Lives and Private Lives, starts with a consideration of the early lives and apprenticeships of Henslowe and Heminges before moving on to look at the family and private lives which formed the background for their professional endeavours. Section (2) Beyond the Playhouse, outlines their wider careers, particularly where these intersected with the playhouse world. For Henslowe, this is illustrated through his pawnbroking operation, which is seen to be intimately bound up with

the playhouse; his Southwark property portfolio, with the potential identification of a storeroom for playhouse stock and pawned items; his position as a major employer in Southwark; his parallel career as a royal servant; and, finally, his royal appointment in the sphere of non-theatrical entertainment, as Master of the Royal Bears, Bulls and Mastiffs. In the case of Heminges, his lifelong affiliation as Citizen and Grocer (so described in his will) is shown to be of benefit to the King's Men by his use of the guild apprenticeship system to train young actors. The final section, (3) In the Parish, reviews the roles of Henslowe and Heminges within the ruling hierarchy of their respective parishes, revealing Henslowe to be only grudgingly admitted to their ranks when his assistance was required, and Heminges to have reached the highest role of parish government, despite being a player, in a parish of merchants, professionals and gentlemen. The importance of influential neighbourhood colleagues is demonstrated by the help of two such colleagues with the legal complexities of the Globe financing, and by the remarkable assistance Heminges received in a desperate year for the playhouse. A brief coda charts Heminges's removal from Aldermanbury to Southwark as a widower and his eventual return.

From this survey, a picture emerges of two men with widely divergent interests (and probably also personalities and skillsets) both prospering in the newly emerging world of commercial theatre and, over decades, blurring the lines between 'entrepreneur' and 'theatre professional'. Their respective financial successes, and social and professional prominence, could not have been predicted for either when he first arrived in London from the country.

1 Early lives and private lives

1.1 Early life and apprenticeship: Philip Henslowe

On 5 February 1597 Philip Henslowe went to consult the astrologer Simon Forman and gave his age as forty-two.[1] Assuming he knew his age accurately that gives a birth year of 1554 or 1555 depending on the birth month. The gentry Hensley/Henslowe family was resident in Lindfield in Sussex from 1539 (Philip's father was Master of the Royal Game in Broil Park) and Philip and his siblings were almost certainly baptised in the parish church of All Saints. Unfortunately, the baptism records there only begin in 1558/9.[2] Philip Henslowe is well-documented from 1585 onwards as courtier, master of the royal game, property magnate, builder and co-owner of the Rose, Fortune and Hope playhouses, but prior to that year, when he leased the plot of land where he would subsequently build the Rose, little is known of him. He is generally thought to have been apprenticed in the 1570s to a Southwark dyer named Henry (Harry) Woodward and to have married the much older Agnes Woodward, Harry's widow, soon after her husband's death.[3] For some years he was also believed to have dealt in timber in Ashdown Forest from the mid-1570s and to have headed his own household in Southwark as early as 1577. These last two points were later realised to be based on the erroneous assumption that Philip recorded the timber transactions in the Diary (they are in the midst of his brother John's mining accounts) and on the mistranscription of a letter from 1597 (as 1577).[4] All these details were first published by William Rendle in 1887 and by G.F.

[1] Lauren Kassell, Michael Hawkins, Robert Ralley, John Young, Joanne Edge, Janet Yvonne Martin-Portugues, and Natalie Kaoukji (eds.), 'CASE1188', *The casebooks of Simon Forman and Richard Napier, 1596–1634: a digital edition*, <https://casebooks.lib.cam.ac.uk/cases/CASE1188> [accessed 18 September 2024].
[2] Catalogue of parish records, All Saints (previously St John the Baptist), Lindfield <https://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/SSX/Lindfield/TheParishChurchofAllSaintspreviouslyStJohntheBapt > [accessed 30 September 2024].
[3] S. P. Cerasano, 'Henslowe, Philip (c. 1555–1616), Theatre Financier', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/12991.
[4] *Diary,* pp. xix-xxiv, p. 299; Introduction, p. 8.

Warner in his ground-breaking catalogue of the documents comprising the Henslowe-Alleyn archive at Dulwich College.[5] They were subsequently adopted by Sir Sidney Lee in the original Henslowe entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (DNB) and explored and expanded by W.W. Greg in the detailed commentary accompanying his transcription of the *Diary* in 1908.[6] Towards the end of the twentieth century the updated ODNB entry (by S.P. Cerasano), Neil Carson's *Companion to Henslowe's 'Diary'*, and later R.A. Foakes (2002 revised edition of the *Diary*) all continued to offer the same information.[7] The only substantial addition to the store of knowledge was Cerasano's excellent and detailed article 'Revising Philip Henslowe's biography'.[8]

Nothing at all is known of Philip's early youth but the description of him as 'citizen and dyer of London' confirms that he served an apprenticeship not locally in Sussex but in London, obtained his freedom of the Worshipful Company of Dyers and became a citizen of London.[9] The early records of the Dyers' Company were lost in the fire of 1666 so the name of Henslowe's master is unknown as is the date when he obtained his own freedom. Southwark, traditionally the centre of the dyeing industry, located outside the City of London itself, south of the river Thames, was then an area of bawdy houses and alehouses, animal baiting and industrial processes, and the site of several prisons. It was regarded as an insalubrious suburb

[5] William Rendle, 'Philip Henslowe', *The Genealogist*, 4 (New series) (1887), pp. 149–59 <https://archive.org/details/genealogist04lond1887/page/148/mode/2up?view=theater> [accessed 30 September 2024]; George F. Warner, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts and Muniments of Alleyn's College of God's Gift at Dulwich* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1881) <http://archive.org/details/cu31924029605106> [accessed 7 November 2024].
[6] Sidney Lee, 'Philip Henslowe', in *Dictionary of National Biography*, 63 vols (Smith, Elder & Co., 1885), XXVI, p. 136; W.W. Greg, *Henslowe's Diary Part II Commentary* (A. H. Bullen, 1908).
[7] Cerasano, *ODNB*; Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's 'Diary',* Cambridge University Press, 1988; R. A. Foakes, ed., *Henslowe's Diary* 2nd edn, Cambridge University Press, 2002.
[8] S. P. Cerasano, 'Revising Philip Henslowe's Biography', *Notes and Queries*, Volume 32, Issue 1, March 1985, Pages 66–72, <https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/nq/32-1-66> [accessed 30 September 2024].
[9] *Diary*, fols.12^{r} and 129^{v}, pp. 29 and 262.

and was not an obvious destination for the son of a gentry family (although Philip's older brothers appear to have had property there and to have been at least partially resident). Despite this, it was most likely the locality where Henslowe was indentured. His apprentice master may indeed have been Harry Woodward as is stated in both the current ODNB entry and in the 2023 REED records of the Rose.[10] Indeed, Woodward may even have been a relative, as the will of Philip's brother John refers to 'my cousin Woodward' and there is a tantalising (and apparently previously unremarked) letter from one Thomas Woodward [Wooddard] referencing a letter from 'cou[n]sin Henslowe'.[11] But there is no evidence to confirm this. On the contrary, the attribution of 'dyer' to Woodward appears to stem solely from his presumed relationship with Henslowe. Not only do we not know for certain the name of his master but also we can only estimate when Henslowe's apprenticeship may have begun and ended. Had he been apprenticed at the average age of almost eighteen his training would have started in 1572 or 1573 and lasted for around seven years; he would thus have earned his freedom by 1580. But apprentices were not permitted to marry and one of the few dates prior to 1585 for which evidence exists is that of Henslowe's marriage in February 1579.[12] Therefore he was probably indentured around 1570 at fifteen (or even younger) and freed by 1578. One of the duties of a master to an indentured apprentice was to ensure he was sufficiently educated and many of the craft guilds required evidence of the ability to read and

[10] Harry Woodward as apprentice master, <https://ereed.library.utoronto.ca/collections/rosep/background-henslowe/> [accessed 2 October 2024].
[11] Will of John Hensley (Henslowe), The National Archives, PROB 11/79/262; letter from Thomas Woodd[w]ard, TNA, SP 46/24/fol. 114.
[12] Steve Lee Rappaport, *Worlds within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London*, Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy and Society in Past Time; 7 (Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 295–96; Patrick Wallis, Cliff Webb, and Chris Minns, 'Leaving Home and Entering Service: The Age of Apprenticeship in Early Modern London', *Continuity and Change; Cambridge*, 25.3 (2010), pp. 377–404, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0268416010000299> [accessed 13 October 2024].

write before an apprentice could be bound.[13] Henslowe probably learned to read and write at home or at a local elementary school in Lindfield but there was no nearby grammar school for him to have attended. Once in Southwark, his master may have sent him to John Mellis's reckoning school on Bankside to learn as much as he needed to know of current bookkeeping practice – certainly, apart from a few arithmetical errors in the Diary, he appears comfortable with numbers and finance.[14]

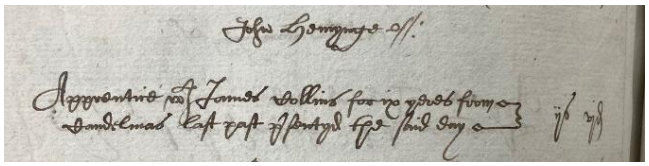
1.2 Early life and apprenticeship: John Heminges

A decade later, the young John Heminges may very well have attended the same reckoning school. As with Henslowe, little is known of Heminges's earliest life but his date and place of birth are documented: he was baptised on 25 November 1566 at St Peter's, Droitwich in Worcestershire, the son of George. There are so many variants of the family name throughout Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire – Hemings, Hemmings, Hemminges, Hemmynge, Hemynge etc. – (and, of course, so many Johns) that, with no information given about George's profession or employment, it is almost impossible to confirm that this is the correct record. Verification is only provided at the end of John Heminges's life when, in 1629, just a few months before his death, he acquired a coat of arms and the grant described him as 'sonne and heire of George Hemings of Draytwiche (Droitwich) in the County of Worcester, Gent'.[15] There are Heminges (of various spellings) to be found in profusion across the area, with particular concentrations in Ombersley (near Droitwich) and Haselor (between Alcester

[13] Mark Thornton Burnett, 'Apprentice Literature and the "Crisis" of the 1590s', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 21 (1991), pp. 27–38, doi:10.2307/3508477.
[14] Linda Woodbridge, *English Revenge Drama: Money, Resistance, Equality* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 63.
[15] E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, (Clarendon Press, 1923), II, p. 321.

and Stratford-upon-Avon). The possibility of a childhood connection between John Heminges and William Shakespeare excited earlier historians but no direct familial relationship with the Hemingeses of Stratford can be established.[16] Just before John Heminges's ninth birthday, a George Heminges died in London and was buried on 11 November 1575 at St Mary Magdalene, Old Fish Street.[17] This may have been John's father visiting London for reasons unknown and never returning to Droitwich; in any event, he was dead by January 12 1584, when Emme (Emma) Hemmynge, widow, was buried at St Peter's, Droitwich.[18] John appears to have had no siblings so that, if Emma was widowed when he was still very young, she may have sought to arrange an apprenticeship for him to give him future security. This can only be speculation, but she may have turned to a distant family member, John Hemmings, parson of St Michael, Wood Street in the city of London, for assistance. John Heminges was apprenticed on 2 February 1578, at the age of eleven, to James Collins, grocer, who lived very near to Wood Street, on Honey Lane.[19] In contrast to Henslowe's unrecorded apprenticeship, John Heminges's formal binding as an apprentice in Grocers' Hall on Candlemas 1578 can still be read in the records of the Grocers' Company.

[16] For example, Malone in William Shakespeare and others, *The plays and poems of William Shakespeare: with the corrections and illustrations of various commentators: comprehending a life of the poet, and an enlarged history of the stage by the Late Edmond Malone* (London, 1821), p.187, <http://archive.org/details/playspoemsofwill03shak_0> [accessed 7 February 2024].
[17] The London Archives, P69/Mry10/A/001/Ms011529.
[18] Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service, Worcester, England, UK, The Diocese of Worcester Parish Registers, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/3146287:62085> [accessed 29 September 2024].
[19] Collins's residence is confirmed by tax assessments for the parish of All Hallows, Honey Lane, in 1577 and 1585, TLA, P69/Alh3/A/001/Ms05022; TLA, CLC/L/GH/D/001/MS11571/007.



John Hemynges

Apprentice w[th] James Collins for ix yeres from Candelmas last past presented the said day ii[s] vi[d]

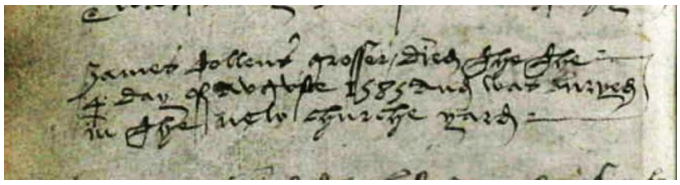
Figure 1.1 TLA CLC/L/GH/D/001/MS11571/007 photo M. Faiers.

John's age when his indentures were signed, just eleven, is perhaps indicative of the desire to offer him advancement, and see him settled, that would have been natural for his widowed mother. In 1580, the average age for London apprentices at binding was just under eighteen years (it would decrease over the next century), yet he was more than six years younger than the average.[20] His youth explains why he was apprenticed for the Grocers' maximum nine years, rather than the more usual seven. It is not known what premium (fee to the apprentice master) was paid by the Heminges family but at this time, to be apprenticed with the Grocers (second in order of precedence of the twelve 'great companies' of the City of London), the premium was 'from £10 upwards'.[21] James Collins paid 2s 6d when he presented John at Grocers' Hall to commence his apprenticeship. The presentation, which had to be made within a month of the apprentice being taken on, must have been a daunting moment for the eleven-year-old but if parson John Hemmings had, indeed, been involved in arranging the apprenticeship, he had chosen well in approaching James Collins. In 1578 Collins was a moderately prosperous grocer, married to Anne, with three children of around John Heminges's age, and his nephew Gerrard also resident as an apprentice.[22] Moving into the

[20] Wallis, Webb and Minns, 'Age of Apprenticeship', p. 380.
[21] Grocers Company as one of the twelve 'great companies', <https://grocershall.co.uk/the-company/history> [accessed 29 September 2024]; J. Aubrey Rees, *The Worshipful Company of Grocers An Historical Retrospect, 1345-1923* (Chapman and Dodd, 1923), pp. 79–80.
[22] Members of the Collins household can be identified in the will of James Collins, TNA, PROB 11/69/7.

heart of a family may have helped make the transition from Droitwich to Heminges's new city life a little easier.

When the Grocers' Company was incorporated in the fourteenth century its members were merchants who imported expensive pepper and spices to be sold wholesale, or gross, hence grosser or grocer.[23] (The register entry of James Collins's burial identifies him as 'grosser').



James Collens grosser Died the [the] 4 Day of Avgvste 1585 and was buryed in the new churche yard

Figure 1.2 TLA P69/ALH3/A/001/MS05022 photo M. Faiers.

By the sixteenth century grocers' wares also included dried fruits, pepper, alum, cloves, rice, dates, ginger, currants, salt and precious woods. Apothecaries were also members at this time, thus permitting grocers to import and sell wine, a privilege which would become useful to Heminges in later life. Grocers also traded drugs, i.e. any substance used as an ingredient in pharmacy, chemistry, dyeing and some manufacturing processes. In addition to learning about the goods being traded and how to test their quality ('garbling'), training to be a grocer required the acquisition of a diverse range of skills: the art of negotiation as both buyer and seller; advertising wares; running the master's shop, initially alongside him then, later, alone; the study of stocktaking and finance. Before arriving in London, John Heminges was probably literate and numerate (usual requirements for apprenticeship) but, like Henslowe, is unlikely to have had the opportunity to attend grammar school; there was none in Droitwich, the

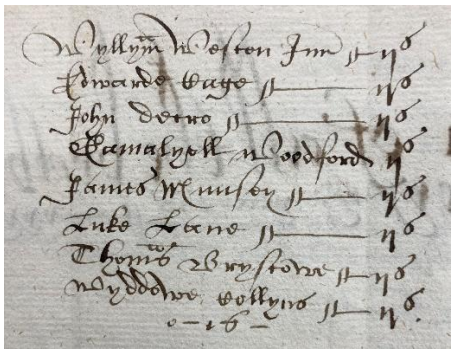
[23] 'Middle English Compendium' <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary/MED19550> [accessed 9 February 2024].

nearest was in Worcester (nine miles distant) or Stratford-upon-Avon (fifteen miles). Fulfilling his responsibility as apprentice master, Collins would have sent his apprentices to a reckoning school where the new skills of arithmetic using Arabic numbers (rather than Roman) and what was then known as debitor and creditor, now double-entry bookkeeping, were taught. The nearest school was in Hart Street, fifteen minutes' walk from Honey Lane, or Heminges may have travelled ten minutes further, across London Bridge, to John Mellis's establishment on Bankside in Southwark.[24] The masters of both schools also wrote textbooks bringing the new Renaissance systems of keeping records of account to England.[25] Linda Woodbridge notes that European merchants were further advanced in adopting the new methods of accountancy than the English and that 'masters sent promising apprentices abroad', especially to firms in Holland, to learn these techniques.[26] There is no trace of John Heminges in any record until 1585, seven years into his apprenticeship, so it is impossible to know whether he was fortunate enough to be sent abroad by Collins. However, he was definitely in London in that year.

That 1585 record is the will of James Collins, who died eighteen months before Heminges's nine years of apprenticeship were completed.[27] The details of the will reveal Collins to have been a model of the middling sort of citizen and, for Heminges, no doubt a role model. He provided generously for his underage children and left bequests to eighteen members of his extended family. These totalled £340, with a further £10 in charitable donations to prisons and hospitals. Heminges was eighteen at the time of Collins's death and

[24] Linda Woodbridge, ed. *Money and the Age of Shakespeare: Essays in New Economic Criticism*, Early Modern Cultural Studies (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 3—4.
[25] Basil S. Yamey, 'Peele, James (d. 1585), Writer on Bookkeeping', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/56446; Woodbridge, *Money and the Age of Shakespeare*, p. 8.
[26] Woodbridge, *Money and the Age of Shakespeare,* p. 3.
[27] TNA, PROB 11/69/7.

figures twice in the will. He is one of the witnesses (the other is the scrivener who wrote it) and is also the recipient of 40s from Collins, with the caveat 'yf my wiffe shall thincke good'. The Grocers' Company statutes of 1345 allowed widows of company members to take over their husbands' apprentices and even to take on apprentices on their own account, but only so long as they remained widows.[28] Anne Collins's judgment of whether it was fit for Heminges to receive her husband's bequest illustrates that she would be taking over his apprenticeship following Collins's death. Widow Collins appears in the list of company members paying the annual fee of two shillings for two years following her husband's death.[29]



Final entry:

Wyddowe Collyns ii^{s}

Figure 1.3 TLA CLC/L/GH/D/001/MS11571/007 photo M. Faiers

Thus Collins's gift was to let Heminges know that Anne would formally take over his training, rather than transfer him to a new master, and to give him the funds to enter the brotherhood of grocers – provided Anne approved.[30] John Heminges successfully completed his

[28] Rees, *Company of Grocers,* p. 23.

[29] Anne Collins remarried two years after her husband's death. Her second husband was George Langdall/Langdale, a practising goldsmith who was also a trumpeter to Queen Elizabeth and held the monopoly for making sackbuts and trumpets; he may therefore have been useful to Heminges later at the playhouse. Re-marriage, TLA, P69/Alh3/A/001/Ms05022*;* payment to Langdale in 1583/4 is recorded in 'Lists of the King's Musicians, from the Audit Office Declared Accounts', *The Musical Antiquary*, vol. 2, 1911, pp. 114-118, *ProQuest*, <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/lists-kings-musicians-audit-office-declared/docview/7070127/se-2> [accessed 29 September 2024]; see also Callan Davies on X (@callanjd), 'Spotted: England's 1st trumpet-maker!', X.com, 15 October 2019 <https://x.com/callanjd/status/1184096166126018566> [accessed 29 September 2024].

[30] A new freeman grocer paid £2 (40s) on his admission to the Grocers' Company. J. Aubrey Rees, *The Grocery Trade: Its History and Romance* (Duckworth, 1910), p. 87.

apprenticeship and was made a freeman of the Grocers Company on 24 April 1587, automatically becoming a Citizen of London. He was not yet twenty-one.

1.3 Marriage and family: Philip Henslowe

Henslowe and Heminges both married widows very shortly after the completion of their apprenticeships in differing but equally distinctive circumstances. Both men were young by contemporary standards, Henslowe twenty-three or twenty-four and Heminges just twenty-one. Henslowe's presumed master, Harry Woodward, was buried in the church at St Saviour's, Southwark, on 8 December 1578; on 14 February 1579, 'Phyllippe Hinshele' married Annys Woodward in that same church.[31] To date, the only marriage record discovered for a Henry/Harry Woodward with an Annys/Agnes is that of Harry Woodward and Agnes Hygins of Winchcombe, Gloucestershire, in the bride's parish on 26 January 1571.[32] This may or may not be the Southwark couple but testimony from a lawsuit brought by suspicious relatives after Henslowe's death does confirm that Agnes was, indeed, the widow of Harry. Joan Horton, who had worked in the Henslowe household for five years testified that 'Philip Henslow was sometyme servaunt unto the defendant Agnes Henslowe and unto one Mr. Woodward, former husband of the said Agnes, before the said Philip maryed hir.'[33] 'Sometime servant' may refer to Henslowe as a former apprentice (the phrase is not unusual), or may suggest that he was working as Woodward's assistant in whatever business his employer

[31] TLA, P92/SAV/3001; Meryl Faiers, 'Annys Woodward Henslowe neé Higgins (?)', *The King's Women*, 2024 <https://www.kingswomen.org/post/annys-woodward-henslowe-n%C3%A9e-higgins> [accessed 9 December 2024].
[32] Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, *Gloucestershire Church of England Parish Registers*; Reference Number: *P368/1,* <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/916243344:4732> [accessed 29 September 2024].
[33] TNA, STAC 8/168/18, transcribed by Rendle, 'Philip Henslowe', p. 154.

followed. Philip and Agnes married speedily, within nine weeks of her husband's death, but were not married by licence and must therefore have posted their banns at the latest by 25 January 1579 (three Sundays before their wedding day). The marriage of a former apprentice to his widowed mistress was a common enough practice at the time, a way of safeguarding the business and providing a stepfather for a family. In some cases no doubt it additionally provided respectability for an existing relationship and the speed of this marriage might suggest that such was the case here.

Agnes had two daughters living at the time, Joan (born in August 1572) and Elizabeth (born in January 1575).[34] She may also have had earlier children who had not survived but the Woodward name is not uncommon in the Southwark records, making it impossible to know for certain. Indeed, only the younger child, Elizabeth, is recorded as 'daughter of Harry Woodward'. Agnes is often referred to as being significantly older than her second husband and at the time of his final illness she may also have been unwell (although she lived a further sixteen months). This does not necessarily mean that there was a substantial age difference between the two despite the rather fanciful testimony of her nephew by marriage, John, that she was one hundred years old at Henslowe's death.[35] On the assumption that Agnes married for the first time around 1570 at the average female age at marriage of twenty-seven, (which is credible given the ages of her daughters at her remarriage, six and four) she may have been closer to ten years older than Philip – older but not remarkably so.[36] Agnes's elder daughter, Joan, married Edward Alleyn in 1592 but Agnes and Philip were to have no children of their

[34] Meryl Faiers, *The King's Women*, 2024.
[35] TNA, STAC 8/168/18. The tendency to over-estimate the ages of elderly residents was not unknown in Southwark: one extraordinary four-week period in 1602/3 saw the burial of three parishioners recorded as being 112, 115 and 126 years of age respectively, TLA, P92/SAV/3001.
[36] Michael Best, 'The Age of Marriage: Life and Times' <https://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/society/family/marriage.html> [accessed 5 November 2023].

own during their nearly thirty-seven year marriage. The loss of eighteen-year-old Elizabeth Woodward to plague in 1593, 'a maid', must have been especially hard to bear.[37] Her death brought to a close the series of concerned and affectionate letters between the Henslowe/Woodward family in London and Edward Alleyn, then playing on tour: 'Sister Bess', as she was known, is poignantly absent from later family letters.[38]

1.4 Marriage and family: John Heminges

Less than a year after he became a Citizen and Grocer, John Heminges applied for a licence to marry Rebecca Knell, 'widow and relict of William Knell'. The licence was dated 5 March 1588 and they married five days later at St Mary Aldermanbury, Rebecca's home parish.[39] Heminges is described as living in the parish of St Michael, Cornhill and as 'gent.'- possibly an aspirational self-description.[40] His place of residence perhaps provides a clue as to his occupation in the intervening months. Cornhill was where many grocers lived and Sun Court, just off Cornhill itself, was the location of the King's Beam, the official scale for measuring bulk items for sale in the City, which was kept in the custody of the Grocers' Company.[41] It is possible therefore

[37] She was buried at St Saviour's on 5 October 1593, TLA, P92/SAV/3001.
[38] Archive of Dulwich College, MSS1, articles 9—14 in Greg, Henslowe Papers, pp. 34—41.
[39] Joseph Foster, John Ward Dean, and Joseph Lemuel Chester, *London Marriage Licences 1521-1869* (London, B. Quaritch, 1887) p. 667 <http://archive.org/details/londonmarriageli00fost_0> [accessed 12 February 2024]; TLA, P69/MRY2/A/001.
[40] 'Describing himself as a gentleman', Mary Edmond, 'Heminges, John (Bap. 1566, d. 1630), Editor of Shakespeare's First Folio', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2009, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/12890. However, the Heminges family had no coat of arms and appear not to have been landowners, which were usual markers of gentility. (Henry French, '"Gentlemen": Remaking the English Ruling Class', in *A Social History of England, 1500-1750*, ed. by Keith Wrightson (Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 269.) In the same licence entry Rebecca's first husband, William Knell, is also characterised as 'gent.' This was possibly simply the convention of a particular scribe or perhaps the occupation of 'player' was sufficiently unusual for the scribe to record both as gentlemen for want of any other appropriate category.
[41] John Stow, 'Cornehill warde', in *A Survey of London, Reprinted From the Text of 1603*, ed. C L Kingsford (Clarendon Press, 1908), pp. 187—200.

that Heminges was living in a grocer's household in the parish and/or that, in some capacity, he was involved in the operation of the King's Beam. What can be deduced, however, is that he did not take up one of the loans of £50 or £100 offered by the Grocers' Company to young freemen, interest free, for a period of two or three years. These were provided from bequests of wealthy grocers past and were intended to help a new freeman purchase his first stock.[42] The loans appear frequently in the Company's court minutes but Heminges's name never features. The identification of his bride as 'widow and relict of William Knell' is the first reference that links Heminges (albeit indirectly) to the career he would eventually follow. Behind the mature-sounding word 'relict', Rebecca was a sixteen-year-old widow; she had married at fourteen and was widowed at fifteen. Her late husband was the player William Knell, a leading member of the Queen's Men.[43] Knell was killed on 13 June 1587 by his fellow Queen's Man, Thomas Towne, in a fight started by Knell. The coincidence of this event, just seven weeks after Heminges had finished his apprenticeship, has led to speculation that he, too, was already a player in the Queen's Men but nowhere is Heminges documented with the company.[44] Laurie Johnson has recently proposed that Heminges joined Leicester's Men in summer 1587, the company of which he believes Knell may originally have been a member, and that he encountered Rebecca through Knell's former colleagues.[45] It is equally plausible that Heminges came to know Rebecca as a girl and then young wife during his nine years with the Collins family in Honey Lane when she lived close by, at her parents' home in

[42] Bequests from wealthy grocers are recorded in TLA, CLC/L/GH/B/001/MS11588/001; Rees, *Company of Grocers*, p. 27.
[43] Edwin Nungezer, *A Dictionary of Actors and of Other Persons Associated with the Public Representation of Plays in England before 1642.* (Yale University Press, 1929), p. 228.
[44] Chambers, *ES* II, p. 321.
[45] Laurie Johnson, *Leicester's Men and Their Plays: An Early Elizabethan Playing Company and Its Legacy* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), p. 177.

Aldermanbury. She might, therefore, have provided a conduit into a playing career, introducing him to her late husband's company.

The pair were very young by contemporary standards. The bride, at sixteen, was more than a decade younger than the average female age at marriage, and Heminges was twenty-one when they married when a man was not deemed to have become adult until the age of twenty-four.[46] The marriage appears to have been very happy, lasting for thirty-one years, until Rebecca's death in 1619. They had fifteen children born alive, and in his will Heminges expressed the wish to be buried 'neere vnto my loueinge wife Rebecca Hemings […] and vnder the same stone'.[47] If Heminges was not a Queen's Man when he married, he quite possibly became one shortly thereafter as the grant of arms in 1629, towards the end of his life, describes him as 'long time servant to Queen Elizabeth'.[48] Unlike Henslowe, Heminges was only ever a royal servant to King James, so that unless the citation is an error by the herald, he probably began his theatre career in the Queen's Men. Whether he was in the Queen's or Leicester's Men or, indeed, any other company, Rebecca's regular pregnancies from 1590 onwards and throughout her marriage may indicate that he was absent from home, on tour, for the start of their married life as it was to be more than two and a half years before their first child was born.[49] Thereafter, and over the next twenty-three years, Rebecca Heminges gave birth to fifteen children, nine girls and six boys, all but two of them baptised at St Mary Aldermanbury:

[46] Rappaport, *Worlds Within,* p. 323.
[47] Will of John Heminges, TNA, PROB10/484 in *Playhouse Wills, 1558-1642: An Edition of Wills by Shakespeare and His Contemporaries in the London Theatre*, ed. by E.A.J. Honigman and Susan Brock, Revels Plays Companion Library (Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 164–69.
[48] Chambers, *ES,* II, p. 321.
[49] The baptism of their first child, Ales, is recorded on 1 November 1590. TLA, P69/MRY2/A/001/MS03572/001.

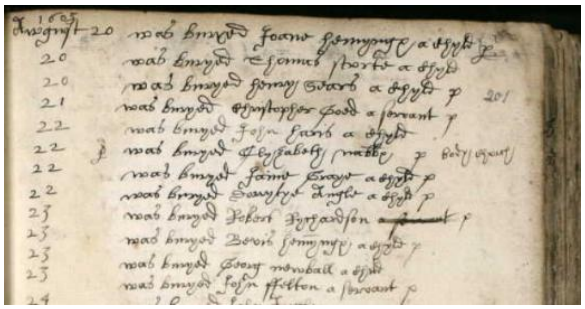
Ales (Alice)	b. 1590		Bevis	b. 1601	d. 1603
Mary	b. 1592	d. 1592	William	b. 1602	
Judith	b. 1593		George	b. 1604	
Thomasine	b. 1595		Rebecca	b. 1605	
Jone (Joan)	b. 1596	d. 1603	Elizabeth	b. 1608	
John	b. 1598	d. 1598	Mary	b. 1611	d. 1611
John	b. 1599		Swynnerton	b. 1613?	d. 1613

Another daughter, Margaret, was probably born in 1606; although there is no record of her baptism in London, she is well attested as an adult. Nor is there a birth record of their final child, Swynnerton (named for Rebecca's influential relative, Sir John Swynnerton), buried as an infant at St Mary Aldermanbury in June 1613, three weeks before the Globe fire.

The three deaths in infancy that Rebecca and John suffered (20% of the live births) represent a slightly higher figure than the statistical average of 14%.[50] Grim though this was, they were more fortunate than their friends and close neighbours, Elizabeth and Henry Condell, who lost four babies in as many years. At least two, and possibly three, Heminges children who survived infancy (Joan, Bevis and, probably, George) did not reach adulthood with the result that 40% of their family died before puberty, the statistically anticipated outcome.[51] 1603 was an especially terrible year for John and Rebecca Heminges. The closure of the playhouses following the death of Queen Elizabeth in March extended through most of the year, with a resultant drastic drop in household income. Any excitement or anticipation that they may have felt with the appointment of the Lord Chamberlain's Men as the King's players would have been rapidly dispelled as a particularly virulent wave of plague took hold of London. Their young family had escaped the last major outbreak ten years previously but in August 1603 they buried seven-year-old Joan, to be followed three days later by her

[50] Linda Payne, 'Children and Youth in History: Health in England (16th–18th c.)' <https://chnm.gmu.edu/cyh/teaching-modules/166.html> [accessed 20 February 2024].
[51] Payne, 'Children and Youth'; Saloni Dattani and others, 'Child and Infant Mortality', *Our World in Data*, 2023 <https://ourworldindata.org/child-mortality> [accessed 20 February 2024].

brother, two-year-old Bevis. These previously unrecognised burials were recorded not at St Mary Aldermanbury but in the adjacent parish of St Michael Bassishaw.[52]



1603
August 20 was buryed Joane Hemynge*s* a chyld p[lague]

23 was buryed Bevis Hemminge*s* a chyld p[lague]

Figure 1.4 TLA P69/Mic1/A/001/Ms06986 photo M. Faiers.

1.5 Family life and professional life: Philip Henslowe

Family relationships were of enormous importance to the playhouse lives of both Philip Henslowe and John Heminges. From 1592 onwards, when Joan Woodward married Edward Alleyn, Henslowe's principal business relationship was with his step-son-in-law but it is very likely that Agnes Henslowe was also her husband's business associate in some of his ventures.[53] She figures in the Diary making loans on her husband's behalf to members of the current playing company, and also made loans to family members, friends, and tenants.[54] She may be the person described as 'my cousin Woodward's wife', in the will of Philip's brother, John, when he refers to 'bonds, sum or sums of money, leases, goods that I have at London within her house'.[55] If Agnes is 'cousin [Harry?] Woodward's wife', leaving such important

[52] See Meryl Faiers, '1603: The Heminges Family in the Year of the Plague', *The King's Women*, 2022 <https://www.kingswomen.org/post/1603-the-heminges-family-in-the-year-of-the-plague> [accessed 5 March 2024] for a fuller account of the children's burials.
[53] See Meryl Faiers, *The King's Women,* 2024.
[54] For example, *Diary,* fol. 28^{v}.
[55] Will of John Hensley/Henslowe, TNA, PROB 11/79/262.

documents and cash with her, even the very fact that the house is called 'her' house, suggests that she was at least Philip's match in financial competence. This competence is implicitly acknowledged in Henslowe's will where she is sole executrix and heir to the majority of his substantial estate.[56] As a result, she was cited in the month of her husband's death by the Sewer Commissioners as the appropriate landowner to 'set a grate of Iron in Mosse Alley' to keep the drainage ditch free from obstruction.[57]

The details of Henslowe and Alleyn's collaborative commercial activities will be discussed below (pp. 72—76 and in Chapter 2) but, in summary, Alleyn led the Admiral's Men, the primary playing company of the Rose; he and Henslowe built a new playhouse, the Fortune, for that company; and, after much effort, secured the joint mastership of the Royal Bulls, Bears and Mastiffs; and developed and operated the Bear Garden together. It was clearly much more than a transactional relationship: their letters refer to each other as father and son, and in 1598 Henslowe described them, 'not as two friends but as two joined in one'.[58] From the evidence of the Southwark token books it can be seen that they shared a joint household, 'ffrom the bell on the Bank side', for more than a decade, until Alleyn moved in to the redeveloped Bear Garden gatehouse (see p. 65) in 1608/9.[59] These token books (collated lists) record the tokens (possibly cheap lead jetons) required to be purchased by the head of every household for all residents aged sixteen or more in the weeks leading up to Easter each year. The tokens were then handed in at Easter or Whitsun communion. Each token cost 2d: in 1618 Alleyn unusually recorded purchasing two in Southwark, paying 4d, and three in

[56] Meryl Faiers, *The King's Women*, 2024.
[57] British Library, Add. 34, 112B, memb. 2^{v}, quoted in S. P. Cerasano, 'Going down the Drain in 1616: Widow Henslowe and the Sewers Commission', *Shakespeare Studies (Columbia)*, 32 (2004), pp. 83–98.
[58] Philip Henslowe to Edward Alleyn 26 September 1598, ADC, MSS1, article 24, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, p. 47.
[59] St Saviour token book 245, 1596, <https://tokenbooks.folger.edu/> [accessed 9 October 2024].

Camberwell, for 6d.[60] Tokens were distributed geographically, probably by parish vestrymen, or their nominees, who recorded name, street (or alley) address and the number of tokens anticipated for each household (based on the previous year's purchase) and then the current year's transaction. With their many marginalia (recording such matters as 'gone away') and insertions, token books reveal the addresses of individuals, including Henslowe, Alleyn and later, Heminges, in some cases across decades.

1.6 Family life and professional life: John Heminges

As the father of many daughters John Heminges acquired five sons-in-law: an actor, a scrivener, a merchant who settled a Caribbean island, a ship's captain, and a disgraced former MP. Two of these were intimately involved with Heminges's commercial playhouse life and all of them at least tangentially.

Thomasine, the third surviving daughter, was the first to marry, at the age of sixteen, and married into the playhouse. Her husband was William Ostler, a player and, for a few months, she herself was the owner of playhouse shares. There is no documentary trace of their wedding, although it is generally assumed to have taken place in 1611 as their son, Beaumont (probably named for playwright Francis Beaumont), was baptised in Thomasine's home parish on 18 May 1612, as 'Beamont', son of William 'Osler'.[61] A marriage date of 1611 is made more likely by Ostler becoming a housekeeper (or co-owner) of the Blackfriars in May

[60] Diary and Account Book of Edward Alleyn, September 29, 1617—October 1, 1622**,** Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project, MSS 9 fol.11^{v}, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-9/011-verso/> [accessed 29 September 2024].
[61] Beaumont Ostler's baptism, TLA, P69/MRY2/A/001/MS03572/001; Nungezer, *Dictionary,* pp. 261—262.

that year, to be followed by the acquisition of a share in the Globe nine months later.[62] He was still young, probably only twenty-four, and had been a player since he was a boy, with the Children of the Chapel Royal, before moving to the King's Men in later 1609 or 1610.[63] He was therefore unlikely to have accrued sufficient capital to purchase these valuable shares for himself. They were more likely to have been provided by his new father-in-law as part of Thomasine's marriage portion. Although the introduction of Ostler to the co-owning consortium diluted the holdings of the existing housekeepers, for the King's Men, the arrangement had the advantage of increasing ownership amongst players at a time when the shareholding base was expanding beyond the company through the legacies of deceased members. For Heminges, it had the advantage of adding shares to what would now be a family portfolio, where he no doubt thought he could control the interest of a grateful Ostler. If this had been his intention, the scheme went awry when Ostler died, intestate, in December 1614. On 22 December, administration of his estate was granted to Thomasine, then not quite twenty years old. On the same day that administration was granted, Ostler's share agreements (indentures) 'came to the hands & possession' of Heminges, who claimed that Ostler had assigned them to him without Thomasine's knowledge.[64] In all likelihood, Heminges was custodian on behalf of his son-in-law, and the indentures had always been in his hands, but he had underestimated his daughter if he thought that she would permit him to retain them without a fight.

Thomasine spent the next nine months trying to persuade her father to hand over the leases, or to compensate her for a loss she estimated at £600, and eventually, in September,

[62] Chambers, *ES,* II, p. 331.
[63] There are two potential birth records for Ostler in 1586 or 1587; Nungezer, *Dictionary,* pp. 261—262.
[64] TNA, KB 27/1454/1, rot. 692, transcript and translation of both, copyright ©2011 Nina Green, <http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/NationalArchives/REQ_4-1-2.pdf> [accessed 13 November 2024].

had a subpoena issued against him. He successfully stalled her for a little longer, agreeing that if she would 'do her duty' to him and her mother, Rebecca, 'he would well & truly satisfy & content the foresaid Thomasina the true value for all & singular the premises aforesaid'.[65] On 26 September 1615 Thomasine went to the family home and 'with tears dropping from her eyes performed & did her duty', presumably by agreeing to forgo her claim on the shares in exchange for the promised compensation.[66] The scene sounds worthy of something Heminges's colleague William Shakespeare might have written. Despite Thomasine's formal obedience, Heminges reneged on his promise and, a week after her twenty-first birthday in January 1616, she had her father arrested for non-compliance. A trial date was set for two weeks later but it appears not to have gone ahead; Heminges must finally have reached some compromise with his assertive daughter. There is no indication of any reconciliation between them and Thomasine was living in her sister Judith's household when she went to law again just four months later, suing Walter Raleigh junior for insult and slander.[67] She was awarded the huge sum of £250 in damages but never received it as the young Raleigh fled the country. She died in July 1621, aged twenty-six, apparently still estranged from her father.[68] William Ostler was Heminges's son-in-law for barely three years but though his early demise ruptured the family it started Heminges on the serial acquisition of playhouse shares which would eventually lead to him owning 25% of the Globe and Blackfriars.

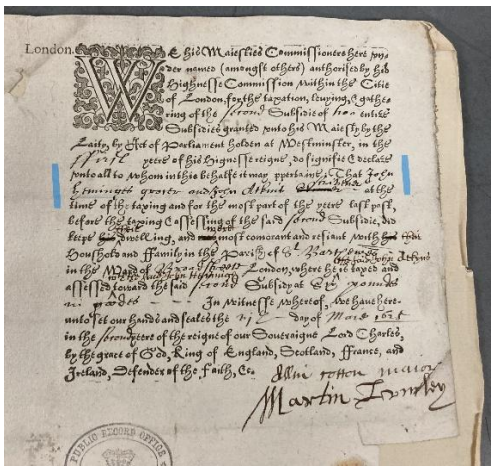
By contrast, when his eldest daughter, Alice, married John Atkins, a newly qualified scrivener, at St Mary Aldermanbury on 11 February 1613, it marked the start of a long

[65] TNA, KB 27/1454/1, rot. 692.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Fred B. Tromly, *The Two Walter Raleighs: Famous Father, Rebellious Son and a Shared Tragedy* (Macfarland, 2018), pp. 156–59.
[68] Thomasine's burial is recorded, TLA, P69/GIS/A/002/MS06419/002.

professional association between Heminges and his new son-in-law.[69] (A scrivener was similar in some respects to a legal executive today, authorised to draw up contracts and legal documents, and might also be a clerk acting as a financial agent). Atkins had completed his apprenticeship only two months previously and marriage to John Heminges's daughter gave him an entry to the King's Men, where he was to remain the housekeepers' in-house legal executive for more than twenty-five years. In 1613, his first major task would be contracting freelance craftsmen for the rebuilding of the Globe. The couple lived in the City and five, possibly six, children were born over the next ten years. Their final baby, Rebecca, was baptised on 17 June 1624 not in their home parish, but in that of St Saviour, Southwark. They were visiting John Heminges, now living near the Globe. Rebecca is recorded as the daughter of 'John a scrivener, stranger', (i.e. resident in a different parish).[70] Alice survived only a few days following the birth and, on 21 June, was buried in the same church, 'M^{r} Heminges daughter a woman in y^{e} church childbed'.[71] Atkins remained close to the Heminges family and, the following year, he and Heminges shared a household and were issued with a joint certificate to be taxed in the parish of St Bartholomew, in the City.[72] Later, one of Alice's sisters would be married from Atkins's house and Alice's son Richard received a special bequest from his grandfather of £5 'to buy him bookes'.[73] Atkins would become Heminges's financial advisor

[69] 'The Common Paper: Subscriptions to the oath, 1417–1613, in *Scriveners' Company Common Paper 1357—1628, With A Continuation To 1678*, ed. Francis W Steer(London, 1968), *British History Online* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol4/pp20-49> [accessed 29 September 2024]; Atkins's marriage to Ales, TLA, P69/MRY2/A/001/MS03572/001.
[70] TLA, P92/SAV/01-01.
[71] TLA, P92/SAV/0406, (I am grateful to Heloïse Sénéchal for providing an image of this document); see Meryl Faiers, 'Ales Atkins Née Heminges - A Quiet Life?', *The King's Women*, 2023 <https://www.kingswomen.org/post/ales-atkins-née-heminges-a-quiet-life> [accessed 5 March 2024] for a fuller account of Alice's life.
[72] TNA, E115/444/74.
[73] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* pp. 164–68.

and facilitator in the final years of the latter's life, when he had returned to Southwark, and would be heavily involved in the extensive litigation that followed Heminges's death in 1630.



Certificate of Residence

…That John Heminges grocer and John Atkins Scrivener at the time of the taxing…

Figure 1.5 TNA E115/444/74 photo M. Faiers.

If Ostler had provided the opportunity for Heminges to increase his own shareholding in the playhouses, and Atkins the means of documenting his acquisitions, Raphe Merefeild and William Smith, the husbands of, respectively, Judith and Rebecca, may well have caused Heminges to lose some of his playhouse profits. Heminges invested in at least one of the expeditions to St Christopher's (now St Kitts) financed by Merefeild, with Smith captaining the vessel. The aim was to bring back the island's highly valuable tobacco crop and Heminges no doubt intended to sell his share of it at one or both playhouses. At his death in October 1630, he still had £60 invested in one of Raphe's projects, 'a desperate [that is, hopeless or despaired of] venture in the West Indies'.[74] His son and heir, William, would spend many months in litigation, allied with one brother-in-law, John Atkins, against another brother-in-law, Thomas Sheppard, over the value of his estate.

[74] TNA, C 2/ChasI/K5/42; Oxford English Dictionary, 'Desperate, Adj., n., & Adv.' (Oxford University Press, 2024), Oxford English Dictionary, doi.org/10.1093/OED/1795506487.

2 Beyond the playhouse

Philip Henslowe and John Heminges both benefitted from close family relationships in their activities in the playhouse (although these relationships may have proved a mixed blessing for Heminges) but these activities themselves formed only a part of their non-domestic lives. Henslowe was firmly rooted in the parish of St Saviour, Southwark, where it was not only his theatrical ventures but his other entrepreneurial enterprises that made him one of its leading residents, in particular his pawnbroking operation and his extensive property portfolio. There was a further, perhaps slightly unexpected, dimension to his career: he was also a royal servant, an attendant in person on the monarch. Heminges's professional life more obviously revolved around the playhouse, which will be fully reviewed in Chapter 3, but his lifelong association with the Grocers' Company was also significant. This next section will look at these spheres which sat alongside Henslowe's and Heminges's playhouse careers.

2.1 Philip Henslowe

2.1.1 Pawnbroker

On folio 55 of the Diary, records of loans from Henslowe to the Admiral's Men in 1599 abruptly give way to accounts of his transactions as a pawnbroker six years earlier. These transactions are mostly recorded in three groups of leaves in the Diary. Folios 55 to 60 follow Henslowe's record of loans to the Admiral's Men for production expenses in spring 1599 and precede the record of his probable share of playhouse income six months later, from October. Folios 73 to 81 follow more company accounts dated 1599 and 1600 (also some miscellaneous memoranda and copies of letters) and are succeeded by signed receipts from various servants

of the Master of the Revels, beginning in October 1599. The final group of entries is on leaves written with the book reversed, as it was used by its first owner, Henslowe's brother, John.[75] The chronology of these reversed leaves is less clear, but the pawn entries are sandwiched between others dated 1598 and 1602. When the pawn entries are sorted chronologically, it can be seen that they run from 16 January 1593 to 25 November 1595 and that they are therefore unlikely to have been written contemporaneously but, rather, to have been copied into the Diary, perhaps in 1599, from another source. There is evidence of this source in the initial entries, which suggest a business already in train, rather than a new enterprise, with the record of an exchange, in April 1593, of three small gold rings for a petticoat '[which] came the 5 of Jenewary 1593', i.e. prior to the start of the extant records.[76] The duplication of three items from 10 December 1593 on folio 59^{v} (in the first group of leaves) and folio 73 (in the second) lends further weight to the likelihood that Henslowe was copying entries from elsewhere into the Diary. Some leaves, such as folio 58, appear to have been written in one sitting; others, for example, folio 56^{v}, are less regular in appearance. 422 transactions are recorded in total and all but twenty entries are cancelled by a large X in both left- and right-hand margins (see figure 1.6 below); some are additionally scored through completely. The cancellation is generally accepted to show a pledge redeemed by the client.[77] However, the fact that the entries appear to be transcribed, out of the Diary's approximate chronological sequence, and from a different source, perhaps suggests some purpose, other than simply pawnbroking, behind their inclusion in the volume. Of the twenty uncancelled records,

[75] See introduction, p. 8.
[76] *Diary*, fol. 57^{r}, p. 111.
[77] For example, Carson, *Companion,* p. 51.

thirteen are of household items (for example, a kettle, platters, curtains or sheets) whereas only seven specify items of adult clothing.

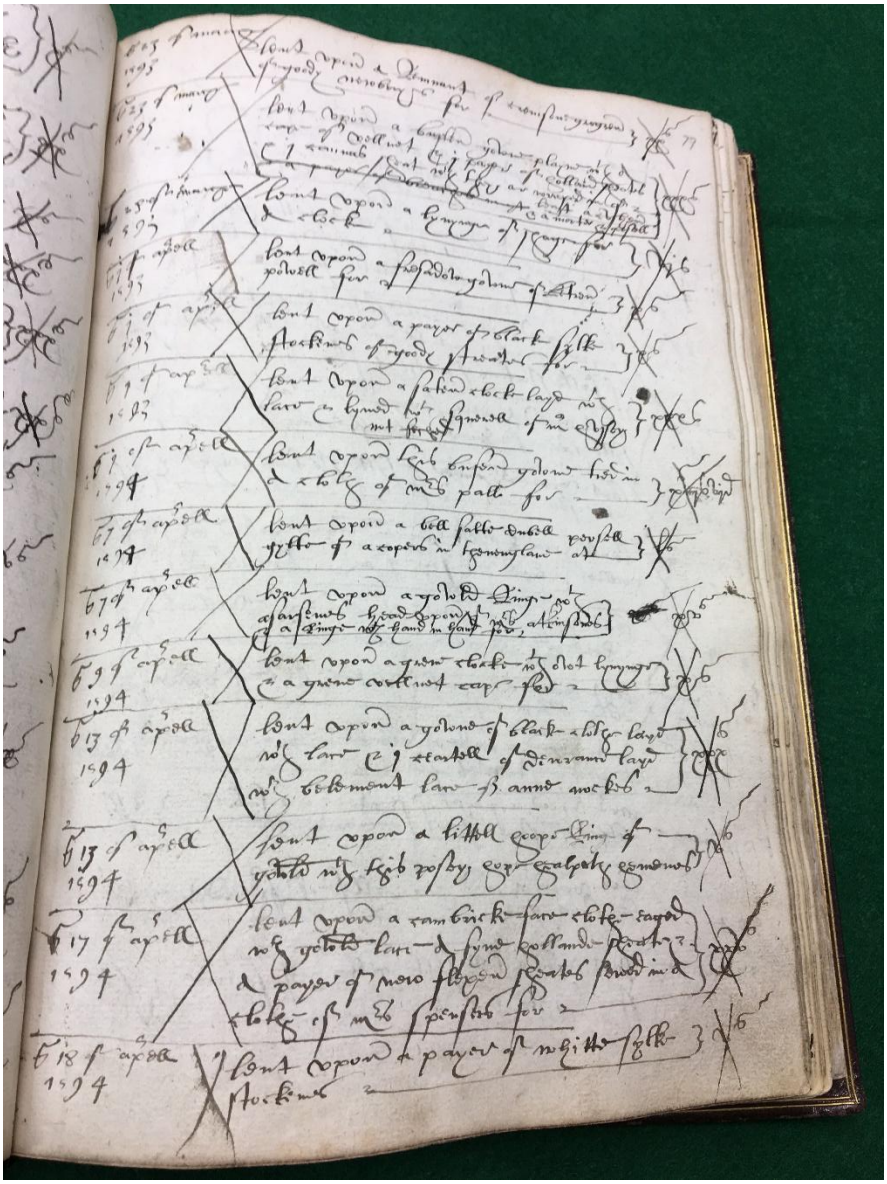


Figure 1.6 Henslowe's Diary, ADC, MSS 7, fol. 79^{r} showing large X in margins. Photo M. Faiers, by kind permission of the Governors of Dulwich College.

The goods Henslowe took 'in pane' (pawn), offering cash against the item, included furniture and apparel, jewellery, household linen and kitchen items, even a cauldron and, most surprisingly, a bible. Notably, he frequently advanced around the same sum for articles of clothing as for gold rings and other jewellery, and fabric, too, was a valuable commodity,

often attracting a loan of £1 or more. This may have been of particular interest to Henslowe and/or his tenant playing company as, potentially (if the client defaulted), fabric might furnish the raw material of costumes. In 1593 and 1594 the average amount loaned stayed constant at just under 20s (£1) per transaction although this figure conceals a huge range in the value of items, from Mrs Rice receiving £13 for a collection of silver gilt items down to Goody (or Goodwife) Elizabeth Street getting just 1s 4d for a coat of black cloth and a curtain.[78] Henslowe recorded 143 transactions in 1593, 255 in 1594 and twenty-three in 1595; there was a sole exchange or redemption in 1596.[79] In total, he advanced just over £400 across the three years of the pawnbroking records; in the same period his gross playhouse income was in excess of £700 and the pawnbroking business appears to have declined as the playhouse income stream stabilised. Just thirteen of the total 422 entries provide a clue as to how Henslowe operated the business as they detail the interest payment due on the loan. This is expressed as a monthly cash charge, rather than a percentage, and falls between 2d and 14d (1s 2d) per month, with 8d per month the most common. If the loan was not repaid for a full year, 8d per month would amount to 8s, sometimes for a loan of just 10s, in which case it would equate to 80% interest. In twenty-first century terminology these were payday loans, providing short-term cash at astonishing levels of interest if the item was not redeemed within days or, at the most, weeks. Clothing was by far the most frequently pawned category, ranging from extravagant male and female garments of velvet trimmed with silver lace or fur to Goody Street's coat of black cloth. The articles described are not the garments of the poor but those of the (perhaps temporarily financially embarrassed) middling sort, so that Henslowe was

[78] *Diary*, fols. 133^{r} and 77^{v}, pp. 260 and 153.
[79] The transactions frequently record multiple items so that many more than 422 individual items are listed.

providing ‘a freely available credit facility’ to his peers and fellow residents.[80] There appears to have been little or no social stigma attaching to the need to borrow by pawning one’s property so that anyone could raise cash for short- or medium-term needs by pawning unused clothes or household goods with Henslowe. He, of course, profited from his neighbours’ need during years of plague followed by dearth.

W. W. Greg asserted of the pawn accounts that ‘there is not sufficient evidence for the identification of any of the persons incidentally appearing in these entries’, and excluded the leaves entirely from his transcription of the Diary.[81] In 1904 it was correct that evidence for the identification of individuals was lacking. However, in 2024, online images and Ingram and Nelson’s transcriptions of the Southwark token books supply fifty-three of the seventy-six people named in the pawn accounts whose homes and occupations can now be traced with a reasonable degree of certainty.[82] As a result, a new network can be identified with Henslowe at its centre, providing credit to many of his Southwark neighbours as well as more distant customers in need of funds. These were predominantly female: of the seventy-six named individuals, fifty are women, with a further fifteen unnamed women recorded by occupation or relationship. Thus Henslowe’s identifiable pawnbroking clientele was 85% female – an extraordinarily high percentage of women taking responsibility for household and/or personal finance.[83] Natasha Korda calculates that, in total, 55% of Henslowe’s pawn

[80] Jeremy Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 89.
[81] W. W. Greg, *Henslowe’s Diary: Part I Text* (A.H. Bullen, 1904) p. xxi.
[82] Alan H. Nelson and William Ingram, ‘The Parish of St Saviour, Southwark’ <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/> [accessed 17 March 2024]. The recent digitisation of the token book images alongside the transcriptions forms a valuable research aid.
[83] Natasha Korda examines the role these women may have played in providing production finance by utilising Henslowe’s pawnbroking facility in Natasha Korda, ‘Household Property/Stage Property: Henslowe as Pawnbroker’, *Theatre Journal*, 48.2 (1996), pp. 185–95, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3208866> [accessed 30 September 2024].

clients were female; 15% male; and 30% anonymous.[84] The accurate figure, including the anonymous clients, must therefore lie somewhere between 55% and 85% of total transactions being made by women. Some of these, however, would not have made the journey to Henslowe's residence on Bankside personally but would instead have used an intermediary agent. One of these agents was his nephew Francis, living in Rose Alley, right by the Rose playhouse, who was particularly active in 1593, and then largely dropped from view.[85] Henslowe's near neighbour on Bankside, Goody Watson, was another prolific agent, working mostly in 1594 and 1595, and on two occasions her husband came in her stead. Located close to Henslowe himself, both Francis and Goody Watson would have served clients living in the crowded alleys between Bankside and Maid Lane. Further afield, Anne Nokes/Knox lived in Platt's Rents near, or on, Molestrand just along the riverbank from Bankside itself, and brought goods to Henslowe from the Paris Garden area. The way in which Henslowe recorded transactions suggests that he had a different commercial relationship with his nephew Francis from those with Goody Watson, Anne Nokes/Knox and (the untraceable) Mrs Grant. The names of clients via Francis are mostly recorded, as are those of the individuals with whom Henslowe presumably dealt in person, but those whose property was brought by his female agents remain mostly anonymous. Henslowe's relationship was therefore solely with the agent, not the article's owner, suggesting that agents were operating on their own account, not necessarily paying over to the owner the full sum loaned on each pledged item.

[84] Natasha Korda, *Labors Lost: Women's Work and the Early Modern English Stage* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p. 230 n. 156.

[85] Francis's continued presence in Southwark in the second half of 1593, evidenced by the pawn accounts, is unexpected, as one of the earliest *Diary* entries records a loan of £15 for him to buy a playing share in the Queen's Men when they 'brocke and went into the contrey to playe'. The company is recorded as travelling extensively throughout the summer and autumn – without their newest recruit. *Diary*, fol. 2^{v}, p. 7; Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies* (Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 216.

Almost all of Henslowe's clients lived within easy walking distance of his home. Just four of the entries which can be traced geographically are in the more easterly Boroughside area of Southwark where, it is likely, someone other than Henslowe was the principal pawnbroker. Six of his clients lived north of the Thames in Westminster (where Henslowe perhaps went in person to collect rents on behalf of his associate, Mrs Isobel Keyes). Here, he seems not to have known names and therefore to have recorded them by occupation, 'a coper[s] in theuenglane' (Thieving Lane), or location, 'a womone[s] dwelling by the cocke in tutell streate' (Tothill Street).[86] But the heart of the enterprise was in Clink Liberty where the token books allow the identification of his close Bankside neighbours, Simon Bird, Mrs Spencer and Goody Katherine Tench, who all brought items to him. These customers illustrate how tightly Henslowe was bound into his local community, especially (and unusually) with the women of Clink Liberty, whilst his other commercial and social networks were dominated by men. Henslowe's most aristocratic client was 'My lord' or 'Lord Burte', who in January 1594 received a loan of £8 for a selection of satin, velvet and silver garments, some of which he then redeemed (or, more accurately, had collected on his behalf) in May.[87] Greg believes this may have been Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby, and there is suggestive evidence to support this.[88] Bertie/Willoughby was a military commander who had ruined himself financially due to underpayment by the Crown for his men and horses.[89] In 1594 he was £4000 in debt, having mortgaged his lands, and was already familiar to the pawnbrokers of Holland, where he pawned plate, silver and jewels for £1200.[90] A courtier as well as a soldier, and a favourite of

[86] *Diary*, fols. 77^{r} and 76^{v}, pp. 151 and 150.
[87] *Diary,* fol. 74^{v}, p. 145.
[88] Greg, *Commentary*, pp. 246–47.
[89] D.B.J. Trim, 'Bertie, Peregrine, Thirteenth Baron Willoughby of Willoughby, Beck, and Eresby (1555–1601), Nobleman and Soldier', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2275.
[90] Georgina Anne Emily Kerr Bertie, *Five Generations of a Loyal House, Part i, Containing the Lives of Richard Bertie and His Son Peregrine, Lord Willoughby* (Rivingtons, 1845) p. 253.

the queen, he may well have encountered Henslowe (by this time a Groom of the Chamber to the Queen) at court.

As with so many of Henslowe's records, it is impossible to understand fully the pawnbroking business he recorded in the Diary but it is notable that at least the first two groups of leaves (folios 55 to 60 and folios 73 to 81) appear, from the volume's internal chronology, to be written some years later, most likely in 1599, some four to six years after the items were pledged. It is also striking that the records cover the period when the Admiral's Men gradually consolidated their position to become the resident playing company at the Rose and may have needed to increase or renew their costume stock. These two factors suggest some relationship between pawnbroking and the playhouse. Whilst the pawn accounts may denote the entirety of Henslowe's pawnbroking operation, it is just conceivable that they only record unredeemed pledged items which became available as theatrical stock. I suggest that the accounts represent a form of triage in Henslowe's storeroom, with the large marginal Xs marking the stages as an item, uncollected after the standard year and a day, was transferred to the costume and props store. Evidence of this may be what is seen on folio 136, where Henslowe entered a row of ten 'o's, followed by 'iid', most likely recording ten months of payments (o), one month of partial payment (iid), followed by default. Although there are many possible interpretations of the pawnbroking records, further weight is given to this speculation by the twenty uncancelled items. These are mostly household goods, unnecessary for use on stage, therefore perhaps not transferred to theatrical stock.

If these items did all find their way into costume stock, it should be possible to cross reference many in the inventories transcribed by Malone, but now missing.[91] Unfortunately,

[91] Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, p. 113.

there are few correlations to be made between pawned and costume items. This may be due in part to the level of detail in each type. Henslowe's notation of pawned items is generally thorough, often covering garment type, style, colour and fabric, as part of the process of valuation. The description in the inventories, however, is sparser and often just an aide memoire to recognition, potentially concealing connected items from the pawnbroking lists. Dating both sets of records might also demonstrate a relationship between these aspects of Henslowe's affairs. The pawn accounts may, indeed, have been entered at random on blank leaves in the Diary at the time of transaction. This was often Henslowe's practice for single items or recording debts with individuals, but longer lists of any type were generally entered on succeeding leaves. Thus there should have been no gap between the end of the first set of pawn entries on folio 60, and folio 73, when the second began. It is more in keeping with his recording style that the pawn accounts appear chronologically when they were entered, in 1599. According to Malone's transcriptions, the inventories in Henslowe's orthography are dated 10 and 13 March 1598 - unhelpful as Henslowe was inconsistent in his use of 1 January or 25 March to mark the new year. Between 8 and 13 March 1598, ten members of the Admiral's Men signed an acknowledgement of their debt to Henslowe at the end of the joint season with Pembroke's Men.[92] Taking stock of, and therefore valuing, costumes and props could well have formed part of the process of closing the season. It may also show Henslowe taking on closer financial management of the company following Edward Alleyn's temporary retirement. It is also possible that the inventories were compiled a year later, in March 1599, when unredeemed pledged items may have already been added to the costume stock during the previous year. Although the pawnbroking entries and costume inventories read as

[92] *Diary*, fol. 44^{v}, p. 87.



Figure 1.7 Lord Willoughby by Nicholas Hilliard

separate lists, there is at least one item which suggests a much closer link. Was the 'orenge taney satten dublet, layd thycke with gowld lace' recorded by Henslowe on 10 March 1598 as 'Gone and loste' perhaps the same as Lord Willoughby's 'dublet of orange coler satten' pawned in January 1594 and unredeemed when he recovered his cloak and silver hose?[93] Was it also the doublet in which his lordship chose to be painted by Nicholas Hilliard?[94] Three days later, on 13 March, Henslowe took a further inventory and this additional list contains the orange tawney doublet and all but one of the other items previously described as missing, including 'Harey the fyftes dublet' and 'Harey the fyftes vellet gowne'.[95] It is impossible to know if Lord Willoughby's doublet also featured in the Admiral's Men's Henry V play, but the dating of the two inventories suggests that those costumes worn by the player performing the role of the King may have been worn on stage on 10 March, when Henslowe took his first inventory, and only returned to the storeroom by 13 March in either 1598 or 1599.

This close reading of the pawn accounts offers a possible reason for their inclusion within the Diary and demonstrates the interaction of apparently unrelated strands of

[93] *Diary*, p. 317 and fol. 74^{r}, p. 145.

[94] Nicholas Hilliard, *Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby D'Eresby*, Victoria & Albert Museum Prints, Drawings & Paintings Collection <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1067949/peregrine-bertie-lord-willoughby-deresby-portrait-miniature-hilliard-nicholas/> [accessed 29 September 2024].

[95] *Diary*, pp. 317 and 323.

Henslowe's commercial life, playhouse and pawnbroking, in addition to showing his centrality to his neighbours, especially his female neighbours, in Clink Liberty.

2.1.2 Man of property

By the end of 1604, when Henslowe wrote his 'note of alle my tenantes & what they paye yearley', he owned the homes of more than seventy local families, or one in twelve households of Clink Liberty and Paris Garden.[96] These tenants collectively paid him in excess of £220 per year in rent, which must have seemed income easily gained compared with the risk and effort of his playhouse ventures. It is therefore no surprise that, having commenced his property acquisition early in his career, he carried on adding to it until the year before his death. In his *Commentary* on the Diary Greg undertakes the most comprehensive survey of all Henslowe's traceable properties, which remains unrivalled, whereas Carson, by contrast, 'consider[s] the diary entries only as evidence of Henslowe's bookkeeping methods'.[97] My own interest lies in attempting to identify any non-playhouse property or properties which may have had a playhouse-adjacent function, more precisely, any that might have functioned as a storehouse for theatrical and/or pawned items. The single costume inventory in Alleyn's hand and the additional inventories of costume and props (transcribed by Malone and reprinted by Greg and Foakes) total 480 items plus fourteen musical instruments.[98] Importantly, these lists exclude twelve items 'Leaft above in the tier-house in the cheast', that is, in the backstage area at the Rose.[99] This indicates that only a small running supply, probably

[96] *Diary,* fol. 178[r], p. 247. Token book 253 (1604) contains 1096 entries; of these, 200 are marked 'gone away'. Henslowe's 75 tenants constitute 8.37% of the 896 resident households.
[97] Greg, *Commentary*, pp. 22–32; Carson, *Companion,* p. 8.
[98] *Diary*, pp. 291—294; pp. 317—323.
[99] *Diary,* p. 319.

for that week's repertoire of plays, may have been kept in the playhouse itself while the vast majority of costumes and props was stored securely elsewhere. Providing storage space for costumes would not necessarily have been a primary responsibility of a playhouse owner and, for the first five years of the Rose's operation with a varying roster of companies, Henslowe probably did not trouble himself about supplying it. But with the settled status of the Admiral's Men appearing to coincide with the busiest year of his pawnbroking business, having a secure store near to both the playhouse and his home would have become a pressing matter. It would have to be a space of considerable size, able to contain the equivalent of up to one hundred large wicker wardrobe skips, used today to transport costumes for touring productions, simply to store the inventoried items.[100] Pawned stock would have necessitated an even larger area so that, to his advantage, Henslowe would have been able to charge the playing company rent for space he was using himself.



Figure 1.8 Large theatrical wicker skip.

Of all Henslowe's recorded properties, the principal contender as costume, prop and pawned goods storeroom is, I believe, the property for which Edward Alleyn paid his father-

[100] Personal correspondence, 8 October 2023 with Christopher Porter, Costume Supervisor, Royal Opera House, London. <https://www.themetraders.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Large-theatrical-wicker-skip_WIC111.jpg> [accessed 29 September 2024].

in-law £10 rental, which is described as being one of 'M^{r} malthowes Rente'.[101] In December 1594, Edward Alleyn had paid £200 for the Bear Garden and less than a year later, in November 1595, Henslowe negotiated with John Malthouse to buy the lease of tenements on Bankside in a 'bargen [that is, an agreement] of the beargarden', for which he paid in instalments through 1596 and 1597.[102] This was Henslowe's sole purchase from Malthouse making it likely that it was part of the messuage (or dwelling house together with its outbuildings and the adjacent land assigned to its use) called 'the barg the bell and the cocke', the lease of which Malthouse himself had acquired in 1589.[103] The land itself was owned by the Bishop of Winchester and was the site of the then current Bear Garden hence, no doubt, the reason for Henslowe's desire to acquire it to add to Alleyn's recent purchase of the baiting arena. The Barge, the Bell and the Cock was a well-known Southwark location which would later be a key property in Alleyn's will but, perhaps surprisingly, the name does not figure at all in the Southwark token books. It appears instead to have been subsumed into 'Malthouse's tenements'.

Reading Henslowe's list of rents for the Malthouse tenements, and cross referencing the names in the relevant token books, allows the precise location to be plotted. Listed alongside Alleyn as tenants of Malthouse's rents are William Glover, Simon Bird and William Tighton, whose names all occur at the Bankside end of Rose and Crown Alley. Greg dismisses the three as 'insignificant' but Glover, in particular, is useful as the token books illustrate that he remained in the corner position through many years and can therefore be used to confirm

[101] *Diary*, fol. 178^{r}, p. 247.
[102] Sally-Beth MacLean and Stephanie Hovland, History of the Properties, Bear Garden collections, *REED online*, https://ereed.org/collections/bghop/properties/ [accessed 22 February 2025]; *Diary,* fol. 38^{r}, p. 74.
[103] ADC, MSS 4, article 21, in Warner, p. 126.

the location of the tenements.[104] Thus the formerly Malthouse, latterly Henslowe, tenements were sited at the northwestern corner of Rose and Crown Alley, with one side facing out on to the alley, the other on to Bankside. Glover paid his landlord £2 13s 4d annual rent. Bird and Tighton each paid £1 6s 8d.[105] These were unsurprising rents for the alleys, and for the dwelling of a waterman, such as Bird.[106] Yet Edward Alleyn was paying his father-in-law £10 annually, certainly in 1602, and probably from as early as 1596. In 1602 and 1604, when Henslowe wrote his lists of tenants, he purchased additional communion tokens annually, presumably for Edward and Joan Alleyn who were resident in his house, so that Alleyn had no need of a separate property in which to live himself. The building he rented to Alleyn was clearly substantial as the rent was one of the highest Henslowe charged. It could have provided an ample storage facility for the Admiral's Men and, as their leading player, Alleyn was the prime candidate to take on its rental. Its location on Bankside, only two or three minutes' walk from the Rose, would have been ideal for the Admiral's Men. By 1603, the Admiral's Men had become the Prince's Men and had moved across the river to the Fortune. However, the old storehouse on Bankside may still have contained their less regularly used stock for a few more years, perhaps until 1606, when the new joint Masters of the Royal Bulls, Bears and Mastiffs found a different use for it.

On 2 June 1606, Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn hired their builder of choice, Peter Street, to take down a building with a frontage on to Bankside 56 ft (just over 17 m) wide and 16 ft (close to 5 m) deep.[107] In its place, Street was contracted to 'make or erect set upp and

[104] Greg, *Commentary*, p. 24.
[105] *Diary*, fol. 178^{r}, p. 247.
[106] Will of Simon Bird, TLA, DW/PA/5/1613/13.
[107] John Payne Collier, *Memoirs of Edward Alleyn: Including Some New Particulars Respecting Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Massinger, Marston, Dekker, &* (Printed for the Shakespeare Society, 1841), pp. 78–81.

fully finishe one new frame for a house' for which very precise dimensions and construction details were given.[108] Greg appears to have little interest in this full and fascinating document, only providing an abstract in the *Henslowe Papers*; Lawrence and Godfrey identify the new structure as the gatehouse to the Bear Garden.[109] They further propose that it was the office for the joint masters as well as housing a bearward and operating as a tap-house. They characterise the building to be demolished as 'outhouses' to the Bear Garden. Although not conclusive, the location evidence of Rose and Crown Alley points instead to this having been a single large building used partially for dwellings but also containing sufficient additional space to be a storehouse. Tellingly, the contract specifies rooms for a tenement at the Thames-facing eastern edge of the new building, to be built across all three floors but only 13ft (4 m) wide. Although small by modern standards, these new spaces could have housed the Glover and/or Bird and/or Tighton families after the demolition of the old store-cum-tenement.[110] The contract describes the staircase to be located 'on the south side of the saide frame', that is, at the back of the building facing away from the river. Two doors are to be set in the Bankside frontage, where the main focus is on central double gates opening into the Bear Garden. This orientation, with the public entry facing north and the southern staircase leading to the first and second floor dwellings in the tenement, makes it likely that the residents used Rose and Crown Alley for ingress and egress. Thus the token-book compiler would continue to record them there, rather than on Bankside itself. Lawrence and Godfrey suggest that the attractive-sounding study, jettying out four feet on the first floor, was to be

[108] Ibid.
[109] Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, p. 102; W. J. Lawrence and Walter H Godfrey, 'The Bear Garden Contract of 1606 and What It Implies', *The Architectural Review (London)*, 47.283 (1920), p. 152, <https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/bear-garden-contract-1606-what-implies/docview/1366870559/se-2?accountid=8630> [accessed 30 September 2024].
[110] Collier, *Memoirs,* p. 78.

an office for Henslowe and Alleyn, but the evidence of the 1609 token book suggests that, initially, it was Alleyn's alone.[111] In token book 257 (1609) Alleyn's name appears for the first time at the end of Rose and Crown Alley, in the midst of Bird (here, Burt) and the Glovers.[112] So it is now possible to conjecture that John Malthouse's tenement had transformed from solely residential space into, firstly, a storehouse and, finally, into a superior home for Edward and Joan Alleyn. By 1612, the Henslowes had joined the Alleyns in Rose and Crown Alley – in the house built to their joint specification by Peter Street.[113]

2.1.3 Employer

Henslowe's non-residential property holdings, the Rose and Bear Garden, later, the Hope, made him a major employer in his community. At the playhouses he would have employed only a few people (the majority were employees of the playing company) but the construction of the Rose in 1587, redevelopment of the Bear Garden in 1606 and its subsequent rebuilding in 1613, all required the employment of many more people, either directly or via the builders. John Orrell has assessed Henslowe's payments of £5 to £8 weekly to Street for the Fortune construction payroll as 'indicating a work force varying from about seventeen people to some twenty-seven or even thirty, including apprentices'.[114] Assuming the same number of workers for the Southwark playhouses, Henslowe would have been responsible for the livelihood of perhaps twenty-five families for a period of several months at a time, with each building project. There would also have been work for others at times of major repairs such as, for

[111] Lawrence and Godfrey, *Bear Garden*.
[112] St Saviour token book 257.
[113] St Saviour token book 259.
[114] John Orrell, 'Building the Fortune', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 44.2 (1993), pp. 127–44, doi:10.2307/2871135.

example, during the remodelling of the Rose in 1591/2. At a time when there were few labour-intensive industries in Southwark, his need for skilled and unskilled workers at these points must have made him especially important to the majority of less well-off residents, someone perhaps not to be crossed and for whom to be available as and when needed, particularly for the tenants of his seventy-plus residential tenements.[115] This was a reciprocal relationship, however: to Henslowe, each resident, customer, or employee was also a potential audience member for the playhouse or for bear-baiting.

2.1.4 At the Court

2.1.4.1 Groom of the Chamber and Gentleman Sewer

In October 1603, when Joan Alleyn wrote to her absent husband that, 'my father is at the court' (then at Wilton House), she conveyed important information on the practical operation of her stepfather's court appointments: that the roles of Groom of the Chamber and later Gentleman Sewer were not sinecures but positions that required rostered attendance on the sovereign.[116] Henslowe's regular duty is attested by the presence of certificates of residence, confirming that he was to be taxed in the royal household rather than at his home (ten of these survive issued between 1598 and 1611) and also by the chronological lacunae in the Diary, following which play income or production expenditure or pawnbroking details were entered, retrospectively, en bloc.[117] In 'The Geography of Henslowe's Diary', Cerasano also

[115] Boulton (p. 78) identifies only seven households operating large scale enterprises with six or more servants from the 1622 Boroughside token book, the largest of which was the soap-boiling Bromfield/Overman family.
[116] ADC, MSS 1, article 38, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, p. 60; Sewer: An attendant at a meal who superintended the arrangement of the table, the seating of the guests, and the tasting and serving of the dishes, Oxford English Dictionary, 'Sewer, n.[2]' (Oxford University Press, 2024), Oxford English Dictionary doi.org/10.1093/OED/1301162473
[117] Certificates of residence, TNA, E115/199/130 various to E115/219/82.

points to the pattern of loans recorded in the Diary, often with gaps of seven to ten days between them, which she reads as periods when Henslowe was absent from home on royal duty.[118] Further weight is given to this by the unusually long gap in the St Saviour vestry minutes, from August to December 1608, when Henslowe was churchwarden and therefore more likely to attend a meeting if possible. The interval may suggest his absence from Southwark for some weeks that Autumn.[119]

Henslowe's Victorian commentators must surely have thought his court appointments sat uncomfortably with their assessments of him as 'a shrewd, business, money-making man [who] filled his place, possibly a low one, among [the leading playwrights and actors]'; and 'an illiterate moneyed man […] who regarded art as a subject for exploitation'.[120] Greg and Chambers were less judgmental, with Chambers according his 'friend, Dr Greg' thanks for his work in offering 'an adequate presentment of [Henslowe's] character'; Chambers' own regular choice of word to describe Henslowe is 'capitalist', which is clearly not a complimentary term in his vocabulary.[121] More recent scholars such as Foakes and Cerasano, with a fuller picture of the diversity of Henslowe's interests now known, see no contradiction in his earning money from a variety of enterprises and personally serving his monarch.[122]

[118] S. P. Cerasano, 'The Geography of Henslowe's Diary', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 56.3 (2005), pp. 328–53, doi:10.1353/shq.2006.0004.
[119] St Saviour vestry minutes, August to December 1608, <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/vestry-minutes-450.html#16080000> [accessed 29 September 2024].
[120] Rendle, 'Philip Henslowe', p. 149; F. Fleay quoted by R. A. Foakes, *Diary*, p. xxix.
[121] Chambers, *ES,* I, p. 359.
[122] For example, R. A. Foakes's introduction to *Henslowe's Diary* and S. P. Cerasano, 'Theater Entrepreneurs and Theatrical Economics', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, ed. by Richard Dutton, 2011 pp. 380-95; Cerasano, 'The Geography of Henslowe's Diary'; S. P. Cerasano, 'Cheerful Givers: Henslowe, Alleyn, and the 1612 Loan Book to the Crown', *Shakespeare Studies; New York, Etc.*, 28 (2000), pp. 215–19, <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/cheerful-givers-henslowe-alleyn-1612-loan-book/docview/1297968124/se-2?accountid=8630> [accessed 30 September 2024]; S. P. Cerasano, 'Philip Henslowe and the Elizabethan Court', in *Shakespeare Survey*, ed. by Peter Holland, Shakespeare Survey (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 49–57 <https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1017/CCOL052187839X> [accessed 13 October 2024].

Andrew Gurr goes even further in his rehabilitation of Henslowe, stating that his receipt of livery on three occasions 'is for his services to the players', a baffling and unevidenced assumption, suggesting that association with playing and players was, in itself, to be rewarded with royal approval.[123]

There has been debate for decades about when his service as one of the grooms of her majesty's chamber began. The earliest royal household evidence for it is a warrant for livery dated 1599 but reading the sequence of warrants from 1586 onwards suggests spring 1592 as the most likely date.[124] However, the watermen's petition to the Lord Admiral to permit the re-opening of 'a playhouse belonging unto the said Philip Henslowe one of the grooms of her majesty's chamber', a petition almost certainly orchestrated by Henslowe himself, (previously dated by Greg, Chambers, Foakes and Cerasano to July or August 1592) points to a date before summer 1590, based on more recent research by Alan Nelson.[125] The importance of Henslowe's appointment for his playhouse life lies not in its unknown start date but in the status it gave him within Southwark, enabling him to co-ordinate the petition to reopen the Rose not only for the apparent benefit of the local watermen but also to his own commercial advantage.

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[123] Andrew Gurr, 'Bears and Players: Philip Henslowe's Double Acts', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 22.4 (2004), pp. 31–41, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26349162>, [accessed 30 September 2024].

[124] Each livery warrant identifies the fourteen grooms of the chamber whose names are written in the same order each time so that when a name disappears, the name of his replacement occurs at the same position on the list. Henslowe first appears on the 1599 list in the position previously occupied by Francis Constable, who was buried in February 1592. Francis Constable of St Martin in the Fields is the only recorded burial of that or similar name in the 1590s. City of Westminster Archives Centre, London, England, *Westminster Church of England Parish Registers*, Reference: STM/PR/1/1, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/2397797:61865> [accessed 29 September 2024]; British Library, Add MS 5750, fols. 113r to 118br, <http://access.bl.uk/item/viewer/ark:/81055/vdc_100163579431.0x000001> [accessed 12 September 2023 but currently unavailable online].

[125] ADC, MSS 1, article 17, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* p. 42; Chambers, *ES,* IV, p. 311; S. P. Cerasano, 'The Geography of Henslowe's Diary'; REED records of the Rose, <https://ereed.library.utoronto.ca/records/rosep-ridm90700072/> [accessed 29 September 2024]; unpublished article by Alan Nelson cited in Lawrence Manley and Sally-Beth MacLean, *Lord Strange's Men and Their Plays* (Yale University Press, 2014), p. 51.

Whatever the precise date of this first appointment, by April 1603 Henslowe had achieved his second royal office as Gentleman Sewer and was allocated nine yards of black cloth for the Queen's funeral..[126] This promotion is generally assumed to have occurred under James rather than Elizabeth, partly on the strength of a draft petition to the new king for a different (and more lucrative) role where the writer refers to himself as one of the grooms of 'your majesty's chamber' and describes his 'many years […] in the service of the late deceased queen'.[127] The draft is, however, not in Henslowe's hand, is undated and unsigned and, although Warner in his Catalogue suggests it is from Henslowe (which Cerasano makes a firm assumption), its authorship is unproven. If the draft petition were his, it may have been composed even before the death of Elizabeth, in anticipation of a new reign, and when Henslowe was, still, a Groom of the Chamber. An alternative reading suggests that he was very briefly a groom to James after Elizabeth's death and became Gentleman Sewer in an early tranche of appointments by the king, in fact by 28 April 1603, the date of Elizabeth's funeral, when he wore his black livery. For almost exactly two decades Henslowe juggled the competing demands of attending the sovereign wherever she or he was, running at least one and sometimes two playhouses, buying up Southwark property whenever opportunity arose and, latterly, serving on the parish vestry. There was one further royal appointment to come.

2.1.4.2 Master of the Royal Game

In November 1604 Henslowe and his son-in-law, Edward Alleyn, finally succeeded in obtaining the office they had been seeking for nearly a decade: the joint mastership of His Majesty's

[126] TNA, LC2/4/4 quoted by Cerasano in 'The Geography of Henslowe's Diary.'
[127] ADC, MSS 5, article 44, fol. 134, in Warner, p.144, and transcribed by Cerasano in 'The Geography of Henslowe's Diary.'

Bears, Bulls and Mastiffs, otherwise known as the Mastership of the Royal Game. Anathema to twenty-first century sensibility, animal baiting was hugely popular at the time and was well established on Bankside by the time Henslowe and Alleyn came to be living there. Leaving aside the ghastliness of what was involved in baiting, there were some similarities with the operation of the playhouse. The baiting arenas (separate for bull and bear) are clearly shown on early maps of Bankside, most famously on Georg Braun and Frans Hogenberg's *Londinvm Feracissimi Angliae Regni Metropolis*.[128] Although both arenas more closely resemble miniaturised versions of the Colosseum in Rome than subsequent map illustrations of the Bankside playhouses, they still depict an open, circular yard, enclosed by tiered seating. The baiting arenas also appear to have used the same principles of charging for entry as the playhouses, that is, a penny for admission and a second penny for a better position, although the yard of the baiting arena was for the action rather than the audience.

Henslowe (and Alleyn) must have viewed baiting as simply another form of entertainment to be exploited, and one which already had a regular audience.[129] Their first move towards control of bearbaiting, and the preeminent court entertainment position of Master, came in late 1594. In December, Alleyn paid £200 to one Mr Burnaby to purchase part of the land on which the arena, known as the Bear Garden, stood.[130] This was a busy year for both of them, as the Admiral's Men had settled into regular playing at the Rose, keeping Henslowe busy as playhouse operator and Alleyn relentlessly on stage for the second half of

[128] Franz Hogenberg, 'Londinvm Feracissimi Angliae Regni Metropolis', 1575, TLA, SC/GL/PR/GP/001/k1268294, London Picture Archive, image 34264, <https://www.londonpicturearchive.org.uk/> [accessed 25 November 2024].
[129] Sally-Beth MacLean and Stephanie Hovland suggest Henslowe and Alleyn's development of the Bear Garden and its gatehouse 'in one area on Bankside' may imply 'a newly focussed interest in commercial entertainment and in bear baiting', History of the Properties, Bear Garden collections, *REED online*, https://ereed.org/collections/bghop/properties/ [accessed 22 February 2025].
[130] HADP, MSS 8, fol. 5^{v}, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-8/005-verso/> [accessed 14 October 2024].

the year. Henslowe had probably not by this point amassed sufficient profits from the Rose to buy the Bear Garden but Alleyn already had funds of his own. These were possibly, as suggested by Collier, from his wife's inheritance from her father but more likely as part of his inheritance from his own father, described by Cerasano as 'not lavish, but substantial'.[131] A year later, Henslowe entered into a 'bargain of the Bear Garden', described above (p. 64), for £6 with John Malthouse, probably for tenements adjoining the Bear Garden itself. By 1597 he had paid Malthouse a further £36 for tenements nearby and Alleyn had acquired the remainder of the land.[132] Having obtained the premises, the pair then set about operating as promoters of animal baiting. This had to be done under licence from the current Master who charged them £10 per quarter for the two days per week that baiting was permitted.[133] Assuming that each of these days was utilised, they needed just short of one hundred people attending and paying 1d each to cover their licence fee. However, it is unclear if this licence fee was simply that, a permit to bait, or whether it included the services of any of the bears or dogs (and their keepers) who were vital to the operation. If it did not, the breakeven attendance figure would have been very much higher and points to the real attraction of baiting to an entrepreneur: the income from betting. As Cerasano notes, the area in which Henslowe and Alleyn stood to have made the most money was the area

> which is most hidden from our scrutiny: it concerns the betting that most scholars assume went on at Paris Garden. Yet we have no receipts for these

[131] Collier, *Memoirs,* p. 15; S. P. Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn's Early Years: His Life and Family', *Notes and Queries*, NS-34.2 (1987), pp. 237–43, p. 240, <https://doi:10.1093/nq/ns-34.2.237> [accessed 14 October 2024].
[132] *Diary*, fols. 22^{r} and 38^{r}, pp. 48 and 74.
[133] *Diary*, fol. 72^{v}, p. 141.

profits, nor are we certain of the admission fees and what they could potentially have yielded on an average day.[134]

In fact there is a limited amount of information about entrance fees: Henslowe recorded the Bear Garden takings over three days of the Christmas holidays 1608 as £4, £6 and £3 13s. (Over the same three days, the owners' share at the Fortune yielded significantly less: £1 5s, £2 5s and £2 4s 9d but at the Bear Garden there was no need to share the income with a playing company.)[135] In the same year, 1608, a travelling bearward (or bearkeeper) employed by Henslowe and Alleyn kept a record of his income and expenses for a few weeks. He records the income taken 'at the door', representing the 1d or 2d paid to enter the bearpit or arena, which suggests a local audience of around one to two hundred.[136] As Cerasano points out, we do not know how the betting worked and therefore how the promoters and/or owners profited from it. What is known is that betting generally took place between individuals and that, without bookmakers, it was almost impossible to regulate as there would have been no one to whom to issue a licence to operate 'official' betting. But there must have been a known and accepted method of monetising gambling at the Bear Garden and for Henslowe and Alleyn to benefit significantly from it.

In 1597, when they had been operating under licence for at least two years, Henslowe and Alleyn renewed their campaign to try to secure the Mastership for themselves, lobbying the Master of the Court of Requests and Alleyn's patron, Charles Howard, (Earl of Nottingham and Lord Admiral). By November 1604 the position had been granted to one of King James's

[134] S. P. Cerasano, 'The Master of the Bears in Art and Enterprise', *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, 5 (1991), pp. 195–209, p. 204, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24322096> [accessed 30 September 2024].
[135] *Diary*, fols. 127^{r} and 126^{v} (book reversed), p. 264.
[136] HADP, MSS 2, article 10, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-2/article-010/> [accessed 29 September 2024].

Scottish followers, from whom Henslowe and Alleyn were forced to purchase the office for the 'very high rate' of £450.[137] It was nearly a decade since they had started their quest for the mastership and the tenacity shown in the face of two rejections, in 1598 and earlier in 1604, indicates just how much they wanted the position and, in turn, how lucrative they assumed it would be. As joint masters, Henslowe and Alleyn found that payments for taking the animals to court or the Tower for royal entertainment were sporadic, late and, in view of the associated costs of transporting lively and dangerous animals, ungenerous. During the ten years for which Henslowe was joint Master, he and Alleyn received a total of just £121 13s 4d, in addition to the annual fee of £73 (calculated at 4s per day), against their claim of £200 per annum costs, a substantial shortfall which can only have been covered by the elusive betting income.[138] Their own internal legal arrangements changed in February 1611 when Henslowe purchased Alleyn's lease of the land from him. Alleyn had paid £200 for it in 1594; Henslowe paid his son-in-law £580, the more than doubled price presumably indicating what a valuable piece of land it now was, providing a major contribution to their joint incomes. At this same point, early in 1611, Henslowe may already have been considering the work that he would eventually undertake to convert the by then dilapidated Bear Garden into the Hope. It required the spur of the Globe fire to bring the scheme forward, but would only have been possible if his legal ownership was already secure in advance of that. There is no suggestion

[137] Alleyn's memorandum book shows that he paid £250 of the total to Stewart, HADP, MSS2, item 9; MSS8, fol. 5^{v}, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-8/005-verso/> [accessed 29 September 2024].
[138] Malone Society, *Dramatic Records in the Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber, 1558-1642*, Malone Society Collections, 1961 (University Press for the Malone Society, 1962), pp. 42, 43, 45, 46, 48, 49, 51, 54, 58, 60; Barbara Ravelhofer, '"Beasts of Recreacion": Henslowe's White Bears', *English Literary Renaissance*, 32.2 (2002), pp. 287–323, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43447636> [accessed 30 September 2024].

that the formal change in ownership from Alleyn to Henslowe in any way altered their practical, commercial arrangement; they remained, indeed, 'as two joined in one'.[139]

The Mastership was, of course, a royal appointment but for its holders it was also a Southwark-based appointment. Whatever local profile or influence Henslowe may have lost with the arrival of the Lord Chamberlain's Men at the Globe, right in the heart of what he must have regarded as his territory for entertainment, he regained with the new post. The practice of animal baiting was much more firmly embedded in the community than the relatively new pastime of playgoing and did not suffer the same opprobrium meted out by the parish authorities.[140] Its appeal was likely to have been strengthened by the restriction of baiting to two days per week, with the lure of betting adding a transgressive attraction. By placing a bet and having a financial stake in the bout, its attenders were participants rather than just spectators or auditors. It is perhaps no coincidence that Henslowe and Alleyn are both first given the honorific 'Esquire' in the token book of 1607, compiled shortly after the improved Bear Garden was in operation, although it is interesting to note that in The Offices of England in the same year, Alle(y)n's name is listed first as one of the two 'Keepers of Paris Garden of Bears and Mastiffs', yet it is only Henslowe who is designated as 'M^{r} Hinslowe'.[141] Henslowe's other court appointment, as Gentleman Sewer to the King, clearly carried more weight in the royal household than Alleyn's fame as a retired star actor.

[139] Philip Henslowe to Edward Alleyn 26 September 1598, ADC, MSS1, article 24, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, p. 47.
[140] St Saviour vestry minutes 19 July 1598.
[141] St Saviour token book 256; *The Offices of England Collected According to the Yeare of 1607*, James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, fol. 37^{r} <https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/10001689> [accessed 29 September 2024].

2.2 Citizen and Grocer: John Heminges

2.2.1 The Grocers' Company

Philip Henslowe's business life away from the playhouse was, except for his court service, based in his home locale of Southwark. The other main strand of John Heminges's working life was centred across the Thames, at Grocers' Hall in the City. He was proud to describe himself as 'Citizen and Grocer' – so what of Heminges the grocer? John Heath in the nineteenth century, J. Aubrey Rees a century ago and, more recently, Jon Stobart, provide ample detail of the commercial life and activity of an early modern London grocer, all of which can be seen in the records of the Grocers' Company, but John Heminges is almost entirely absent from those pages until 1613.[142] He did not feature in the minutes of the regular courts, or meetings, of the Company for any of the causes that might be expected: he was never fined for a minor misdemeanour, nor was he the subject of complaint from any of his fellow grocers. Heminges's name occurs only in the Wardens' accounts, on occasions when money was paid: at his apprentice binding; at what was called his 'apprentice entrance', when he joined the company; and, later, when he paid to register and present his own apprentices. He was never recorded paying his annual 2s brotherhood money (as Widow Collins had). Heminges's absence from the written record (other than for apprentice bindings) for a quarter of a century is by no means unique. There were many more members of the Brotherhood, as it was known internally, than those active participants whose names occur regularly through

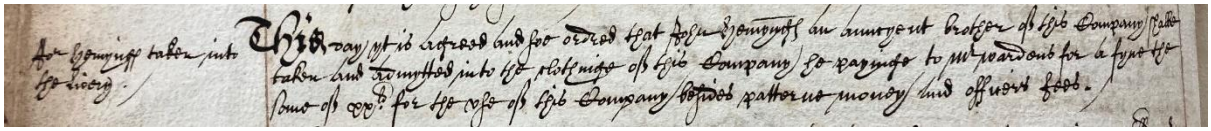
[142] John Benjamin Heath, *Some Account of the Worshipful Company of Grocers of the City of London* (London [Printed by C. Whittingham], 1854) <http://archive.org/details/someaccountwors01heatgoog> [accessed 22 February 2024]; Rees, *Grocery Trade*; Rees, *Company of Grocers*; Jon Stobart, '1 Ancient and Modern: The Grocery Trade in Early Modern England', in *Sugar and Spice: Grocers and Groceries in Provincial England, 1650-1830*, ed. by Jon Stobart (Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 18—40.
[143] Helen Clifford, *From Grossers to Grocers: The History of the Grocers' Company* (2018), Vol. 1 From Foundation to 1798, p. 167.

the court minutes, but his apparent lack of involvement has led the author of the recent official history of the Grocers' Company to speculate that 'his wife Rebecca managed the grocery business'.[143] This remains an unproven possibility.

Every member of the Company was required to pay 2s Brotherhood money annually and, generally, approximately 450 names appear each year (listed, neatly, eighty per page) with a note at the foot of those paying 'arrearages'. These payments in arrears mostly covered no more than two or three years although, in 1602, John Hasdon paid for the previous sixteen years.[144] Heminges's name never appears on these lists, but in the financial year running from mid-July 1612 to mid-July 1613 he is unexpectedly present, having paid his 2s. Oddly, this financial year has the largest number of payments in arrears (more than forty in total), but Heminges's name is still not one of that number. He paid solely his annual fee.[145] This entry may appear insignificant but it could well mark the intersection of Heminges's two worlds, as man of the theatre, and member of the Grocers' Company. A possible clue in his unexpected decision to become a fee-paying member of the Brotherhood is that his name, alongside his 2s payment, appears towards the end of the annual list indicating that he was one of the final contributors in the Grocers' financial year ending in mid-July 1613. The destruction of the Globe on 29 June may in some way have led to his payment, whether to emphasise his good standing with the Company in case he needed a temporary career whilst the playhouse was being rebuilt or, potentially, as a longer term strategy to ensure he could use his status as grocer to supply wholesale goods to a reconstructed Globe.

[144] TLA, CLC/L/GH/D/001/MS11571/010.
[145] Ibid.

Having paid his brotherhood money for the first time after twenty-six years, Heminges continued to pay in most of the years that followed. In common with other guilds, the Grocers' Company was hierarchical. There were apprentices; ordinary freemen known as bachelors; liverymen who wore the livery cloaks and hoods of the company on high days and holydays; assistants and wardens. Many of the men who had joined the Company at around the same time as Heminges were, by 1620, liverymen who were prominent in the court minutes over a number of years. Each year just a few more people were added to the ranks of the livery, generally paying the substantial sum of £30 for the privilege. July 1621 saw an unusual influx of thirty-three new liverymen being admitted; then, on 5 November 1621, this entry is recorded:[146]



This day yt is agreed and soe ordered that John Hem*m*ynges an auncyent brother of this Company shalbe taken and admytted into the clothinge of this Company he payinge to the M^r^ Wardens for a fyne the some of xx^li^ for the use of this Company besides patterne money and officers fees.

Figure 1.9 TLA CLC/L/GH/B/001/MS11588/003, photo M. Faiers.

What lay behind the elevation of John Heminges to the livery ('clothinge')? He had been a freeman of the company for thirty-four years and was admitted to the livery at the discounted rate of £20, rather than the standard £30; the entry recording his admission is fuller than usual. One possibility for his promotion is that, by 1621, John Heminges had a public profile as one of the king's own players and was frequently at court. His familiarity there may have

[146] TLA, CLC/L/GH/B/001/MS11588/003. Patterne money was a contribution to the cost of the Company's silver plate, referencing the 'paten' [dish for the communion host] given by early members at their promotion to the livery.

been perceived as useful by the Grocers, who relied on relationships between Company members and the crown when official support was required.[147] Or he may have sought the distinction for himself, perhaps feeling passed over following the mass nomination of liverymen in July or, possibly, he believed an enhanced position within the City and Company would be helpful in marketing the Shakespeare First Folio on which he was already working. Although speculative as a motive, seeking his own promotion to improve sales would be in keeping with someone who would issue the injunction, 'whatever you do, buy', in the preface to 'The great Variety of Readers'.[148]

His installation as a liveryman may not be quite the last glimpse of Heminges as a Grocer. On 31 October 1627, a 'John Hemmings' petitioned the court of the East India Company 'for satisfaction for upwards of nine hundredweight [roughly 460 kg] of wax and seven hundredweight [roughly 350 kg] of cloves, the estate of Anthony Honey, late master of the Hart, deceased'.[149] These were key commodities of the grocery trade – so perhaps John Heminges was, indeed, an active grocer for decades. He appears to have received neither his goods nor compensation in lieu. Captain Honey had died in 1626, asking 'my worthie frend Captaine John Bickle' to sell the goods in his ship 'at their best proffitt'.[150] The value to Heminges of the cloves alone was huge: his share of that cargo was worth over £300.[151] He

[147] Edmond Smith, *Merchants: The Community That Shaped England's Trade and Empire, 1550-1650* (Yale University Press, 2021), p. 185.
[148] 'To the great Variety of Readers', in *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works: Original-Spelling Edition*, ed. by Stanley Wells and others (Oxford University Press, 2nd edition, 2005), line 6.
[149] 'East Indies: October 1627', in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, East Indies, China and Persia, Volume 6, 1625—1629*, ed. W. Noel Sainsbury (1884), pp. 275—299. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/colonial/east-indies-china-japan/vol6> [accessed 28 February 2024].
[150] Will of Anthony Honye (Honey), TNA, PROB 11/150/593.
[151] The price of 1lb of cloves was set by the East India Company at 6s 4d in 1609 and at 8s in 1630. 'East Indies: February 1609', in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, East Indies, China and Japan, Volume 2, 1513—1616*, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (1864), pp. 180—181, *British History Online* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/colonial/east-indies-china-japan/vol2> [accessed 28 September 2024]; 'East Indies: October 1630', in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, East Indies and Persia, Volume 8, 1630—1634*, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London, 1892), p. 54, *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/colonial/east-indies-china-japan/vol8> [accessed 14 October 2024].

was suffering a substantial loss of profit in addition to the loss of his (unknown) original investment in the voyage of the Hart when his petition was made to the East India Company just six weeks before the impending marriage of Margaret Heminges to the former MP, Thomas Sheppard. Heminges had offered a marriage portion of £500 and the loss of the cargo was almost certainly a factor in his inability to pay the full amount.[152] The non-payment then became part of the bitter family lawsuits following his death.

2.2.2 Apprentice Master

John Heminges's most celebrated association with the Worshipful Company of Grocers is, of course, as apprentice master, using his status as a freeman of the Company to train boys and young men primarily for the stage. David Kathman's extensive research in the Company archive has uncovered records of the formal apprentice bindings, including the lengths of the terms of apprenticeships, which are used in the chart below; also included is the age at binding where known.[153] When Heminges himself was apprenticed in 1578, he was only eleven years old (and was freed at twenty) but, by 1595, the Company had such a high number of apprentices that it sought to reduce their number to avoid future poverty for so many of them. This was done by the Court of Assistants' meeting on 9 May 1595 when it was decreed that

> No Brother of this Companye shall hencefoorthe at any tyme take any Apprentyce under eight or nyne years at the leaste […] [So that] None shalbe

[152] Hemings v Sheppard, TNA, C2/ChasI/H4/34.
[153] David Kathman, 'Grocers, Goldsmiths, and Drapers: Freemen and Apprentices in the Elizabethan Theater', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 55.1 (2004), pp. 1–49, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3844321> [accessed 30 September 2024].

made free of the Companye by seruice under the age of xxiiii years at the leaste.[154]

Thus for an apprentice to reach the minimum age of twenty-four to be freed, he was assumed to be around sixteen at his binding. This was to have been made explicit in a deleted passage: '~~suche Apprentice shalbe of xvi years of age at the leaste when he entrethe~~'.[155]

Name	Age at start	Bound	Term	Anticipated end	Actual end
Thomas Belte	16+	November 1595	9 yrs	November 1604	Not known
Alexander Cooke	17	January 1597	8 yrs	January 1605	March 1609
John Rice (undocumented)	*13?*	*1604?*	*Not known*	*Not known*	*1611*
George Birch	16	July 1610	8 yrs	July 1618	Not known
John Wilson	15	February 1611	8 yrs	February 1619	October 1621
Nicholas Crosse	14 or 15	May 1614	10 yrs	May 1624	Not known
Richard Sharpe	?	February 1616	8 yrs	February 1624	Not known
Thomas Holcombe	13?	April 1618	8 yrs	April 1626	Not known
Robert Pallant	14	February 1620	8 yrs	February 1628	Not known
William Trigg	?	December 1625	12 yrs	December 1637	July 1632
William Patrick	16	December 1628	12 yrs	December 1640	1637?

Figure 1.10 John Heminges's apprentices with the King's Men.

This chart illustrates that the end dates of apprentice terms often coincided, at least to within a few months, so it was intended that pairs of youths should be trained together: Belte and Cooke; Birch and Wilson; Crosse and Sharpe; Holcombe and Pallant; Trigg and Patrick. The reality was rarely so tidy, with the disruptive effects of playhouse closures, extended terms of apprenticeship, and the disappearance of an apprentice from the record. The impact of the scheme in the context of Heminges's playhouse responsibilities is considered in Chapter 3. The chart also shows a growing disregard for the Grocers' Company rule that no one should be freed before the age of twenty-four, with at least Wilson, Crosse,

[154] Grocers' Company court minute book, 9 May 1595, TLA, CLC/L/GH/B001/MS11588/002.
[155] TLA, CLC/L/GH/B001/MS11588/002.

Holcombe and Pallant due to be under that age at the completion of their apprenticeships. Crosse, Trigg and Patrick were all bound for terms in excess of the norm, twelve years in the case of latter two. This may suggest a genuine training for the grocery trade running in parallel with their theatrical apprenticeship. (Patrick was probably the son of Heminges's close neighbour, Oliver Patrick, a brewer, perhaps seeking a more reliable alternative career for his son than the stage.)[156] Trigg's father was a grocer, making it very likely that William was learning the skills of both grocery and stage, although his petition to the Mayor's Court following Heminges's death makes it clear that his primary training was as a player: 'to learn the art which the said John Heminges used […] the art of stage player'.[157]

Two more individuals should be included as likely apprentices with Heminges in the King's Men: Henry Condell and John Rice. Neither is confirmed as his apprentice but there is a view within the Grocers' Company that Condell was Heminges's first apprentice, pre-dating Thomas Belte.[158] Condell's birthdate, 1576, and birthplace, Norwich, make this plausible as he would have been seventeen when Lord Strange's Men, including Heminges, played in the city in 1593.[159] But Condell's marriage, just three years later at the age of twenty (apprentices were forbidden to marry), means that any apprenticeship if, indeed, it took place, must have been both informal and brief. John Rice is recorded on at least two occasions taking part in non-playhouse events. In 1607 he performed in an entertainment by the Merchant Taylors

[156] William Patrick's father, Oliver, resided two doors away from John Heminges in Black Boy Alley in 1628 (St Saviour token book 274) and had lived there since at least 1621. See image <https://tokenbooks.folger.edu/search/PageImage.php?booknumber=274&pagenumber=15> [accessed 15 October 2024].
[157] Kathman, 'Grocers', p.11.
[158] Clifford, *Grossers to Grocers,* p. 168.
[159] Mary Edmond, 'Condell, Henry (Bap. 1576?, D. 1627), Actor and Editor of Shakespeare's First Folio', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/6055. Heminges's membership of Strange's Men is confirmed by a travelling licence naming him, TNA, PC2/20, in Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry, and William Ingram, *English Professional Theatre, 1530—1660*, Theatre in Europe : A Documentary History (Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 191.

for Prince Henry, where he is specifically referred to as Heminges's 'boy', i.e. apprentice.[160] In 1610 he performed in a water pageant with King's Man, Richard Burbage. Between these performances, 1607 to 1610, there is a notable gap in Heminges's list of new apprentices. Belte was due to complete his term in 1604 and Cooke in 1605. Cooke's term subsequently extended to 1609, probably as a result of plague closure. However, that would not have been known in advance, making it likely that Rice was the next in the procession of apprentices. He probably began training, without formal indentures, around 1604. In 1625, with the playhouses closed due to severe plague, Rice gave up the stage and became parish clerk of St Saviour. It was as one of 'my Loving freind*es*' that Heminges appointed him to oversee his will in 1630.[161]

During his four decades as player and grocer, Heminges used the status and advantages of being a member of the Grocers' Company to benefit the King's Men directly. With each of the ten boys or youths that he presented in Grocers' Hall, he was helping to secure the future of the playing company by increasing the talent pool of trained performers. It may even have been at his insistence that two of his early apprentices, Alexander Cooke and John Wilson, were formally freed as grocers at the completion of their training and took on their own apprentices almost immediately to continue the company succession. Heminges may not have had any clear intention of becoming a player when he finished his own apprenticeship, yet he very quickly saw how his ability to bind apprentices could be transferred from his old life to his new. Whilst his function as an apprentice master for the

[160] Jean Robertson and D. J. Gordon, 'A Calendar of Dramatic Records in the Books of the Livery Companies of London, 1485–1640', in Malone Society Collections III (Oxford, 1954), p. 172 quoted in David Kathman, 'John Rice and the Boys of the Jacobean King's Men', in *Shakespeare Survey: Volume 68: Shakespeare, Origins and Originality*, ed. by Peter Holland, Shakespeare Survey (Cambridge University Press, 2015), LXVIII, 247–66, doi:10.1017/CBO9781316258736.020. See also Chapter 3, p. 190.
[161] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* p. 168.

King's Men benefitted the playing company rather than himself, his position as a freeman of the Grocers' Company also afforded him the opportunity for direct personal gain by enabling him to buy wholesale items of food and drink for sale at the Globe and Blackfriars.[162] The operation and finances of this are considered in Chapters 3 and 4.

[162] Henslowe and Heminges each received payment from the company sharers for the use of their apprentices, which, it is assumed, covered board and lodging. *Diary,* fol. 82^{v}, p. 164; Hemings v Sheppard, TNA, C2/ChasI/H4/34 refers to Heminges receiving payments 'for boyes'.

3 In the Parish

The final section of this chapter will look at the public service of Philip Henslowe and John Heminges in their respective parishes of St Saviour, Southwark and St Mary Aldermanbury in the City, exploring how that service interacted with their playhouse lives. Each served on the parish vestry, effectively the local council, and rose to its most senior position of churchwarden, yet they appear to have been regarded very differently by their fellow vestrymen.

3.1 The parish of St Saviour, Southwark: Philip Henslowe

The story of Henslowe's membership of, and relationship with, the parish vestry of St Saviour's is simply told. He joined the vestry; rapidly became churchwarden, eventually serving two two-year terms; became a governor of the free grammar school; helped with the negotiations for the purchase of the rectory which housed the school; and was one of four people chosen to be a purchaser of the rectory. Yet a close reading of the vestry minutes from 1587 until Henslowe's final meeting in 1615, allied with knowledge of his wider networks, reveals a more nuanced picture. The vestry (as its members were collectively known) comprised thirty prominent, male inhabitants of the parish, resident there for at least eight years, and who selected their own new members. They functioned, in effect, as the local government and annually chose six of their number to serve in the senior role of churchwarden.[163] Becoming the head of his household at his marriage in early 1579, Henslowe was eligible for the vestry eight years later, in 1587, just as he was opening his first playhouse

[163] Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society,* p. 265.

venture. Yet it was two decades later, only in July 1607, that he was elected into membership. During this twenty-year period, forty-two of Henslowe's fellow-parishioners were elected to the vestry. Many of these men (with whom Henslowe would later serve) joined in the early to mid-1590s – precisely the period when he, as a well-known local figure, assessor for the lay subsidy, landlord and employer, might have expected to join. He is referred to only once in twenty-years' worth of minutes, in May 1598, when the vestry decided to solicit contributions to the parish poor from the playhouses. The minutes two months later may provide a reason for such avoidance:

> a petition shall be made to the body of the Council concerning the playhouses in this parish, wherein the enormities shall be showed that comes thereby to the parish. And that, in respect thereof, they may be dismissed and put down from playing.[164]

The members of the vestry disapproved of the playhouses, and by implication the playhouse owners, in their territory. When Henslowe was eventually elected to the vestry in 1607 two of his fellow vestrymen were also royal servants and the occupation list of the remainder reads like a seventeenth-century trade directory. Six were grocers; three were members of the Bromfield/Overman family of soap boilers (whose waste product of hazelnut shells may have surfaced the yard of the old Rose);[165] there were also three brewers and three watermen, the watermen crucial for ferrying playhouse audiences. There were two timber merchants, useful for playhouse supplies; and a pair each of butchers, tallow chandlers,

[164] St Saviour vestry minutes 19 July 1598.
[165] See Chapter 2, p. 111.

innkeepers and fishmongers; a single public notary (Roger Cole, appointed an overseer of Henslowe's will), cutler, merchant tailor, baker, ironmonger, scrivener, embroiderer, haberdasher, and glover (these last three all potential suppliers of playhouse costume elements).[166] As a new vestryman, Henslowe found he was thrust into the midst of a complicated and stalled attempt by the parish to purchase the lease of the former rectory of St Saviour's which, since 1563, housed the free grammar school.[167] It is highly likely that it was in hope that he could liberate the negotiation that he was finally summoned.

Unprecedently, after attending just two meetings, Henslowe was chosen as churchwarden at the earliest opportunity, on 2 March 1608 ('being the choice day of new churchwardens'), an indication of the importance attached to his new membership of the vestry.[168] His now colleagues would have known, of course, of the prestigious position he held as Joint Master of the Royal Game and they may have surmised that his other role as gentleman sewer to the king would enable him to present the vestry's case against Queen Anna's gentleman usher, John Elphinstone. Elphinstone had been granted the lease of the rectory property in lieu of salary.[169] But, in addition to his own proximity to the king, Henslowe must have known Elphinstone. They were gentlemen in the households of the king and queen respectively and there were surely occasions when they encountered each other professionally. Who better to attempt to wrest the lease out of Elphinstone's hands than Master Henslowe? In February 1609 negotiations appear to have recommenced but it was

[166] The occupations of individuals can be traced through a multiplicity of references on the Parish of St Saviour, Southwark, website. <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/INDEXOFNAMES.HTML> [accessed 29 September 2024].
[167] St Saviour vestry minutes 2 March 1563.
[168] St Saviour vestry minutes 2 March 1608.
[169] 'James I: Volume 14, May—June , 1605', in *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: James I, 1603-1610*, ed. Mary Anne Everett Green (1857), *British History Online* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/jas1/1603-10/p.218> [accessed 28 September 2024].

two years later, when Henslowe's term as churchwarden had already ended, that the vestry was advised that that 'the fee-simple of the rectory may be had', but seemingly only at a vastly inflated price of £1500.[170] Their lawyer advised that only four of the 'ancients of the vestry' should be purchasers and that they should post an enormous bond of £2000 apiece to guarantee the subsequent transfer of the rectory to the parish. One of those selected was Philip Henslowe. It had taken an inordinate length of time to reach agreement and then document the deal but, once Henslowe had joined the vestry, matters did move forward slightly faster and he eventually helped achieve what his fellow vestrymen had wanted from him. Even so, they appear never to have fully embraced the playhouse owner. His name never headed the hierarchical attendance list and, as churchwarden, he was never chosen for one of the more prestigious vestry appointments.

3.2 The parish of St Mary, Aldermanbury: John Heminges

No such reservations appear to have influenced John Heminges's service in the parish of St Mary Aldermanbury. It was one of the smarter parishes of the City, with Aldermanbury itself described by John Stow in his 1603 *Survey of London* as 'meet for merchants', a characterisation borne out by the surviving wills from the years of Heminges's residence, now held by the National Archives.[171] These include His Majesty's Chirurgion (Abraham Allen), four aldermen, five merchant taylors, a doctor, a merchant, two gentlemen, a vintner and only five members of craft guilds. Yet, despite the City's official antipathy to the playhouse, these men were happy to appoint Heminges (and later Condell) to senior roles in the parish

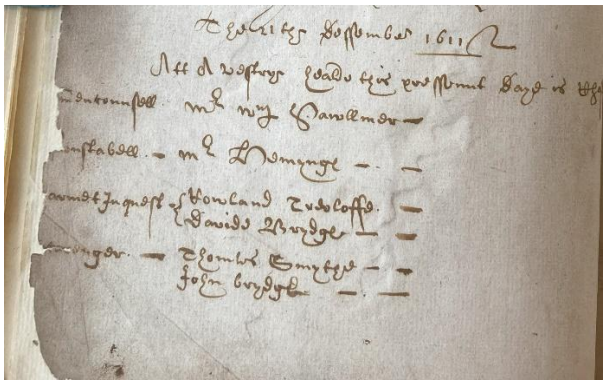
[170] St Saviour vestry minutes 26 February 1611.
[171] Stow, *Survey,* p. 292.

administration. From the ordering of names in the 1591 tax assessment, when Heminges is listed for the first time, it is apparent that the family lived on Aldermanbury itself, approximately (and rather appropriately) on the site of what is now the Guildhall Library, where the Grocers' Company records are housed, moving by 1600 to Addle Street.[172] By the time Thomasine came to 'do her duty' to her parents in 1615, the house was described as a manor house or mansion and in 1619, Heminges himself was described (with Condell) in a lawsuit as being 'of great living, wealth and power'.[173] Both references are a long way removed from any idea of players as vagabonds or a menace to society. Money appears to have brought with it respectability.

Although the vestry minutes of St Mary are very brief when compared with those of St Saviour in Southwark they nevertheless furnish details of Heminges's growing status in the parish, paying his taxes and, in 1601, contributing towards the construction of two galleys, required by the Crown. Unlike the St Saviour's minutes, individual appointment to the vestry is not recorded, but Heminges was a member by, at the latest, December 1602. Then he was first accorded the honorific 'Master' and chosen to be one of the sidemen (or churchwarden's assistants).[174] In 1606 he was appointed to a wardmote inquest (or judicial enquiry) and made one of the overseers for the poor. In 1608 he was chosen as churchwarden for two years and to be one of the new feoffees (trustees) for the parish lands.[175] He held the position of auditor of the accounts on at least two occasions and, in December 1611, was appointed constable.

[172] St Mary Aldermanbury tax assessment 1591, TLA, P69/MRY2/B/001/MS03570/001; Pierson Cathrick Carter, *The History of the Church and Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury* (Printed privately, 1913) p. 87.
[173] In the legal Latin of her bill, Thomasine agreed to do her duty 'ad […] domum mancionalem'. TNA, KB 27/1454/1, rot. 692; REQ 4/1/2 Transcript and translation of both, copyright ©2011 Nina Green, <http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/NationalArchives/REQ_4-1-2.pdf> [accessed 29 September 2024].
[174] St Mary Aldermanbury vestry minutes 21 December 1602, Heminges appointed sidesman, TLA, P69/MRY2/B001/MS03570/001.
[175] St Mary Aldermanbury had only two churchwardens rather than six, as at St Saviour.

The parish appears to have nominated each retiring churchwarden as constable at the conclusion of his term, thus filling a post which was otherwise frequently mocked and avoided. Heminges's appointment may have provoked some merriment from his playhouse colleagues, with memories of Shakespeare's comic constables Dogberry, Dull and Elbow.[176]



St Mary Aldermanbury vestry minutes 21 December 1611.

Constabell – Mr Hemynges

Figure 1.11 TLA P69/MRY2/B/001/MS03570/002 photo M. Faiers.

One of Heminges's closest vestry colleagues was William Leveson, of similar age, a mercer and merchant adventurer, named in the second charter of the Virginia Company.[177] Leveson was clearly the parish's finance person of choice; like Heminges, he served as auditor, churchwarden and constable.[178] Even before Heminges served on the vestry with him, Leveson was an obvious choice to assist with the complicated arrangements for the individual leases of the Globe in 1599 (see Chapter 3). The other close associate who was to be party to the Globe contract was Thomas Savage, a goldsmith living in the neighbouring parish of St Giles Cripplegate, who owned the Addle Street property in which Heminges lived. In 1605

[176] St Mary Aldermanbury vestry minutes 21 December 1611, Heminges appointed constable, TLA, P69/MRY2/B001/MS03570/002.
[177] 'America and West Indies: Addenda 1609 | British History Online' <https://www-british-history-ac-uk.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/cal-state-papers/colonial/america-west-indies/vol9/pp. 34—36> [accessed 28 September 2024].
[178] Leveson's parish roles can be traced in TLA, P69/MRY2/B001/MS03570/001.

Heminges bought the house from Savage for £90 but mortgaged it back in 1608.[179] The mortgage may have been to provide cash for Heminges when the playhouses were shut due to plague and the household's income was vastly reduced. It may equally have been to fund the purchase of a position as one of the ten seacoal meters of the City, a post secured for him by Savage sometime before December that year. Just as Henslowe's function as a royal groom required real attendance, so the post of seacoal meter was not a sinecure. The seacoal meters attended each ship arriving in London bringing coal from the north-east of England; they supervised the unloading into a chaldron (a large wagon containing twenty-eight hundredweight or more than 1420 kg) before delivering the necessary paperwork to the City office.[180] They operated on a roster and each was allowed up to four deputies: Heminges selected his local associate, John Jackson.[181] (Jackson had previously served as deputy to John Keale, whose position as seacoal meter Heminges may have taken over.)[182] The financial rewards were substantial. Once a seacoal meter had purchased his office, he was entitled to a one-tenth share of 4d per chaldron.[183] At an estimated 150,000 tons of coal brought by sea to London each year, the ten seacoal meters shared around £1785 annually – a very useful addition to the Heminges family income in 1608/9 with eight children living at home, even after Jackson's and other deputies' fees had been paid.[184] (A contemporary estimate offers an

[179] Mark Eccles, 'Elizabethan Actors II: E-J', *Notes and Queries*, 38.4 (1991), pp. 454–61, <https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/nq/38.4.454> [accessed 11 October 2024].
[180] Raymond Smith, *Sea-Coal for London, History of the Coal Factors in the London Market* (Longmans, 1961), pp. 50–52; Edward Nicholas, 'Parliamentary Note Book', 1624, TNA, SP14/166, fol. 227.
[181] David Kathman, 'John Heminges and Henry Condell', in *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare*, ed. by Bruce R. Smith (Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 923–27, doi:10.1017/9781316137062.121.
[182] TLA, COL/CC/01/01/028.
[183] 'Weights and Measures', in *The History of the British Coal Industry: Volume 1: Before 1700: Towards the Age of Coal*, ed. by John Hatcher (Oxford University Press, 1993). doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198282822.005.0002; 'The Case of the Coal-Meters - Wing C1041 Early English Books Online - ProQuest' <https://www.proquest.com/eebo/docview/2240944567/99895666/4ED04B7F10C945F7PQ/1?accountid=8630&sourcetype=Books> [accessed 14 March 2024].
[184] John Hatcher, 'From Abundance to Scarcity Fuel Shortage and the Rise of Coal, 1550–1700', in *The History of the British Coal Industry: Volume 1,* p. 41.

even more astonishing figure, '4d a chaldron of seacoal, which by computation amounts to about £3000 per annum').[185] Heminges held this position until 1626, when he may have been persuaded to relinquish it.[186] The number of seacoal meters, ten, was fixed by statute and the Mayor and Corporation refused to increase the total, even at the persistent request of the new monarch, Charles I, in 1625 and 1626, that his nominee should be added to the number. The *Remembrancia* of the City eventually records only that 'the business was otherwise compounded', leaving open the possibility that Heminges's familiarity at court caused him to be pressured to resign to please the king, in exchange for the granting of a coat of arms and the promise of a canon's place at Christ Church, Oxford for his son in recompense.[187]

3.3 Coda: to Southwark and back

In March 1619, Heminges's long-term colleague Richard Burbage died; six months later, in September, his wife Rebecca died, aged forty-seven, and was buried in the parish where she had lived her whole life. They had been married for thirty-one years. In December that year, John Heminges made his final appearance in the parish vestry minutes and the next information that exists of his residence is the Southwark token book of 1622.[188] It is unsurprising that, following two major bereavements, he should want to move away from Aldermanbury, a place resonant with memories of Rebecca and their children. It is also highly

[185] Nicholas, TNA, SP14/166 fol. 227.
[186] Kathman, 'John Heminges and Henry Condell'.
[187] City of London (England) Corporation, *Analytical Index, to the Series of Records Known as the Remembrancia* (E. J. Francis & co., 1878), p. 297 <http://archive.org/details/analyticalindex00overgoog> [accessed 30 June 2024]; 'Charles I - volume 122: December 1-20, 1628', in *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1628-29*, ed. John Bruce (London, 1859), p. 408 *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/chas1/1628-9/pp401-412> [accessed 11 October 2024].
[188] St Mary Aldermanbury vestry minutes 21 December 1619, TLA, P69/MRY2/B/001/MS03570/001; St Saviour token book 270.

likely that this is when he abandoned performing. There is a view that he ceased acting as early as 1611 when he was named for the final time in a printed list of actors: in the 1616 folio edition of Jonson's *Catiline's Conspiracy*, which declares that it was first acted in 1611.[189] However, this is to ignore the evidence of the ballad of the Globe fire ('Distressed stood old stuttering Heminges'), almost certainly contemporaneous with the 1613 fire itself; Jonson's 1616 reference to him as 'old master Heminges' in *Christmas his Masque*, which suggests he was still a familiar figure on stage; and a handwritten annotation naming him on a 1616 text of *Volpone.*[190] This latter dates to a production between 1615 (when Nathan Field joined the King's Men) and Burbage's death in March 1619. What is rather more surprising than his quitting his home in Addle Street is that he should choose to move to Southwark, a much less salubrious environment, with at least two of his teenaged daughters. He purchased communion tokens that year for himself and sixteen-year-old Margaret. Elizabeth was too young, at fourteen, to require a token and Rebecca, then seventeen, may already have been living with Alice and John Atkins, as she would later be married from Atkins's household. No additional token was purchased for an apprentice so Heminges's relocation may also therefore mark the point from which his apprentices were taken on in name only, and were given board and lodging in the home of another King's Man.

[189] Nungezer, *Dictionary,* p. 181; Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 230; Ben Jonson, *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson (1st Folio)* (Imprinted at London: By Will[iam] Stansby, 1616), p. 764 <http://archive.org/details/workesofbenjamin01jons> [accessed 2 August 2024].
[190] Peter Beal, 'The Burning of the Globe', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 20 June 1986, pp. 689-, The Times Literary Supplement Historical Archive, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/EX1200450155/TLSH?sid=bookmark-TLSH&xid=cd8b0a81> [accessed 30 September 2024]; 'Christmas His Masque, The Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson' <https://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/k/works/christmas/facing/#> [accessed 1 August 2024]; Mira Assaf and Richard Dutton, 'Volpone Stage History', *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online* <https://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/k/works/volpone/facing/#> [accessed 1 April 2024].

Once Heminges had moved to Southwark, his professional life and his home life were even more firmly intermingled. In Aldermanbury he was a respected citizen, an active participant in parish affairs, who could use the daily half-hour walk from home to work to make the transition to the playhouse world. In Southwark he lacked the eight-year residence qualification to join the vestry but, having worked there for twenty years, was known to all as one of those responsible for the fabric and organisation of the Globe. At the rebuilding of the Globe following the 1613 fire, he had a house built on the same plot of land, allegedly at a cost of £200.[191] This may have been built as a tap-house abutting the playhouse or, as Heloïse Sénéchal proposes, a rental tenement, but it appears that Heminges moved into the property, so that he was now living immediately adjacent to the Globe.[192] There was no escape from his professional life. His location in the 1620s is variously given in the token books as Maid Lane, Iremonger's Rents/Maid Lane, and Black Boy Alley, but the grouping of residents' names suggests that these all identify the same place, merely labelled as each token distributor saw fit.[193] He is absent from the books for 1625 to 1627 and instead is confirmed as living with Atkins in the City during the major plague outbreak of 1625, when the richer city parishes were safer than more densely populated suburbs such as Southwark.[194] He may well have remained in the City for the next two years as daughters Rebecca and Margaret were married in 1626 and 1627 from City parishes. The move to Southwark situated him closer to the Globe and to the King's Men from April to September and may have enabled him to be hands-on in running the tap-house, although scarcely necessary at that point in his life. Being closer to the

[191] Herbert Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses* (AMS Press, 1987), pp. 226–34.
[192] Héloïse M. Sénéchal, 'The 'dwellinge howse on the Banckside': John Heminges, Black Boy Alley, and the House Adjoining the Globe', forthcoming article, *Shakespeare Quarterly,* Spring 2025.
[193] St Saviour token books 270, 271, 272, 274 and 275.
[194] Neil Cummins, Morgan Kelly, and Cormac Ó Gráda, 'Living Standards and Plague in London, 1560–1665', *The Economic History Review*, 69.1 (2016), pp. 3–34, doi:10.1111/ehr.12098.

Globe meant living at a greater distance from the Blackfriars; perhaps being back in the City from 1625 was partly brought about by some specific need to be nearer to that playhouse. Only at the end of the decade, from 1628, did he settle back in Southwark, living in the house he built in Maid Lane/Black Boy Alley. He died in that house in October 1630 and was buried, as he requested in his will, back at St Mary Aldermanbury. The funeral was 'in decent and Comely manner p*er*formed in the Evening without any vaine pompe or Cost', as he had asked.[195] It cost 25s and although the register records him simply as 'player', in the parish accounts the late churchwarden and constable is listed as 'a stranger in the Chancell'.[196] A stranger returned home.

[195] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* p. 165
[196] TLA, P69/MRY2/A/001; Carter, p. 111.

Conclusion

This introductory chapter provides an exploration of the wider lives of Philip Henslowe and John Heminges against which to set their playhouse careers – the subject of, respectively, Chapters 2 and 3. For both, the result is a picture of a life encompassing diverse activities. In the case of Henslowe, much of this has long been known and discussed from, for example, Greg to more recent widely ranging articles by Cerasano.[197] MacLean's detailed REED introduction to the Rose, and analysis of Henslowe as 'Theatrical Entrepreneur and Man of Property', (2023) bring together a hugely complex series of documents to provide a densely detailed account of his association with the Rose (touching also on the Fortune and the Hope).[198] Using much of the same material, this chapter has highlighted those areas of intersection between Henslowe's playhouse and non-playhouse lives: a pawnbroking business directly supplying costume needs; residential property rental income providing funds to sustain the playhouse in difficult years; and the use of royal and court relationships to finally achieve the premier entertainment position of Joint Master of the Royal Game. A close reading of the vestry minutes of St Saviour provides an understanding of Henslowe's apparently equivocal position within Southwark: a major landlord and employer with excellent court connections but only summoned to join the vestry after twenty years when those connections were required.

[197] Greg, *Commentary;* for example, Cerasano, 'Revising Philip Henslowe's Biography'; 'The Geography of Henslowe's Diary'; 'The Patronage Network of Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn'; 'The Master of the Bears in Arts and Enterprise'; ''Cheerful Givers: Henslowe, Alleyn, and the 1612 Loan Book to the Crown'; 'Philip Henslowe and the Elizabethan Court'.
[198] Sally-Beth MacLean, 'Rose Playhouse' *REED online* <https://ereed.library.utoronto.ca/collections/rosep/> [accessed 10 October 2020].

Heminges is similarly shown operating beyond the scope of merely the playhouse. His affiliation as a grocer is well known, as is his use of his 'Citizen and Grocer' status to train apprentices for the King's Men. This chapter has also engaged closely with the records of the Grocers' Company to consider his wider relationship to it over more than forty years, concluding that whilst he may have used the Company to help promote the Shakespeare First Folio, the Company perhaps believed his court relationships to be of use. Heminges's position as one of the seacoal meters of London has previously been noted by Eccles and Kathman and this chapter has further explored both the mechanics and finances of this sought after City function to demonstrate its importance in providing income for the Heminges family, especially when the playhouses were closed.[199] A speculative reason for Heminges apparently relinquishing this lucrative office is also posited, with the possibility of pressure from Charles I in exchange for a coat of arms and a position for Heminges's son, William. Like Henslowe, Heminges was also a member of his home parish vestry but in his case there seems to have been no reservation about his election (or co-option). Instead, he appears to have been someone his colleagues were willing to help, firstly with the necessary legal manoeuvres concerning the Globe lease and then, to his own great advantage, with help in securing the valuable position of seacoal meter.

Both Henslowe and Heminges built and ran playhouses (and Heminges acted in them, also) but this chapter has demonstrated that their activities were much broader than that. Henslowe's court appointments and Heminges's membership of the Grocers' Company

[199] Mark Eccles, 'Elizabethan Actors II: E-J', *Notes and Queries*, 38.4 (1991), pp. 454–61, doi:10.1093/nq/38.4.454; David Kathman, 'Grocers, Goldsmiths, and Drapers: Freemen and Apprentices in the Elizabethan Theater', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 55.1 (2004), pp. 1–49; David Kathman, 'John Heminges and Henry Condell', in *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare*, ed. by Bruce R. Smith (Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 923–27, doi:10.1017/9781316137062.121.

demanded time and loyalty; serving on the parish vestry was time consuming with frequent (often lengthy) meetings; but both seized opportunities for personal gain or advancement whenever they arose. Henslowe and Heminges are not subject to easy categorisation. They were skilful commercial operators as well as good citizens undertaking their expected social responsibilities; and they were starting to define what it meant to be a playhouse proprietor.

Chapter 2: Philip Henslowe – Playhouse Entrepreneur

Introduction

1.1

The detail of playhouse finance has generally been of limited interest to academics. It is sometimes glanced at but few have paid it serious attention. The earlier period of James Burbage's heyday is fully examined by William Ingram in *The Business of Playing*; Neil Carson analyses Henslowe's finances in the *Companion to Henslowe's Diary;* and Andrew Gurr includes some assessment of the finances of the King's Men in *The Shakespeare Company*; while in *Shakespeare's Money* Robert Bearman examines the wealth of one housekeeper. Only Herbert Berry in *Shakespeare's Playhouses* begins to look at the economics of ownership in the longer term and the balancing of lease length versus income potential.[1] This chapter seeks to address this deficit. It examines the building, financing and operation of the Rose, Fortune, and Hope, to chart Henslowe's development from opportunist builder of the Rose to becoming a dominant, and apparently disliked, force in the theatre industry. Section 1, At the Rose, reviews the building process and then calculates the playhouse's potential audience capacity. It reviews the construction cost; how it was funded; Henslowe's need to find a tenant for it; and the costs and method of operation. Section 2, At the Fortune with Edward Alleyn, mirrors these categories for the Fortune. Henslowe's final playhouse venture, At the Hope with Jacob Meade, forms a briefer section 3. The final section 4, Henslowe in Company, moves away from playhouse buildings. It focuses, instead, on Henslowe's relationships with the different playing companies who were his tenants across three decades, tracing his transition to a position of dominance in the theatre industry.

[1] Herbert Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses* (AMS Press, 1987), pp. 179–94.

1.2

Theatre has always been a precarious business, reliant on the supply of quality product, a skilled workforce and, crucially, a positive audience response to its efforts. Financial success has never been a guaranteed outcome for commercial theatre in London. Even before the recent pandemic, when only 20% of new West End productions were expected to recoup their initial outlay, an even smaller percentage went on to make a profit.[2] Following the terrible impact of Covid and lockdowns on live entertainment, we are more fully appreciative of the enormous impact that frequent plague closures caused the theatre professionals of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century London.

We are perhaps less aware of what they would have seen as their everyday difficulties. These would have included personnel issues, for example, how to cope when contagious illness tore through a company without understudies, as well as what might broadly be termed access issues.[3] The most obvious of these access problems for the outdoor playhouses was, of course, weather.[4] Weather extremes may have dissuaded people from attending on days of excessive heat, cold, wind or rain, and especially on the rare occasions (for example, on 6 April 1580 and Christmas Eve 1601) when London was hit by earth tremors.[5] But for the

[2] "Commercial productions are largely financed by investment from individual investors. It is considered a high-risk investment; on average, only one-in-five shows recoup their initial capital investment." Written evidence submitted by The League of Independent Producers to Parliamentary Committee for Culture, Media and Sport, 5 June 2020, clause 7.16. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/5337/pdf/> [accessed 29 September 2024]. I am grateful to Patrick Gracey for drawing my attention to this.

[3] The only contemporary reference to the possible use of understudies is from a 1593 letter to Edward Alleyn by Philip Henslowe, 'one of you^{r} felowes weare fayne to playe you^{r} parte for you'. There is, however, no evidence that this was a dedicated understudy rather than emergency replacement. Archive of Dulwich College, MSS 1 article 013, in Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 278.

[4] See Laurie Johnson, *Shakespeare's Lost Playhouse: Eleven Days at Newington Butts* (Routledge, 2017), p. 15 on the marshy land of Southwark and the impact of weather events.

[5] David E. Alexander, 'Disaster Planning and Emergency Management: London and Earthquakes', *Disaster Planning and Emergency Management*, 2018 <http://emergency-planning.blogspot.com/2018/02/london-and-earthquakes.html> [accessed 31 October 2023].

predominantly pedestrian traffic, access was also costly in both time and money. The location of, certainly, the Rose and Globe, and to a lesser extent the Fortune and Blackfriars, meant that access took considerable time unless you happened to live nearby. To get to the Rose might require a forty-minute walk through the city, followed by a river crossing and a further ten minute walk along Bankside, easily taking more than an hour in total and costing perhaps 3d each way for the boatman.[6] Without the spare cash for a wherry across the Thames it would have taken even longer to cross the crowded London Bridge on foot, making a visit to a play a real investment in time and/or money even before arriving at the playhouse. (The less able-bodied but well-to-do must have rejoiced in the possibility of coach travel to the Blackfriars).[7] Yet despite all the obstacles to commercial success, theatregoing flourished in London and men and boys, and some women, continued to see working in the playhouse as a viable way of earning a living.

The popularity of the playhouses attracted not just those keen to perform but also others interested solely in making money from attenders. Some of these formed the array of hawkers to be found outside the buildings and the vendors of comestibles within. But in 1604 the commercial success of the playhouses inspired Lord Saye and Sele to write to Robert Cecil proposing 'a penny per poll of all that come into playhouses throughout England', i.e. one penny per head tax.[8] His reasoning was that 'the unnecessary weed of tobacco' was then

[6] Edward Alleyn frequently records 6d as the cost of his round trip by water from Southwark to the City, for example: The Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project, MSS9 article 009, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-9/> [accessed 30 September 2024].
[7] Traffic congestion caused by coaches became a problem at the second Blackfriars, leading to a petition from local residents (dated by Bentley to 1618/19) to the Lord Mayor and Corporation for the closure of the playhouse. Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage* (Clarendon Press, 1968), VI, p. 28.
[8] Cecil family, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable the Marquess of Salisbury, Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, Pt.16*, Historical Manuscripts Commission, 9 (H.M.S.O., 1883), p. 339, <http://archive.org/details/calendarofmanusc16grea_0> [accessed 30 September 2024]. Lord Saye and Sele's descendants include Ralph and Joseph Fiennes, both actors.

heavily taxed but 'all interludes and common playhouses are as unnecessary and yield no penny to the king'. He clearly thought this could be a significant income stream for himself as, via Cecil, he offered the enormous sum of one thousand marks (£667) to Sir Philip Herbert (not yet Earl of Montgomery) to obtain such a right from the king.[9] If granted, he proposed to pay the royal coffers £40 per annum for twenty-one years, making a total of more than £1500. It would have required 17,220 theatregoers each year, for twenty-one years, prepared to accept the doubling of the basic one penny entry price just to cover Lord Saye and Sele's proffered outlay.[10] Many more audience members would have been required for him to make a profit, yet he must have believed this formed an achievable target. Cecil ignored his proposal and the project went no further. But Lord Saye and Sele's enthusiasm for a new tax derived from the success of playgoing demonstrates just how commercially attractive this relatively new mass market entertainment had become. Someone else who was attracted to its moneymaking potential a few years earlier was Philip Henslowe.

As far as can be ascertained, Henslowe knew nothing of playhouse building or management before embarking on his first theatrical enterprise but, over the course of the next three decades, he would go on to become experienced in every aspect of their construction and operation. His interest was, primarily, in the possibility for profit that they offered. The previous chapter identified some of the other sources from which he derived his wealth, in particular his ownership of property, but his control of successive playhouses was always an important contributor to Henslowe's income.

[9] Cecil family, *Calendar,* p. 339.
[10] £667 + (£40 x 21) = £1507; £1507 x 240 = 36180d; 36180 ÷21 = 17222 attenders @ 1d per head per annum.

1 At the Rose

1.1 What was built?

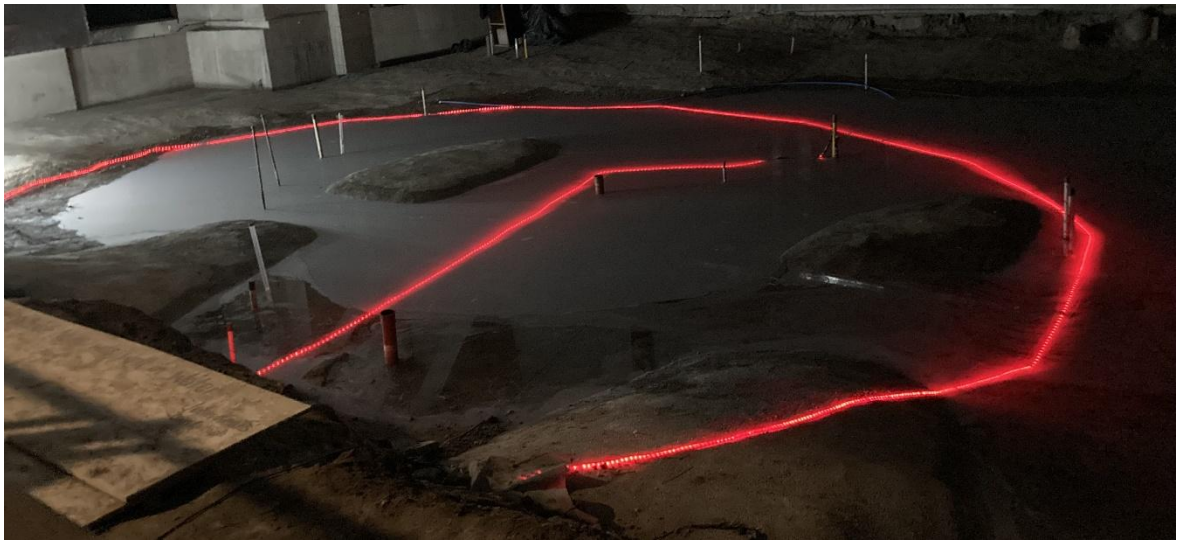


Figure 2.1 The partial footprint of the Rose Playhouse, Park, Street, Southwark. Ropelights mark the inner edge of the yard; the straight line across the centre shows part of the stage edge which continues under the viewing platform. Tiring house area is to the right, behind the stage line. Photo M. Faiers.

Figure 2.1 shows what remains of the Rose today: a partial footprint marked out by ropelights in the basement of an office building in modern Southwark, standing on land formerly known as the Little Rose estate. On 24 March 1585 Philip Henslowe made his first foray into the world of the playhouse when he purchased the lease of this plot of land, lying between Bankside and Maid Lane to the east of Rose Alley.[11] However, building a playhouse may not even have been his initial intention. Until that time, he had almost certainly been operating as a dyer, running Harry Woodward's former business, acquired on his marriage to Agnes. What prompted the purchase of the Little Rose can only be guessed at. It may have been influenced more by his proximity to the popular Bear Garden than by viewing the success of either Burbage's (possibly radical) amphitheatre, the Theatre, or the rectangular Curtain, across the

[11] Archive of Dulwich College, Muniment 15, in *Henslowe Papers: Being Documents Supplementary to Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by W.W. Greg (A. H. Bullen, 1907), pp. 1–2.

Thames.[12] Unless he was an avid attender at one of these playhouses he was more likely to have been attracted by the regular crowds flocking to the Southwark Bear Garden and by the possibility of creating a rival to it. Jon Greenfield, in his analysis of the development of the Rose, proposes that it may have been originally conceived for animal baiting as well as for staging plays.[13] He points to the archaeological discovery of a significant change in floor levels and consequent height of a protective wall separating the yard from the first gallery as being

> so singular that it cannot have been accidental. There must be something about the way Henslowe intended to use the building that brought about this peculiarity of form. Was Henslowe intending to make his new playhouse exclusively for showing plays? Or was he thinking of a building that could be used for a wider range of entertainments, including staging plays, but not exclusively?[14]

This possibility is rejected by Bowsher and Miller, who note that there was never any licence for baiting at the Rose and that the yard was not deep enough to contain animals.[15] If, however, Greenfield is correct, Henslowe may have only discovered during the construction period that the Rose was not suited to the dual purpose he had intended. It was to be more than a quarter of a century before his next attempt to create a multi-purpose venue, the conversion of the Bear Garden into the Hope, but the Rose may have marked the start of his progress as playhouse innovator.

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[12] Callan Davies, *What Is a Playhouse?: England at Play, 1520-1620.* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2022), pp. 30 and 32.
[13] Jon Greenfield, 'Reconstructing The Rose: Development of the Playhouse Building between 1587 and 1592', in *Shakespeare Survey*, ed. by Peter Holland (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 23–35, doi:10.1017/CCOL052187839X.002.
[14] Greenfield, 'Reconstructing The Rose'.
[15] Julian Bowsher and Pat Miller, *The Rose and the Globe: Playhouses of Shakespeare's Bankside, Southwark: Excavations 1988-91*, MOLA Monograph; 48 (Museum of London Archaeology, 2009), p. 137.

There were no specialist playhouse builders when Henslowe set out to erect his building on the Little Rose plot so he engaged someone he may have known already, butcher turned carpenter, John Griggs.[16] Six years later, in 1592, in a deposition in the legal dispute between Margaret Brayne and the Burbages concerning the Theatre, Griggs gave testimony on the probable cost of building that playhouse. By then he was possibly an expert witness on playhouse building, or he may have deposed, simply, as a carpenter familiar with the Theatre's construction.[17] If he had been involved as a young man, or apprentice, in assisting Burbage and Brayne building the Theatre, Henslowe's choice for the Rose was apposite. Both Griggs and Henslowe were almost certainly familiar with the architecture of the local baiting arena, with its central area for the action surrounded by none too secure scaffolding for spectators.[18] They may also have crossed the Thames and paid to attend plays from time to time at Burbage's Theatre, to gaze at their surroundings in preparation for their Bankside scheme. None of Henslowe's early commentators were, understandably, able to offer any substantive view of what was built but now, with the transformative advantage of the archaeological dig of 1989, we possess a clearer picture of, at least, the footprint of the Rose. From the information literally uncovered, it is now possible to gauge the capacity of the Rose with some confidence, whereas the earlier consensus, of around 2400 people, had been based only anecdotally or by comparison to the assumed size of the Globe.[19]

[16] Mary Edmond, 'The Builder of the Rose Theatre', *Theatre Notebook*, 44.2 (1990), pp. 50–54.
[17] Charles W. Wallace, *The First London Theatre: Materials for a History* (University of Nebraska Press, 1913), pp. 133–34.
[18] 'The Bear Garden Collapses: Stowe (1631): How to Track a Bear in Southwark' <https://trackabear.library.utoronto.ca/items/show/1402> [accessed 2 November 2023]; The London Archives, Remembrancia, 1, 520 in Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry, and William Ingram, *English Professional Theatre, 1530-1660*, Theatre in Europe: A Documentary History (Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 87.
[19] For example: Alfred Harbage proposes a total of 2424 in *Shakespeare's Audience,* (Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 30; and Richard Hosley suggests 2490 in 'The Playhouses', in *The Revels History of Drama in English Vol.3, 1576-1613,* edited by J. Leeds Barroll, (Methuen, 1975), p. 256.

Once the 1989 rescue excavation was complete, it was apparent that there were two phases to the life of the Rose: Phase 1 from 1587 to 1591 and Phase 2 from late 1591 onwards. The results demonstrated that expenditure minutely recorded by Henslowe in early 1592 reflects not just regular repair and maintenance but a sizeable reconfiguration of the northern end of the building to both improve the stage and increase audience capacity, all of which could be seen in the ground.[20] Armed with the information provided by the archaeology, historians and archaeologists have now been able to estimate the Rose's likely capacity in both phases with much greater potential for accuracy. As a result, the total audience numbers have generally been estimated to be slightly lower, at around sixteen hundred for Phase 1 and two thousand for Phase 2. Carol Chillington Rutter in the revised edition of *Documents of the Rose Playhouse* subscribes to these figures as do Julian Bowsher (lead archaeologist on the Rose dig) and C. Walter Hodges in his reconstruction drawings, whilst Foakes opts for a figure of 2150.[21] Yet there is still no certainty about the number of gallery levels, whether two or three (the excavated remains, of course, provide only a footprint). The working consensus for three is succinctly summed up by Rhodes, writing before the discovery of the remains: 'It is more than likely that the Rose had three galleries for spectators […] The evidence for three galleries in the Elizabethan theatre is so well known that it need not be reviewed here', and restated by Bowsher, 'these buildings were polygonal wooden structures with three tiers of galleries and an open yard'.[22] In Chapter 4 I will arithmetically test the two- or three-gallery issue of the Rose against the financial information supplied by Henslowe's income recording.

[20] Julian Bowsher, *The Rose Theatre: An Archaeological Discovery* (Museum of London, 1998), p. 74.
[21] Bowsher, *The Rose Theatre,* p. 74; *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, ed. by Carol Chillington Rutter, Rev. ed. (Manchester University Press, 1999) p. xiii; R. A. Foakes, 'The Discovery of The Rose Theatre: Some Implications', in *Shakespeare Survey: Volume 43: The Tempest and After*, ed. by Stanley Wells, Shakespeare Survey (Cambridge University Press, 1991), XLIII, 141–48, doi:10.1017/CCOL0521395291.013.
[22] Ernest Rhodes, *Henslowe's Rose: Stage and Staging* (Kentucky University Press, 1976), p. 70; Julian Bowsher, *Shakespeare's London Theatreland* (Museum of London Archaeology, 2012), p. 43.

In the absence of physical evidence, a speculative reconstruction of the Rose's finances may guide a decision. To undertake this, my focus is on the Rose Phase 2, the building which emerged after the works of 1591/2, and which is the principal playhouse of the Diary.

It is doubtful that a House Full sign ever stood outside any Elizabethan open-air playhouse. Unconstrained by modern health and safety legislation there must have been an instinct to squash in as many people as physically possible at the most popular performances, particularly into the standing-only yard, making the notion of capacity itself fluid. Playhouse owners, still licensed and regulated by a 1574 Act of Common Council, were only required to keep 'good order' amongst their audiences.[23] There was no prescription for how this was to be achieved, and no requirement to limit audience numbers. To arrive at a potential audience capacity figure it is first of all necessary to determine the size and shape of the Rose Phase 2. This is only made possible by the dimensions and descriptions contained within the report of the archaeological dig.[24] The 1591/2 reconfiguration changed the Rose from a fourteen- to a fifteen-sided polygon with three and a half sides at the rear of the stage and the remaining eleven forming the audience bays. The rescue excavation was unable to expose the entire footprint of the playhouse but uncovered a single entry point to the galleries between bays thirteen and fourteen. (The main entrance to the building lay at the southern edge, bay ten

[23] BL, MS Lansdowne 20, in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 73—77.
[24] Bowsher and Miller, *The Rose and the Globe,* pp. 37—45. In the exposition and analysis that follow I rely on this report where no separate reference is given.



Figure 2.2 Van Buchell's copy of De Witt's drawing of the Swan.

of the diagram below.) This gallery entry point was in the same position as one of the two entrances labelled 'ingressus' on the celebrated de Witt drawing of the Rose's nearby rival playhouse, the Swan, so it is assumed that there was also a second entry point, opposite the first, at the Rose, between bays six and seven.[25] No evidence was discovered of an external stair turret where it might have been expected, either outside near the ingressus point or in the region of the main entrance. The apparent lack of stair turret makes it much more likely that everyone entered via the main gateway into the yard before making their way to a gallery access point. In this case, the upper gallery, or galleries, were reached via internal stairs from the rear of the ground floor gallery. The archaeological report provides dimensions from which it is possible to calculate the size of both the galleries and the yard. The outside wall of each bay measured 16 ft 6 in. (5.03 m), and internally each bay front was 10 ft 6 in. (3.2 m) wide, so that the distance between the exterior and interior walls created an audience bay 11 ft 6 in. (3.5 m) deep, widening towards the external wall.[26] In order to calculate how many seats these bays may have contained, it is necessary to move away from playhouse building and instead

[25] Drawing of Swan Theatre after Johan de Witt's drawing from 1596, Aernout van Buchell, *Adversaria*, Utrecht, University Library, Ms. 842, < https://www.uu.nl/en/special-collections/collections/manuscripts/buchelius-booth/adversaria-by-aernout-van-buchell> [accessed 30 September 2024].

[26] 16ft 6in. was the length of a surveyor's pole, Kemble Hilldreth, 'Understanding Survey Measurement Terms', *Point to Point Surveyors*, 2010 <https://www.pointtopointsurvey.com/2010/01/understanding-survey-measurement-terms/> [accessed 26 September 2024].

examine the principles adopted for creating temporary entertainment spaces for the court. John Orrell, in *The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe* (published six years before the discovery of the Rose and Globe archaeological remains), analyses in detail the dimensions given for the conversion of a hall, assumed from its measurements to be Christ Church, Oxford, for a performance in front of King James in 1605.[27] From this it appears that there was some slight gradation in the distance between rows, so that ladies and the King's servants sat on benches 8 in. (20 cm) in depth, with a further 16 in. (40 cm) for their legs, knees and enormous skirts. These rows were therefore 24 in. (2ft/ 61 cm) apart. The remainder of the audience was not so fortunate and had seats only 6 in. (15 cm) deep, with a further 12 in. (30 cm) legroom, 18 in. (45 cm) in total. Whatever the legroom allowed, all seats were only 18 in. wide, which, Orrell notes, 'is the figure found to be standard in Inigo Jones's [court] designs'.[28] It is a reasonable assumption that it was also standard for playhouse seating. It therefore appears that the Rose gallery audience sat on simple benches attached to the degrees (steps) in the same way that modern spectators sit on bleacher (fixed bench) seating to watch sporting events. Although an allowance of 18 in. per person is modest, (especially for bulky doublets and wide skirts), it is worth noting that, even in 2024, it remains the recommended space per person for calculating bleacher seating requirements.[29] This construction of degrees/risers and ingressus may be what was sketched by Henslowe on a letter to Alleyn in September 1593, with the steps framed by two of the supporting gallery pillars.[30] It is also very similar to a modern arrangement of benches and aisle.

[27] John Orrell, *The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe* (Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 127–38.
[28] Orrell, *Quest,* p. 135.
[29] Modern bleacher seating, <https://www.husseyseatway.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Classic-Wood-Bench-2018-metric.pdf> accessed 19 June 2024.
[30] HADP, MSS1 Article 014 image 02 recto, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-1/article-014/02-recto/> [accessed 30 September 2024]. It is almost certainly not the drawing of a stage design as performing on those levels would be unsafe and well-nigh impossible.



Figure 2.3 left, ADC MSS1 article 014 drawing, by kind permission of the Governors of Dulwich College; right, modern bleacher seating. Photos M. Faiers.

From the measurements above, it starts to be possible to calculate gallery capacity. Each bay had room for five rows of seating, allowing a generous 20 in. (51 cm) for each seat and associated legroom, and assuming there to have been a walkway 2 ft 6 in. (76 cm) wide at the rear. Tiffany Stern, starting from the rigidly allocated seating of the reconstructed Globe, cogently argues that this corridor was a space in the original playhouse where audience members could move to improve their view of the stage.[31] There is no obvious reason to suppose that the Globe was unique in this and, that by analogy, the Rose also had space for standing customers. The diagram below illustrates the approximate layout of the seating bays.

[31] Tiffany Stern, '"You That Walk i'th Galleries": Standing and Walking in the Galleries of the Globe Theatre', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 51.2 (2000), pp. 211–16, doi:10.2307/2902134. Standing at the rear of circles and galleries is a practice that has survived until today with many West End of London theatres still licensed for rarely used standing spaces on all levels. The Duke of York's has 16; the Fortune 12; the Harold Pinter 37; the Lyceum 29; the Phoenix 56; and the Piccadilly 32. (Personal correspondence with Vicky Hawkins, then Head of Production, Ambassador Theatre Group, by email, October 2023).

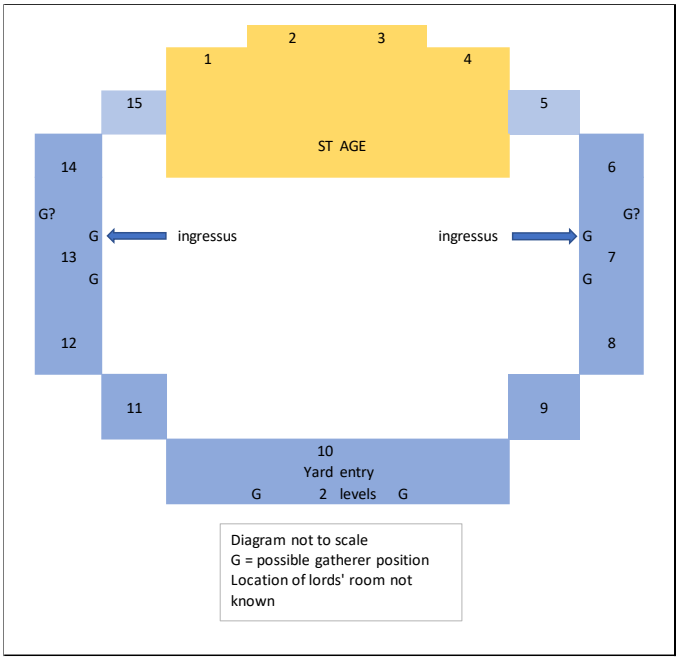


Figure 2.4 Approximate layout of audience gallery bays, Rose Phase 2.

This shows three different types of audience bay within the gallery area, with bays one to four behind the stage forming the backstage and tiring house area. Firstly, there are eight 'standard' bays, here numbers five, six, eight, nine, eleven, twelve, fourteen and fifteen. The brick and tiled floor of the excavated ingressus was just over 5 ft (1.52 m) wide, i.e. the space of three to four seated people, and my calculations assume that this width was taken from the 'ingressus' bays, numbers seven and thirteen. Bay ten, above the main entranceway into the playhouse, had no ground floor gallery, and seating only in the upper levels. For a modern audience these upper galleries directly above the entrance would be regarded as premium seating, with unobstructed sightlines to the stage straight ahead. However, if the position of lords' rooms above the stage, and gallants on stage at the Blackfriars, are indicative of perception in the 1590s, the Rose galleries closest to the stage would have been the preferred places, and may have been where the lords' room, or rooms, were located.

Standard bay	Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	Row 5	Standing		
Gallery 1	7	8	8	9	10	12		
Gallery 2	7	8	8	9	10	10	106	2 galleries
Gallery 3	7	8	8	9			138	3 galleries
Ingressus bay	Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	Row 5	Standing		
Gallery 1	4	5	6	7	8	12		
Gallery 2	4	5	6	7	8	10	82	2 galleries
Gallery 3	4	5	6	7			104	3 galleries
Entrance bay	Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	Row 5	Standing		
Gallery 1								
Gallery 2	7	8	8	9	10	10	52	2 galleries
Gallery 3	7	8	8	9			84	3 galleries

Figure 2.5 Seating capacity of three bay types, Rose Phase 2.

Bay	Type	Physical capacity 3 galleries	Physical capacity 2 galleries
1	Stage		
2	Stage		
3	Stage		
4	Stage		
5	Standard	138	106
6	Standard	138	106
7	Ingressus	104	82
8	Standard	138	106
9	Standard	138	106
10	Entrance	84	52
11	Standard	138	106
12	Standard	138	106
13	Ingressus	104	82
14	Standard	138	106
15	Standard	138	106
		1396	1064

Figure 2.6 Capacity of each bay showing 2 and 3 gallery levels, Rose Phase 2

The figures above can only be a 'best estimate' based on the measurements provided by the archaeology, supported by the commercial logic of my experience. They illustrate that three levels of gallery at the Rose Phase 2 may have held 1396 people, or 1064 if only two gallery levels were present.

The excavation discovered the outline of the yard in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 and was able to determine its area, surface material and the angle of the rake which assisted viewing. The yard surface was raised and the rake flattened slightly in Phase 2, indicating that

there were clearly no issues with sightlines for the majority of the audience.[32] Before it was known that the yard was raked, there had been a view that some spectators may have sat on the yard floor but, post-1989, there is now general agreement that the entire yard audience stood, as at the reconstructed Globe.[33] The Phase 1 yard was surfaced with 'a grey, rather friable mortar-like substance' which was changed in Phase 2 to an even mixture of earth, cinders and nutshells.[34] Orrell calculates that twenty-seven cartloads of nutshells would have been required to cover the yard so that these were clearly not just the detritus of performances. Hazelnuts were used in the process of oil production and the shells may have been industrial waste from Henslowe's later Southwark vestry colleagues, the Bromfield family of soap-boilers. To calculate the capacity of the 1719 sq ft (159.7 sq m) Phase 2 yard, Christine Eccles records that the senior boys at Alleyn's foundation of Dulwich College were pressed into service. 740 could be tightly packed into the area, roughly equivalent to the same number of sixteenth-century bodies, who were on average 2% to 3% smaller than adult males today.[35] Adding this number to the gallery figures above gives a total capacity of 2136 with three gallery levels or 1804 with two galleries, figures not too far distant from those of Foakes, Bowsher and others.

[32] Julian M. C. Bowsher, 'Twenty Years on: The Archaeology of Shakespeare's London Playhouses', *Shakespeare*, 7.4 (2011), pp. 452–66, doi:10.1080/17450918.2011.625443.
[33] Rhodes, *Rose, p*. 24.
[34] Rutter, *Documents,* p. xi; John Orrell, 'Nutshells at the Rose', *Theatre Research International*, 17.1 (1992), pp. 8–14, doi:10.1017/S030788330001556X.
[35] Christine Eccles, *The Rose Theatre* (Hern, 1990), p. 93; Alex Werner, *London Bodies - the Changing Shape of Londoners from Prehistoric Times to the Present Day* (Museum of London Archaeology, 1998), p. 108. See also introduction, p. 16.

1.2 What did it cost?

What did it cost Henslowe to transform the Little Rose plot from a small area of marshy ground into a building capable of holding around two thousand spectators? There appears to be an answer in the agreement entered into between Henslowe and John Cholmley, a grocer, on 10 January 1587: £816.[36] This is the sum that Cholmley was due to pay Henslowe over an eight-year period, in return for half the income of the playhouse for the same eight years. It has frequently been regarded as the cost of construction. Greg in his commentary on the Diary assumes '£816 very likely to have been his outlay on the concern', as does Rhodes.[37] Foakes characterises the purpose of the agreement as 'for the erection of the Rose', and Bowsher and Cerasano summarise it as 'an attempt to defray costs'.[38] Carson goes so far as to describe the agreement as being 'to share expenses in the building of a playhouse', which is nowhere explicit in the document.[39] What is explicit is that it was Henslowe's sole responsibility to cover the cost of construction:

> he the saide Phyllipe his executors or assignes shall and will at his and their owne proper Coste and Chargis with as muche expedicion as maye be ereckted fynished and sett vpp or cause to be erected finished and sett vpe by Iohn Grygges Carpenter his servantes or assignes ^ the saide play house.[40]

[36] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 16, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/muniments-series-1/group-016/> [accessed 30 September 2024]. Transcription by Professor Emerita Sally-Beth Maclean (University of Toronto).
[37] W.W. Greg, *Henslowe's Diary Part II Commentary* (A. H. Bullen, 1908), p. 44; Rhodes, *Rose,* p. 4.
[38] Foakes, *Diary,* p. xlvi; HADP, Julian Bowsher and S. P. Cerasano, 'The Deed of Partnership in the Rose Playhouse (January 10, 1587) - Muniment 16', https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/essays/the-deed-of-partnership-in-the-rose-playhouse-january-10-1587/ [accessed 22 February 2025]; Sally-Beth MacLean also cites this essay in 'History of the Rose Property', *REED online*, https://ereed.org/collections/rosep/background-property/ [accessed 22 February 2025].
[39] Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's 'Diary'* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 14.
[40] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 16.

If this agreement documented an equal partnership, £816 would represent only half the cost, making the real total £1632. In the light of much later testimony about the cost of building and rebuilding the Globe, £700 and £1300 respectively, this is an unrealistically high figure for the Rose.[41] £816 was the contractual, probably negotiated, figure agreed upon and most likely bore some relation to the estimated building expense as Henslowe knew it at the time of signing. However, it certainly cannot be assumed to be the accurate cost. The agreement was entered into in January, at an early stage of the Rose's construction, when it was 'now in framinge and shortly to be ereckted and sett vppe': that is, that the timber frame was being constructed off-site to be brought to the plot later in the spring, presumably when the ground was drier.[42] The key points of the agreement are that Cholmley was to pay Henslowe £816 over an eight-year period, by thirty-two quarterly instalments of £25 10s from St John's Day (June 23) 1587. In return he would receive half the income of the playhouse in the same period.

The rationale behind the start date of the payment schedule is unclear but at least three possibilities present themselves. Firstly, it is conceivable that the date of June 23 was selected as likely to be at the end of the playhouse's first full quarter of operation, when a proper reckoning could be made, which ties in with an early spring date for the completion of the building. It may instead have been scheduled around an anticipated opening for the Rose in the summer; or even planned as an advance payment for an autumn launch. It is unknown when performances actually commenced and all that can be said with any certainty is that

[41] Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses*, pp. 221 and 230.
[42] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 16. The technique of constructing oak-framed buildings off-site is still in use today, see: Rowan Moore, 'New River Wing, Clare College, Cambridge Review – a Perfect Fit', *The Observer*, 10 March 2024, section Art and design <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2024/mar/10/new-river-wing-old-court-clare-college-cambridge-review-witherford-watson-mann-a-perfect-fit> [accessed 10 March 2024].

the playhouse was open by 29 October 1587, when the Privy Council responded to complaints about Sunday performances in Southwark by writing to the Surrey justices of the peace.[43] The most important point in the agreement for Cholmley was that he was also to have the use of an existing 'little house' on the plot for whatever purpose he chose, possibly storing victualling supplies. He was also granted the exclusive right to sell food and drink not just within the playhouse itself but throughout the Little Rose plot. Early commentators, such as Ordish, Greg and Beckerman, struggled to explain why this odd transaction might have seemed sensible at the time to either signatory.[44] More recent scholars have focused on it as a finance raising document, with Andrew Gurr believing that Cholmley 'apparently put up a proportion of the [playhouse building] cost in return for the right to sell food and drink there to the visiting public', and William Ingram describing it as a deed of partnership 'for financing the erection and operation of the Rose playhouse'.[45]

But even these later views continue to misrepresent the scope of the document which, in reality, governs two businesses: the playhouse and a separate catering business. For Henslowe, if its purpose was, indeed, to secure cash to pay for the playhouse construction, allowing payments to be spread over eight years was not the obvious solution. For Cholmley, (probably a tanner of dubious reputation rather than the grocer he had become a year earlier

[43] TNA, PC2/14 in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 426. Laurie Johnson proposed in 'Who Performed at the Rose in 1587?' presented for the Rose Playhouse, online, 17 July 2023, that the opening was some time around early October when the Sewer Commission, meeting on 2 October, appeared unaware of the new playhouse although complaints had already been made about it.

[44] For example, T. Fairman Ordish, *Early London Theatres: In the Fields.* (E. Stock, 1899), p. 153, <https://archive.org/details/earlylondonthea02ordigoog> [accessed 30 September 2024]; Greg, *Commentary,* p. 44; Bernard Beckerman, *The Theatrical Manager in England and America: Player of a Perilous Game, Philip Henslowe, Tate Wilkinson, Stephen Price, Edwin Booth, Charles Wyndham*, ed. by Donohue Joseph Jr (Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 25.

[45] Andrew Gurr, *Shakespeare's Opposites: The Admiral's Company, 1594-1625* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 126; William Ingram, 'John Cholmley on the Bankside', *Early Theatre*, 15.2 (2012), pp. 43–65, doi: 10.12745/et.15.2.909. William Ingram has traced the leading candidate for Henslowe's John Cholmley and presented a credible backstory for the agreement.

by redemption [outright purchase without apprenticeship]) £102 was an enormous sum to commit each year simply to obtain the catering concession. This was especially pertinent as the quarterly payment was due whether the playhouse was open or not. Cholmley may have been the 'undiscovered' sitting tenant on the Little Rose plot (as Ingram suggests) who then used that position as leverage to force his way into the transaction primarily to obtain the catering concession for the Rose and its immediate surroundings.[46] That the agreement governed the entire Little Rose plot may have been the important point for Cholmley. It gave him a geographically defined exclusivity tied to neither the playhouse operation nor its seasonal calendar. So long as he believed he could make a profit of £102 per year from a Southwark, rather than simply Rose, tap-house operation, any share of box office income from the playhouse itself was a bonus. The importance of the entire plot to Cholmley may explain his willingness to share in the cost of ongoing maintenance:

> Iohn Cholmleye & Phillype Hinshleye […] shall and will […] at theire equall Costes and Chargis repare amende sustayne mantayne and vpholde the saide playe howse [erasure] brigges wharffes and all other the wayes and brygges now leadinge or which heareafter shalbe made to leade or appurtayne into oute and from the saide parcell of grownde.[47]

Cholmley was agreeing to contribute to the upkeep of the playhouse to support his share of that income, as well as to maintain access routes to the whole plot, which would benefit his separately located tap-house. Henslowe may also have coveted the additional income stream a tap-house could provide, hence demanding such a high price to cede it to Cholmley. Entering

[46] Ingram, 'Cholmley'.
[47] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 16.

into the deed of partnership was potentially a risk for Cholmley only if a tap-house (or other catering outlet) failed to cover his annual commitment to Henslowe. For Henslowe there was no risk at all in becoming Cholmley's partner. Even if the embryo Rose failed, he was guaranteed £816 in instalments by 1595 and Cholmley's quarterly payments would have been sufficient on their own to cover the playhouse's 'dark' costs when no performances took place.

However, the deed of partnership also displays a naivete about the new (for Henslowe and Cholmley) business of running a playhouse. Although he was already building the Rose, Henslowe appeared unaware of how he would need to operate it, namely that he would require a playing company, or companies, to perform: 'Phillype Hinshleye and Iohn Cholmley theire executours and assignes ioyntly to appoynte and permitte suche personne and personnes players to vse exersyse & playe in the saide playe howse' is the sole reference to the players.[48] The description of the income to be shared, on the other hand, is full, repeated, and clearly intended to cover all possibilities:

> […] all the beniffytte somes of moneye proffitte and Advauntage of a playe howse […]
>
> […] The moytie or one halfe of all suche some and somes of moneye gaynes profytt and Comodytye which shall arysse growe be colectted gathered or become due […]
>
> […] all suche some and somes of moneye gaynes proffytes and Comodytie which shall arrysse growe be colected gathered or becoume due […]

[48] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 16.

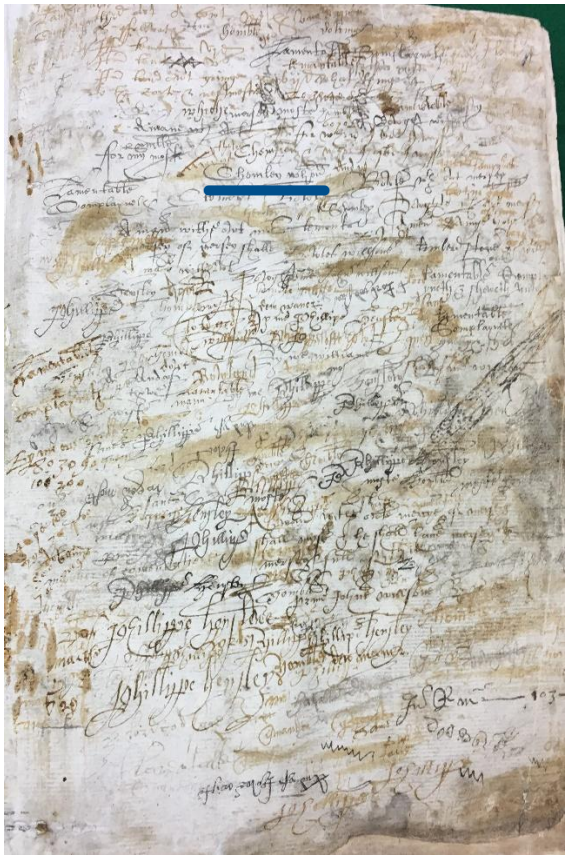
> […] receave all suche some and somes of moneye of every personne & personnes resortinge and Cominge to the saide playe howse […]
>
> […] all suche some and somes of moneye gaynes profytte and comodytie whatsoever as shalbe so colected gathered or receaved.[49]

Since this agreement is often only partially reproduced or quoted, the broad and repeated nature of the language is usually missed. It is also worth noting that in 1587, profit did not necessarily mean the difference between the amount earned and that spent, as today, but also, advantage or benefit, material or otherwise.[50] Scholars when commenting on the agreement have been rather less precise about the money to be shared than Edward Pryce, the scrivener who drew up the document. Chambers, Greg and Ingram all refer to 'profits' as though interchangeable with 'income'; Ordish accurately refers to 'half the receipts'.[51] It appears, therefore that, whether innocently or duplicitously (but to what end?) an agreement had been made to which it would have proved almost impossible to adhere. Henslowe may have quickly discovered this when trying to engage a playing company as his first tenants. Custom and practice dictated that the playhouse income was split in some fashion between playing company and playhouse owner, yet he had entered into an arrangement for the owner to take the totality. If this was to be acceptable to the company sharers, they would require some form of payment per performance or per week from the owner(s), a system that would not find favour with Henslowe. If the agreement had provided solely for profits to be shared between the partners, there would have been no problem. Henslowe could have

[49] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 16.
[50] Oxford English Dictionary, 'Profit, n.' 1.1.a (Oxford University Press, 2024), Oxford English Dictionary doi.org/10.1093/OED/6630322299.
[51] E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, (Clarendon Press, 1923), I, p. 36; Chambers, *ES,* II, pp. 406, 408*;* Greg, *Commentary,* p. 44; Ingram, 'Cholmley'; Ordish, *Early London Theatres,* p. 153.

paid the playing company sharers a share of takings, or a fixed fee, as a legitimate expense to set against income and thus arrive at the profit figure to divide with Cholmley. Of the scholars who have discussed the partnership deed, Neil Carson alone has recognised that there was 'no provision for a share of the receipts to go to the actors'.[52] There is no evidence that the contractual financial arrangements continued into the life of the extended and improved Rose from 1592. Crucially there is no evidence of the agreement ever being followed (and its terms are quite precise as to how it is to be followed, annually, quarterly and daily), almost certainly because it was unenforceable. Foakes and Cerasano also suggest that, as Cholmley is never mentioned again, the partnership may have been dissolved even before Henslowe started recording expenditure in the Diary.[53] Given this omission, it is likely that detailed terms of the deed of partnership were ignored (or amended to be practical) almost as soon as signed. When Henslowe doodled 'Cho[l]mley when' on the flyleaf of the Diary sometime after 1591, and possibly as he was recording his detailed building expenditure from 1591, he may have been anticipating Cholmley's 50% contribution to those costs, unaware until then that his former partner had died in April 1589 or February 1590.[54] Whatever the reason that called Cholmley to mind, he was no longer a part of the financial equation.

[52] Carson, *Companion,* p. 14.
[53] *Diary*, p. 304; S. P. Cerasano, 'Henslowe, Philip (c. 1555–1616), Theatre Financier', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/12991.
[54] David Kathman, 'Citizens, Innholders, and Playhouse Builders', *Research Opportunities in Medieval and Renaissance Drama* 44 (2005), pp. 38–64, discussed by Ingram, in 'Cholmley'.



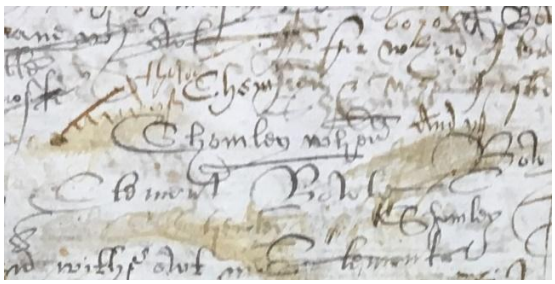


Figure 2.7: (left) Flyleaf of Henslowe's Diary (ADC MSS 7) with 'Chomley when' highlighted.

(below) Enlargement of 'Chomley when'.

Photo M. Faiers, by kind permission of the Governors of Dulwich College.

Rather than by reference to the Cholmley agreement, some approximation of the cost of building the Rose can be deduced from the later contract between Henslowe and Edward Alleyn with their master carpenter or project manager, Peter Street, for building the Fortune in 1600, as well as from other building expenses in the Diary. Henslowe noted the costs of constructing the Fortune in the most helpful detail on the reverse of the contract itself and additionally itemised incidental expenses within the Diary.[55] Approximately £140 was spent on timber (including transport) for the Fortune and at least £128 on wages. The weekly wage bill paid to Street's men for the Fortune ranged from £5 to £8, suggesting a construction period of around twenty weeks, including the preparation of the timbers offsite. The

[55] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 22, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/muniments-series-1/group-022/> [accessed 30 September 2024]. The transcription has been made by Professor Grace Ioppolo (University of Reading); *Diary*, fols. 97—99, pp. 188—193.

remaining budget was spent on tiles, bricks, sand, loam, nails, laths and, presumably, interior decoration. These details provide some guidance in assessing likely costs when John Griggs built the Rose for Henslowe. Very little is known of the Rose's aesthetic appearance but assuming it to have been a plain functional building (unlike the contract provisions for the Fortune) its original cost in 1587 may have been around £500 to £600. Given Henslowe's family connections with the supply of timber from Ashdown Forest, that area may have provided the source for its 'huge oak timbers each weighing two tons and standing thirty feet high', which cost in the region of £100.[56] Alternatively these may have been cut near the Thames at Windsor, like those for the Fortune, with a further £30 or so to transport them by water. Griggs's men, like Street's, were paid for, say, 20 weeks at £6 per week, a total of £120. The balance was spent on other building materials and craftsmen for finishing, and copious supplies from the ironmonger, the Frying Pan. When the playhouse was less than five years old Henslowe spent something over £100 to alter and extend it.[57] Three years later he spent a carefully noted £108 19s carrying out repairs, plus a further £7 2s for 'mackinge the throne In the heuenes' so that by 1595, the total sum expended on the Rose may have been as much as £700 or £800.[58] The phasing of this expenditure suggests that Henslowe, a novice in the playhouse business, had initially built too small and unsophisticated a structure. The rebuilding in 1591 added seats (approximately two hundred) plus a covering for the stage – a simple improvement obvious to any performer but not necessarily to an inexperienced owner.[59] Henslowe's willingness to spend a further 40% in addition to his original construction

[56] *Diary*, p. xx; Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p. 161.
[57] *Diary*, fol. 5^{r} and 5^{v}, pp. 12—13. The leaf is torn therefore an exact tally is not possible.
[58] *Diary,* fols. 2^{v} and 5^{v}, pp. 6—7, 13.
[59] Julian M. C. Bowsher, 'The Rose and Its Stages', in *Shakespeare Survey*, ed. by Peter Holland (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 36–48, doi:10.1017/CCOL052187839X.003.

cost demonstrates the importance of ongoing substantial investment in a building worth maintaining for its income earning capability.

Even at the lower estimate of £500, building the Rose in 1587 was a major structural and financial project for Henslowe. His builder, John Griggs, certainly became a close associate of the Henslowe family by 1593, when a letter from Henslowe to Alleyn includes greetings from Griggs and his wife; Griggs (or more probably his wife) took on Henslowe's orphaned niece Mary to learn sewing and bone-lace making.[60] Their close familial relationship would have featured regular credit transactions to be recorded, balanced and cancelled, as, for example, later in 1592 Griggs was indebted to Henslowe for £15, a transaction memorialised in the Diary.[61] Henslowe undoubtedly used his own creditworthiness to juggle the cashflow payments to Griggs for labour and materials as well as payments to other suppliers.[62] His diverse commercial interests, including dyeing and, potentially, tanning and starch making, would have given him good credit credentials for the project thus requiring little actual cash to be expended, perhaps only 10% of the total budget.[63] By utilising his strong credit position to husband cash, Henslowe was able to open his first playhouse without undue strain on his finances and for the following eight years and three months he also had the comfort of Cholmley's regular contractual payments to look forward to.

[60] HADP, MSS 1, Article 010, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-1/article-010/> [accessed 30 September 2024]; *Diary*, fol. 123^{r}, p. 228.
[61] *Diary,* fol. 12^{r}, p. 29.
[62]See Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation* (Macmillan, 1998), p. 101 for the operation of household credit.
[63] Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660-1730* (Methuen, 1991), quoted in Muldrew, p. 100.

1.3 Finding a tenant

From the evidence of the Cholmley agreement, reviewed above, it appears that Henslowe paid little attention to who might be the first tenants of the new playhouse, beyond agreeing that he and Cholmley would jointly appoint them. It is conceivable that when he planned and built the Rose, he had been fortunate enough to enter into some sort of playing arrangement with at least one of the touring companies who periodically came into London. Possibly an occasional playgoer himself, he would have been aware of the different companies and may have been able to secure an introduction to the key sharers in one or more of them. It is, however, equally possible that his building project was entirely speculative, based on the assumption that once it was there, tenants would want to occupy a brand-new playhouse. Although we have some knowledge of playing companies at the Theatre, Curtain and inns such the Cross Keys, there is no evidence of which company, or companies, Henslowe was able to lure to his new enterprise for the best part of five years, until he began recording income in the Diary. With the arrival of Strange's Men in February 1592, the Diary provides the first confirmation of longer-than-casual residency in any playhouse. Thus, for the preceding nearly five years, Henslowe was faced with the theatre programmer's nightmare of scheduling blank weeks and months stretching forward in time. To compound his difficulties, no doubt every company was interested in playing in the same lucrative weeks: what is still known as the 'golden period' around Christmas, also Shrovetide, Easter, and the Mayday holiday. The period of Lent, varying slightly each year between February and April, would have been a relatively unattractive proposition to a playing company with the

possibility of a fine or enforced closure for playing against a prohibition.[64] The companies Henslowe might have aspired to attract included Essex's, Sussex's, Worcester's, Strange's and the first iteration of the Admiral's Men. The sovereign's own company, the Queen's Men, was primarily a touring company and was extensively occupied in these years with regular visits to a circuit of towns and cities but there may have been a few consecutive weeks here and there when a London residency at the Rose was possible. To have persuaded them to launch the new playhouse would have been a coup for Henslowe. From extant touring records it is impossible to deduce exactly how and by whom the Rose was eventually filled but its calendar probably included substantial and/or regular visits from Leicester's, Worcester's, Strange's, the Admiral's, and Essex's. A tentative playing schedule is given below.[65] The reality is extremely unlikely to have been as tidy and consecutive as this, with dark periods and truncated runs scattered through the months. Even fantasy programming such as that below demonstrates the number of company relationships Henslowe would have had to cultivate whilst attempting to avoid expensive dark weeks with no income.

[64] Playing in Lent had been prohibited since a privy council letter to justices of the peace in March 1579. TNA, PC2/12/427, in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 77.

[65] This schedule is based on collated individual company touring information in Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies* (Oxford University Press, 1996), and *Records of Early English Drama 'REED Patrons & Performances'*, <https://library2.utm.utoronto.ca/otra/reed/> [accessed 30 September 2024].

1587	January		**1590**	**January**	Admiral's
	February			**February**	Admiral's
	March			**March**	*Lent*
	April	Queen's		**April**	*Lent*
	May	Worcester's		**May**	Strange's
	June	Worcester's		**June**	Strange's
	July	Sussex's		**July**	Strange's
	August	Sussex's		**August**	Essex's
	September	Essex's		**September**	Essex's
	October	Leicester's		**October**	Admiral's
	November	Leicester's		**November**	Admiral's
	December	Admiral's		**December**	Admiral's
1588	**January**	Admiral's	**1591**	**January**	Admiral's
	February	*Lent*		**February**	*Lent*
	March	*Lent*		**March**	*Lent*
	April	Essex's		**April**	Admiral's
	May	Essex's		**May**	Admiral's
	June	Essex's		**June**	Queen's
	July	Sussex's		**July**	Queen's
	August	Sussex's		August	*Works?*
	September	Worcester's		September	*Works?*
	October	Worcester's		**October**	Admiral's
	November	Admiral's		**November**	Admiral's
	December	Admiral's		**December**	Strange's
1589	**January**	Admiral's	**1592**	**January**	Strange's
	February	*Lent*		**February**	Strange's
	March	*Lent*			
	April	Worcester's			
	May	Essex's			
	June	Essex's			
	July	Sussex's			
	August	Sussex's			
	September	Strange's			
	October	Strange's			
	November	Admiral's			
	December	Admiral's			

Figure 2.8 Illustrative programming at the Rose, 1587 – 1592.

What must have appeared, at the time, to be stability was brought about by a deepening relationship with Strange's Men in the second half of 1591. Some of their members were already familiar with Henslowe and the Rose having joined the group from Leicester's Men, following the death of the Earl of Leicester and disbanding of his players.[66] Strange's

[66] Laurie Johnson, *Leicester's Men and Their Plays: An Early Elizabethan Playing Company and Its Legacy* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), p. 204.

Men had lost their London base at the Theatre following their split with the Burbages, and still boasted the charismatic Alleyn as their leading performer.[67] Henslowe's extensive remodelling of the Rose may have been an inducement to them to become his tenants. The building improvements may also have been a last gamble by Henslowe to recoup his investment, or the result of Strange's Men's demands to agree to a residency - or perhaps a mixture of all three. But in the circumstances, the cost of over £100 on the work must have seemed money very well spent to ease the difficulties of scheduling. Plague closures in 1592 and 1593 brought an end to any continuity of operation until Henslowe secured Sussex's Men as tenants from December 1593 to February 1594.[68] They were joined for eight performances by the Queen's Men at Easter the following year, playing their final performance on 8 April.

This joint residency has been overshadowed by the celebrated Admiral's and Chamberlain's Men's combined season at Newington Butts, but does it, perhaps, show Henslowe attempting something new? Whether by invitation or accident, securing joint tenants, playing either as one larger integrated company or two troupes alternating performances, allowed for eight plays in as many days. This schedule provided income to the owner every day whilst individual players were able to have days off. If it was an experimental season, it was cut short as, on 9 April, a severe gale struck, followed by exceptionally heavy rain two days later.[69] Thousands of trees were blown down, the Thames flooded and a five-week gap in Henslowe's recording was possibly due to storm and/or flood damage to the Rose. The newly revived Admiral's Men returned on 14 May but played just three

[67] Lawrence Manley and Sally-Beth MacLean, *Lord Strange's Men and Their Plays* (Yale University Press, 2014), p. 47.
[68] *Diary*, fol. 9[r], p. 21.
[69] 'Weather in History 1500 to 1599 AD', <https://premium.weatherweb.net/weather-in-history-1500-to-1599-ad/> [accessed 8 October 2024]; Laurie Johnson, *Shakespeare's Lost Playhouse: Eleven Days at Newington Butts* (Routledge, 2017), p. 144.

performances, perhaps finding the Rose just partially repaired and too difficult to work in. They may have played at the Rose only while Henslowe negotiated terms with Peter Hunningborne, the owner of the playhouse at Newington Butts, to move the players there to allow more repairs to be carried out.[70] It is very likely that the work of 'payntinge & doinge it a bowte wth ealme bordes & other Repracyones', totalling £108 19s, referred to as '1595 in Lent' was actually undertaken following the disastrous weather of March and April the previous year but not recorded in the Diary until a year later.[71] Whatever the impetus for the joint season with the Chamberlain's Men at Newington Butts in June (were the Chamberlain's Men already due to play there when Henslowe negotiated a position for the Admiral's Men as well?) the excursion was presumably at least facilitated by Henslowe, as he records income for it, albeit at a vastly reduced level. This suggests a different financial arrangement with the two playing companies from that at the Rose. The customary company and owner income division now had to accommodate two owners, Hunningborne and Henslowe. Henslowe's responsibility to provide an alternative playing venue must surely have been the reason that he was involved in supporting a venture providing income for a rival playhouse owner. His relationship with the Admiral's Men had become closer once his nineteen-year-old stepdaughter, Joan Woodward, married Edward Alleyn in October 1592 and it was probably Alleyn who led the company back to his father-in-law's playhouse by mid-June 1594. If the 'Repracyones' noted by Henslowe in 1595 had been carried out between the weather damage in mid-April and the company's return in mid-June 1594, at a cost of over £100, it was again

[70] Johnson, *Lost Playhouse,* p. 136.
[71] *Diary*, fol. 2^{v}, pp. 6—7. This entry occupies 75% of the page, appearing to be written in one session and copied from another list or disparate sources.

(as in 1591/2) a justified investment to keep a playing company content. Henslowe was about to enjoy more than five years of continuity of tenants.

In October 1597 the Admiral's Men seem to have participated in another joint season, this time with Pembroke's Men, which lasted four and a half months.[72] It was around this time that Alleyn temporarily stopped performing. He would return to the stage in 1600 but for two and a half years he appears to have taken planned leave of absence from the Admiral's Men, the Rose, and London.[73] It may be that his non-appearance was the driving force behind a double company season: a marketing ploy to keep audiences engaged even without the star performer. But 1597 was also the year when the Admiral's Men lost several of their number to Pembroke's Men at the Swan, only to regain them after August following the *Isle of Dogs* debacle.[74] So perhaps 'joint season' is a misnomer and Henslowe was merely reflecting an enlarged company of the Admiral's Men, swollen with the returnees and some of their former Pembroke's colleagues. Sadly, by this point Henslowe had abandoned his straightforward three column accounting system, initially for the complex five column version but then for a weekly tally, so it is impossible to ascertain very much about the season at all. Whatever Henslowe's oblique recording was masking, he was, again, striving to keep his income from the Rose flowing, this time by binding the returning deserters to him contractually.[75]

By late 1599 Henslowe and the Admiral's Men had been in a close relationship for five and a half years, but the nature of this had changed after Alleyn's departure. Henslowe became more involved with the daily running of the company, as well as the playhouse,

[72] *Diary*, fols. 27^{v} and 36^{v}, pp. 60, 71—72.
[73] S. P. Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn's "Retirement" 1597-1600', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England; New York*, 10 (1998), pp. 98–112, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24322341> [accessed 30 September 2024].
[74] Gurr, *Opposites,* p. 35.
[75] *Diary,* fol. 232^{r}, p. 240.

presumably taking over aspects of the company managerial role that Alleyn had previously undertaken. He does not appear to have had artistic or creative responsibility but operated as an enabler. He advanced loans to the company for the purchase of costumes and props, and for payments to playwrights. His actions kept the company afloat and on stage and, therefore, kept the Rose commercially viable. The playhouse must, once again, have required extensive repair when Henslowe and Alleyn designed the scheme to build a new home for the Admiral's Men, rather than spend more money on the ageing Rose. Once the company had moved into the Fortune, Henslowe was again in need of tenants for the old playhouse. He secured a (presumably brief) run by Pembroke's Men in October 1600 (just two performances are recorded) but it probably took until August 1602 to secure a longer-term arrangement.[76] Then he 'Layd owt for the company at the mermaid when we weare at owre a grement […] ix^{s}' towards supper.[77] The sharers with whom he dined were from Worcester's Men who had been playing at the Boar's Head.[78] In 1601 and 1602 there is no record of building expenditure at all by Henslowe and it appears instead that this time his offer was providing cash for (and to some extent writing off) very substantial spending on physical production costs and play commissions. This technique was sufficiently successful to retain Worcester's until Queen Elizabeth's death, and the plague that followed shortly thereafter, forced the theatres to close in 1603. By this time Henslowe had made his declaration that he would rather pull down the Rose than pay a huge increase in ground rent.[79]

[76] *Diary*, fol. 83^{r}, p. 164.
[77] *Diary*, fol. 115^{r}, p. 214.
[78] Gurr, *Playing Companies,* p. 328; Herbert Berry, *The Boar's Head Playhouse*, Folger Books (Folger Shakespeare Library; Associated University Presses, 1986), pp. 51–52.
[79] *Diary*, fol. 114^{v}, p. 213. See below, p. 134.

1.4 Running the Rose

Building and then operating a playhouse, particularly an outdoor amphitheatre, in this period was a high-risk activity. The business was subject to the audience's collective endurance of the vagaries of weather in the little ice age, with desperately severe winters and wet summers. The return of plague could, and did, lead to legally enforced closure for months on end and, when weather and sickness did not cause closure, it could be summarily imposed by the authorities at any moment of civil unease. Alongside these factors shared by all the playhouses was the terrifyingly specific risk of fire, which could be kindled at any time. And yet playhouses were still built and the commercial risks undertaken, presumably because their builders felt that the potential rewards outweighed those same risks.[80]

Before commencing construction, a playhouse builder had to consider the longer-term implications of his project: weighing the length of the lease against both potential income and running costs. Expending large capital sums to build a playhouse was simply the beginning for Henslowe or any entrepreneur. He (or she) then had to continue to pay to keep it in operation and needed to know the quantum of, and earn sufficient money to cover, the building's overheads. These costs divide into three categories: costs related to personnel; to the building itself; and to its original and ongoing financing.

Personnel costs would have been minimal in any playhouse. The staff required to prepare, rehearse and perform plays were the responsibility not of the playhouse owner but of the tenant playing company. Thus the individuals we know of from the Diary, such as Steven Magett the tireman and the 'Underell' who was owed wages, ('pd vnto vnderell at the

[80] The potential rewards are examined in Chapter 4.

apoyntmente of the company for wages w^{ch} they owght hime') were employees of the Admiral's Men.[81] It is likely that Henslowe only employed a carpenter for running repairs and maintenance (such as repairing damage caused by rain and wind, fixing broken benches, reattaching palings and topping up the surface of the yard with a mixture of Thames sediment and hazelnut shells from Southwark soap works).[82] Additionally a nightwatchman guarded against theft and, crucially, fire. These roles may have been combined and carried out by one or more people, but it is unlikely that it was necessary to pay more than the average labourer's wage of 10d per day (thus 10s per week for two people) whether the building was open or dark, at an annual cost of £26.[83] Henslowe's agreement with Cholmley also shows that the owners were able to appoint people 'at theire Choyse to Coleckte gather and receave all suche some and somes of moneye of every personne & personnes resortinge and Cominge to the saide playehowse'.[84] These were the 'gatherers' positioned at entrance doors and stairways to collect the income, who may have had modest wages, perhaps just a few pence per performance. If Henslowe employed four of the eight gatherers whose positions are shown in figure 2.4 above, they may have collectively cost him £10 per annum.

Much more substantial than personnel costs were those related to the building. First was the need to pay rent for the lease of the ground on which the playhouse stood. In the case of the Rose, this was £7 per annum paid to the parish of St. Mildred's, Bread Street, in the City; Henslowe was still paying it in 1602.[85] The next requirement was for every

[81] *Diary*, fols. 16^{r} and 116^{v}, pp. 37 and 217. Underell was most probably the Thomas Underhill recorded in the token books at various addresses in the Clink Liberty in this period. 'Sacramental Token Books', <https://tokenbooks.folger.edu> [accessed 6 November 2023].
[82] Orrell, 'Nutshells at the Rose'.
[83] Jeremy Boulton, 'Wage Labour in Seventeenth-Century London', *The Economic History Review,* Vol. 49/2 (May, 1996) pp. 268-290 (p.269) https://www.jstor.org/stable/2597916 [accessed 19 February 2025].
[84] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 16.
[85] ADC, Muniment 15, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* pp. 1-2; *Diary,* fol. 178^{v}, p. 246.

performance space to be licensed in accordance with the December 1574 Court of Common Council ruling.[86] By the 1590s this responsibility had passed to the Master of the Revels and in Spring 1592, Henslowe paid a regular 5s per week for a premises licence, rising to 6s 8d later in the year and to 40s (£2) per month in 1596 and 1597.[87] By 1599 the monthly licence was £3 and this figure will be used to calculate the cost in an average playing year.[88] The 1574 ruling also required 'every person so to be licensed' to pay 'to the use of the poor in hospitals of the City, or the poor of the City visited with sickness', such sum to be agreed with the Lord Mayor and Aldermen.[89] Two decades later the arrangement was with individual parishes rather than the Corporation. In April 1598 the churchwardens of St. Saviour's determined 'that he [Mr Langley], Mr Henslowe, and Jacob Meade shall be moved for money for the poor in regard of their playhouses'.[90] Described as a very liberal portion of money by the residents of Finsbury, the amount donated to parish poor relief was probably around 5s per playing week.[91] (The Southwark parish accounts 1611 to 1613 itemise the charitable giving by Henslowe's rival playhouse the Swan as £4 6s 8d, £5 3s 4d and £5 5s, suggesting that it was used for less than half the year.)[92] Even when the Rose was new, the resident carpenter would have needed a budget for his regular repairs and maintenance both for the playhouse and the adjacent drainage ditches and wharf.[93] The ditches and wharf were subject to the supervision of the Surrey and Kent Sewer Commissioners who on several occasions required Henslowe to

[86] BL, MS Lansdowne 20, in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 73—77.
[83] *Diary*, fols. 6^{v} and 23^{v}, pp. 15 and 52.
[88] *Diary,* fol. 81^{v}, p. 162.
[89] BL, MS Lansdowne 20, in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 73—77.
[90] St Saviour parish vestry meeting 1 May 1598, <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/vestry-minutes-450.html#15980000> [accessed 30 September 2024].
[91] ADC, MSS 1, article 28, in *Diary,* p. 289.
[92] Account Book of the Overseers of Paris Garden Liberty, 17 May 1608 to 30 September 1671 [BL, MS. Add.34,110] 'The Parish of St Saviour, Southwark', <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/Add-34110.html> [accessed 7 November 2023].
[93] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 16. See <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/SKCS-1.html> [accessed 30 September 2024] for details of the Sewer Commissioners Presentments requiring works by Henslowe.

clear obstructions and, when the Rose first opened, to cut back overhanging willows. He generally delayed undertaking these repairs but mended the wharf by the Rose within a speedy six months, no doubt as it was essential for access. Assuming that Henslowe managed to avoid paying the hefty fines levied by the Sewer Commissioners, an annual maintenance budget of £40 per year (separate from any capital required for larger works) would be reasonable. Thus Henslowe's costs to keep the Rose open may have been:

Owner's running costs	
Ground rent	£7
Carpenter/watchman	£26
Licences (building)	£30
Gatherers	£10
Donation to parish	£10
Repairs & maintenance	£40
	£123
Amortised capital costs	£41
Total	**£164**

Figure 2.9 Henslowe's annual running costs at the Rose Phase 2.

Of these, the ground rent (£7) and, probably, the cost of the carpenter/night watchman (£26) would have been unavoidable even when the playhouse was closed for long periods, so that he needed to spend at least £33 per year on the Rose. But in addition to these immediate and short-term costs was the less tangible long-term finance that remained tied up in the playhouse.

To build the Rose, Henslowe first acquired a twenty-year lease on the Little Rose plot in March 1585, by assignment from citizen and vintner, Robert Withens. Greg provides only extracts of the document thus appearing to show that Henslowe took over responsibility to pay £7 per year rent to the parish of St Mildred's, with no further payment, even though

Withens himself had paid £105 for the lease just five years previously.[94] However, the full assignment makes it clear that some money changed hands:

> That I the saide Roberte Withens for and Inconcideracion of a Certeyne competente somme of lawfull money of england to me in hande paide before thenseallinge hereof by Phillipp Hinchley Cittizen and Dyer.[95]

Possibly the sum paid was either too embarrassingly large (for Henslowe) or small (for Withens) to be recorded but it hampers any attempt to factor in the payment to the ongoing cost of owning the Rose. I will therefore assume that it was either negligible and can be safely ignored, or that Henslowe was happy to write it off at the time. It was more than two years before the Little Rose plot was producing income as a functioning venue so that whatever had been paid for the lease, Henslowe was still required to pay £14 in rent to St Mildred's. Following the assumption (above, p. 123) that the original building cost was around £500, Henslowe also records expenditure on major work at the Rose 1592 to 1595 totalling at least £225 (45% of the original building cost) thus the total capital expended was £739 (£500 construction cost + £14 two years rent + £225).[96] The lease which Henslowe took on had twenty years to run, until 1605, but the working life of the lease was only eighteen years (allowing for the first two years before building). Spread over the eighteen earning years of the lease, this equates to £41 per year (£739 ÷ 18 years). Based on this hypothesis Henslowe needed the Rose to earn a minimum of £164 (running costs £123 + £41) each year to make

[94] ADC, Muniment 15, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* pp. 1—2.
[95] HADP, Muniment Series 1 Group 15, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/muniments-series-1/group-015/> [accessed 30 September 2024].
[96] *Diary,* fol. 2^{v}, p. 6 and fol. 4^{r}, p. 9.

an overall profit. To put this into commercial perspective, when Henslowe recorded his annual rental income, he was receiving more than £220 annually from his tenants, so that he was jeopardising three quarters of his rental income just to keep the Rose afloat.[97] This rather stark analysis of the real annual cost of his playhouse may lie behind its demise in 1600. The £225 that Henslowe spent on the building up to 1595 suggests that substantial work was required every four or five years to keep the Rose in good condition, sufficiently attractive for audience and performers alike. It was almost certainly in need of further refurbishment by 1599 when he decided to switch his resources to building the new Fortune with Edward Alleyn for the Admiral's Men rather than upgrade a tired Rose. This is borne out by the Lord Admiral's letter to the local justices referring to the Rose at just the time that Henslowe turned his attention to the Fortune: 'the dangerous decaye of that Howse […] standeth verie noysome'.[98] Four years later, still owning the rundown theatre two years from its lease end, Henslowe declared 'I wold Rather pulledowne the playehowse' than pay the £20 rent now demanded by St Mildred's for the Little Rose plot.[99] The playhouse may already have been struggling to find both tenants and audiences but it was a straightforward commercial decision for Henslowe to walk away from it rather than pay an almost trebled rent.

[97] *Diary*, fols. 177^{v} and 178^{r}, pp. 247—49.
[98] ADC, MSS 1, article 27, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* p. 49.
[99] *Diary*, fol. 114^{v}, p. 213.

2 At the Fortune with Edward Alleyn

2.1 What was built?

In the late 1590s the Rose, despite its probably rundown condition, was sufficiently successful for Henslowe to think about expansion, and about starting the new century with a new playhouse building project. Langley's Swan playhouse, in operation from 1595, had some negative impact on the income of the Rose. This can be traced through the income recording in the Diary from before and after the opening of the Swan. That impact may have first spurred Henslowe and Alleyn to think about a new theatre in a new area. But by 1599 the Swan had ceased regular performances (for reasons unknown) and the Rose had acquired a different competitor just one hundred yards away in Southwark with the opening of the Globe.[100] Whilst Alleyn was absent from the stage, staying in the Sussex countryside, he and his father-in-law had already turned their attention to a plot of land half an hour's walk from the Rose, between Golding Lane (now Golden Street) and Whitecross Street, across the Thames in Clerkenwell. Alleyn, the prime mover in the project, leased it in December 1599 and they planned to erect a state of the art playhouse, the Fortune, on what remains today a place of recreation – Fortune Street Park.[101] The construction of the Fortune has often been seen as a riposte to the arrival of the Globe, but Cerasano argues cogently in favour of a longer term plan linked to Alleyn's temporary retirement from the stage in 1597, a view also endorsed by Vincent Landro.[102] If the long term plan for building the Fortune had indeed arisen from the threat posed by competition it was from the Swan, which had caused the

[100] William Ingram, *A London Life in the Brazen Age: Francis Langley, 1548 - 1602* (Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 205; Herbert Berry in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 438—49.
[101] Fortune Street Park today, <https://www.fortunestreetpark.com/history.php> [accessed 2 April 2020].
[102] Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn's "Retirement" 1597-1600'; Vincent Landro, 'Henslowe's Relocation to the North: Playhouse Management in Renaissance London', *Theatre Survey*, 38.2 (1997), pp. 31–47, doi:10.1017/S0040557400002064.

Rose's income to decline from 1596. Whatever the motive for this expansion of the Henslowe-Alleyn empire, the length of time required to prepare and fund it suggests considered awareness of the potential new audience in the expanding northern suburbs rather than simply a fit of pique at a new rival neighbour. Not all residents of Clerkenwell were pleased to welcome a playhouse into their neighbourhood and, almost as soon as Alleyn had completed his purchase, some were lobbying the authorities to put a stop to the plans. Lord Willoughby, Peregrine Bertie (perhaps the owner of the pawned orange satin doublet), went direct to the Privy Council to complain, resulting in a temporary halt to work in March 1600.[103] This was reversed a month later when the parishioners accepted that 'the Erectoꝛs of the saied howse, are contented to give a very liberall porcōn of money weekelie, towarde y^{e} releef our Poore'.[104] Edward Alleyn's money had talked.

Calculating the possible capacity of the new playhouse is again a puzzle and, on this occasion, lacks the Rose's helpful archaeology. Instead, the original building contract still exists, entered into by Henslowe and Alleyn, and 'Cittizen and Carpenter of London', Peter Street, who only a few months previously had overseen the construction of the rival venue, the Globe.[105] It is obvious that a desire to use Street's experience as project manager/architect of the Globe motivated his engagement, as the agreement stipulates three areas in which the Fortune is to replicate the Globe: internal divisions and stairs, proportions (but not necessarily dimensions) of the stage, and internal finishing. The new posts of the wooden frame though are to be 'lardger and bigger in assize' than the second-hand timber of the Globe.[106] Despite

[103] TNA, PC2/25, in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 538. Lord Willoughby and his pawned doublet are discussed in Chapter 1, p. 58.
[104] ADC, MSS 1, article 28, in *Diary,* p. 289.
[105] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 22.
[106] Ibid.

the similarities, in one crucial respect the Fortune was to be unique. Where the Theatre, Rose, Swan and Globe were polygonal, and the Curtain, rectangular, the Fortune was to be square: 'the frame of the saide howse to be sett square'.[107] Employing a square shape had the simple effect of increasing the proportion of more lucrative gallery seats at the expense of the cheaper yard, to the direct benefit of all concerned, owners Henslowe and Alleyn, and the Admiral's Men, led by Alleyn.

The contract is very precise in its detail. The Fortune is 'to conteine ffowerscore foote of lawfull assize everye waie square wthoute and fiftie fiue foote of like assize square everye waie wthin', i.e. a square with sides 80 ft (24.4 m) long externally, and 55 ft (16.8 m) long internally.[108] There are to be three levels of gallery of diminishing heights and the now missing surveyor's 'plot' or plan (presumably originally annexed to the agreement) by implication showed the location of the exterior stair turrets.[109] From these dimensions it is possible, applying the same principles as for the Rose, to work out a layout and approximate capacity for the Fortune.

[107] For the shape of the Curtain, <https://database.theatrestrust.org.uk/resources/theatres/show/3237-curtain-theatre> [accessed 26 October 2024]; HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 22.
[108] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 22.
[109] See Martin Brückner and Kristen Poole, 'The Plot Thickens: Surveying Manuals, Drama, and the Materiality of Narrative Form in Early Modern England', *ELH*, 69.3 (2002), pp. 617–48, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30032036> [accessed 30 September 2024] for the use of surveyors' plots.

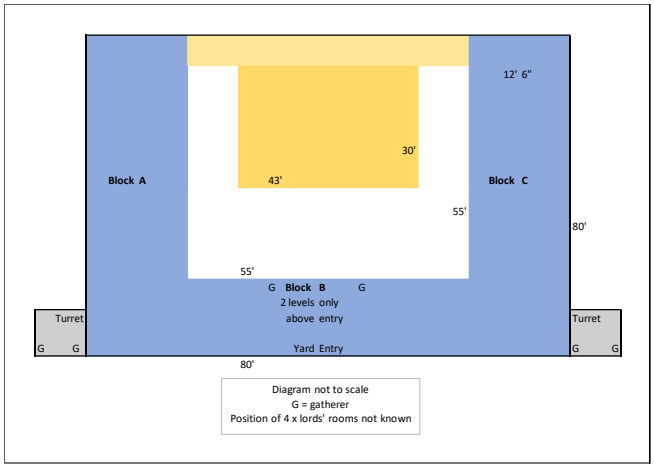


Figure 2.10 Approximate layout of audience gallery bays, the Fortune.

Figure 2.10 shows two external stair turrets, each manned by at least two gatherers, opening at each level into the three seating blocks, A, B and C. To allow for diagonal access aisles between the blocks at these corners, the usable length of each gallery level is assumed to be 48 ft (of the 55 ft total length). Gallery 1 of stage-facing block B is bisected by the entry to the yard across the width of half a dozen seats but the two upper levels run continuously. (At least two gatherers would have been required at the entry point to collect the pennies). The contract specifies that each gallery is to be 12 ft 6 in. (3.8 m) deep. Applying the royal court and Rose allowance of 18 in. for individual space, this yields capacities of 608 in each of the side blocks, A and C, with 552 in block B, the block containing the entrance. In the first two levels, the audience is accommodated across six seated rows and one standing row, but in the topmost gallery, the reduced headroom probably only permitted five rows and no standing. Altogether this gives a total of 1768 in the galleries.

Block A

Galleries	1 &2	Gallery 3
	Capacity	Capacity
Row 1	32	32
Row 2	32	32
Row 3	32	32
Row 4	32	32
Row 5	32	32
Row 6	32	0
Standing	32	0
	224	160

3 levels	608

Total	1768

Block B

	Gallery 1	Gallery 2	Gallery 3
	Capacity	Capacity	Capacity
Row 1	24	32	32
Row 2	24	32	32
Row 3	24	32	32
Row 4	24	32	32
Row 5	24	32	32
Row 6	24	32	0
Standing	24	32	0
	168	224	160

3 levels	552

Block C

Galleries	1 &2	Gallery 3
	Capacity	Capacity
Row 1	32	32
Row 2	32	32
Row 3	32	32
Row 4	32	32
Row 5	32	32
Row 6	32	0
Standing	32	0
	224	160

3 levels	608

Figure 2.11 Capacity of seating blocks, the Fortune.

Using the measurements given in the building contract, the 43 ft (13.1 m) wide stage projected into the middle of the yard, creating a central block of 1375 sq ft (127.7 sq m) with two smaller side blocks, making 1735 sq ft (161 sq m) in total. In the Dulwich College experiment quoted above, the Rose yard of 1719 sq ft held 740 people therefore using the equation (1735 sq ft ÷ [1719 sq ft ÷ 740 people]) gives a rough capacity for the yard of 747 – almost identical to that of the Rose. The Street agreement refers to 'ffower convenient divisions for gentlemens rooms' (a fourfold increase on the singular 'my lords Rome' of the Diary).[110] The location of these rooms, whether above the stage or, as Chambers, and more recently Gabriel Egan, think most likely, at the stage edge of the lowest gallery is uncertain, but they are assumed to contain a maximum of four seats each.[111] Thus the total physical capacity of the Fortune may have been 1768 galleries + 747 yard + 16 lords' room seats = 2531. Was the square shape of the Fortune merely a stylistic affectation; or a necessity dictated by the available plot of land; or had Henslowe, Alleyn and Street carefully computed the increase in capacity and, consequentially, income? Having worked on the Globe, was it

[110] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 22; *Diary,* fol. 5^{v}, p. 13.
[111] Chambers, *ES,* II, p. 531; Gabriel Egan, 'The Situation of the "Lords Room": A Revaluation', *The Review of English Studies*, 48.191 (1997), pp. 297–309, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/517599> [accessed 30 September 2024].

perhaps Street who pointed out the commercial benefit of squaring the circle (or polygon) which increased gallery space and required simpler (faster and therefore cheaper) straight, rather than angled, carpentry? Whether by accident or design, the new playhouse offered space for an additional 437 people, 21% more than the Rose, with 430 of the 437 located within the higher income-yielding galleries.

2.2 What did it cost?

The hugely detailed contract between Henslowe and Alleyn, and Peter Street, for building the Fortune, signed in January 1600, is the primary evidence we possess of the cost of building a playhouse at this time. Allied to the contract are figures in Henslowe's hand, with acquittances from Street written on its reverse; two further contemporaneous lists of expenditure in the Diary; and a later entry in Edward Alleyn's memorandum book.[112] Together, these yield plenty of figures but piecing them together to create an overall picture is by no means straightforward. The contract is very simple financially (and no doubt an example of Henslowe driving a hard bargain). It is a fixed price agreement for the sum of £440 to be paid in two instalments, at the raising of the mainframe, and on completion of the job (scheduled to be by 25 July 1600). The only exclusions for which Street is not responsible are painting, rendering and sealing. Henslowe's account on the reverse of the contract totals £345 and runs from signature of the agreement until 11 June 1600. This is barely a month after the frame had been erected and therefore could not have marked the completion of the building,

[112] HADP, Muniments Series 1 Group 22; HADP, MSS 8, fol. 6^{v} Alleyn's Memorandum Book, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-8/006-verso/> [accessed 30 September 2024]; *Diary*, fols. 97^{r} and 97^{v}, 98^{v} and 99^{r}, pp. 188—90, 191—93.

yet more than three-quarters of the budget had already been spent. Street was presumably increasingly concerned about his liability for any overspend, even though he could hardly be blamed for costs or delays arising from the month-long hiatus caused by the Privy Council's order in March.[113] The penultimate entry on this list is 4s to Street 'to pacify him' – although such a small sum is hardly likely to have achieved this aim. The Diary entries from the beginning of June to the end of the first week of August show Henslowe dining and/or breakfasting with Street on an almost daily basis, no doubt to keep him working whilst a revised arrangement was thrashed out between them. On several occasions he was accompanied by his bailiff, Gilbert East, to reinforce the message. Henslowe's remaining Diary entries demonstrate him employing his extensive credit in the form of an account of 'what we owe' to suppliers of timber.[114] The scattered figures total over £37 but many deliveries appear to be uninvoiced, certainly unpaid. The final confusing piece of the Fortune's financial jigsaw is Alleyn's later journal entry headed 'What the fortune Cost me'; 'novemb 1599' has been added retrospectively, it appears, at the same time as dates on preceding and succeeding entries.[115] Alleyn here totals everything he spent on the plot of land: the lease, the playhouse, his own property and subsequent transactions. The crucial figure here is the £520 he records 'for the building the playhow'. The heading makes it quite clear that this is his cost, not the total.

Thus we have figures of £440 (the contract price), £37 (Henslowe's scattered figures) and £520 (Alleyn's cost), leaving aside the Street hospitality treats: how are these figures to be interpreted? Herbert Berry, Susan Cerasano, Melissa Aaron and Andrew Gurr all accept

[113] TNA, PC2/25, in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 538.
[114] *Diary*, fol. 97^{r}, pp. 188—89.
[115] HADP*,* MSS 8, fol. 006^{v}.

Alleyn's £520 as the total cost but in 'Building the Fortune' John Orrell begins (although never completes) a move away from this figure.[116] In this article he produces an excellent and detailed analysis of the construction timeline from tree-felling in January to completion sometime after 2 August.[117] Orrell also identifies the many varied costs which are barely mentioned but which must have been incurred. These include skilled carvers for the satyrs, glazing for the windows, copious materials for the plaster, tiles and laths for the roof, and the ready prepared wood for interior finishing of benches, risers, flooring and paling. Despite this painstaking research, Orrell never tallies the final count for these extra items (or, indeed, for the Fortune overall) but in summary he concludes the extra costs were:

Timber for finishing (inc. *Diary* fol. 97[r])	£76 14s 6d
Roofing materials	£44 13s
Plaster materials	£76 13s 4d
Total	£198 0s 10d

This figure still excludes the additional labour costs and specialist items such as glazing, ironwork and lead for pipework as well as miscellaneous costs for which perhaps a further £100 should be allowed. Thus the total outlay could have been: £440 contract payment + £200 'Orrell's additions' + £100 omitted items, labour and miscellaneous = £740. Of this, if Alleyn indeed paid £520 per his journal, Henslowe would have paid just his £220 share of the original contract. Of course, it is highly unlikely that the final arrangements were as neat as

[116] Berry, *Playhouses*, p. 183; S. P. Cerasano, 'Theater Entrepreneurs and Theatrical Economics', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, ed. by Richard Dutton, 2011, pp. 380-95; Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn's "Retirement" 1597-1600'; Cerasano, 'Henslowe, Philip (c. 1555–1616), Theatre Financier', ODNB; Melissa D. Aaron, *Global Economics: A History of the Theater Business, the Chamberlain's/King's Men and Their Plays, 1599-1642* (University of Delaware Press; Eurospan distributor, 2005); Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage,* p. 177; John Orrell, 'Building the Fortune', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 44.2 (1993), pp. 127–44, doi:10.2307/2871135.

[117] Timber is best cut in the winter when sap is low; the Rose was, similarly, 'now in framinge' at the time of the Cholmley agreement in January 1587.

this, and Peter Street may also have borne some of the excess to compensate for an inaccurate initial estimate. The fixed price for his proportion of the build (i.e. excluding painting, plastering and sealing) should probably have been around £560: £440 (original estimate) + £77 (finishing timber) + £45 (roofing materials). He was perhaps over-optimistic following his work on the Globe just a few months earlier, making too great an allowance for the cost saving he had there from reusing the main framework timbers and for the anticipated time and cost saving of straightforward right-angled carpentry. And he may well have lost a hard-fought negotiation with Henslowe over the price.

Assuming the Fortune to have cost around £740 to build (a figure comparable with that later agreed as the likely cost of the first Globe), how was this funded?[118] Building Henslowe's second playhouse was not an impulsive action, argues Cerasano.[119] She traces Alleyn's time off stage (largely in Sussex) at the height of his fame as the period when plans were laid between him and Henslowe for their new playhouse north of the river. This is confirmed by a letter from Henslowe in the middle of this period, 4 June 1598, when he writes, 'as for ower other matter betwixt vs J haue bene wth my lord admerelle a bowte yt', i.e. the planned playhouse as well as their attempt to secure the Mastership of the Royal Game.[120] So they had a period of some thirty months in which to consolidate plans and raise the necessary cash or credit. Both of them can be described at this period as prosperous. In all likelihood Henslowe was earning something in excess of £100 annually from the Rose (see chapter 4) and had increased his property portfolio with purchases recorded in the Diary and considered in the previous chapter. Alleyn similarly was already amassing what became a

[118] Berry, *Playhouses*, pp. 221, 230.
[119] Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn's "Retirement" 1597-1600'.
[120] ADC, Alleyn Papers, MS II, article I, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* p. 97.

substantial fortune, with property holdings supplemented by his playing share of around £100 per year (until his withdrawal from acting). From the schedule of payments made to Street between January and June 1600 it appears that there was no problem for either Henslowe or Alleyn to provide hard cash for the full £440 of the contract's value. For the expenditure beyond that, Henslowe's Diary record of the timber ordered demonstrates that his usual credit arrangements with regular suppliers (such as the ironmonger at the sign of The Frying Pan) held good. Only at Northumberland Court did he have to pay in cash for wood and this, too, became unnecessary as the project progressed and his creditworthiness was accepted there also. Even though the cost of construction may have overrun significantly, careful advance planning of their cashflow (including a rather one-sided deal with Street) and reasonable liquidity allied to their perceived reliability in financial dealings meant that Henslowe and Alleyn were able to take a truly substantial building project in their joint stride.

2.3 Running the Fortune

If Henslowe's initial huge headache at the Rose had been finding tenant companies to keep the playhouse occupied, at the Fortune he had no such worries. The new playhouse was to be the home for the Admiral's Men and they remained there, under various designations as their patrons changed, until after Henslowe's death. The project was primarily Alleyn's. He had led from the start during his time away from acting and it was not until 1601 that Henslowe's ownership of one-half of the Fortune was formalised.[121] But if one substantial problem had been removed, the ever-present anxiety about plague remained. Where 1592

[121] ADC, Muniment 53, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* pp. 25—26.

and 1593 had been bad for Henslowe and theatre business, the beginning of the new century was devastating, with playhouses closed for, in aggregate, half of the first decade.[122] For a playhouse owner, this meant not just lack of income during those periods of closure, but also that unavoidable costs would still be incurred in the weeks and months without performances. Alleyn paid £240 for the original lease of the plot, which had an annual rental of £12, and was to run until 1625.[123] In 1610, he was able to purchase the freehold (and went on to acquire additional property surrounding the playhouse for his own ends) so that rent was only payable for the first ten years of the Fortune's existence.[124] But this coincided with the plague-hit decade so was the worst time to have to bear this rent cost. When the playhouse was able to open, the owners' annual total cost of running the Fortune probably amounted to around £108 for a full playing year:

Ground rent	£12	
Carpenter/watchman	£26	
Licences (building)	£30	
Gatherers	£10	
Donation to parish	£10	
Repairs & maintenance	£20	low figure to reflect new building
	£108	
Amortised capital costs	£49	
	£157	

Some of these annual costs (rent and the carpenter/night watchman), totalling £38, would still be payable even during the more than sixty months when the playhouses were closed between 1603 and 1610. The initial construction cost (£740 building + £240 lease = £980)

[122] J. Leeds Barroll, *Politics, Plague, and Shakespeare's Theater: The Stuart Years* (Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 173.
[123] HADP, MSS 8 006^{v}.
[124] ADC, Muniment 37, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* pp. 14–16.

would normally be amortised (divided) across the length of the lease but five years of the lease were unusable due to plague. Subtracting these months from the total lease length means that £49 per year needed to be amortised across whole of the remainder of the lease (to 1625). (Alleyn and Henslowe would have been uncertain, at the outset, that the freehold could be purchased.) At least in the early years of its existence, the Fortune's owners needed to earn a minimum of £157 (£108 + £49) each year for it to remain solvent.

Evidence of the financial pressure on them in the early 1600s can be seen in an undated and unexecuted agreement from 1608. This was a year when the playhouses were closed both at the start (January to March) and then from later July right the way through until 1610, with a window of playing from April 1608 to the first half of July.[125] Probably during those late spring or early summer months, when it must briefly have seemed that playing had resumed and that the worst was past, an agreement was drawn up between Henslowe and Alleyn, and Thomas Downton, one of the leading sharers of the Admiral's Men. By this, Downton was offered a one thirty-second (or, as it is described, 'one Eight parte of a ffowerth') share in the Fortune for the price of £27 10s, plus 10s annual rent, to be paid quarterly.[126] The agreement was to run for thirteen years (to 1621) and Downton was required to perform at the Fortune 'unles he shall become vnhable by reason of sicknes or any other infirmitiye', or had been granted licence by Henslowe and Alleyn to play elsewhere.[127] The agreement valued the playhouse at that time at £880 (£27 10s multiplied by 32), £140 more than the hard cost of construction but insufficient to cover the additional £240 spent on buying the original lease. The Downton agreement suggests that a quarter of the playhouse

[125] Leeds Barroll, *Politics,* p. 173.
[126] ADC, Muniment 33, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, pp. 13—14.
[127] Ibid.

was to be sold to eight sharers of the Admiral's Men who, in exchange for a stake in the real estate, would be legally bound to play only at the Fortune and to pay their proportion of costs of repairs or rebuilding. It would have been a good deal for Henslowe and Alleyn if they had pulled it off giving them an outright £220 in cash in exchange for giving up just a quarter of the shares but the scheme never came to fruition. Henslowe had, of course, employed this tactic previously, in October 1597, when he bound Downton and others to play only 'in my howsse' after the *Isle of Dogs* episode at the Swan.[128] Whether this time the deal was rejected because the players found the restrictive terms unpalatable, or simply collapsed because plague struck again and any notion of future performing became irrelevant, it is not possible to discern. The need for a substantial injection of short-term cash could easily have arisen from the highly disruptive period of plague closures. But this was also the time when Henslowe and Alleyn were consolidating their position as Masters of the Royal Game and may therefore have been looking to make the management of the Fortune more straightforward. With the nucleus of a permanent company whose individual members had a vested interest in keeping the playhouse successful, they would have been free to concentrate instead on their newest joint venture. It is also, of course, tempting to think they may have been looking at the success of the King's Men's playhouse ownership structure and wondering if it could be replicated to their own advantage. However, copying the King's Men was not the direction in which Henslowe's playhouse operation would proceed.

[128] *Diary,* fol. 232^{r}, p. 240.

3 At the Hope with Jacob Meade

3.1 What was built and what did it cost?

Once the Fortune was running smoothly under Alleyn's oversight, and with the old Rose no longer in use, Henslowe turned his attention, again, to playhouse innovation. This time, his target was the Bear Garden, which he and Alleyn jointly operated as a baiting arena and which he had bought outright from Alleyn in February 1611 for £580.[129] This price was more than double what Alleyn had paid in 1594, presumably reflecting the increased value of the Bear Garden as a successful operation. The building itself, however, must have been tired and in a state of disrepair after many years as a baiting arena, and therefore ripe for redevelopment as a multi-purpose space. By 1611, Alleyn was preoccupied with acquiring land and leases in Dulwich in preparation for his charitable foundation there so that Henslowe needed a new partner. His choice was Jacob Meade, a reasonably well-off waterman who had been Keeper of the Bears at the Bear Garden since Henslowe's own service as Deputy Master in 1599. Meade was also one of those named by the vestry, along with Francis Langley and Henslowe, in 1598, 'to be moved for money in regard of their playhouses', so that his connection with the Bear Garden preceded 1599.[130] (Callan Davies has recently argued for the same 'playhouse-ness' of the earlier Bear Garden here evidenced in the vestry minutes.)[131] No agreement remains to cast light on the contractual relationship between Henslowe and Meade but all other documents relating to the construction and operation of the Hope/Bear

[129] HADP, MSS 8, fol. 005^{v}, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-8/005-verso/> [accessed 30 September 2024]. Alleyn may have needed the cash from what, until then, had been his sole asset, to fund his ongoing dispute with Sir Francis Calton.
[130] St Saviour vestry meeting 1 May 1598.
[131] Callan Davies, *What Is a Playhouse?: England at Play, 1520-1620.* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2022), p. 57.

Garden are very usefully reviewed by MacLean in the latest REED records.[132] Meade was the day-to-day manager of the premises, so that the proposal to co-venture with Henslowe must have appeared a logical step once the plan was outlined. This was to rebuild the old animal baiting arena as a dual-purpose playhouse and baiting arena, perhaps harking back to his original intention at the Rose nearly thirty years before. The plan was undoubtedly given impetus by the destruction of the Globe by fire on 29 June 1613 as, exactly two months later, Henslowe and Meade contracted with a carpenter to reconstruct the Bear Garden.[133] Their intention was that it should be in operation before the Globe could be rebuilt.

The obvious choice of carpenter was Peter Street, who built the Fortune and then Edward Alleyn's house (otherwise the gatehouse to the Bear Garden) but by this time both he and John Griggs, the builder of the Rose, were dead.[134] Southwark carpenter Gilbert Katherens was therefore contracted. His task was to demolish the old Bear Garden and adjacent stabling and to erect in its place a 'Plaiehouse […] bothe for players to playe Jn, And for the game of Beares and Bulls to be bayted', all to be completed in just three months by 30 November 1613.[135] For this, Katherens was to be paid £360: £60 on signature of the agreement; £100 for his labourers' wages; £100 when the basic structure was standing; £100 'when the saide Plaie house, Bull house and stable are fullie finished builded and done'.[136] After the budget overruns of the Fortune, there were no exceptions in his contract like those in Street's. He was required to 'fynde and paie for at his like proper costes and charges for all

[132] Sally-Beth MacLean, 'History of Entertainment', *REED Online*, Bear Gardens/Hope Playhouse, edited by Stephanie Hovland and Sally-Beth MacLean, https://ereed.org/collections/bghop/entertainment/ [accessed 20 February 2025].
[133] ADC, Muniment 49, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* pp. 19—22.
[134] Mary Edmond, 'Peter Street, 1553–1609: Builder of Playhouses', in *Shakespeare Survey*, ed. by Stanley Wells (Cambridge University Press, 1992), XLV, 101–14; Mary Edmond, 'The Builder of the Rose Theatre'.
[135] ADC, Muniment 49, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers*.
[136] Ibid.

the lyme, heare, sande, Brickes, tyles, lathes nayles, workemanshipe and all other things needfull and necessarie for the full finishing'.[137] At a cost of £80, Katherens sub-contracted a bricklayer, John Browne, to undertake the brickwork foundation 'of as large a compasse and height as the plaie howse called the Swan'.[138] The contracted figure of £360 was therefore extremely challenging, with nearly a quarter of the budget to be spent just on the foundations and low supporting wall, but Katherens was given one advantage. He was permitted to reuse any of the dismantled timber and was also given access to 'suche olde tymber which […] Henslow hathe latelie bought beinge of an old house in Thames street'.[139]

The model for the Hope (as the old Bear Garden was renamed) was to be the Swan, with several references to its size and height but, beyond those details, we know little of how the new venue looked, whether more like a baiting arena or more like a playhouse. The contract requires an unusual substitution for a permanent playing space: 'a stage to be carryed or taken awaie, and to stande vppon tressells good substanciall and sufficient', in lieu of a fixed stage, with the heavens 'over the saide stage to be borne or carryed wthout any postes or supporters'.[140] It is easy to see the commercial appeal of a dual use building to Henslowe and Meade but it must have presented Katherens with difficulties. He was required to fashion something 'substanciall and sufficient' yet that could easily be dismantled, unlike the temporary stage erected at Trinity College, Cambridge for plays. This construction featured frequently in the college accounts, costing more than £6 in labour and transport

[137] Ibid.
[138] ADC, Muniment 51 in George F. Warner, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts and Muniments of Alleyn's College of God's Gift at Dulwich* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1881), p. 241 <http://archive.org/details/cu31924029605106> [accessed 7 November 2023].
[139] ADC, Muniment 49, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers*.
[140] Ibid.

whenever it was required.[141] This was a (possibly weekly) expense which Henslowe and Meade would never have countenanced.[142]

Frustratingly, because the model for the Hope was the Swan, a playhouse for which neither archaeology nor building contract survives, it is not possible to recreate the capacity of the Hope in the same way as for the Rose and the Fortune, even despite the recent addition of the REED online records of the Bear Gardens/Hope Playhouse.[143] All that can be inferred is that it may have held around two and a half thousand people in its playhouse format, with the conventional three galleries and a yard. When reconfigured for baiting, the capacity must have been reduced by the number in the yard, perhaps six or seven hundred, but possibly also by the top gallery being little used. A play could be enjoyed from the upper level if it could be heard, but to 'enjoy' baiting meant being able to see the action, ideally in close proximity. The annual cost to Henslowe and Meade to keep it open as a playhouse was around £100 (staffing, licences, donations to the parish poor, and repairs budget) but no doubt the true cost for its dual use was very different and impossible to estimate. No further evidence is extant about the cost of constructing the baiting arena-cum-playhouse but, with its recycled timber and demountable stage, the Hope was certainly the most extraordinary of Henslowe's trio of amphitheatres. Regular playing scarcely outlasted Henslowe himself but the Hope continued as a popular baiting arena, was probably demolished during the Commonwealth, and rebuilt at the Restoration.[144] Yet, for Henslowe, with the earlier purchases of the Bear

[141] Alan H. Nelson, *Cambridge 1: The Records - Records of Early English Drama*, University of Toronto Press. <http://archive.org/details/cambridgeREED01nelsuoft> [accessed 8 December 2020].
[142] The contract between Henslowe and Meade, and player Robert Dawes, provides for use of the Hope on Mondays for animal baiting. Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, Appendix I, article 2, pp. 123—25.
[143] Bear Gardens/Hope Playhouse, edited by Stephanie Hovland and Sally-Beth MacLean, *REED online*, https://ereed.org/collections/bghop/ [accessed 22 February 2025].
[144] Berry in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 597.

Garden (for £580), and the old timber for reuse added to Katheren's fee of £360, at £940 it was disproportionately expensive.

4 Henslowe in company

Each of Henslowe's playhouses stood on a valuable parcel of real estate and represented a substantial investment on which he needed to make a financial return. He operated these playhouses across a period of twenty-eight years, many of them seriously disrupted by official closure due to plague or instruction from the Privy Council or local magistrates. This lack of continuity would have made it difficult to plan and run a business even if he had been in control of all elements of the operation, but he was only ever providing the venue (and sometimes the finance) for the end product: the plays on the stage. Critically, he first needed to find tenants and then maintain sufficiently good relations so that they wanted to stay. Bernard Beckerman divides Henslowe's career as playhouse landlord into four: the first ten years at the Rose until Alleyn's temporary withdrawal in 1597; from 1598 until around 1603 working with the Admiral's Men and Worcester's Men at the Rose and Fortune, when any regular financial recording stopped; the 'Bear Garden' period when his emphasis was on bears rather than plays; and his final sortie, with Lady Elizabeth's Men at the Hope.[145]

So little is known of the companies at the Rose before 1592 (see above, pp. 122—24) that it is impossible to deduce anything of Henslowe's dealings with them except to note that there must have been multiple relationships to nurture in order to keep the playhouse afloat. This period probably also saw many dark weeks without performances as a result of arrangements falling through or, simply, when no company was available to bridge a gap. Equally elusive is Beckerman's characterisation of the 'Bear Garden years', when the Rose was out of use (possibly demolished); Alleyn was running the later iterations of the Admiral's Men at the Fortune; and Henslowe seems to have had no playhouse to rent out. It seems to

[145] Beckerman, *Theatrical Manager,* p. 28.

me, therefore, that there are three phases to Henslowe's working relationships with his tenants to consider: 1592 to 1597, acting as landlord at the Rose; Beckerman's period 1598 to around 1603, as he morphed into banker of both the Admiral's and Worcester's Men at the Rose and Fortune; and the final few years at the Hope. I should stress that I am considering the nature of Henslowe's relationship with the players rather than examining the minutiae of their financial dealings: others have already explored these transactions thoroughly.[146]

The two principal company relationships were the longstanding association with the Admiral's Men and, latterly, the brief but troubled time with Lady Elizabeth's Men. Andrew Gurr characterises Henslowe's dealings with the Admiral's Men as 'fair, scrupulous and never noticeably exploitative'; whereas 'exploitative' is the word he applies to those with Lady Elizabeth's Men.[147] Very broadly, Henslowe's dealings with these two companies might best be described as moving from informal and respectful to more legalistic and mistrustful. These are not binary opposites, however, and the troubled relationship with Lady Elizabeth's Men at the end of his life sheds light on practices with the Admiral's Men two decades earlier.

'Nowhere is the process of analysis more delicate than when applied to questions of theatrical management. For on many important matters […] the diary is ambiguous or silent'.[148] Carson is correct in asserting the Diary's ambiguity or silence on so many topics of great interest but there is something to be gained by an approach to its contents that is less delicate and more focused on statistics and chronology in order to, at least partially, understand Henslowe's relationships with the playing companies. 35% of the leaves in the

[146] For examples see, Carson, *Companion*; Greg, *Commentary;* Neil Carson, 'Production Finance at the Rose Theatre, 1596–98'*, Theatre Research International,* 4.3 (1979), pp. 172–83, doi:10.1017/S0307883300001929*;* Gurr*, Shakespeare's Opposites;* Roslyn L. Knutson, 'Henslowe's Diary and the Economics of Play Revision for Revival, 1592–1603*', Theatre Research International,* 10.1 (1985), pp. 1–18, doi:10.1017/S0307883300010452.
[147] Gurr, *Opposites*, pp. 88—89.
[148] Carson, *Companion,* p. 31.

Diary contain information about Henslowe's relationship with the Admiral's Men or Worcester's Men; 11% detail dealings with individual players, the Revels office, or other transactions that might be termed playhouse-adjacent; 9% record income taken at the playhouse, mostly at the Rose with a few references to the Fortune and a single one to the Bear Garden; while a further 9% record expenditure on his playhouse buildings. In total, very nearly two-thirds of the Diary are focused on Henslowe's playhouse life and, although its chronology is often difficult to disentangle, when the leaves are sorted into date order (as far as is possible), his evolving relationship with the players is easily traced.

4.1 1592 – 1597 at the Rose

Carson poses the question, 'was the landlord […] involved in the day-to-day business of the theatre […] Or was he simply a property owner, whose major interest was in collecting rent?'[149] Certainly, in the first phase of the Diary's chronology, from 1592 to 1597, Henslowe was a landlord, but a landlord with nearly five years' experience of running his playhouse. He was no longer the novice he had been when signing the agreement with Cholmley. The Diary's initial playhouse records are of the remodelling of 1591/2 and the residencies of Strange's, the Queen's, Sussex's and, only then, the Admiral's Men. These are the records of an owner, noting his expenditure on the building and then the income he derived from it. It was not until 1594 and the arrival of the Admiral's Men on a more settled footing that the first entry noting an evolving association was made. On folio 236, Henslowe tallied his modest personal expenditure on the company that year. This information sits amongst details of Henslowe's

[149] Carson, *Companion,* p. 31.

and Alleyn's accounts with each other, suggesting that the company was primarily Alleyn's enterprise, which Henslowe was merely assisting. He records going to Somerset House, where Lord Hunsdon lived, on four occasions in the year. Was this perhaps to press the case for the Admiral's Men being permitted to share the Lord (Hunsdon's) Chamberlain's Men's season at Newington Butts following the floods of April? Or could the reference to 'mackinge of o^{r} leater twise' be to a letter confirming the Rose as the company's regular home?[150] The same entry also notes 'goinge vp & downe to corte twise', where, on 28 December, the Admiral's Men performed at Greenwich.[151] No doubt Henslowe, already a Groom of Her Majesty's Chamber, was in attendance, keen to demonstrate his new theatrical alliance.

Where the first years of the Diary, 1592 to 1594, show fewer entries related to Henslowe's playhouse business and more to his non-theatrical endeavours (including pawnbroking) and family affairs, in 1595 and 1596 the range of entries is more evenly spread. Here there are records of his playhouse income, of loans to individual players, as well as his initial expenditure on property that would become part of the Bear Garden development. Family and other diverse matters continue to be represented but, by 1596, he began to make loans to the company collectively, via Alleyn.[152] On the same leaf he also recorded almost daily repayments by Alleyn of this company debt, suggesting that these were being made from the company's share of box office income. The following year evidence begins to appear of a transition to a more proactive relationship with the Admiral's Men. Henslowe's income from the Rose continues to be noted but in a format that changed on 24 January (folio 26^{r}) for no

[150] *Diary*, fol. 236^{r}, p. 234.
[151] Ibid.; Malone Society, *Collections. Vol.6, Dramatic Records in the Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber, 1558-1642*, Malone Society Collections, 1961 (University Press for the Malone Society, 1962), pp. 28–29.
[152] *Diary*, fol. 71^{v}, p. 139.

obvious reason. This change suggests that different and/or additional information was now required from the figures.

1597 also marked an evolution in the operation of the Admiral's Men at the Rose. They had suffered the depletion of their numbers when some of the company defected to Langley's Swan early in the year so that Henslowe contractually bound those returning to the Rose during the latter part of the year after the enforced closure of the Swan. This must have been with the agreement of Edward Alleyn, perhaps even at his prompting, as he witnessed six such contracts between August and October. Once the new relationship between Henslowe and his tenant company was established, the company dynamic changed still further. Alleyn was now free to step back from performances, move to the country, invest time and energy in trying to secure the Mastership of the Royal Game, and to begin planning the Fortune. The period Autumn 1597 to the opening of the Fortune in mid-1600 has been described as Alleyn's temporary retirement from the Admiral's Men (as well as from the stage), although Cerasano more accurately identifies it as 'Retirement', to indicate that he remained physically close to the company and playhouse for at least a portion of the next two and a half years.[153]

4.2 1598 – 1603 at the Rose and Fortune

Henslowe now commenced recording cash advances to individual sharers for specific purchases and/or play commissions. He noted expenses from 29 December 1597 as made 'sence my sonne edward allen leaft [p]laynge', confirming that Alleyn had ceased performing by this time.[154] On 18 December he 'Bowght my boye Jeames brystow', as an apprentice for

[153] Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn's "Retirement" 1597-1600'.
[154] *Diary,* fol. 43^{r}, p. 83.

the company, presumably using his status as citizen and dyer.[155] The new accounting of advances to the players has the appearance of a planned handover of cash management from Alleyn to Henslowe. Where Alleyn had a leading voice in company decisions, Henslowe generally acted solely as the players' banker, neither participating in their discussions nor taking responsibility for their financial actions. He kept a tally of their debts to him and noted in some detail the purpose of every advance he made. It is through this detailed record that we have the wealth of information about plays bought and/or newly commissioned, the costs of production and the timescale of the production process. After nine months of making loans to the company, Henslowe imposed a new rent deal on the sharers as, from 29 July 1598, he began to 'Receue the whole gallereys', i.e. additionally took the 50% gallery income that had previously been the company's, towards reducing their debt.[156] He subsequently entered weekly takings on this basis (in what appears to be one retrospective session) for over a year, until October 1599, with breaks for the first four weeks of Lent and for eighteen weeks across the summer. By this means he recovered £358 of their debt to him. He continued to keep track of the company's account and allowed a substantial level of debt to build up. When the final Rose reckoning was done, before the move to the Fortune in mid-1600, eleven company members acknowledged a total obligation of £300.[157] (The leaf is undated but sits between two that are dated July and August 1600.) During this period he also began to pay the Master of the Revels for play licensing, previously the company's responsibility. His moves to enforce repayment of advances to the sharers by taking a proportion of their playhouse income, and direct involvement in paying to licence new plays, demonstrate a shift in relationship with the players. Permitting their debt to grow (or, at least, not reduce) suggests that relations with

[155] *Diary,* fol. 232^{r}, p. 241.
[156] *Diary,* fol. 48^{r}, p. 94.
[157] *Diary,* fol. 70^{r}, p. 136.

the Admiral's Men were not confrontational in any way and that owner and players had become de facto joint venturers in the enterprise.

The change of Henslowe's tone from landlord to quasi-partner is nowhere more keenly seen than in his letter to Alleyn on 26 September 1598, reporting the death of Gabriel Spencer: 'yt is for me harde & heavy […] *I haue lost* one of *my* company w^{ch} hurteth *me* greatley' and he turns to Alleyn, the former company leader, for advice, 'I wold fayne haue alittell of you^{r} cownsell yf I cowld'.[158] The emphasis is mine – Henslowe now regarded the Admiral's Men as his own company when to Alleyn he might more appropriately have referred to 'our' company, as he sought Alleyn's guidance about Spencer's replacement. The lines were becoming blurred between playhouse owner and company finance director but the Admiral's/Prince's Men were never moved to complain in the same way as the later company, Lady Elizabeth's Men. This suggests that although their own relationship with Henslowe may have been born out of necessity, it remained respectful on both sides.

Once the Fortune opened in 1600, Alleyn became fully involved with the Admiral's Men again, reprising some of his most celebrated roles, such as in *Doctor Faustus* and *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, and also taking back some of the administrative work of the company, for example, once again receiving payments for court performances. Henslowe continued to advance cash for plays and production costs, but he ceased to record income and therefore, it must be assumed, ceased to have such a close financial relationship with the company. His attention turned instead to finding tenants for the vacant Rose after just two recorded performances by Pembroke's Men in October 1600. By 1602 he had secured the residence of Worcester's Men and appears to have operated with them as he did with the

[158] ADC, MSS1, article 24, *Diary,* pp. 285—86.

Admiral's Men, making and recording loans for specific purchases at the behest of named sharers. From around this time in the first decade of the century, Henslowe no longer entered much detail in the Diary. His day-to-day focus moved away from the playhouse to the Bear Garden and other ventures.

4.3 1613 – 1615 at the Hope

Henslowe's playhouse life remains largely silent until 1613, when he and Jacob Meade hired Gilbert Katherens to rebuild the old Bear Garden as the Hope, and at around that time also contracted with Nathan Field to bring a company to the new venue. The lower portion of the Field document is badly damaged and much else is barely legible but what can be discerned illustrates Henslowe codifying, with a new group of players, some of the features of his informal relationship with the Admiral's Men ten years earlier.[159] It reads as a fair arrangement between parties who did not yet know each other and for whom trust was therefore not a given:

- Henslowe and Meade undertake to provide at their own cost 'a sufficient howse or howses for the saide Company to play in' 'during the space of Three yeares'; (the Admiral's Men never appear to have had the advantage of a fixed contract term for their residencies at either the Rose or the Fortune, the relationship via Alleyn being deemed sufficient guarantee, no doubt);
- Henslowe and Mead agree to make advance payments for production and commissioning expenses to four or five sharers of their choosing; (dealings with the Admiral's Men were similarly conducted via a handful of sharers but seemingly without formal appointment);

[159] ADC, Muniment 52, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, pp. 23—25.

- Henslowe and Mead are to receive the income from the second or third performance of a play towards the costs they incur; (this appears to be a new development in the allocation of income);
- the company is to have the use of Henslowe's personal costume stock both in London and on tour; (Henslowe's pawnbroking records suggest that some unredeemed pledged items may have been transferred to theatrical stock, a practice which may have continued beyond the timespan of his written record);
- Henslowe and Mead agree to remove any troublesome company member if a majority of the company so desires; (no doubt a clause inserted at Field's request with the aim of shifting responsibility but there is no evidence of Henslowe acting in this way at the Rose);
- Henslowe and Mead will pay over any fines received for absence from rehearsals promptly to the company; (fining company members may have been an internal matter for the Admiral's Men but as Henslowe now contracted individuals, he took responsibility for their discipline);
- Henslowe and Mead will provide nightly accounting of income, although there is no mention of actually paying over the company's share; (this echoes the daily accounting required in the Cholmley agreement of 1587 and was no doubt standard practice).

Complementing this document is a contract between Henslowe and Mead, and Robert Dawes, dated 7 April 1614.[160] It is no longer in existence but, as transcribed by Boswell, it was clearly written in preparation for the opening of the new playhouse. It is less even-handed than the Field agreement:

- Dawes is hired for three years to play as and where Henslowe and Meade require 'at the rate of one whole Share accordinge to the custome of players';
- he is to attend all rehearsals, which will be notified to him at least the night preceding;

[160] Greg, *Henslowe Papers*, Appendix I, article 2, pp. 123—25.

- he will pay a fine of 12d (1s) for late attendance at rehearsal or 2s for non-attendance;
- he will be fined 3s if late for performance;
- he will be fined 10s if four company members determine that he is drunk at a performance;
- he will be fined 20s (£1) for each performance missed without permission, unless sick;
- he will pay a fine of £40 for wearing any costume outside the playhouse; for removing company property from the playhouse; or for knowing about others going out in costume;
- Henslowe and Mead have the right to take a share of his income towards the value of company stock they have provided and towards reducing the company debt;
- Henslowe and Mead have the right to use the Hope one day in four for their own purposes and on Mondays for animal baiting, and to retain all income arising from this.

The fines enshrined in the contract were, in all probability, industry-standard internal company management but became a disciplinary matter with the advent of what is, effectively, a contract of employment. They may appear severe, particularly £40 for the removal of costume items from the building, but the principle of fines for tardiness, drunkenness, and absence remained in performers' agreements until the late twentieth century. Pro rata deduction of salary for absence from rehearsal or performance, without agreement or good cause, still applies.[161] Taken together, the Field and Dawes agreements

[161] West End performers' contracts are still made for a fixed term, with a maximum of 65 weeks, i.e. one year plus rehearsal and preview period (clause 7), and notice of calls may still be given for the following day (clause 2.14.4). Performers' salary may be deducted for absence: '11.1 If the Artist is absent for reasons of the Artist's own neglect or default for any part of the working day, the Manager may deduct one hour pro-rata from the Artist's Salary for each hour or part thereof missed by the Artist.' *The Agreement for West End Theatre Artists (including Performers, Stage Management, Booth Singers and Supernumeraries) between Society of London Theatre and Equity*, from April 2019. My thanks to Jeffrey Brady, Senior General Manager and Head of Touring, Trafalgar Theatre Productions, for this information, by email 29 September 2024.

show Henslowe (with Mead) preparing to operate as owner-manager, managing non-artistic elements of the company's business through nominated company sharers. Attempting to straddle both sides of the commercial and personnel divide was always going to be fraught with difficulty. The extent of this difficulty can be read in the Articles of Grievance and Oppression produced in 1615 by Lady Elizabeth's Men.[162]

The Articles, probably produced in late 1615 just a few months before Henslowe's death, form a grim litany of fifteen unanswered complaints about his despotic management style and financial duplicity. They demonstrate a complete breakdown of trust between the parties. The fact that there is no rebuttal leads Carson to remark, 'It would be naïve, therefore, to take them at face value or to ignore the possibility that the players overstated their case'.[163] He goes on to suggest that, as following Henslowe's death, the players agreed to pay Alleyn £200 of the £400 claimed by Henslowe, 'there was some right on the landlord's side'.[164] Nevertheless, the behaviour described by the players differs vastly from what can be read of Henslowe's style and attitude during the previous two decades. He stands accused of (amongst many misdemeanours) sequestering costume stock and playbooks; of selling costumes; of intermingling personal and private debts; of having more gatherers than his due (and therefore retaining a greater share of income); of failing to compensate the company at the agreed rate for days of non-performance due to baiting; of forcing players (such as Dawes, but also the hired men) to enter into financial bonds, thereby enabling him to 'break' the company by taking them away from Lady Elizabeth's Men. There is almost certainly truth in many of these claims but the very existence of the Articles points to an unhappy period at the

[162] ADC, MSS 1, article 106, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* p. 85.
[163] Carson, *Companion,* p. 32.
[164] Ibid.

Hope (perhaps unsurprisingly, given that actors and audience were sharing the premises with bulls and bears). A successful season would almost certainly never have generated two such densely written sides of complaint.

Conclusion

This chapter has followed the course of Henslowe's career across three decades, as a builder and operator of playhouses, inexperienced with the Rose and ending as a major force in the theatre industry, at odds with the company/ies he tried to control. The narrative is familiar but, aided by reports of the archaeology of the Rose and by the survival of building contracts for the Fortune and the Hope, it has been possible to create a new, commercially based interpretation of Henslowe's playhouse career.

Henslowe's inexperience in the early years of the Rose illustrates the mistakes of a novice to the theatre industry. The playhouse was too small and, with an uncovered stage, not ideal for the players, thus requiring extensive remodelling after four years; and the agreement with Cholmley (whatever its original intention) was unworkable, ignoring the share of income to the players. The subsequent construction of the Fortune suggests not only that Henslowe had learnt from his Rose mistakes but also that he was responding to an increasingly congested and competitive entertainment area in Southwark.[165] The effect of the arrival of the Swan can be seen in his income recording and probably led to the choice of location of the Fortune in the expanding northern suburbs.[166] There is no doubt that the layout of the Fortune, with its much greater gallery capacity, was very advantageous to the owners but whether this was by design, or was forced by the dimensions of the plot, is not known. If it was by choice, then Henslowe had learnt this lesson well as the Fortune was almost certainly the most financially successful of his playhouse projects.

[165] MacLean and Hovland, History of the Properties, Bear Garden collections, *REED online*, https://ereed.org/collections/bghop/properties/ [accessed 22 February 2025].
[166] Landro, 'Relocation'.

After the Globe fire of 1613, the King's Men rebuilt their playhouse at considerable expense when they already had a potential replacement available, the Blackfriars. Henslowe exhibited no such loyalty to his own original building. The move away from the Rose was a straightforward commercial decision: at a vastly increased ground rent, the plot on which it stood was no longer worth the money and the playhouse was abandoned. The decisions to build the the Fortune and the abandonment of the Rose were commercially astute, and yet Henslowe overreached himself with the conversion of the Bear Garden into the dual-purpose Hope by prioritising income generation over the needs of performers and audiences.

This miscalculation on his part illustrates the importance to any playhouse owner of productive relationships with the companies occupying the building. By building the Rose speculatively, Henslowe needed to establish and maintain these relationships. It is impossible to know how difficult this was for him or long it took but, by the mid-1590s, he and his tenant companies (principally the Admiral's Men) had evolved a modus operandi. This may have been achieved largely through Alleyn's mediation; it is noticeable that when Alleyn was not involved, at the Hope, the relationship between owner and players broke down completely.

The account of Henslowe's career in this chapter illustrates at several points the skills required by any playhouse operator. He exhibited an entrepreneurial leap of faith in seemingly building the Rose speculatively. It was a bold decision and for a decade it paid off. However, the need to adapt it after only four years suggests he had not properly considered what those using it might require. He was responsive to the commercial pressure of competitors, and to a developing market elsewhere, leading to the profitable construction of the Fortune. He was prepared to abandon the Rose when it was no longer viable and to switch his attention to the new playhouse. An aspiring playhouse owner could learn from all these

actions but he or she might be unwise to employ Henslowe's techniques of personnel management.

Chapter 3: John Heminges - 'business manager' of the King's Men

Introduction

Chapter 1 demonstrated that almost every aspect of John Heminges's life, whether family, financial, or social, evolved from, or revolved around, the playhouse. This chapter turns its attention to his long service with the King's Men, from the age of twenty-seven in 1594 until his death at sixty-three in 1630. By exploring the breadth of his activities, the first half of the chapter offers a perspective on commercial playhouse management through the lens of a single career. This introduction reviews the limited scholarship that Heminges has attracted; seeks to define the vague term 'business manager' so often applied to him; defines other functions found within the playhouse; and briefly surveys Heminges's career with the King's Men.

Part One opens with a short survey (1) outlining what little is known of Heminges as a performer. Section 2 goes on to delineate the responsibilities he would have undertaken as a sharer in the King's Men, not yet a co-owner of either the Globe or Blackfriars. These responsibilities are broadly identified as either financial (budgeting, record keeping, day to day cash management, and receiving payments for court performances) or concerned with succession planning through the apprentice system. Heminges's individual apprentices were discussed in Chapter 1; here, the focus is on their training, its length and method. The section ends by tracking apprentice dates on to events in Heminges's life and career. Section 3 charts Heminges's move into the position of housekeeper (or co-owner) of, first, the Globe, and then Blackfriars, with the new benefits and issues that this brought.

The second half of the chapter focuses on the two (or three) playhouses of the King's Men: the first Globe (1599 to 1613), the second Globe (1614 onwards) and the second Blackfriars (from 1609). Although both the Globe and Blackfriars continued in use until the closing of the theatres in 1642, the end date for this review is the death of John Heminges, in 1630. Section 4 considers what can be deduced about the physical playhouses before questioning what each might have cost to build and how that expense was funded. Information for the Globe comes from archaeology, and by comparison with the Fortune building contract (discussed in Chapter 2, p. 136), and for the Blackfriars from details provided in that ever-useful source, litigation. The next section (5) aims to establish the operating costs of each playhouse, for both the co-owners (housekeepers) and company sharers. It concludes by drawing together the cost of the joint Globe and Blackfriars operation for the company sharers of the King's Men, in the light of the later evidence of the Sharers' papers. The final section of the chapter (6) examines the issue of ancillary sales, food and drink, within the playhouse, with particular reference to the role John Heminges almost certainly played in this area.

Despite both his thirty-six year association with the company and his acknowledged position as one of its leaders, Heminges's name was historically only found in books and journal articles about the King's Men in relation either to well-documented legal arrangements (for example, disputes concerning share ownership) or as part of a companywide analysis of the allocation of roles in original Shakespeare productions.[1] More

[1] E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage,* II, (Clarendon Press, 1923), pp. 320—23; Edwin Nungezer, *A Dictionary of Actors and of Other Persons Associated with the Public Representation of Plays in England before 1642* (Yale University Press, 1929), pp. 179—86; T.W. Baldwin, *The Organization and Personnel of the Shakespearean Company* (Princeton University Press, 1927), pp. 403—405; T. J. King, *Casting Shakespeare's Plays: London Actors and Their Roles, 1590-1642* (Cambridge University Press, 1992); Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 230.

recent authors, such as Roslyn Knutson (2001), Andrew Gurr (2004), Paul Edmundson (2015) and David Kathman (2016) have provided fuller documentary details of his professional life; these are complemented by the volumes in celebration of the quatercentenary of the First Folio by Emma Smith (2015 and 2016) and Chris Laoutaris (2023); and Gabriel Egan (2001) raised the issue of Heminges and the presumed tap-house at the Globe.[2]

'Business manager' is the term most frequently employed to describe John Heminges in a playhouse context but this often masks a confusion between his roles as sharer within the playing company and as housekeeper owning a share (later shares) in the physical property of the playhouses. This confusion is unsurprising as one individual could have more than one function (see glossary, p. xiv). The ODNB entry on John Heminges refers to his work as a sharer: 'he seems always to have been mainly on the management side'.[3] Gurr attributes some of the success of the King's Men to 'the patent honesty of the man who did their paperwork, John Heminges', where the paperwork in question relates to his position as housekeeper of the Globe and the Blackfriars, rather than as company sharer.[4] The label 'business manager' is, today, largely meaningless commercially and to appreciate the

[2] Roslyn Lander Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time,* (Cambridge University Press, 2001); Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company*; Paul Edmondson, 'His Editors John Heminges and Henry Condell', in *The Shakespeare Circle*, ed. by Paul Edmondson and Stanley Wells (Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 315–28; David Kathman, 'John Heminges and Henry Condell', in *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare*, ed. by Bruce R. Smith (Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 923–27; Emma Smith, *The Making of Shakespeare's First Folio* (Bodleian Library, 2015); Emma Smith, *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's First Folio* (Cambridge University Press, 2016); Chris Laoutaris, *Shakespeare's Book: The Intertwined Lives behind the First Folio* (Collins, 2023); Gabriel Egan, 'John Heminges's Tap-House at the Globe', *Theatre Notebook*, 55.2 (2001), pp. 72–77.

[3] Except when referring to the Lord Chamberlain's Men at a specific point in their existence, 'the King's Men' will be used throughout to identify the company John Heminges joined in 1594; for example, Nungezer, *Dictionary,* p. 181; Mary Edmond, 'Heminges, John (Bap. 1566, d. 1630), Editor of Shakespeare's First Folio', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/12890.

[4] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574 - 1642*, 4th edn (Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 74.

distinction between the functions Heminges carried out as both sharer and housekeeper it may be helpful to define them in modern terms. As company sharer, Heminges's position might now be seen to parallel that of an Executive Director within an arts organisation working alongside an Artistic Director (leading performer, Richard Burbage?). As housekeeper, he operated akin to a Chief Operating Officer (COO), enabling strategic corporate decisions to be carried forward, whilst Cuthbert Burbage, who with his brother jointly owned 50% of each playhouse, acted as Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/Chair taking the lead in, for example, legal matters.

In his role as company sharer, Heminges's responsibilities are broadly grouped as financial and administrative, including liaison as the public face of the company with the Master of the Revels and at court; and as related to succession planning and training through apprenticeship. In 1598/99 the Burbages sought to raise capital to move the Theatre to its new site in Southwark by inviting (or perhaps pressuring – it is impossible to know how this potentially risky offer was phrased) five of the company sharers to join them as co-owners by purchasing a notional share in the Globe. Heminges was one of those sharers who agreed, becoming a housekeeper in the reconstituted building. At this point his portfolio of responsibilities increased. He firstly corrected a legal issue that arose from inaccurate drafting of the lease and took on responsibility for the administration of the player-housekeeper group. On behalf of all the housekeepers, he was responsible for project management, the biggest undertaking being the rebuilding of the Globe in 1613/14. He was publicly recognised, by the St Saviour's vestry and the sewer commission, as the individual with primary responsibility for the building and its associated waterways.[5] Heminges is also believed to

[5] For example, Court of 1605/6 February 14, TLA, SKCS/018 (fols. 434^{v}—438^{v}), Records of the Surrey and Kent Commissions of Sewers, <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/SKCS-1.html#16060214> [accessed 14 October 2024].

have run the ancillary sales associated with the Globe and, quite possibly, the Blackfriars, using his status as Citizen and Grocer to supply comestibles. In Chapter 4 I will argue that these sales were operated on his own account, paying only a small profit share to his fellow housekeepers. However, in addition to these wide-ranging corporate duties, from the beginning, he was a player.

Part One: King's Man

1 Heminges the player

How (and even why) John Heminges became a player is not known but that has not prevented speculation during at least the last century. In Chapter 1 I added to this speculation by suggesting that his entry, probably to the Queen's Men, was via his marriage to Rebecca Knell. He knew her, not primarily as the widow of a player, but as a girl, then young wife, who lived nearby for nearly a decade. Until recently there has been a general consensus that the first company he joined was, indeed, the Queen's Men, thus Chambers: (he) 'very probably began his theatrical career with the Queen's company'; Nungezer: 'Heminges possibly began his career with the same company' (as William Knell); Kathman: 'he may have been connected with the Queen's Men around [the] time' (of the killing of Knell).[6] For Gurr, this became definite, 'Queen's 1588-94'.[7] The most recent view is that of Laurie Johnson who, acknowledging that 'Heminges is understood to have been a member of the Queen's Men at some point', believes his first company was Leicester's Men and that he joined them as a newly qualified freeman in the latter months of 1587.[8]

Whichever company he joined, it is not necessarily the case that 'Heminges must have become stage struck', as suggested by the ODNB entry.[9] He was a newly married twenty-one year old, or about to become one, in need of a living to keep himself and his wife and he had not sought a loan from the Grocers to set himself up in his qualified trade. He may simply

[6] Chambers, *ES,* II, p. 321; Nungezer, *Dictionary,* p. 180; David Kathman, 'Grocers, Goldsmiths, and Drapers: Freemen and Apprentices in the Elizabethan Theater', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 55.1 (2004), pp. 1–49, (p. 7).
[7] Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company*, p. 230.
[8] Laurie Johnson, *Leicester's Men and Their Plays: An Early Elizabethan Playing Company and Its Legacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), pp. 176—77.
[9] Edmond, 'Heminges'.

have made a pragmatic decision to earn money. Alternatively, he may have been of interest to the players, not for hitherto undiscovered performing skills, but for the financial training he had received as an apprentice. The fact that he and Rebecca were married by licence rather than banns (otherwise requiring residence and three weeks' notice) suggests that he may already have been away from London on the road by March 1588. The only documentary evidence linking Heminges to the Queen's Men remains the grant of his coat of arms, dating to 1629 (see pp. 33 and 93). He is first confirmed as a player in the travelling licence to Strange's Men, in May 1593.[10] Here, he is named fourth out of six presumed sharers in the company. In that five-year interval Heminges gained the skills he needed as a player, not as an apprentice, but by learning on the job and by 1593 was able to fund the purchase of a share in Strange's Men, costing him perhaps £20 to £30.[11] This was a substantial sum for a twenty-six year old to find and profits from a putative grocery business operated by Rebecca may have been used for the purchase. Strange's were Henslowe's first recorded tenants at the Rose, from February 1592, but after the luxury of living at home, they were forced to leave London in May 1593, due to plague. They are recorded travelling to Rye, Bristol, Bath, Norwich and Coventry in 1593, leaving Rebecca Heminges with toddler Alice and newborn Judith.[12] The next record of Heminges with a playing company is not until December 1596, when he is recorded with George Bryan receiving payment for court performances in the previous year,

[10] Licence to Strange's Men, The National Archives, PC2/20 in Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry, and William Ingram, *English Professional Theatre, 1530-1660*, *Theatre in Europe: A Documentary History* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 191.
[11] Francis Henslowe was loaned £15 and £9 to purchase 1.5 company shares. Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, 2002) , fols. 2^{v} and 3^{v}, pp. 7 and 9; will of Simon Jewell, TNA, PROB 11/80 in E.A.J. Honigman and Susan Brock, *Playhouse Wills, 1558-1642: An Edition of Wills by Shakespeare and His Contemporaries in the London Theatre*, Revels Plays Companion Library (Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 58–60.
[12] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies,* (Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 274.

but he is assumed to have joined the Lord Chamberlain's Men at their inception in 1594.[13] This was the company to which he would dedicate the remainder of his life.

Heminges is often assumed to have given up performing to focus on management issues around 1611, when his name appeared for the final time in a printed cast list, that of Jonson's *Catiline's Conspiracy*; for no obvious reason, Gurr brings this forward to 1608.[14] In the previous chapter I posited a date of 1619 for Heminges's retirement from the stage, following the deaths of Burbage and Rebecca, and Heminges's disappearance from the vestry record after 1619, thus proposing a twenty-five-year playing career with the King's Men.[15] During this quarter-century his sole confirmed role is Corbaccio in a revival of *Volpone* sometime around 1616 (see p. 94) but his name also occurs on the cast lists of *Every Man in his Humour, Every Man out of his Humour, Sejanus, The Alchemist* and *Catiline's Conspiracy.* He also, of course, included himself in the prominent third position, after Shakespeare and Burbage, in the First Folio list of players. Based on his playing Corbaccio, all that can be said with any degree of certainty is that, at the age of fifty, he was unsurprisingly playing old men. Despite this lack of information about Heminges the player, Baldwin confidently ascribes thirty-two Shakespearean roles to him.[16] Although these are unverifiable, there is a strong tradition associating him with Polonius and Julius Caesar so that Baldwin is probably correct to identify a typical Heminges role as 'the faithful father, counsellor, servant', such as Capulet, Polonius or Kent.[17]

[13] *Dramatic Records in the Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber, 1558-1642*, ed. by David Cook and F. P. Wilson, Malone Society Collections, 1961 (University Press for the Malone Society, 1962), VI, p. 29.
[14] Gurr, *Shakespeare Company,* p. 25.
[15] See Chapter 1, p. 91.
[16] Baldwin, *Personnel,* p. 249.
[17] Baldwin, *Personnel,* p. 249.

2 Company Sharer

2.1 Financial management: 'Bookes of Reckonnings & accompt.'*

The establishment of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, probably in May 1594, might not have been quite such a considered plan as Andrew Gurr proposes with the idea of the duopoly of the Chamberlain's and Admiral's Men as the only officially sanctioned playing companies. However, the constituent initial sharers certainly support his definition of it as one of 'the strong companies'.[18] These comprised a leading man (Richard Burbage), a resident player-poet (William Shakespeare), principal and secondary clowns (Will Kemp and Thomas Pope), juvenile lead (William Sly), second lead and music director (Augustine Phillips), supporting player (George Bryan), and character man (John Heminges). Bringing Heminges's commercial and bookkeeping training into this mix looks like a smart and calculated choice – whatever its impetus. When Heminges left Strange's Men he took with him the value of the share he had originally purchased, worth around £30.[19] But the eight sharers in the new company would have found £240 (£30 from each) insufficient to purchase the stock of costumes and playbooks that they needed at the outset so that each initial stake was almost certainly £50. Although this investment may have risen as high as £80 in later years, a figure of £50 is supported by the will of Alexander Cooke (who became a sharer around the time he was freed as a grocer). He valued his share at this amount and referred to it being held by his colleagues.[20]

* Litigation 29 November 1632, following the death of John Heminges, Sheppard v Call, TNA, C2/ChasI/S3/21.
[18] Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage,* p. 61.
[19] Simon Jewell's will suggests a share value in Pembroke's Men of £33 in 1592, see TNA, PROB 11/80 in Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* pp. 58—60.
[20] Will of Alexander Cooke, TNA, PROB 10/311 in Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* pp. 94—95; C. J. Sisson, 'Notes on Early Stuart Stage History', *The Modern Language Review*, 37.1 (1942), pp. 25–36, doi:10.2307/3717775.

Heminges had the opportunity, during his time with Strange's at the Rose, to observe Henslowe's practices and, with the benefit of his own finance training, to implement a similar (but perhaps less idiosyncratic) system with the new company. His own will makes reference to his multiple books, and litigation after his death, referring to 'certeine writeings notes & bookes of Reckonnings & accompt', implies that he was operating the recommended hierarchy of books – inventory, memorial/journal and 'great booke of accompte' – keeping a full financial record.[21] Whether he kept a single set of books, or separate versions for the sharers and, from 1599, for the housekeepers too, in addition to records of his personal income and expenditure, is not known. However, the same litigation implies that his executor and heir had access only to personal accounts.

The day-to-day financial management of the company was probably conducted similarly to Henslowe's custom of advancing funds to authorised members to undertake the purchases necessary to commission, rehearse and provide costumes and props for each new play. This was, essentially, a system of multiple petty cash floats given to individuals, supplemented by the direct payment of certain bills, generally when a substantial amount had been incurred on credit. It was simple and workable and there is no reason to think that Heminges needed to institute anything more complex. Each transaction was documented so that expenditure could be tallied as required, for example, for an individual play, or for the total spent on costumes and/or props. These categories were all as familiar to Henslowe as to Heminges but an additional area of expenditure for the players alone was the cost of creating their playbooks and individual cued parts. This may have been via a fee for their regular scribe (known to have been Ralph Crane from around 1618), to provide his own

[21] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* p.167; TNA, C2/ChasI/S3/21; Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 67.

materials as well as his and an assistant's labour, or the King's Men may have been purchasing paper at 4s 4d per ream, plus ink for 7d, to supply him.[22] However it was effected, copying out an entire play for Heminges to take to the Master of Revels for licensing, plus parts for, say, sixteen players, was a time-consuming, labour intensive, and therefore relatively expensive, business.[23] Although the King's Men had Shakespeare as their in-house dramatist, his modest annual output meant that additional writers were needed, initially to build the repertory, and then to keep it updated. To guarantee timely delivery, these play commissions may have required a more formal arrangement than simply staged and receipted payments. There is evidence that writing contracts were in existence as early as 1572 and, beyond the period covered by the Diary, Henslowe and playwright Robert Daborne worked on the basis of written memoranda.[24] The responsibility for documenting such arrangements for the new company no doubt fell to Heminges.

In the company's earliest years, resources, both human and financial, were tight. The newly assembled sharers brought with them some playscripts from previous companies. Gurr proposes that Heminges brought with him several of the Queen's Men plays, although it seems unlikely that, as a relatively junior Queen's man, he would have been able to take plays from Queen's to Strange's and thence to the new company.[25] Costumes, however, were easily

[22] Diary and account book of Edward Alleyn, Henslowe Alleyn Digitisation Project, MSS 9, article 001, 006^{v}, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-9/006-verso/> [accessed 1 October 2024].
[23] For an account of preparing individual parts for a large cast play in 2018, see Meryl Faiers, 'The Philip Massinger Marathon', *The Philip Massinger Marathon*, 2018 <https://massimara.wordpress.com/blog/> [accessed 31 October 2023].
[24] R. Mark Benbow, 'Dutton and Goffe versus Broughton: A Disputed Contract for Plays in the 1570s', *Records of Early English Drama*, 6.2 (1981), pp. 3–9, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43505451> [accessed 1 October 2024]; memorandum between Robert Daborne and Philip Henslowe for the composition of Machiavel and the Devil, April 17, 1613, HADP, MSS 1, article 070, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-1/article-070/> [accessed 1 October 2024].
[25] Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company,* p. 25.
[26] Letter from Philip Henslowe to Edward Alleyn, 28 September 1593, Archive of Dulwich College, MSS 1, article 14, in *Diary,* p. 280.

pawned, and effectively lost, when financial trouble hit, as former members of the first Pembroke's Men knew all too well in September 1593.[26] To provide costumes, the Chamberlain's Men may have burnt through the initial capital of £400 (£50 per sharer) very quickly. For comparison, Henslowe and Alleyn inventoried over five hundred items of costume and props, assembled over a period of around five years, together easily worth between £1000 and £2000.[27] The Chamberlain's Men may have needed to spend in the region of £500 per annum in their early years in order to mount the 40% to 50% of the repertory of twenty-five to thirty plays that was new each season.[28] A further possibility is that James Burbage, (father of Cuthbert and Richard and owner of the Theatre where the company played in the early 1590s), may have acted as Henslowe did at the Rose, underwriting expenses in order to cashflow the players.[29] Any such apparently philanthropic practice by Burbage senior had the advantage of keeping the Theatre open and his own share of income flowing. By whatever means these set-up costs were met, someone (quite possibly Heminges) had an overview of company finances so that he knew what could be afforded at any time, whether on new plays or on the physical production. Tensions may have arisen as the desire of writers and/or players to produce larger and more expansive and extravagantly costumed pieces collided with the reality of financial constraints. Such unacknowledged constraint may lie behind the relative economy of casting and setting of, for example, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, probably dating to the start of the company's life.[30]

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[27] Costume and prop inventories, *Diary*, pp. 291—94, 317—23.
[28] Roslyn L. Knutson, 'The Repertory of the Chamberlain's Men, 1594-95, with Observations on Its Commercial Value', *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, 8–9.1 (1982), pp. 74–84, p. 74, doi:10.1163/23526963-90000054.
[29] I am grateful to Martin Wiggins for this suggestion.
[30] *British Drama, 1533-1642: A Catalogue*, ed. by Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson (Oxford University Press.), 9 vols, 3, '970: The Two Gentlemen of Verona', pp. 252—56.

During the company's first five years, before the move to the Globe, their income was simple to calculate and record, assuming it to have been on the conventional split of receipts from the yard and half the galleries going to the company. The balance went to the venue owner. No doubt Heminges, under the watchful gaze of at least one other company member to ensure his honesty, totalled the company's portion at each performance. This daily apportionment had been envisaged by novice owners Henslowe and Cholmley in 1587 and was still the case fifty years later when Brome referred to the daily receipts being 'parcelled out upon the sharing-board', even before the end of the performance.[31] It is highly doubtful that the full amount could have been paid out to the sharers immediately. It would have been essential to hold back cash both for known commitments (such as the wages of hired men) and a sensible reserve for future production expenditure, plus a contingency against unexpected problems. A small advance could have been paid, with the balance to be settled weekly, monthly, or on the quarter days customarily used for payments, once all obligations had been met. A final profit share might then have been made at Whitsun each year, seemingly the financial year end for the King's Men, reflecting the anniversary of their foundation.[32] In 1613 Whitsun fell on 14 May with the result that the company probably had only six weeks' reserve in hand at the time of the destruction of the Globe on 29 June.

Heminges is recorded in December 1596 attending the court at Whitehall, with fellow sharer George Bryan, collecting payment for the first time for the previous year's performances before the queen. But he was no stranger at court, having played there six

[31] Richard Brome, *The English Moor,* edited by M. Steggle, <www.dhi.ac.uk/brome> [accessed 5 May 2023].
[32] In the Sharers' Papers, 'TNA, LC 5/133, Answer of Cuthbert Burbage et al. to Petition of Robert Benefield et al. Concerning Division of Profits of the Globe, but Including Summary History of the Theatre', *Shakespeare Documented* <https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/resource/document/answer-cuthbert-burbage-et-al-petition-robert-benefield-et-al-concerning-division> [accessed 6 November 2024]. All subsequent references to the Sharers' Papers are from the semi-diplomatic transcription on the Shakespeare Documented website.

times with the Lord Chamberlain's Men and more frequently than that with Strange's Men. By 1630, his presence is recorded more than two hundred times, as performer or company representative to receive payments and/or obtain play licences.[33] The royal patent to the new King's Men in 1603 (in which Heminges was listed only fifth) was not merely a formality. The named sharers (and their colleagues in the other royal playing companies) were each awarded four and a half yards of red cloth to process with the monarch at his formal entry into London in 1604 and, in August, when the playhouses were still closed, they were required to undertake genuine duties for more than two weeks and attend the Spanish ambassador at Somerset House.[34] In the 1607 list of the 'Players of Enterludes' in the Offices of England, he appears fourth, following Burbage, Fletcher (Laurence, recorded in the 1603 patent but otherwise undocumented with the company) and, oddly, his own apprentice, Alexander Cooke.[35] In later royal patents Heminges's name headed the company list, reflecting the official perception of him as leader of the King's Men after the death of Richard Burbage in 1619, and he clearly established good working relationships with the various Masters of the Revels with whom he interacted. He made payments on behalf of all four of the royal companies for permission to perform during Lent 1618; and in 1623 was able to secure a new licence from Sir Henry Herbert for *The Winter's Tale* as an old play, for which the licensed playbook had been lost, 'on Mr. Hemmings his worde', without payment.[36] At the end of his career, in 1628, he appears to have negotiated an arrangement with Herbert for the Master

[33] There are more than two hundred references by my count in Malone Society *Collections,* VI*;* and Joseph Quincy Adams, *The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, 1623 - 1673* (Yale University Press, Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1917).
[34] TNA, LC 2/4/5 in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 196.
[35] *The Offices of England Collected According to the Yeare of 1607*, James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, <https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/10001689> [accessed 29 September 2024].
[36] Adams, *Records,* p. 25.

of the Revels to receive two benefit performances per year.[37] For these, the players agreed to give up their share of income entirely; the housekeepers, however, were entitled to deduct their daily costs – no doubt calculated by Heminges at the maximum credible amount.

Although Heminges is first named in the Chamber accounts in 1596, he may also have been present on earlier occasions, unremarked in the record, in support of colleagues receiving the fees. From 1596 onwards, he received court payments on behalf of the company every year until 1630, six months before his death. Court performances were paid at the rate of £10, often many months in arrears, so that players might easily collect £50 or more. Carrying such large sums whilst walking through the streets, or boarding a wherry, would have been a perilous undertaking without colleagues acting as bodyguards. In 1617 and 1618, court performances were paid a full year late so that Heminges is recorded in the Chamber accounts receiving £130 and £150 in a single payment each year.[38] Only his name is given but a posse of colleagues would have been required for safety. The company's income from both court and regular performances could clearly amount to a sizeable figure, running into several hundreds of pounds, which had to be kept securely but with easy access to at least a running fund for day-to-day cash needs. Litigation concerning the early years of the Theatre provides a clue to how this was managed. There is a reference to James Burbage using a false (i.e. duplicate) key to steal from 'the commen box where the money gathered at the said playes was put in'.[39] There would have been two locks on such a box, one key held by Burbage, the other (which he duplicated) by a second keyholder. The same practice was used

[37] Adams, *Records,* p. 42.
[38] Malone Society *Collections,* VI, pp. 68 and 69.
[39] Chambers, *ES,* II, p. 388.

for the parish chest, for example, at St Saviour in Southwark, where three vestrymen held keys to the chest kept in the church vestry.[40]



Figure 3.1 Parish chest, All Saints church, Barrington, Cambs., showing multiple lock positions with single modern padlock. Photos M. Faiers.

The playhouse chest may have been smaller than a parish chest but weight and immovability were its essential qualities. There appears no suggestion that the company cash reserves were lost in the Globe fire so the chest was probably kept elsewhere: with Heminges in the City or with Cuthbert Burbage in Shoreditch. Accurate and transparent accounting would have been required to reconcile the respective income of sharers and housekeepers.

There would have been additional, non-financial, administrative chores that fell within Heminges's remit. The most challenging of these may have been the co-ordination of the many occasions when the players left the playhouse to perform elsewhere. The initial task was to scope out the playing area, then to organise wagons, boats, and porters to transport the players, their costumes and props to one of the Inns of Court or to the current location of the royal court. Even though the company toured from time to time, the most complex and nerve-racking move was the eighty-five-mile journey from Augustine Phillips's house at

[40] St Saviour vestry minutes, 2 March 1583, <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/vestry-minutes-450.html#15830000> [accessed 15 October 2024].

Mortlake to the court at Wilton House for the first performance before their new monarch and patron in December 1603. Heminges collected an additional £20 for the company's pains and expenses in making the trip, which probably took them four or five days in each direction.[41] In time, these moves no doubt became a well-rehearsed routine but always with an edge of panic at relocating to less familiar surroundings. When the company began its two-venue operation in 1610, a much bigger move was necessary twice yearly, raising the question of storage for the King's Men's costumes and props. It is extremely unlikely that anything more than a running supply of the next few days' costumes was kept at the Globe. The space required to store probably more than five hundred items was much greater than the playhouse could offer and the risk of 'Casualtie of fier' too great.[42] The store may have been located in a separate building on the Globe estate, or elsewhere nearby (as with the Rose and Henslowe's storeroom) which would have required frequent trips, perhaps two or three times weekly for more than half the year, to transport items between the Globe and the Blackfriars.[43] Alternatively, the advent of the Blackfriars, with its additional spaces, may have allowed them to divide their stock, knowing the repertory requirements, to keep a sizeable costume supply north of the Thames. In whatever fashion the moves were managed, Heminges, with the company's tireman and the bookholder, would have needed to monitor the inventory closely.

[41] Malone Society *Collections*, VI, p. 38.
[42] TNA, Req2/789 quoted in Herbert Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses* (AMS Press, 1987), p. 221.
[43] See Chapter 1, p. 65.

2.2 Succession planning: 'Apprentice to John He*mm*yng*es* for nyne years from the daie of p*re*sentment.'*

Chapter 1 showed Heminges operating as an apprentice master within the structure of the Grocers' Company but the fact that only two of his ten apprentices became freemen Grocers within his lifetime illustrates that the primary purpose in training these adolescents was not for the grocery trade at all. Instead, it marks the use of the recognised system of craft training as a means of succession planning for the relatively new playing company. Heminges was not alone in the King's Men in being a member of a livery company. Their hired man, Thomas Goodale, was a mercer, and Robert Armin and John Lowin were goldsmiths, but Heminges may have been the first King's Man to formally bind apprentices in a livery company to train them for the stage.[44] The company required a regular turnover of apprentices in order to maintain the three or four that were needed concurrently to play the various female and children's roles. This necessity may later have influenced Alexander Cooke and John Wilson to obtain their freedom as grocers and thus bind their own apprentices to expand the available talent pool of boys. In November 1595, eighteen months into the life of the playing company, the sharers would have been aware that, although a leading man might play throughout a thirty-year career, a boy-player's performing life was limited to his early twenties, at most. At this point Heminges bound his first apprentice, Thomas Belte, perhaps lending some weight to the possibility that Condell had been his casual apprentice for a short period from 1593.[45] If the informal system had provided the necessary training, there was

* Worshipful Company of Grocers, Wardens' accounts, TLA, CLC/L/GH/D/001/MS11571/007.
[44] Records of London's Livery Companies Online: Apprentices and Freemen 1400-1900 <https://www.londonroll.org/search> [accessed 23 April 2024]; Martin Butler, 'Armin, Robert (1563–1615), Actor and Comic Writer', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/647.
[45] See Chapter 1, pp. 83—4.

every incentive to regularise it to make apprenticeship more attractive, with freedom and citizenship as the prize. The companies of boy players had no such reward to offer their recruits. Frustratingly, no evidence survives of the recruitment and selection process. Tempting though it might be to imagine Burbage and Heminges visiting performances at rival playhouses to view the talent on offer, with the aim of luring young players away to become apprentices, there is no known example of this. Nor is there any of would-be apprentices haunting the tiring house door. The system within the King's Men probably worked in the same way as regular guild apprenticeship, via family association (such as Robert Pallant, son of a player), or recommendation through personal networks (William Patrick was the son of a close neighbour of Heminges).[46]

It is impossible to be certain to what extent Heminges was personally involved in training the adolescents he apprenticed. Scott McMillin proposes that a sharer who was an apprentice master taught and rehearsed with the youth, often with just one other adult player.[47] McMillin cites *Othello* and *Measure for Measure* as being particularly suited to this arrangement, whilst James J. Marino also notes that scenes requiring only master and apprentice were more easily revised.[48] For Heminges, as a supporting player, the opportunity to rehearse with his current apprentice in this way was more limited but certain roles that have been ascribed to him, such as Capulet and Polonius, offered that chance. In the main, however, tuition would have been shared with other company members with whom the apprentice played scenes. However, as Tiffany Stern makes clear, before the apprentice

[46] See Chapter 1, p. 83, note 156.
[47] Scott McMillin, 'The Sharer and His Boy: Rehearsing Shakespeare's Women', in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England,* ed. by Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel, Redefining British Theatre History (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) pp. 236—39.
[48] James J. Marino, 'Parts and the Playscript: Seven Questions' in *Rethinking Theatrical Documents in Shakespeare's England*, ed. Tiffany Stern (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), p. 62.

reached the stage of group rehearsal, he first had to learn not only his own lines but also memorise the brief introductory cue to each speech, which was all that was written on his individual part.[49]



Figure 3.2 An Elizabethan actor's part on the left, Orlando in 'Orlando Furioso', (*ADC, MSS 1, Article 138, fol. 265^{r}) showing brief cues in right hand margin; by kind permission of the Governors of Dulwich College. Centre & right: replica of Orlando part, made to actual size. Replica and photos M. Faiers.*

Learning by rote was possibly easier for someone not long out of school but, even so, would have required considerable repetition alone with his master before embarking on scene work – and the ever-growing repertory meant that his master might have forty or more roles of his own to remember. There is one direct reference to Heminges training an apprentice, not for the playhouse but, in 1607, for the entertainment given by the Merchant Taylors for Prince Henry referred to in Chapter 1.[50] Forty shillings were paid 'To Mr Hemmynges for his direccion of his boy that made the speech to his Majesty', and five shillings 'given to Iohn Rise the speaker', the clearest indication that Rice was, indeed, Heminges's

[49] Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 61; 'Part of Orlando in Robert Greene's "Orlando Furioso"', ADC, MSS 1, Article 138, fol. 265^{r}.
[50] Chapter 1, p. 84.

undocumented apprentice.[51] Beyond providing the formal framework for the training, Heminges would have given the apprentice a home, offering the same experience of family life that he had enjoyed with James and Anne Collins. The expense of maintaining the company apprentices in a master's home was a legitimate corporate cost and litigation following Heminges's death makes reference to him receiving weekly payments 'for boyes' in addition to his other theatrical income.[52] As was usual in the Grocers' Company, Heminges would have been paid a premium by an apprentice's family, intended as an acknowledgement of the cost of training and, ordinarily, to provide the heavily prescribed clothing of a London apprentice.[53] In the King's Men, the premium may, instead, have gone some way towards paying for the expensive female costumes that would be required, as fabric alone for a woman's dress could cost in excess of £7.[54] Creating multiple costumes, as each apprentice graduated through roles of increasing length and complexity, was the most visible form of the King's Men's investment in the boys of the company. But there was also their ongoing upkeep to be paid to their master, plus a substantial investment of senior sharers' time in first teaching, and then practising with them, the skills of the stage player.

Other sharers in the King's Men also took apprentices so that there was a sufficient number to cover all the female roles (or, in the case of the departure or even death of an apprentice, a playwright could be tasked with writing for the diminished number of boys available). The example of Heminges, however, provides the only consistent long-term use of

[51] Jean Robertson and D. J. Gordon, 'A Calendar of Dramatic Records in the Books of the Livery Companies of London, 1485–1640', in Malone Society Collections III (Oxford, 1954), p. 172, quoted in David Kathman, 'John Rice and the Boys of the Jacobean King's Men', in *Shakespeare Survey: Volume 68: Shakespeare, Origins and Originality*, ed. by Peter Holland, Shakespeare Survey (Cambridge University Press, 2015), LXVIII, pp. 247–66.
[52] TNA, C2/ChasI/S3/21.
[53] J. Aubrey Rees, The Worshipful Company of Grocers: An Historical Retrospect, 1345-1923 (Chapman and Dodd, 1923), pp. 111—112.
[54] *Diary*, fol. 119^{v}, p. 223.

apprenticeship for training. The dates reveal a pattern suggestive of apprentices working in pairs, moving up the hierarchy of roles together until each in turn graduated.

Name	Age at start	Bound	Term	Anticipated end	Actual end
Thomas Belte	16+	November 1595	9 yrs	November 1604	Not known
Alexander Cooke	17	January 1597	8 yrs	January 1605	March 1609
John Rice (undocumented)	*13?*	*1604?*	*Not known*	*Not known*	*1611*
George Birch	16	July 1610	8 yrs	July 1618	Not known
John Wilson	15	February 1611	8 yrs	February 1619	October 1621
Nicholas Crosse	14 or 15	May 1614	10 yrs	May 1624	Not known
Richard Sharpe	?	February 1616	8 yrs	February 1624	Not known
Thomas Holcombe	13?	April 1618	8 yrs	April 1626	Not known
Robert Pallant	14	February 1620	8 yrs	February 1628	Not known
William Trigg	?	December 1625	12 yrs	December 1637	July 1632
William Patrick	16	December 1628	12 yrs	December 1640	1637?

Figure 3.3 Heminges's apprentices, 1595 to 1628.

(Figure 3.3 has already been used to illustrate how the pairings of apprentices might have been anticipated to work).[55] The very long, twelve-year, terms for Trigg and Patrick may have been to ensure that there was sufficient time for their genuine training as grocers. However, the length may equally have been intended as a means of keeping young men within the company, perhaps at a time when recruitment via other means was, for some reason, particularly difficult. The chart also highlights the years when Heminges did not take on a new apprentice when he might have been expected to. Thus the gap between Cooke and Rice covers the period of planning, building and establishing the Globe when Heminges took on new responsibilities; between Rice and Birch the Blackfriars scheme was born, again, requiring additional input from Heminges; and his work on the Shakespeare First Folio, and move to Southwark, occurred in the gap between Pallant and Trigg. This pattern of apprentice binding makes clear that being an apprentice master in the playhouse was not a nominal function but was the same as in a craft guild, requiring direct application of time and skill to

[55] Chapter 1, p. 82.

the training. At times when there were additional company pressures, it was inadvisable for Heminges to commit time to this training.

3 Housekeeper: ‘Noe wise man will adventure his Estate in such a course’. (John Shank) *

In his response to the Sharers’ Papers in 1635, John Shank, a later housekeeper with the King’s Men, succinctly summed up the risk, quoted above, to one’s personal estate in becoming a housekeeper. When the owner of the land where James Burbage’s Theatre stood refused to negotiate a new lease with Cuthbert and Richard, the brothers astutely invited their five most senior and longstanding colleagues to co-venture with them on a new playhouse. This entailed the complex removal and reassembly of the Theatre. Yet those colleagues accepted the invitation. As sharers, they had seen the owners of the Theatre and the Curtain make greater profits than theirs, and the lure of a share in playhouse ownership was too compelling to refuse. This was despite the obvious risks of ‘unanticipated fluctuations in demand, or [being] wiped out overnight by fraud, fire or other calamities’.[56] The near legendary status of the story of dismantling the old playhouse, transporting it across the Thames, and rebuilding it in Southwark, conceals to a large extent just what a very shrewd move by Cuthbert and Richard Burbage this represented. The Burbages were not cash-rich and their own contribution was probably only the value of the very solid timbers of the Theatre, plus what would now be termed the ’goodwill’ attaching to the Burbage name as well as to the Theatre frame.[57] The player-housekeepers, Heminges, Kemp, Phillips, Pope, and Shakespeare, signed up to the plan in February 1599. They became vulnerable to risk as soon as they put their

* John Shank, ‘The Sharers’ Papers’, TNA, LC 5/133.

[56] Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain 1470-1750*, The Penguin Economic History of Britain (Penguin, 2002), p. 191.

[57] Goodwill – ‘The established reputation of a business regarded as a quantifiable asset and calculated as part of its value when it is sold’. Oxford English Dictionary, ‘Goodwill, n., Sense 4.b’ (Oxford University Press, 2024), Oxford English Dictionary, doi.org/10.1093/OED/4082554541.

names to the lease and, it is assumed, paid in, or provided collateral to cover, their stake for each to become the owner of 10% of the Globe.

The original documentation is now lost but, from later litigation, it appears that the tripartite lease between the owner of the land (Nicholas Brend), Cuthbert and Richard Burbage acting as one party, and the player-housekeepers acting as another party, did not explicitly state that this should be a tenancy in common, as intended. With such a tenancy, each lessee could dispose of his share i.e., sell it back to his co-housekeepers or bequeath it as part of his estate. Instead, a joint tenancy was inadvertently created between the seven individuals. As a result, at the death of, or surrender of his share by, any of them, his share went to the remaining joint tenants. Brian Corrigan, in *Playhouse Law in Shakespeare's World*, elucidates the problem in a detailed but straightforward account, and lays out how it was solved.[58] The joint tenancy had to be broken so that a tenancy in common could be created in its place. The means of doing that was to transfer the player-housekeepers' five shares to two trustees (thus breaking the joint tenancy). The trustees then transferred the shares back so that a new tenancy 'in common' was established, as originally intended. Heminges was clearly the enabler of this paper transaction: the trustees were his own landlord, Thomas Savage, and his parish colleague, William Leveson.

Later in 1599, Will Kemp gave up his share, assigning it to Heminges, Phillips and Shakespeare (and not to Pope), and famously morris danced off to Norwich.[59] The reason for his departure may have been professional differences, as Corrigan and David Wiles both

[58] Brian Jay Corrigan, *Playhouse Law in Shakespeare's World* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Associated University Presses, 2004), pp. 64–68. See also Robert Bearman, *Shakespeare's Money: How Much Did He Make and What Did This Mean?* (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 102–4.
[59] Corrigan, *Playhouse Law,* p. 65.

suggest, or simply that he failed to contribute the cash when it was called for.[60] With the benefit of hindsight, that might appear a mistake, but the success of the Globe was by no means assured in 1599. Whatever the reason for it, Kemp's departure caused a further problem to the remaining player-housekeeper group. Kemp had not included Thomas Pope in the assignment of his share when he left the company (Corrigan speculates that there was professional animosity as Pope was also a clown). Heminges, Phillips and Shakespeare each now held 13.33% of the Globe (i.e. Kemp's 10% share divided between them), whereas Pope had only his original 10% stake. Another transfer of the player-housekeeper shares was now effected, this time to Thomas Cressey, a City mercer. Cressey then transferred back four equal shares of 12.5% each to Heminges, Phillips, Pope and Shakespeare.[61] Why Cressey agreed to participate in this transaction is not known but, in his trade of mercer, he may have been known to Heminges (and the King's Men), supplying costume materials.

After eight and a half years as a housekeeper of the Globe, Heminges and his then player-housekeeper colleagues Shakespeare, William Sly and Henry Condell (who had replaced Phillips and Pope) received an offer from the Burbage brothers that must have seemed initially irresistible. They were each offered an equal one seventh share in the Blackfriars playhouse, for free. The catch was that the Burbages were proposing to reduce the King's Men's operation at the Globe to play there only in the warmer months, whilst using the Blackfriars as what would later be described as their 'winter house'.[62] The apparent gift of

[60] Corrigan, *Playhouse Law,* p. 65; David Wiles, *Shakespeare's Clown: Actor and Text in the Elizabethan Playhouse* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 36.
[61] Cressey received 13.33% + 13.33% +13.33% + 10% = 50% and transferred back 4 x 12.5% = 50%; Thomas Cressey, mercer, Livery Companies Online.
[62] James Wright, *Historia Histrionica an Historical Account of the English Stage, Shewing the Ancient Use, Improvement and Perfection of Dramatick Representations in This Nation in a Dialogue of Plays and Players.* (Printed by G. Croom for William Haws, 1699) <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxyd.bham.ac.uk/docview/2264187329?accountid=8630.> [accessed 12 October 2020].

equal shares gratis, with the Burbages holding only one share apiece, was the trade-off for the consequent reduction in income and profit from the Globe. As with the proposal to co-venture on the Globe in 1599, it is impossible to know how this was framed to the sharer-housekeepers and the 'free' shares may well have been the result of some unhappy wrangling. By August 1608 the new consortium was established; Richard Burbage compensated the Blackfriars tenant, Henry Evans, for the remainder of the lease he had previously been granted; and the King's Men were ready to start their new multi-venue operation. Plague then intervened and it was to be a further eighteen months before the playhouses re-opened.[63] The outbreak was so severe, and the prospect of resuming playing so distant that, in March and April 1609, Heminges twice went to court to receive extraordinary payments of £30 and £40, to support the 'companie beinge restrained from publique playing […] in the tyme of infeccion'.[64] But eventually, by some point in 1610, the King's Men commenced their seasonal system of using the Globe from around mid-April until the end of the summer, and Blackfriars for the other months. The system persisted beyond Heminges's lifetime, until the closing of the playhouses in 1642.

For the next two decades Heminges and Cuthbert Burbage continued as housekeepers of both Globe and Blackfriars, whilst others came and went, and Heminges now had responsibility for the consortium's finances as joint owners. The weekly payroll would now include the carpenter and/or night watchman needed for repairs and security, as well as all the gatherers at the doors. With the lines so blurred between company and owners, no doubt the gatherers were employed as one group, rather than separately, with the cash still divided

[63] J. Leeds Barroll, *Politics, Plague, and Shakespeare's Theater: The Stuart Years* (Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 173.
[64] Malone Society *Collections,* VI, pp. 47–48.

by location. Heminges was also now viewed by others as the representative of the playhouse(s) as well as the players although, perhaps surprisingly, the sewer commissioners referred only to '_____Burbidge' and '_____Hemmings' in February and April 1606 when the pair were ordered to undertake repair work to the waterways around the Globe.[65] 1606 was the sole year in which the owners were taken to task by the sewer commission until in 1630 'John Hemmings' was ordered to repair the wharf 'to the Thames […] against the Globe staires'.[66] This reference is doubly interesting. For twenty-four years there had been no issues with the sewers (drainage ditches) around the playhouse, indicating that these, and probably also the building, were kept in good repair. Furthermore, the existence of a wharf and stairs associated with the Globe suggests that the owners (or owners and players jointly) had at some point created an easy access route for playgoers arriving by water.

Heminges may have been diligent for the common good in looking after the fabric of the building and its surrounds but, in managing the consortium's shares, he acted in his own interest. The tenancy in common, viewed as so desirable by the original player-housekeepers, led to multiple changes in share ownership as housekeepers died and willed their shares away from the King's Men. Eventually (after Heminges's death) it resulted in the legal petition of three of the players to be permitted to purchase shares from the then-current housekeepers.[67] When shares were not bequeathed beyond the company, they were generally acquired by Heminges or, later, by Heminges and Condell. It could be argued (and no doubt was) that this maintained the spirit of the original consortium, with ownership of the playhouses remaining in the hands of individual King's Men but, following the death of

[65] TLA, SKCS/018, fol. 438^{v}, <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/SKCS-1.html> [accessed 15 October 2024].
[66] TLA, SKCS/029, <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/SKCS-2.html> [accessed 15 October 2024]. I am grateful to Héloïse Sénéchal for drawing my attention to this record.
[67] 'The Sharers Papers', TNA, LC 5/133.

Richard Burbage in 1619, Heminges and Condell were the only two player-housekeepers remaining. Each owned 25% of each playhouse with Cuthbert, and Richard's widow, holding the other 50%. Despite the longstanding and close company affiliation, it must have felt to the other King's Men increasingly like the landlord and playing company relationship at any other playhouse. Heminges may not have envisaged acquiring the shares of former colleagues at the time he enabled the change from joint tenancy to tenancy in common, but he certainly profited from this change more than any other housekeeper. In his own will, he bequeathed his 'severall partes' not to any player(s) but beyond the membership of the King's Men.[68] The litigation which followed the death of William Ostler, when Heminges's own daughter sued her father for compensation for loss of profits in the months after her husband Ostler died, as well as for the value of the residue of the leases on both playhouses, illustrates just how valuable and coveted it was to be a housekeeper.[69] Two years later, the husband of Augustine Phillips's widow, John Witter, brought a claim against Heminges and Condell for five years of Globe profits due to his wife, which he maintained had been illegally withheld.[70] The suit eventually came to nothing. Witter had almost certainly refused to pay his wife's contribution to the cost of rebuilding the Globe and so would have been forced to relinquish his share. Added to this, Phillips had provided that his widow should forfeit the executorship of his will to Heminges, Richard Burbage and William Sly if she remarried, so that it seems that there may have been no case to answer. Again, the length (two years), and tenacity, of the process speak to the perceived, and probably very real, value of playhouse share ownership.

[68] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* pp. 164—67.
[69] See Chapter 1, pp. 48—49.
[70] TNA, REQ 4/1/2/2.

Part Two: the Playhouses

4 Building the playhouses

4.1 The Globe: what was built?

There has been intense debate for more than a century about the physical characteristics of the Globe playhouse: precisely where in Southwark it stood; its size and appearance; and its audience capacity. In the early 1920s, a heated argument raged between George Hubbard and W.W. Braines, with Hubbard proposing that the Globe stood on the north side of Maiden Lane (now Park Street) and Braines that it was on the south.[71] At the same time, E.K. Chambers described the dispute about locality only as 'a matter of controversy' and, instead, concerned himself with the Globe's appearance, concluding that it 'was almost certainly round […] No doubt it was round inside'.[72] That there were three levels of gallery appears never to have been doubted. By mid-century, there was general acceptance that its likely shape was polygonal and focus shifted to trying to calculate its width, or diameter, based on the tiny images in maps and views of the period. Irwin Smith (who assumed the playhouse had an octagonal floor plan and that 'Cuthbert designed the Globe') proposed a figure of 84 ft (25.6 m).[73] John Orrell used measurements from the traditional method of laying out a building that he conjectured builder Peter Street would have employed, and arrived at 100 ft (30.5 m).[74] J. C. Adams dismissed Street as 'able but illiterate', and Orrell's proposal as 'unacceptable', whilst offering his own calculation of a width of 107 ft (32.6 m).[75]

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[71] George Hubbard, *On the Site of the Globe Playhouse of Shakespeare,* (Cambridge University Press, 1923); W.W. Braines, *The Site of the Globe Playhouse Southwark*, Second edition, revised and enlarged (Hodder and Stoughton, 1924).
[72] Chambers, *ES,* II, p. 434.
[73] Irwin Smith, 'Theatre Into Globe', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 3.2 (1952), pp. 113–20, doi:10.2307/2866501.
[74] John Orrell, *The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe* (Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 107.
[75] John Cranford Adams, 'How Large Was the Globe Playhouse?', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 33.1 (1982), pp. 93–94, doi:10.2307/2870340.

All these (often vehemently held) views date from before the archaeological excavations of 1988 – 91, when a portion of the Globe was uncovered. The discovery of a very small section of inner and outer wall, and probable stair turret, definitively revealed the building to have been polygonal. This resulted in a new emphasis on trying to ascertain the number of sides, and hence of seating bays, it contained. Before this discovery, John Orrell's calculations were based on a twenty-four-sided polygon but, since the archaeological report has been available, the general view now is that it had a smaller number of sides. Writing at around the time of the dig, R.A. Foakes opted for twenty or twenty-four sides, and Andrew Gurr has been consistent in proposing twenty; Franklin Hildy, reviewing the erection of prototype bays at Shakespeare's Globe in 1992, suggested eighteen.[76] But the most persuasive view must surely be that of lead MOLA archaeologist and co-author of the dig report, Julian Bowsher, reviewing his own findings twenty years later: 'The evidence for the Globe suggests that it was either 25.7 m [in diameter] and 16-sided or 29 m and 18-sided'.[77]

The quotations from the scholarship of the physical Globe represent merely a selection of the extensive literature on its size and appearance; in contrast, there has been much less conjecture about the audience capacity of the playhouse. Some of the very earliest estimates, provoked by full houses for the astonishing nine-day run of *A Game at Chess* in 1624, of 'more than 3000 persons' and 'during these last four days more than 12,000 persons'

[76] R. A. Foakes, 'Playhouses and Players', in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama*, ed. by A. R. Braunmuller and Michael Hattaway (Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 12; Andrew Gurr, 'Why the Globe Is Famous', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, ed. by Richard Dutton, (Oxford Academic, 2012), p. 193; Andrew Gurr, *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, ed. by J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 44; Franklin J. Hildy, '"If You Build It They Will Come": The Reconstruction of Shakespeare's Globe Gets Underway on the Bankside in London', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 10.3 (1992), p. 3, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26351991> [accessed 15 October 2024].

[77] Julian Bowsher, 'Twenty Years on: the Archaeology of Shakespeare's London Playhouses', *Shakespeare,* 7.4 (2011), pp. 452-66, < https://doi.org/10.1080/17450918.2011.625443> [accessed 17 October 2024]; Julian Bowsher, *Shakespeare's London Theatreland* (Museum of London Archaeology, 2012), p. 95.

are still regarded as roughly accurate, identifying the Globe as potentially larger than its competitors.[78] From the archaeological remains it could not be determined whether there were two or three gallery levels but the Henslowe and Alleyn contract with Peter Street for the construction of the Fortune (considered in chapter 2) is for a three-level building.[79] As so many of the particulars in that contract refer back to Street's recent work on the Globe, the working hypothesis for the Globe here is that it, too, had three levels of gallery. For the calculations of audience capacity that follow, and of financial capacity in the next chapter, a decision is necessary. Archaeological remains are the strongest evidence for the size of the Globe and, lacking archaeological and/or architectural expertise myself, my assumption will be that the Globe had eighteen sides (thus taking the median between Bowsher's lower estimate (sixteen) and the twenty proposed by Gurr and Foakes) and three gallery levels. On this basis, and using practical experience, I will create a template of audience capacity to test the figure of three thousand. Should subsequent discoveries disprove the eighteen-sided polygon, the template can be adjusted accordingly. The diagram below represents this eighteen-sided polygon, with five sides behind the stage and tiring house area, and thirteen bays of seating.

[78] Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, MS 18,203 and Spanish State Archives, Simancas, Registro de Cartas, Libro 375 in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 615—16.
[79] Henslowe Alleyn Digitisation Project, Muniments Series 1 Group 22, <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/muniments-series-1/group-022/> [accessed 30 September 2024].

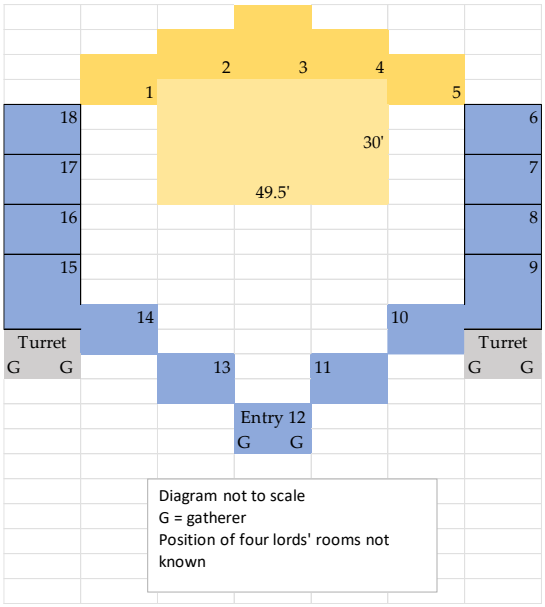


Figure 3.4 Illustration of position of seating bays at the Globe.

The very limited remains uncovered during the dig from 1988 provide sufficient information to construct a model of both standing and seating capacities. According to Bowsher, the exterior (back) wall of each bay was 16 ft 6 in. (5 m) long (the length of a sixteenth-century surveyor's pole) and the interior, 10 ft 6 in. (3.2 m) in length; the depth from front to back was 12 ft 6 in. (3.8 m).[80] Utilising the standard seating space of 18 in. (46 cm) per person described in Chapter 2, this depth could have accommodated six rows in each of the two lower galleries but low headroom and poorer sightlines probably allowed space for only five rows in the uppermost gallery.[81] The bays containing access from the stairway (turret bays) would have had a slightly reduced capacity to allow space for audience members to enter and move around. The bay across the yard entrance had no seats at first gallery level.

[80] Bowsher, *Shakespeare's London Theatreland,* p. 95.
[81] See Chapter 2, p. 110 and Orrell, *Quest*, p. 135.

All bays are assumed to have had an access walkway behind where audience members would also have been able to stand and move around.[82]

Standard bay	Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	Row 5	Row 6	Standing	
Gallery 1	7	7	8	9	10	10	12	
Gallery 2	7	7	8	9	10	10	10	
Gallery 3	7	7	8	8	8			162
Turret bay	Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	Row 5	Row 6	Standing	
Gallery 1	8	8	7	7	7	7	4	
Gallery 2	8	8	7	7	7	7	4	
Gallery 3	4	5	6	7				118
Entrance bay	Row 1	Row 2	Row 3	Row 4	Row 5	Row 6	Standing	
Gallery 1								
Gallery 2	7	7	8	9	10	10	10	
Gallery 3	7	7	8	8	8			99

Figure 3.5 Illustration of capacity of three types of seating bay.

Based on the interior angles and gallery lengths, the total area of the yard, excluding the stage, is calculated to be 2355 sq ft (218.8 sq m). Using the same equation as for the Rose, described in Chapter 2 (p. 114) (based on 740 senior Dulwich College pupils occupying a space of 1719 sq ft), the capacity of the Globe yard can be calculated: 2355 ÷ (1719 ÷ 740)=1014.

Bay	Type	3 galleries
1	Stage	
2	Stage	
3	Stage	
4	Stage	
5	Stage	
6	Standard	162
7	Standard	162
8	Standard	162
9	Standard	162
10	Turret	118
11	Standard	162
12	Entrance	99
13	Standard	162
14	Turret	118
15	Standard	162
16	Standard	162
17	Standard	162
18	Standard	162
		1955

Galleries	1955
Lords' rooms	16
Yard	1014
Total	**2985**

Figure 3.6 Illustration of total potential capacity of the Globe.

[82] Tiffany Stern, '"You That Walk i'th Galleries": Standing and Walking in the Galleries of the Globe Theatre', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 51.2 (2000), pp. 211–16, doi:10.2307/2902134.

Adding the yard capacity (1014) to that of the galleries (1955) gives a total figure of 2985. With no health and safety regulation in 1599 to limit attendance, the practical capacity of any playhouse was fluid, yet this speculative number is so close to the anecdotal figure of 3000 that it may, perhaps, be accepted as within the bounds of reasonable possibility. These seating arrangements will be used in Chapter 4 (Part Two) to determine the financial capacity of the Globe. It should be noted that although the calculations above relate to the first Globe, 1599 to 1613, the calculation of capacities, both physical and financial, assumes that the rebuilt Globe, 1614 to 1642, held the same number of people (albeit that it was probably more highly decorated) as it was claimed to be reconstructed on the same footprint. Referring to the second Globe, litigation in 1632 described it as 'sett vp there vpon the said demised premisses in the same place where the former howse stood', and three years later a Southwark building survey confirmed it had been constructed 'on an old foundac*i*on'.[83]

4.2 The Globe: what did it cost to build?

The best guide to the cost of dismantling the Theatre and re-erecting it as the Globe is to be found in the contract and expenditure for the Fortune, analysed in Chapter 2. This agreement between Henslowe and Alleyn, and their builder, Peter Street, refers explicitly at several points to items which Henslowe and Alleyn want copied ('steares Conveyances & divisions wthoute & wthin') or improved upon ('all the saide fframe in every poynte […] lardger and bigger in assize') and thus it should be possible to arrive at an approximate construction figure

[83] TNA, Req2/706, transcribed in Berry, *Playhouses,* p. 200; The Parish of St Saviour, Southwark, view of new buildings 1635 TLA, P92/SAV/1327, transcribed by Alan Nelson, <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/foundations.html#clink> [accessed 15 October 2024].

for the Globe, too.[84] Henslowe's account with Street from January to June 1600 itemises approximately £100 in newly hewn large timbers for the Fortune's frame, plus around £30 to bring them downriver by barge.[85] This is the major item of expenditure not required for the Globe. Nevertheless, building the Globe was labour intensive as dismantling the Theatre had to be done carefully (and therefore was unlikely to have been either speedy or surreptitious), salvaging as many mortice and tenon joints as possible, and trimming timbers where that was not achievable. Wallace, however, surmises that the £40 worth of iron utilised in the Theatre's construction was probably designed to facilitate removal (allowed for in the lease) in lieu of mortice and tenon joints.[86] Whichever method was employed, some new timber would have been required. The dismantled timbers had to be individually labelled using traditional carpenters' marks and moved to Street's wharf for temporary storage before being taken across the river and meticulously reassembled.[87] The weekly labour cost was probably around the same as that for the Fortune, an average £6 per week (for twenty men) for twenty-six weeks totalling £156 (£128 is recorded for the Fortune although the final total was probably higher). The first Globe was thatched rather than tiled but in all other respects would have required the same materials as the Fortune. These included wood and ironwork for internal finishing which were unlikely to have been salvageable from the Theatre. The Globe also had the constructional disadvantage of being polygonal rather than square like the Fortune, undoubtedly making it slower to insert stairs, gallery floors and benches. Making allowance for both the savings on timber and extra costs of labour, the Globe, too, probably cost somewhere between £700 and £800. During the protracted lawsuit over the lease in the

[84] HADP, Muniments, group 022.
[85] Reverse of ADC, Muniment 22, Henslowe's account with Street, *Diary*, pp. 310—315.
[86] Charles W. Wallace, *The First London Theatre: Materials for a History* (University of Nebraska Press, 1913), p. 8.
[87] Irwin Smith, 'Theatre into Globe', p. 116.

1630s, the then current owners, referring back to the original construction, claimed that the brothers Burbage and their colleagues

> did at theire owne proper Costs and chardges expend disburse and lay out in the erecting newe building […] used for Playhowse and commonly called the Globe the somme of One Thowsand pounds of lawfull English money at the least.[88]

In the same suit, John Atkins, one of Heminges's sons-in-law, and scrivener (legal executive) to the company for twenty years, deposed that 'the best parte of one thowsand Pounds' was spent on the building.[89] These statements exaggerated both the Burbages' personal financial involvement as well as the cost. Later in the same lawsuit all parties accepted as a negotiated 'statement of fact' that the first Globe cost £700, which suggests that the hard spend may have been £700 to £800.[90]

4.3 The Globe: how was it funded?

If paying for the Fortune was relatively straightforward, remaining within the Henslowe family, funding the Globe was a significantly more complex issue, as outlined above.[91] Under

[88] TNA, REQ 2/706, 28 January 1632 Bill of Complaint, transcribed by Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* p. 198. The complainants were the then current co-owners, Cuthbert Burbage, Richard Robinson (inheritor of Richard Burbage's share via his late wife, Winifred, Richard Burbage's widow) and William Heminges, who had inherited his father, John's, share. John Lowen and Joseph Taylor were also named complainants as assignees of William Heminges.
[89] TNA, REQ 2/706, 18 September 1632 Interrogatories, John Atkins for the King's Men. Transcribed by Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* p. 212.
[90] In November 1634, £1400 appears to have been agreed as the figure for the rebuilt Globe. TNA, REQ 1/157 fol. 65^{v}. Transcribed by Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* p. 237.
[91] Pp. 189—91.

the original agreement between the Burbages, and Heminges, Kempe, Phillips, Pope and Shakespeare, Cuthbert and Richard retained 50% and the other initial co-owners held 10% each. The general assumption that the build costs were shared in the same ratio as ownership was advanced first by Chambers and subsequently accepted by Berry, Gurr, Bearman and others.[92] On this basis, an £800 final bill might be thought to have been split £400 to the Burbages and £80 to each of their co-owner colleagues. Had the Globe cost as much as Cuthbert's quoted £1000, this would result in the claim that has become almost standard, that each of the others paid £100 for his share. Yet it is equally possible that the Burbages valued the timber and goodwill as half the deal and that the sole cash used was that raised from their partners. Gurr, for example, believes that the Burbages supplied the timber as their contribution and that the others put in £100.[93] This would create a cash (or credit) budget of just £500, demonstrably too low, as shown by the Fortune expenses, to cover the cost of labour and everything other than the main timbers. At the more likely total of £700 to £800, each of the non-Burbage partners would have been required to supply cash (or a mix of cash and credit) of £140 to £160.

This would have been a very significant commitment for a player. If John Heminges was, indeed, running a separate grocery business (either personally or via his wife Rebecca), he might have found it easier than the others to fund his Globe share. That business may have supplied some cash but, just as importantly, it would have enabled him to raise credit without too much difficulty.[94] Shakespeare had only his sharer income (see Chapter 4) and had already

[92] E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (Oxford University Press, 1988), II, pp. 58–61; Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* pp. 182–222; Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642*, p. 33; Bearman, *Shakespeare's Money,* p. 105.
[93] Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642*, p. 33.
[94] See chapter 1 for details of Heminges's career charted through the Grocers' Company records.

stretched himself on the purchase of New Place (1597) but he was clearly careful with his money and planning future investments. By 1598 he was being talked of as someone of substance who might stand surety for a £30 bond. Bearman, however, speculates that raising his contribution to the Globe may have delayed his next investment, a share in the Stratford upon Avon tithes, purchased in 1602.[95] Nothing is known of Pope's or Phillips's financial standing at this time but both died only a few years later, Pope in 1603 and Phillips in 1605. Each described himself in his will as a gentleman and left substantial bequests of cash and gold or silver (£313 10s in the case of Pope, £108 10s for Phillips), plus property.[96] Phillips refers to the 'howse and Land in Mortlacke which I lately purchased', the timing suggesting that it was acquired with the fruits of his Globe ownership.[97] Pope appears to have had fewer direct family responsibilities which left him with more cash to disburse but, like Phillips, he also bought and/or leased property, including tenements on each side of his home. But he knew that the cash for legacies might have to be called in by his executors: 'much of this mony is out upon bonds'.[98] Although both Pope and Phillips added to their prosperity with their share of the Globe, each was clearly good for cash or credit in early 1599. This may not have been the case for Will Kemp. No comparable will or other financial information exists for him but his abrupt departure from the company, only a few months after the original agreement was signed, may have been precipitated by his unwillingness, or inability, to make the payment when required. As described above, his share was swiftly reallocated between the

[95] Bearman, *Shakespeare's Money,* pp. 93 and 104.
[96] Wills of Thomas Pope, TNA, PROB 10/224, and Augustine Phillips, TNA, PROB 10/232 in Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* pp. 68-74.
[97] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* p. 73.
[98] Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* p. 71.

remaining four non-Burbage housekeepers and John Heminges found himself the owner of 12.5% of the Globe.

4.4 Rebuilding the Globe: 'Distressed stood old stuttering Heminges.'*

On 29th June 1613 the Globe burnt to the ground in just two hours at an early performance of *All is True*. The event was recorded in several letters and in a ballad which name checks three of the presumably devastated owners:

> Out runne the Knightes: out runne the Lordes
> and there was great adoe
> some lost their hattes & some their swords
> then out runne Burbidge too
> the reprobates thoughe druncke on munday
> pray'd for the foole & Henry Condye
> oh sorrow pittifull sorrow and yett all this is true.
>
> The perrywigs & drumme-heads frye
> like to a butter firkin
> a wofull burneing did betide
> to many a good buff ierkin;
> then with swolne eyes like druncken fflemminges
> distressed stood old stuttering Heminges.[99]

* Ballad of 'The Burning of the Globe' quoted in Peter Beal, 'The Burning of the Globe', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 20 June 1986, pp. 689-, <https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?st=Newspapers&lm=DA~119860600&searchResultsType=SingleTab&qt=OQE~%22burning%22~~OQE~%22globe%22&sw=w&ty=as&it=search&sid=bookmark-TLSH&p=TLSH&s=Pub+Date+Forward+Chron&u=bham_uk&v=2.1&asid=a28345a8> [accessed 16 October 2024].

[99] Beal, 'The Burning of the Globe'.

To describe Heminges as distressed by the fire is surely an understatement. He was probably on stage as it started and alarmed for his own safety, that of his fellows, and for the safety of the sizeable audience. Everyone had a near-miraculous escape as the blaze took hold, but for Heminges and all the King's Men it would have been a traumatic experience, watching their base, their home for more than a decade, being destroyed so utterly. But the reconstruction that followed the disaster was to place Heminges at the forefront of the King's Men, managing the multiple strands of the project. When the first Globe was built, Heminges was just one of the consortium and management of the construction project was almost certainly in the hands of Cuthbert Burbage. By the time of the fire, Heminges was running the company finances and it therefore fell to him to act as project manager for the rebuild. He was later described as 'a principall agent ymployed in and about the oversight of the building of the said Playhowse', so it would have been Heminges who calculated what that rebuild might cost and what capital was going to be required from each owner. [100]

Two of the contemporary letters about the Globe burning note that the speed of destruction was due to fire catching in the thatched roof. Thatch, rather than tile, had been both a style in the earlier playhouses (the Rose, for example) and also an economy. When the first Globe was built, Street constructed what he could, using the recycled materials and limited budget available to him. It was almost inevitably a building built on compromise, providing a hurried construction for the company that was not necessarily perfect in every way. When the Burbage consortium decided that they would replace it following the fire, they may also have decided to build the venue they really wanted, with new materials and nothing skimped. Although Orrell believes that 'charred but largely unconsumed' massive timbers

[100] Deposition of John Atkins, October 1, 1634. TNA, Req2/706 quoted in Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* pp. 229–30.

from the original would have been used in the rebuilding this runs counter to the letters describing complete destruction.[101] The Globe's reconstruction could be viewed as a vanity project rather than a necessity. The King's Men had the smaller capacity indoor Blackfriars that could have been pressed into service year-round and they had the choice of touring during the summer months if Blackfriars had been deemed too warm or unhealthy. But having chosen to proceed, they moved at speed.

One of Heminges's very first actions, before mid-July, was to his own advantage. In Chapter 1, (pp. 78—79) it was noted that he first paid his brotherhood money to the Grocers' Company within days of the fire. Although possibly coincidental, the timing suggests that he viewed his good standing with the Grocers as useful for his separate tap-house business at the Globe.[102] Even more important, however, than securing his own private enterprise was the issue of the Globe lease. In 1613 it had only sixteen years to run, to Christmas 1629, so that it was important to obtain a lengthy extension to justify the expenditure that would be necessary to create a superior replacement for the original building. Within four months, the housekeepers had gained a six-year extension, to Christmas 1635, at the same rent (£14 10s) from John Bodley, who held the mortgage for the land.[103] This knowledge would have allowed them to start planning with their new carpenter (Peter Street had died in 1609) for the timber felling to take place in winter when sap was low, and to hire the team ready to fabricate the mainframe by late spring. The second Globe was operating within a year of the fire, beating Henslowe and Meade's construction project at the Hope by some three months.[104]

[101] Andrew Gurr and John Orrell, *Rebuilding Shakespeare's Globe* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1989), pp. 94–95.
[102] The tap-house and ancillary sales are discussed below in section 6.
[103] Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* p. 158.
[104] TNA, SP14/77/fol. 107^{v} in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 613.

Heminges, along with both Burbages and Henry Condell, met with the fourteen-year-old owner, Matthew Brend, and his representatives in February, to negotiate a longer extension and, as part of an inducement to get him to agree, committed to spend £1000 on rebuilding the Globe.[105] Although there was no final resolution to this (Brend later disowned a contract signed in his minority), it gives a clear figure of £1000 (roughly 25% more than the original had cost) as the estimated building cost in February, midway through the construction period. The holder of each share therefore needed to put in just over £70 to provide the budget. Litigation with Augustine Phillips's heirs (John Witter, on behalf of his wife, Anne Phillips Witter), suggests that Heminges sought a contribution of £60 per share, insufficient for the estimated cost in February.[106] But even at this level Witter defaulted and Heminges and Condell jointly took over that share. It was perhaps at this point that Shakespeare withdrew from financial involvement with the housekeepers and sold his shares to Heminges and Condell, giving each a stake of nearly 18% thus, with the Burbages, dominating the consortium.[107] The company scrivener, John Atkins, recorded that his father-in-law Heminges had co-ordinated the project and Atkins himself had prepared contracts for the freelance workers.

In 1632, the current housekeepers, in their lawsuit with the Globe's landlord, the now Sir Matthew Brend (knighted at his majority), over the still disputed lease extension, claimed that the rebuilt playhouse had been constructed 'to theire further charge of ffiteene hundred pounds'.[108] In the same suit, Atkins deposed that the total spent was 'Thirteene or fourteene

[105] TNA, SP14/77/fol. 107^{v} in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 613.
[106] Charles W. Wallace, *Shakespeare and His London Associates as Revealed in Recently Discovered Documents* (University of Nebraska Press, 1910), p. 60.
[107] See Chapter 4, pp.302—04 for further details of Shakespeare's financial position at this point.
[108] TNA, Req2/706 transcribed in Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* p. 200.

hundred Pounds'.[109] This lower figure was nevertheless a huge overrun on the anticipated £1000, possibly largely incurred later in the building process in creating a more attractive and, in the highest income-yielding areas, more luxurious environment for playgoers now used to the indoor setting of the Blackfriars. Further cost estimates came from Richard Hudson, a carpenter who had worked for James Burbage on the Theatre and who had been involved in building the first Globe, and his colleague, Thomas Spurling. Spurling valued 'the timber and Carpenters worke' in the rebuilt playhouse, deposing it 'Could not Cost lesse than Eleaven hundred pounds'.[110] Others who had been involved in the rebuilding also gave their views: John Wathen, bricklayer, valued 'materialls and workemanshipp' of the brickwork and tiling at £240, and Richard Fisher said the 'plaisteringe worke and materialls […] were very well worth 300^{li}'.[111] The resulting total was £1640, with Spurling's £1100 for the frame and labour. Allowing for some exaggeration from the craftsmen, and accepting Atkins's figure of £1400, this meant that Heminges eventually needed to obtain £350 from each of the Burbages; £250 from Henry Condell; £100 from Thomas Pope's heirs; and put in £350 himself to cover his own and his son in law William Ostler's shares. All these substantial figures then had to be earned back in succeeding years to return the Globe to profit.

[109] TNA, Req2/706, 1 October 1634 Interrogatories, John Atkins for the King's Men, transcribed in Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* p. 230.
[110] TNA, Req2/706, 18 September 1632 and 1 October 1634 Interrogatories, Richard Hudson for the King's Men. Transcribed in Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* pp. 216 and 232.
[111] TNA, Req2/706, 18 September 1632 Interrogatories, John Wathen and Richard Fisher for the King's Men. Transcribed in Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* p. 217.

4.5 The second Blackfriars: what was built and what did it cost?

Attempting to review what was built at the King's Men's/Burbage consortium's indoor playhouse, the second Blackfriars, and what it cost, is both easier and harder than the same exercise for the Globe. It is easier as there is a firm figure of £600 for James Burbage's February 1596 purchase of the former upper parliament chamber and associated spaces, with a further £400 expended on its conversion, and also because the dimensions of this chamber are known.[112] However, the lack of any remnant of the interior of the great mediaeval hall makes it harder. At £1000 total expenditure, Cuthbert's deposition in 1635 was accurate: 'o*u*r father purchased it at extreame rates & made it into a play house w*i*th great charge & trouble.'[113]

At least two modern playhouses have taken the second Blackfriars as the inspiration for their construction and might therefore offer a stylistic approximation of an indoor playhouse of the early seventeenth century. However, neither the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, at Shakespeare's Globe in London, nor the Blackfriars Playhouse at Staunton, Virginia, in the United States, can claim to be a physical replica. Bound by twenty-first century health and safety constraints and building regulations, they have seating capacities of 340 (plus 50 standing) and 324 respectively, and each features a seated pit and one lower and one upper gallery.[114] However, in his original conversion of the upper storey of the Blackfriars building, James Burbage is unlikely to have paid so much attention to the necessity for ease

[112] Mary Edmond, 'Burbage, James (c. 1531–1597), Actor', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/3950.
[113] Cuthbert Burbage in the Sharers' Papers, TNA, LC5/133.
[114] Seating information, Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, <https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/about-us/sam-wanamaker-playhouse> [accessed 16 October 2024]; seating plan, Blackfriars Playhouse, <https://americanshakespearecenter.my.salesforce-sites.com/ticket/#/instances/a0FUY000000cdwP2AQ> [accessed 16 October 2024].

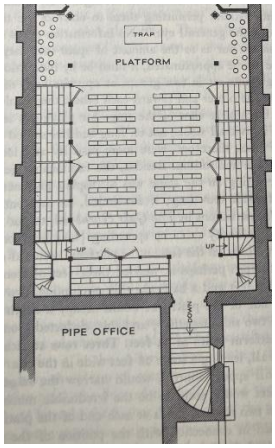
of access and speedy evacuation. His commercial intention would have been to fit in as many people as possible using the court-standard 18 in. (46 cm) seat width (described in Chapter 2, p. 107) across the maximum number of galleries permitted by the height of the 66 ft by 46 ft (20 m by 14 m) upper chamber.[115] The Fortune building contract gives the total height for its three galleries from the floor of the yard to the ceiling of the topmost level as 32 ft (9.7 m). At Blackfriars, it may have been possible to contain three galleries within the estimated 38 ft to 40 ft (11.5 m to 12 m) wall height, in which case the total seating capacity would have been around 650. This tallies approximately with Andrew Gurr's 'perhaps seven hundred' with three galleries (or 'barely six hundred' with two galleries).[116] Although a third upper gallery may have existed, its inclusion would have added seating at the lowest price, thus potentially compromising the space available for higher priced seats. As John Astington puts it, 'modern guesses generally arrive at a capacity of five to six hundred', and with this in mind, my estimate of seating capacity is based on only two galleries, affording maximum space (particularly headroom) in both.[117]

Sixty years ago, in *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, Irwin Smith arrived at a total seating capacity for the second Blackfriars of 516 based on the use of a pit with benches, three levels of gallery, and stools on stage.[118] Although more recent scholars, Astington included, have tended to assume two rather than three galleries, Smith's detailed conjectural calculations remain an (almost literal) benchmark of capacity, even though his imaginative

[115] The overall dimensions of the space are given in the testimony of Alexander Hawkins in a lawsuit of 1609, TNA, KB 27/1414/1, Herbert Berry, in Wickham et al, *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 501 and 518.
[116] Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 32.
[117] John H. Astington, 'Why the Theatres Changed' in *Moving Shakespeare Indoors,* ed. Andrew Gurr and Farah Karim-Cooper, p. 27.
[118] Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse* (NY University Press, 1964), p. 297.

visual reconstructions of the playhouse are now largely dismissed.[119] Smith used a seat width of 24 in. (61 cm) per person, whereas my own figures continue to use the court standard of 18 in.; and he calculated that there may have been as many as twenty-eight stools on stage.[120] At times, there may have been twenty-eight but the number may have varied by, for example, genre of play, playing space required for fighting or crowd scenes, or simply by the number of patrons wishing to sit there. With this uncertainty a more cautious sixteen has been allowed for here. However, Smith ignored the possibility of boxes; I have added a notional thirty-two box seats, which may have been spread across two or four, or more, boxes. My estimate of total seating capacity is therefore 524.[121] The newly seated pit area, in lieu of the standing yard, could accommodate thirteen rows of seats. The upper gallery, holding three rows of seats, was accessed by stairs at pit level. The capacity of the lower gallery, also three rows deep, would have been slightly reduced to allow entrance for everyone, not just pit patrons, from the main staircase into the chamber (at bottom right on the plan below). Irwin Smith's conjectural plan at pit/lower gallery level is helpful in visualising this layout.[122]

[119] For example, J.A. Lavin, 'The Elizabethan Theatre and the Inductive Method', in *The Elizabethan Theatre II. Papers given at the Second International Conference on Elizabethan Theatre Held at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, in July 1969.*, ed. David Galloway, (Macmillan, 1970), p. 77; Christopher Highley, 'Early Troubles: From the 1596 Petition to Ben Jonson at the Second Blackfriars Playhouse', *Blackfriars in Early Modern London: Theater, Church, and Neighborhood* (Oxford Academic, 2022), p. 199, n. 33.
[120] Smith, *Blackfriars*, p. 297.
[121] Pit 174 + stage stools + galleries 302 + box seats = 524.
[122] Smith, *Blackfriars,* p. 310, photo M. Faiers.



Pit	174
Stage stools	16
Gallery 1 (reduced for accesss)	142
Gallery 2	160
Box seats	32
Total capacity	**524**

Figure 3.7 Left, diagram of the Blackfriars at floor/first gallery level from Irwin Smith, 'Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse'; right, illustration of potential capacity of the Blackfriars.

4.6 The second Blackfriars: how was it funded?

When James Burbage bought the mediaeval great hall of Blackfriars in 1596 it was, it is assumed, with the intention of creating an indoor playing space for the company led by his son, Richard. James died, intestate, exactly a year later, having been thwarted in that plan by the activist residents of the Blackfriars area, galvanised by Lady Elizabeth Russell, somewhat perversely including the Lord Chamberlain's Men's own patron, Henry Carey.[123] Possession of the Blackfriars passed to Richard before his father's death (Cuthbert gained The Theatre) who, perhaps for easy money and a quiet life in the face of such local opposition, leased it to Henry Evans for use by the boys of the Chapel Royal.[124] The success of the children's company meant that Richard and the rest of the King's Men were effectively locked out of his inheritance until the spring of 1608, when King James took offence at the boys' repertoire and ordered them to be closed down.[125] This provided the opportunity for Richard to reclaim the Blackfriars for

[123] For an account of this local activism, see Chris Laoutaris, *Shakespeare and the Countess: The Battle That Gave Birth to the Globe* (Penguin, 2014).
[124] Chambers, *ES,* II, p. 306.
[125] Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies*, pp. 354—55.

his own company, negotiating an arrangement with Evans to buy him out of his remaining lease, and bringing together a new consortium to co-venture with him. The new group comprised Richard and Cuthbert, the player-housekeepers of the Globe (Condell, Heminges, Shakespeare and Sly) and Thomas Evans, the son of Henry, included in the deal as part of his compensation.[126] No money changed hands for these shares. Richard seemingly gave away six-sevenths of the Blackfriars to facilitate the plan of year-round operation by the King's Men. Andrew Gurr characterised this as 'an unprecedented act of generosity and fellowship'.[127] That is a possibility. It could equally represent a negotiated outcome for depriving his fellow player-housekeepers (and his brother) of profits from the Globe for more than half the year; or it could even have been a means of gaining hard cash (£40 annual rent) from the new Blackfriars housekeepers at the expense of less tangible future profits. Although applauding what he saw as the spirit behind it, Gurr also described the choice to use two playhouses as 'proud, exclusive and uneconomical'.[128] 'Confident' might be a gentler interpretation than 'proud' but it certainly was an exclusive choice; no other company operated a system of two fixed venues. However, it is highly doubtful that it proved to be an uneconomical choice. As Chapter 4 will demonstrate, the additional costs for all parties, housekeepers and sharers, across both playhouses, were more than justified by the massively increased income per performance at the Blackfriars. Whether the decision was altruistic, or selfish, or somewhere between, it was to yield serious financial benefits to all who worked at the Blackfriars.

[126] Lucy Munro has confirmed that Thomas was the son of Henry Evans, rather than the scribal error the name has previously been assumed to be. Lucy Munro, 'Who Owned the Blackfriars Playhouse?', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 70.4 (2021), pp. 247–69 (p. 253), doi:10.1093/sq/quaa013.
[127] Gurr, *Shakespeare Company*, p. 112.
[128] Gurr, *Shakespearian Playing Companies*, p. 296.

5 Operating the playhouses

5.1 The Globe: housekeepers

For ten years from 1599, the King's Men performed in only one playhouse, the Globe, which was probably in operation for around forty weeks in an averagely 'good' year. There was technically a prohibition against playing during the six weeks of Lent, although from the evidence of Henslowe's Diary and Heminges's payments to the Master of the Revels, there was clearly some flexibility in the application of the rule.[129] Perhaps up to four weeks of performances were lost yearly before Easter. The principal season of performances at court, when the King's Men were especially called for, ran from 1 November (All Souls Day) to 2 February (Candlemas), with a particularly intense period in the two weeks around Christmas itself (mirroring the modern 'golden period' of pantomime performances). The Christmas court was often resident away from Whitehall, further upstream on the Thames. The players therefore lost a day's performance at the Globe to travel and perform, sometimes on several days in succession. As a result, Globe performances through the Christmas season were intermittent at best and, at worst, lost entirely. For the purpose of my analysis, two weeks of performances in December and January are discounted from the total, with a further six weeks across the year where performances had to be omitted due, for example, to weather, plague, political or regulatory issues. Added to the weeks presumed lost in Lent, there may have been twelve weeks when performances did not take place in London each year. There was perhaps some compensation for this from touring, but that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

[129] Henslowe recorded performances during Lent in 1595, 1596 and especially in 1597.

Some of the running costs the King's Men and housekeepers faced were limited to their playing weeks but others, especially those of the housekeepers, were annual charges which could not be avoided. These related to personnel; to the building itself; and to its original and ongoing financing. The personnel costs to the housekeepers were not heavy. They needed a nightwatchman to guard against intruders and fire, someone who could perhaps also double as maintenance carpenter, repairing damaged fixtures and fittings and generally keeping the building in good repair despite its location in the boggy Bankside area. (It has already been noted (p.198) that the owners generally kept the drainage ditches surrounding the Globe in at least an acceptable condition). These security and maintenance tasks may have been undertaken by more than one person but a notional allowance of ten shillings per week (£26 per year) would have been adequate. The only other direct employees of the housekeepers were the gatherers who collected the income at the doors. These may initially have been two groups of people remunerated separately by the owners and the playing company but it is very likely that they became one entity. Assuming that, as appears to have been the case at the Rose, gatherers were able to retain the loose change of takings in their money box (with the total rounded down to the nearest sixpence or shilling so that they had the opportunity to earn a little extra each day), a total of £20 per year would have been sufficient to pay them.[130]

The first cost under the building heading was the rent of £14 10s payable annually to the Brend family for the land on which the playhouse stood. The Globe itself then required a licence as a performance space under the December 1574 Court of Common Council ruling.[131] This was obtained from the Master of the Revels and varied over time but an average of £3

[130] See Chapter 4, p. 268 for further details of gatherers.
[131] BL, MS Lansdowne 20 in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 73—77.

per playing month has been assumed in the summary below. The same Common Council ruling also required owners of licensed performance spaces to pay 'to the use of the poor in hospitals of the City, or the poor of the City visited with sickness', with the payment to be negotiated with the local parish, in this case, St Saviour.[132] The housekeepers' contribution to the parish poor relief may have averaged five shillings per playing week, or £10 per year. A budget was also required for the modest running repairs and maintenance that the resident carpenter would undertake. When the Globe was new, no extensive or expensive work should have been necessary, thus a figure of £30 annually may have sufficed. With all these costs tallied, the housekeepers' tangible costs amounted to £131 per year, with 40% (£51) unavoidable in the event of closure. Therefore, during the plague hiatuses of the 1600s, each housekeeper would have been liable to cover £8 10s annually in building costs, with no income against which to offset it. Unless the player-housekeepers had built up personal reserves this would have been an alarming prospect.

In addition to what might be termed these 'hard' costs of running the Globe, the housekeepers also had to earn back the £800 cost of building it in the first place, amortised (divided) across the thirty-one-year lifetime of their lease, before they could truly declare that they were in profit. This is not an area that has attracted great scholarly interest. Summaries of the King's Men's earnings and/or profits, such as those of Gurr or Bearman, include only the hard costs and ignore the question of lease length and amortisation, although as previously noted (p. 100) Berry touches on this consideration.[133] As with calculations of Henslowe's playhouse finances in Chapter 2, I aim to examine the broader finances of

[132] BL, MS Lansdowne 20 in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 73—77.
[133] Gurr, *Shakespeare Company*, pp. 85–119; Bearman, *Shakespeare's Money,* pp. 146–53; Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* pp. 149–96.

playhouse ownership, thus including the long term costs. Assuming that Henslowe's approximately £100 of major expenditure every four or five years (see Chapter 2, p. 137) indicates what was required to keep a playhouse in good working condition, the Globe consortium probably had to resign themselves to allocating something similar over the lifetime of their lease. This totalled perhaps £600, in addition to the small annual repairs budget. Like the Rose, the Globe, too, would suffer from prolonged periods of plague closure reducing the usable years of the lease, so that the figure of £1525 (£800 construction cost plus £600 allowance for major works plus £125 for the dark plague months) needed to be charged across the remaining 28.5 years of the lease, at £53 per year.[134] This would have made the housekeepers' total annual cost of operating the Globe 1599 to 1609, £184.

Globe 1: 40 wks p.a.	
Rent	£15
Licensing 10 months	£30
Donation to parish	£10
Repairs & maintenance	£40
Gatherers	£10
Security/carpenter	£26
Amortised plague costs	£4
Amortised capital costs	£49
	£184

Globe 1: 20 wks p.a.	
Rent	£15
Licensing 5 months	£15
Donation to parish	£5
Repairs & maintenance	£20
Security/carpenter	£26
Gatherers	£5
Amortised plague costs	£4
Amortised capital costs	£49
	£139

Figure 3.8 Illustration of Globe 1 housekeeper costs for 40-week season (left) and 20-week season (right).

Once the Blackfriars opened and use of the Globe was reduced to around five months of the year, certain of the costs would have gone down proportionately, taking this figure down to £139 per year for the period 1610 to 1613. However, the rebuilding of their playhouse saw a dramatic rise in annual costs to accommodate the £1400 that, by common consent, the housekeeping consortium spent. By 1614 the lease was running out and the

[134] (£800 + £600 + £125) ÷ 28.5 = £53.

situation surrounding its renegotiation became hugely contested, with disputes running into the late 1630s, but, at the time of rebuilding, the housekeepers had obtained an extension only to 1635. Thus, more than £60 per year had to be allocated to recoup the rebuilding cost. There are two financial uncertainties here: firstly, it is impossible to know if they had recouped all the costs of constructing the first Globe (£800) by the time of the fire. If not, that figure would have to be written off. Secondly, some of the £600 major building fund may have remained unspent by 1613 and therefore been available towards the reconstruction cost. My figures assume that these two imponderables cancel each other out. The housekeepers' total cost of operating the second Globe rose to £150 with the addition of the amortised (divided annually) rebuilding cost. This was for just five months' annual operation and explains why its owners were so anxious to secure a new, longer lease to allow them to recover the cost of reconstruction.

Globe 2: 20 wks p.a.	
Rent	£15
Licensing 5 months	£15
Donation to parish	£5
Repairs & maintenance	£15
Gatherers	£10
Security/carpenter	£26
Amortised rebuilding cost	£64
	£150

Figure 3.9 Illustration of Globe 2 housekeeper costs for 20-week season.

5.2 The Globe: Company sharers

This section will consider the costs that had to be borne by the sharers of the King's Men. These men were all players but not all players were sharers; some players were waged hired men, with no responsibility beyond their individual job description. Some, such as Heminges

and Shakespeare, were sharers in the King's Men and also housekeepers of the Globe. This group had to bear their proportionate share of both company sharer and housekeeper costs. The reward they could expect for taking on such a burden will be examined in the next chapter.

At any time that a playhouse was open for performances, the playing company's costs were vastly more than those of the owners, a point made forcibly by King's Men Benfield, Swanston and Pollard at law in 1635:

> out of the Actors moiety, there is notwithstanding defrayed all wages to hired men, Apparell, Poet*es*, light*es*, & other charges of the Houses whatsoever, soe that, betweene the Gaynes of the Actors, & of those few interested as Houskeepers, there is an vnreasonable inequality.[135]

For the first decade of the Globe's life, the company sharers (including, of course, those who were also player-housekeepers, such as Heminges and Shakespeare) would have incurred costs of approximately £600 for the forty-week playing year, on the basis of introducing twelve new plays into the repertory.[136] This was more than three times as much as the housekeepers' costs. Unlike the housekeepers, the largest single cost was for their personnel, assumed here to have averaged eight hired men on stage across the year, with four others fulfilling offstage responsibilities. These hired personnel, players, costume person(s), technical crew and bookholder, cost perhaps £240.[137] These are calculated at a generous

[135] Petition of Benfield, Swanston and Pollard, TNA, LC5/133.
[136] 'Drama historians have agreed that the Chamberlain's [Men] probably acted an average of twenty-five to thirty plays a year […] forty percent to fifty percent would have been new plays': Knutson, *Chamberlain's Men,* p. 74.
[137] For example, T.J. King in *Casting Shakespeare's Plays* (Cambridge, 1992) illustrates the possible casting and doubling arrangements for many of the plays in King's Men's repertory, ranging from the economy of *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (nine principal, and three minor, adult players) to, for example, *Coriolanus* (eleven principal, and fourteen minor, adult players).

average of 10s per person per week for forty weeks to allow for gradations in payment, for example, for the bookholder, who was undoubtedly paid substantially more than a new, young, hired man. The company may have departed London to tour as soon as possible if the playhouses were forced to close, partly to avoid an unproductive wage bill for their hired men. The other personnel whose expenses had to be paid were the apprentices, lodged with Heminges and other masters within the company. They are included as a company expense at 6s per week each for their lodging during playing weeks only, a total of £60.[138] The company's remaining costs were all production costs. Twelve plays are included at the rate of £10 each, to include the cost of production of playbook and parts (described above, p. 176); each play then required a licence from the Revels office, costing 7s; and an allowance of £15 per new play is included for costume and props. Some plays would have required a much higher level of expenditure, perhaps rivalling the Admiral's Men's spend on costumes for *The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey* of almost £39, £21 of it on red velvet for the cardinal's robe.[139] Sir Henry Wotton's description of *All is True*, also featuring the cardinal, suggests it, too, stretched the costume budget to the limit:

> Set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty, even to the matting of the stage: the knights of the order with their Georges and garters, the guards with their embroidered coats, and the like.[140]

Juggling the demands of play choice and costume requirements with available budget must have been a tricky task for Heminges at times.

[138] John Heminges received weekly payments 'for boyes and otherwise': TNA, C2/Chas1/S3/21, Reply of William Heminges and John Atkins.
[139] *Diary*, fols. 92^{v} and 93^{r}, pp. 179–80.
[140] Letter from Sir Henry Wotton to Sir Edmund Bacon, 2 July 1613, in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 499.

Globe 1: 40 wks p.a.	
Plays 12 @£10	£120
Licensing 12 plays	£5
Costume 12 plays	£180
Hired men 8 players/4 staff	£240
Apprentices' living (5)	£60
	£605

Figure 3.10 Illustration of Globe 1 company sharer costs for 40-week season.

The advent of the Blackfriars gave the King's Men the opportunity both to perform all year round and to introduce extra plays into the repertory, perhaps fifteen in total. But the price for this increase in productivity was a commensurate increase in their overall costs. My working hypothesis is that six new titles were added each year at the Globe and nine at the Blackfriars, proportionate to the length of playing season in each venue. (It also assumes that, once in the repertory, all could be played in both houses). The company may, of course, have operated in a completely different fashion. On this basis, whilst the majority of their expenses at the Globe reduced proportionately with the shorter playing season, their payroll remained almost unchanged. This was due to the addition of the consort of musicians assumed to have been inherited with the acquisition of the Blackfriars, who now had to be paid for, too. These are likely to have formed a mixed consort, where 'the instruments most commonly associated with the term are lute, cittern, bandora, treble viol/violin, bass viol and flute'; my figures assume that this consort comprised eight regularly employed musicians.[141] At least seven musicians, and possibly as many as fifteen, have been identified in Sir Henry Herbert's 1624 list of musicians and necessary attendants, by John Cutts and William Lyons respectively.[142]

[141] Simon Smith, *Musical Response in the Early Modern Playhouse, 1603–1625* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 196 (note 44), doi:10.1017/9781316848333.
[142] Linda Phyllis Austern, *Music in English Children's Drama of the Later Renaissance* (Gordon and Breach, 1992), p. 13, <http://archive.org/details/musicinenglishch0000aust> [accessed 12 June 2024]; Austern, p. 311; William Lyons, 'Theatre Bands and Their Music in Shakespeare's London', in *Shakespeare, Music and*

This was a maximal list to protect the pool of players, regular and casual, who might be needed over the annual court revels season. The resulting total expense for the sharers was £382 for just twenty weeks – or more than £3 per performance in a six-performance week.

Globe 1: 20 wks p.a.	
Plays 6 @ £10	£60
Licensing 6 plays	£2
Costume 6 plays	£90
Hired men 8 players/4 staff	£120
Musicians (8)	£80
Apprentices' living (5)	£30
	£382

Figure 3.11 Illustration of Globe company sharer costs for 20-week season.

5.3 Blackfriars: Housekeepers' costs

The first responsibility of the new Blackfriars housekeepers under the terms of the twenty-one-year lease was to pay £40 per annum to their landlord, Richard Burbage. If shared equally, his fellow housekeepers were paying him £6 1s 4d each. The playhouse had to be licensed at £3 per month for the seven months when performances were held and, especially after the initial furore more than a decade previously, it would have been important to keep local parishioners happy by making a sizeable contribution of more than £1 per month to the parish poor relief. Although the indoor Blackfriars probably required less maintenance of the physical space than was the case at the Globe, security, in the form of a nightwatchman, would still have been relevant. Fire was still a risk, even in a stone building, and could easily destroy the gallery and stage framework slotted into it. Trespass and theft potentially

Performance, ed. by Bill Barclay and David Lindley (Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 14–28 (p. 23); John P. Cutts, 'New Findings with Regard to the 1624 Protection List', in *Shakespeare Survey: Volume 19: Macbeth*, ed. by Kenneth Muir, Shakespeare Survey (Cambridge University Press, 1967), XIX, 101–7, (p. 104), doi:10.1017/CCOL0521064325.011; Adams, *Dramatic Records,* pp. 74–75.

represented an even greater risk as the playhouse was just one part of a much larger precinct, difficult to secure and police. As at the Globe, a nightwatchman/men could double the function of maintenance carpenter, repairing the damage caused not by exposure to wind and rain but by careless or overenthusiastic audience members, and general wear and tear. The cost for this function is included at 10s per week all year round, £26, as is a modest repairs and maintenance budget of £25. As the housekeeping consortium took the playhouse back from Henry Evans more than ten years after James Burbage first purchased it, it is almost certain that the original purchase price (£600) and cost of adaptation (£400) had long been written off in the Burbage family finances. As a result, rather than needing to recoup a large building cost over the lifetime of the lease, they had only to accumulate sufficient money annually to create a fund for major repairs and renovation. Continuing to use the 'Rose' principle of £100 every four or five years, this could have equalled £400 over the lifetime of the twenty-one-year lease, thus £19 a year is added to my calculation of housekeepers' running costs. (By the time of the Globe fire, in 1613, the Blackfriars housekeepers might have accumulated £80 to £100 in an unspent reserve which, with the agreement of the housekeepers of both playhouses, could have been used to reduce the cash required to rebuild the Globe. Although technically possible, this is entirely hypothetical.) Without having to recoup James Burbage's initial outlay, right from the start, the Blackfriars was much more profitable for its housekeepers than the Globe. Their total running costs for a thirty-week operation amounted to £146 – only a few pounds more than at the Globe, where there was only a twenty-week playing season.

Housekeepers' running costs	
Rent	£40
Licensing 7 months	£21
Parish	£8
Repairs & maintenance	£25
Security/carpenter	£26
Gatherers	£7
Long term building fund	£19
	£146

Figure 3.12 Illustration of Blackfriars housekeeper costs for 30-week season.

5.4 Blackfriars: Sharers' costs

As in 5.2 above on the company sharers' costs at the Globe, this section similarly is concerned with the expenses that had to be paid by those same company sharers at the Blackfriars. As far as is known, there was no change in personnel between the two playhouses, with the same group of players performing in both. Again, some of those company sharers were also player-housekeepers of the Blackfriars, for example, Condell, Heminges and Shakespeare, who paid their proportion of both company sharer and housekeeper costs, in exchange for proportionately increased income. The company's hired men did not contribute to the costs at either playhouse.

5.2 demonstrated that the sharers' costs amounted to more than £3 per performance at the Globe. At the Blackfriars their per performance and weekly costs were even higher although, as Chapter 4 will demonstrate, their earning potential also increased dramatically at the indoor playhouse. For all its appeal to the new housekeepers as an upmarket venue attracting a higher-paying audience, the Blackfriars was significantly more expensive for the players, the King's Men, to run. Their operating costs for a thirty-week playing season came to £648, more than four times those of the housekeepers. This arose both from the new

responsibility to pay for the resident musical consort and the need to provide lighting for performances in the darker months. It is impossible to know whether candles were used throughout the length of every performance, even in the brighter months of early autumn and later spring, or whether they were only lit as daylight failed. For the purposes of this financial exercise, I have assumed that their use was consistent at every performance. During the King's Men's first decades at the Blackfriars, tallow candles, costing approximately one penny each, would have been used, with a proportion of wax candles introduced only later, during the 1630s. Nic Brownlie has calculated that at each performance, 78 to 80 candles were in use throughout the building (including non-performance spaces), at a cost therefore of 6s 6d, very nearly £2 per week, or £60 per year.[143] The company's total Blackfriars expenditure of £648 equates to £21 12s per week or £3 12s per performance, across a thirty-week season.

Company sharers' costs	
Play commissions & scripts x 9	£90
Licensing 9 plays	£4
Court performance travel	£14
Costumes 9 plays	£135
100% candle costs	£60
Hired men 8 players/4 staff	£180
Musicians (8)	£120
Apprentices' living (5)	£45
	£648

Figure 3.13 Illustration of Blackfriars company sharer costs for 30-week season.

[143] Martin White, 'The Chamber of Demonstrations' <http://www.bris.ac.uk/drama/jacobean/research3.html> [accessed 3 November 2020]; Nic Brownlie, 'The Effects of Candlelight Illumination at Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse' (Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, 2024). I am grateful to Nic Brownlie for information about candle quantities.

I calculate the company's combined running costs for the two playhouses to be £1030 per year - not so far removed from the probably underestimated figure given by Benfield et al. in the Sharers' Papers of

> 900 or 1000li p*er* ann*um*) or therabout*es* beeing 3li a day one day w*i*th another, besides the extraordinary Charge which the sayd Actors are wholly at for apparell & Poet*es* &c.[144]

Notably, their figures exclude the key elements, plays and costumes, meaning that the sharers' true total was almost certainly in excess of £1000.

Combined company costs				
Globe			**Blackfriars**	
Play commissions & scripts x 6	£60		Play commissions & scripts x 9	£90
Licensing 6 plays	£2		Licensing 9 plays	£4
Costume 6 plays	£90		Court performance travel	£14
Hired men 8 players/4 staff	£120		Costumes 9 plays	£135
Musicians (8)	£80		100% candle costs	£60
Apprentices' living (5)	£30		Hired men 8 players/4 staff	£180
	£382		Musicians (8)	£120
			Apprentices' living (5)	£45
Combined total	**£1,030**			**£648**

Figure 3.14 Illustration of company sharer costs for full playing year at both playhouses.

[144] Further petition of Benfield, Swanston and Pollard, TNA, LC5/133.

6 Ancillary sales: 'They rayse betweene 20 & 30li p*er* ann*um* from the Taphowses & a Tenem*en*t'.*

The final section of this chapter will offer a picture of how what would now be termed 'ancillary sales', i.e. food and drink provided to paying customers, may have been operated in the playhouses of the King's Men. There is only a small amount of archaeological evidence (food remains, sherds of cookware pottery) for these sales, and only one specific reference to a Globe tap-house (here, an 'alehowse') in the ballad on the Globe fire.[145] Other references to tap-houses in association with playhouses are generalised (and the very concept of 'tap-house' ill-defined) so that much of what follows is, of necessity, conjectural.[146] However, it is based on a commercial sensibility that suggests ancillary sales would always have provided a useful additional income stream for playhouse owners, provided that they were willing to undertake the additional risk of a retail business alongside the unpredictable business of playing. There can be a misconception about who retained the income from these sales, particularly in the case of the King's Men with their fluid internal hierarchy, so that it is worth recalling the Henslowe/Cholmley agreement at the Rose (examined in Chapter 2 pp. 115—121). Although this may never have been operable, its presumption is that the owner rather than the tenant company has the right to sell to customers and retain the income. This principle is also apparent nearly fifty years later, in the Sharers' papers, as the quotation

* Further petition of Benfield, Swanston and Pollard, TNA, LC5/133.

[145] Beal, The Burning of the Globe.

[146] OED defines tap-house as 'A house where beer drawn from the tap is sold in small quantities; an ale-house. "Tap-house, N." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, December 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1187003045. A playhouse tap-house could therefore take many forms. It may have been similar to a modern theatre bar, but sited immediately adjacent to, or abutting, the playhouse; or perhaps have been a larger establishment next door or nearby, such as, for example, the Colonnade Bar, part of the fabric of the current Theatre Royal, Brighton. An ale-house 'retailed low cost ale on a small scale, usually from the rooms of a private dwelling' (Mark Hailwood, *Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England* (Boydell & Brewer, Incorporated, 2014), p. 2.)

above illustrates, and as I will demonstrate financially in Chapter 4. But before progressing to operational matters, this section will first consider the likelihood of John Heminges functioning as operator of these ancillary sales.

There is a widely held view that John Heminges ran a tap-house at the Globe despite what Gabriel Egan refers to as 'incomplete and fragmented evidence'.[147] Egan builds a very reasonable case for Heminges as the person responsible for the tap-house based on the literary evidence of the ballad on the burning of the Globe. He also points out that what evidence there is stems from a conjecture by Chambers, which then becomes a 'pseudo-fact which is now repeated as though a certainty'.[148] For Gurr, this morphs still further into the statement, '[Heminges] was tapster at the Globe's tavern', thus reducing ownership to pulling pints.[149] Kathman is more measured in his comment that Heminges simply 'owned an adjacent tap-house' to the Globe .[150] Although the evidence is slim, John Heminges's training within the Grocers' Company, his access as a grocer to wholesale supplies, and his demonstrable ability to take personal advantage of financial opportunities, make him the obvious candidate within the King's Men to take the risk of operating the playhouses' ancillary sales. He would also retain the rewards, paying his housekeeper colleagues a modest share of the profits.

Heminges was almost certainly with Strange's Men in 1592 (the year before he is first recorded as a company sharer) when they played at the Rose. There he would have had ample opportunity to observe Henslowe's operation and, although he may have been unaware of the reciprocal profit-sharing arrangement with Cholmley, he cannot have failed to notice that Henslowe was not deriving direct income from the varied food and drink sales in his own

[147] Egan, 'Tap-house', p. 75.
[148] Chambers, *ES II,* p. 424, p. 426.
[149] Gurr, Shakespeare Company, p. 230.
[150] Kathman, *Cambridge Guide,* p. 924.

playhouse. A few years later, when the Chamberlain's Men were preparing to open the Globe, Heminges's moment came. When his co-owners considered the question of ancillary sales and how they were to be run, they may have turned to him as the person with the obvious expertise. Or memories of Henslowe may have made Heminges put himself forward for the position. As Egan notes, the ballad about the 1613 fire is awash with liquid references suggesting the popular association of the Globe, and Heminges in particular, with the supply of drink. These references reinforce the possibility that Heminges indeed ran a tap-house at the first as well as the second Globe. He had completed his grocery apprenticeship more than ten years previously, having received training in bookkeeping and stocktaking, and may have been running a business in tandem with his theatre career. He remained in good standing with the Grocers' Company, never sanctioned in the court minute books for any misdemeanour.[151] Maintaining good relations with the Grocers would have given him access to many of the foodstuffs found at the Rose (and presumed to be sold at the Globe, too), including imported dried fruit such as figs and currants. These had to pass through the Grocers' Company weighing house before being sold.[152] In addition to his financial training and access to wholesale supplies, there was one further benefit Heminges gained as a Grocer. Not only vintners but also apothecaries were able to sell wine (officially for medicinal purposes but 'medicinal' extended to muscadel, malmsey and sack) and, until the establishment of the Apothecaries' own society in 1617, apothecaries and grocers were united in one company.[153] Heminges therefore had the ability to obtain a licence to sell wine. This would have been a commercially advantageous addition to his stock, perhaps especially at the Blackfriars with its more affluent clientele. Heminges's contemporary (and sometime

[151] TLA, Worshipful Company of Grocers CLC/L/GH/B/001/MS11588/001.
[152] Rees, *Company of Grocers,* p. 34.
[153] Rees, *Company of Grocers*, p. 147.

dinner companion) Edward Alleyn, meticulous in detailing his expenditure, notes a 'botle off clarret wine' costing 1s 3d (15d) at dinner, when one penny could buy a quart of good beer.[154] No doubt there was equal disparity in the profit margin between the two liquids.

Once the Globe was rebuilt, Heminges had 'a faire howse newe builded to his owne vse' on the Globe estate, attached to, or adjacent to, the playhouse itself.[155] In the course of the lease renegotiation of the 1630s with Sir Matthew Brend, Atkins deposed that it cost Heminges £200, and George Archer, Brend's rent collector, gave a figure of 'betwene two and three hundred pounds'.[156] This was a vast sum of money to spend on a private dwelling house (Heminges had purchased his substantial Addle Street family home in 1605 for £90), particularly one that would have to be vacated when the Globe estate lease expired.[157] Given that this lease was due to expire relatively soon, in 1635, (it was subsequently extended) Heminges clearly intended to make money from the property. It thus seems very likely that this was constructed as a tap-house to service the rebuilt Globe. Eight years later, by 1622, Heminges had moved to Southwark and is recorded in token books through the 1620s in Maid Lane, Iremonger's Rents/Maid Lane, and Black Boy Alley but, as already shown, these were merely variant designators for the same address.[158] It appears that he took up fulltime residence in the house he had built, adjoining the Globe. Heloïse Sénéchal offers plausible new evidence of a Globe tavern, probably located closer to the Thames than the playhouse itself. This may suggest that Heminges's house functioned as a tap-house only until he chose

[154] Heminges and Edward Alleyn dined together on 4 June 1622; Heminges probably paid the bill as Alleyn (who maintained a detailed expense record) gives no cost. HADP, MSS 09, fol. 059^{r}; 'Medieval Price List' <http://medieval.ucdavis.edu/120D/Money.html> [accessed 30 October 2023].
[155] Wallace, *London Associates*, p. 332.
[156] TNA, Req2/706 quoted in Berry, pp. 229–34.
[157] Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses,* p. 164; Kathman, *Cambridge Guide,* pp. 924–25.
[158] See Chapter 1 p. 95.

to inhabit it, when the tavern took over the Globe's retail activity.[159] In his will, Heminges left no property nor any mention of income from a tap-house: the house adjoining the Globe was not his to bequeath and it appears he had already relinquished whatever income he had previously received from it and/or the tavern.

If Heminges did, indeed, run the ancillary sales at the Globe, did he also operate at the Blackfriars? The playhouse was situated in the highly commercialised retail precinct of Blackfriars with eating and drinking establishments already on hand so that sales may have been limited to what could be moved around within the playhouse. With a much smaller auditorium than the Globe's, and accessed via stairs, the nature of the retail offer needed to change. At the Globe, dishes of food as well tankards of beer could be transported around the auditorium, but at Blackfriars there was probably greater emphasis on tobacco, wine and easily portable nuts and fruit. But Heminges would still have been the best qualified member of the housekeeping consortium to provide the items for sale and therefore the most likely to have run this and to have benefitted from yet another income stream.

Even assuming Heminges's conjectured operation of the housekeepers' ancillary sales in both venues to be correct, it remains impossible to be sure of the underlying commercial arrangement. But the 1635 Sharers' Papers are suggestive of a method of operation that continues today. In these, the King's Men company sharers (i.e. those who are not housekeepers) seeking redistribution of playhouse shares complain that the owners of the Globe and Blackfriars receive £20 to £30 per year from the tap-houses and gardens, whilst incurring no expense.[160] Their imprecision implies a variable annual figure, which would not

[159] Héloïse M. Sénéchal, 'The 'dwellinge howse on the Banckside': John Heminges, Black Boy Alley, and the House Adjoining the Globe', forthcoming article, *Shakespeare Quarterly,* Spring 2025.
[160] Further petition of Benfield et al., TNA, LC5/133.

be the case for rent alone. It may therefore represent an annual percentage share of ancillary sales profit paid across to the housekeepers in exchange for the right to sell food and drink – albeit also taking on the considerable risk involved. It is almost inconceivable that the annual profit of two tap-houses could amount to as little as £20 to £30. Instead, the figures could easily represent a modest 10% share of tap-house profit. This is calculated on the basis of one audience member in every three spending a single penny at the Globe (twopence at the Blackfriars) at 60% capacity per year, with the majority of that income from the Globe.[161] Thus the very low figures given in the Sharers' papers makes it likely that the housekeepers of both the Globe and Blackfriars had opted to sacrifice a large portion their entitlement to profit, in exchange for a risk-free arrangement with a retail specialist. Thirty-five years earlier, the obvious specialist was John Heminges.

[161] The detailed calculation is shown in Chapter 4, pp. 305—07.

Conclusion

John Heminges could be described as the ultimate King's Man. He was the longest-lived of the original group of sharers in its predecessor company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, remaining with the King's Men until his death. He invested substantially in them, buying his share in, first, the company and then (twice) in the building of the Globe itself. He also invested time, thirty-six years of his life, in being a player, a sharer, an apprentice master and a housekeeper. He performed with the company for probably twenty-five years and ran its finances, both day to day and strategic, for longer than that. He trained ten young men initially to play female roles but also to boost the number of young actors available to progress within the company hierarchy.

As a housekeeper he was clearly resourceful, employing his non-theatrical contacts on at least two occasions to deal with structural financial issues. He was also his own man, ready to take personal advantage of corporate circumstances. This was particularly the case with housekeeper shares and seems to have been a trend that grew with time. When Will Kemp departed the company, Heminges took only his due proportion of Kemp's share, whereas the apparent gift of shares to son-in-law William Ostler may only have been made because Heminges believed he could control Ostler and/or the shares. The legal battle with Thomasine that followed suggests that he always intended to retain or regain them, as does the Witter dispute over Augustine Phillips's shareholding. Subsequently Heminges (with Condell) went on to acquire any available housekeeper share through the 1620s. The Witter dispute, however, arose as a result of what was arguably Heminges's greatest achievement for the King's Men: the rebuilding of the Globe following the fire. Here, he brought to bear his financial, administrative and project management skills so that the rebuilt Globe was ready

within a year of the fire - on time if not on budget. His self-interest may have extended to running the ancillary sales at both Globe and Blackfriars on his own account, paying over only a modest share of profits to his fellow housekeepers, in exchange for assuming the risk of the venture. Reviewing the well-known history of the King's Men by examining the portfolio of responsibilities exercised by John Heminges has allowed for a very different perspective, one that is commercial rather than literary or dramatic, but one that illustrates the infrastructure that was essential to the successful operation of the leading company of its time.

Chapter 4: Income and profitability

Introduction: 'The whole question of seating and prices is rather difficult'.*

Where previous chapters established likely seating (and standing) capacities for various London playhouses, this final chapter converts those results into a financial capacity for each venue. In doing so, it acknowledges the truth of Chambers's comment that 'the whole question of seating and prices is rather difficult'.[1] From this starting point it extrapolates both corporate and individual income in a 'typical' year. Andrew Gurr undertook a similar exercise in *The Shakespeare Company,* producing hypothetical profit and loss accounts for the King's Men across various periods.[2] I approach the same limited evidence from the commercial perspective of aiming to establish the profitability of several playhouse businesses. An important initial point is that there is rarely any such thing as a typical year when reviewing theatrical activity of any period; this was certainly the case in the timeframe under review. Performances might be curtailed by seasonal events such as Lenten closure (although this could be ignored if an advance fine was paid); or more abruptly in the case of closure due to plague, when performances might be prohibited for a period ranging from a few weeks to many months; or with almost no notice at the behest of the Privy Council, as in the case of *The Isle of Dogs* in 1597; or simply prevented from proceeding due to appalling weather conditions, too grim for even a hardy yard audience.[3] Yet those working within the theatre

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* E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Clarendon Press, 1923), II, p. 531.
[1] Ibid.
[2] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company, 1594-1642* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 106–11.
[3] In 1619 Heminges paid the Revels Office on behalf of all four royal companies, Joseph Quincy Adams, *The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, 1623 - 1673* (Yale University Press, Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1917), p. 48; William Ingram, *A London Life in the Brazen Age: Francis Langley, 1548 - 1602* (Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 167–86.

industry would not have known that these breaks in performance were imminent, so this chapter will offer a picture of what the hired men, sharers, owners (Henslowe and Alleyn) and housekeepers (the King's Men) might have anticipated earning in a forthcoming year of regular performances. Touring by the playing companies is beyond the scope of this thesis so that income from this is not included. In the case of annualised corporate and individual profits, touring is assumed only to cover its related costs, with no net gain. A further potential income stream is money that may have been earned by either the playhouse owner, the playing company, or both, from hawkers selling wares within, or immediately outside, the playhouse. Today, such merchandise sales generally operate on the basis of a percentage share of income being paid to the theatre owner, but there is an alternative mechanism whereby the merchandiser rents a sales space from the venue.[4] This is perhaps more likely to have been the procedure used in (or outside) the playhouses under consideration, but neither system is possible to quantify so this must remain an unexplored feature of the commercial operation.

This is a chapter of two halves. Part One is focused on Henslowe and Alleyn, and their potential earnings from the second phase of the Rose (1592) and the Fortune (1600). It begins, as any commercial playhouse owner would, by pricing the house (section 1): that is, calculating the maximum possible revenue that could be derived from the physical capacity previously established for each playhouse in Chapter 2. Section 2 examines the division of income between playhouse owner and playing company, and a brief section 3 recapitulates the respective costs of owner and playing company sharers at both the Rose and Fortune.[5]

[4] I am grateful to Jeffrey Brady, Senior General Manager and Head of Touring, Trafalgar Theatre Productions, for confirming my understanding of current practice.
[5] The costs incurred by the owner(s) have been illustrated in detail in Chapter 2, pp. 135 and 148.

Sections 4.1 (the Rose) and 4.2 (the Fortune) offer projections of corporate, or collective, income for the owner(s) and company sharers. Section 5 then looks at individual income, firstly for the personnel of the playing companies (5.1), and in 5.2 at that of Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn.

Part Two is concerned with the playhouses of the King's Men, the Globe and the Blackfriars, and with the individual earnings of key personnel: the Burbage brothers, William Shakespeare, and John Heminges. It follows the same pattern as Part One, thus section 6 undertakes the exercise of pricing the house for the Globe and the Blackfriars, followed by a restatement of owner and company sharer costs (from Chapter 3) in section 7. Section 8.1 illustrates corporate profits for both owners and sharers in the Globe during the three phases of its use: a 40-week season at the first Globe; reduced 20-week season when the Blackfriars began to be used; and a 20-week season at the second Globe. 8.2 demonstrates corporate income at the Blackfriars and 8.3 combines the profits from both playhouses. The final section, 9, considers the earning potential of, first, Richard Burbage as housekeeper and playing company sharer (9.1); then his brother Cuthbert as housekeeper (9.2); 9.3 offers a view of playhouse income for William Shakespeare; and 9.4 looks at what John Heminges may have meant by earning 'good yeerely proffitt' from his playhouse life.[6]

[6] Will of John Heminges, The National Archives, PROB10/484 in E.A.J. Honigman and Susan Brock, *Playhouse Wills, 1558-1642: An Edition of Wills by Shakespeare and His Contemporaries in the London Theatre*, Revels Plays Companion Library (Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 164–68.

Part One

1 Pricing the house

'Pricing the house' to arrive at a 'gross potential' figure is still a vital exercise in budgeting commercial theatre today. It is essential to know what it is possible to earn per performance, per week, or per season, to offset costs. The categories of costs (examined in chapter 2) are those incurred in mounting a particular play (production costs); regular running costs, including wages and, at the Blackfriars, lighting; irregular costs such as, for example, repairing storm damage or Henslowe paying for hospital costs for a boy injured at a performance; and amortised costs of building and/or rebuilding and associated leases, i.e. writing off the initial cost over the lifetime of the lease.[7] Not all these varieties of cost applied to each category of theatre worker but all costs needed to be covered by the potential income from the playhouse for the theatrical operation to be commercially viable.

The general view of the price of admission to the Globe and other open-air playhouses is that 'the cheapest price was only one penny which bought you a place amongst the 'groundlings' standing in the 'yard' around the stage […] For another penny, you could have a bench seat in the lower galleries which surrounded the yard.'[8] This quotation is from the website of Shakespeare's Globe in 2024, yet actual evidence about pricing structures does not abound. The fullest accounts are from William Lambarde in 1570 (nearly twenty years before the Rose was in operation): 'they first pay one penny at the gate, another at the entry of the scaffold and a third for a quiet standing' and, in 1599, from Swiss visitor Thomas

[7] Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, 2002), fol. 86^{v}, p. 169.
[8] Shakespeare's Globe website, <https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/shakespeares-world/audiences> [accessed 26 June 2024].

Platter.[9] Platter's diary of his trip to England gives the fullest account: 'The playhouses are so constructed that they play on a raised platform, so that everyone has a good view. There are different galleries and places, however, where the seating is better and more comfortable and therefore more expensive. For whoever cares to stand below pays only one English penny, but if he wishes to sit he enters by another door, and pays another penny, while if he desires to sit in the most comfortable seats which are cushioned, where he not only sees everything well, but can also be seen, he then pays yet another English penny at another door.'[10] Both describe an entry system where one penny was paid to access the playhouse and to give entry to the yard. Beyond that, gallery entrance was either from the yard at the cost of a further penny or, if there were direct access to the gallery stairs from the street, twopence would have been paid to ascend. Both accounts supply the detail that for a third penny a cushioned seat could be obtained. This could have been a cushion hired to put on any bench or possibly it provided access to a more select area of seating. Neither account provides any detail about either the cost of, or means of entry to, the lords' room, a dedicated space which is known to have existed. Henslowe, for example, refers to work on the lords' room at the Rose, and the construction contract for the Fortune to the more egalitarian, but equally segregated, 'gentlemen's rooms'.[11]

[9] William Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent Conteining the Description, Hystorie, and Customes of That Shyre. Collected and Written (for the Most Part) in the Yeare. 1570. by William Lambard of Lincolnes Inne Gent. and Nowe Increased by the Addition of Some Things Which the Authour Him Selfe Hath Obserued since That Time.* ([By Henrie Middleton] for Ralphe Nevvberie, dwelling in Fleetestreete a litle aboue the Conduit, 1576), sig. sig.4I-4I^{v} <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2240875687/citation/784BE83A688040CAPQ/1> [accessed 13 September 2024].

[10] Thomas Platter, *Thomas Platter's Travels in England 1599*, ed. and translated by Clare Williams (Cape, 1937), p. 167.

[11] *Diary*, fol. 5^{v}, p. 13; Archive of Dulwich College, Muniment 22 in *Henslowe Papers: Being Documents Supplementary to Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by W.W. Greg (A. H. Bullen, 1907), pp. 4–8.

1.1 The second Rose

Where Chapter 2 considered the archaeology of the second phase of Henslowe's Rose playhouse, and how it can inform the calculation of likely physical capacity, this chapter now progresses to the calculation of the Rose's financial capacity. Although this calculation does not need to take account of the Cholmley agreement, it must still contend with Henslowe's own records.[12] His financial recording has been extensively commented upon by scholars from Fleay and Greg, to Foakes and Carson, and might best be described as inconsistent and elliptical.[13] Whilst his records of expenditure, whether on making repairs to the Rose, or paying for his brother's children, are clear and literally easy to read, the recording of playhouse income is partial and open to interpretation. To arrive at a financial capacity for the Rose, and then an assessment of Henslowe's own share of that, I want to avoid making unwarranted assumptions about these partial records. I will therefore only use Henslowe's income figures for the almost five years from February 1592 to the end of 1596 to check and ground my own calculations. In doing this, I assume that these earliest reports of box income, written in three columns of pounds (£), shillings (s) and pence (d), represent his share of receipts. They may record either the sums counted up from the collection boxes of Henslowe's own gatherers, or the sum calculated to be his customary half of the total gallery takings (possibly 'immediately that night' as prescribed in the Cholmley agreement).[14] (Although there is little agreement about the five-column accounting that he adopted in early

[12] See Chapter 2, p. 115—121 for discussion of the Cholmley agreement.
[13] Frederick Gard Fleay, *A Chronicle History of the London Stage 1559-1642* (Reeves and Turner, 1890) <http://archive.org/details/cu31924026121263> [accessed 30 July 2024]; W.W. Greg, *Henslowe's Diary Part II Commentary* (A. H. Bullen, 1908); *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by R. A. Foakes; Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's 'Diary'* (Cambridge University Press, 1988).
[14] The Henslowe Alleyn Digitisation Project, Muniment 16 <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/muniments-series-1/group-016/> [accessed 28 October 2024], transcription by Professor Emerita Sally-Beth Maclean (University of Toronto); *ES,* I*,* p. 360.

1597, there appears general consensus that the figures in these first five years of record-keeping represent Henslowe's own share of box office income as owner).

In Chapter 2, the physical capacity of the Rose phase two was estimated based on a building with both two, and three, galleries. Although my own view tends towards Jon Greenfield's that there were only two galleries (having now had the opportunity to see the remains of the Rose in situ), the estimation of financial capacity that follows will also use both two and three galleries as the basis for estimation.[15] The calculation of the financial capacity of the Rose phase two below is based on the following assumptions: that patrons in the yard paid a single penny; that two or three levels of gallery attenders paid twopence; that 10% of those in the galleries hired a cushion for additional comfort; and that those in the lords' room paid sixpence.

4.1 Total income	3 galleries				2 galleries		
	Pence	ff			Pence	ff	
Gallery @ 2d per person	2792	£11.63			2128	£8.87	
Cushion hire 1:10 1d	139.6	£0.58			106.4	£0.44	
Lords' room @ 6d per person	72	£0.30			72	£0.30	
Yard @ 1d per person	740	£3.08			740	£3.08	
	3743.6	£15.60	**£15 12s**		3046.4	£12.69	**£12 14s**

Figure 4.1 Estimated financial capacity of the Rose in 1592.

A full house at the Rose could therefore produce around £15 12s, with nearly 2150 patrons over three gallery levels, or £12 14s with fewer than 2000 attendees spread across two levels. When Samuel Kiechel visited London from Ulm in 1585 he noted of a playhouse

[15] Jon Greenfield quoted by Roger Clegg, *Reconstructing the Rose,* <https://reconstructingtherose.tome.press/chapter/4-4-1-the-galleries/> [accessed 12 June 2023]. To my inexpert eye, when looking at the section of gallery now marked out by rope lights on the floor, the sightlines from a third tier of gallery down to the stage would have been very poor indeed and the return of income from a third gallery unlikely to have justified the cost of construction.

visit, 'It may well be that they take as much as from 50 to 60 dollars (£10 to £12) at once'.[16] This preceded the building of the Rose. Nevertheless it may offer an indication that the figures above are broadly correct. Whether there were two or three levels of gallery, it is very obvious how important the gallery patrons were to the financial success of the Rose. They produced three times the amount of income compared with that of the yard. With two levels, 70% of the total income had the potential to come from gallery patrons, who comprised only 55% of the total attendance. If there were three levels, 75% of total income could have been delivered by the 65% of the audience seated in the gallery. The skewed emphasis towards the galleries also raised the ticket yield (average price across the house) to more than $1^{1/2}$ d with two galleries, or to $1^{3/4}$ d with three gallery levels. It is worthwhile remembering that total capacity is something of a fiction and that no one would ever predicate a business plan on such a basis. Nevertheless, in theory, the Rose could take £94 (three galleries) or £76 (two galleries) in a week of six performances. Equally theoretically, in a full year the playhouse could earn between £4800 (three galleries) or just under £4000 (two galleries).

But Henslowe would have known from the outset that being able to plan for 52 weeks of performances per year was as unlikely as the venue regularly playing to 100% capacity. Regulations prohibited playing during the six weeks of Lent, although Henslowe and/or the Rose playing companies appear from his records largely to have ignored this. The very first performances he records occur during Lent, in February 1592, and continue throughout that season. In other years, performances on a less regular schedule suggest that the ban was at

[16] William Brenchley Rye, *England as Seen by Foreigners in the Days of Elizabeth & James the First: Comprising Translations of the Journals of the Two Dukes of Wirtemberg in 1592 and 1610; Both Illustrative of Shakespeare; with Extracts from the Travels of Foreign Princes and Others, Copious Notes, an Introduction, and Etchings.* (J. R. Smith, 1865), p. 88.

least partially observed, and performances omitted. Weather events must also have prevented playing from time to time. Southwark was marshy territory, hence the number of drainage ditches traversing its streets and alleys, and flooding may have closed the Rose on occasion. Such an event perhaps led to Henslowe's involvement with performances at the more distant playhouse at Newington Butts in June 1594.[17] Henslowe's main issue in knowing how long each year, or season, the Rose would be open was that he was not the decision maker in that respect. That responsibility lay with the playing company. As discussed in Chapter 2, he had first to make the Rose sufficiently attractive to a playing company for them to take up residence for a period ranging from a few weeks to several months. It was only after his relationship with the Admiral's Men became more settled that he would have been able to plan with any greater degree of security, even then making allowances for unanticipated closure due to plague or legal restriction. Although Henslowe's financial reporting is subject to interpretation, the dates of his performance recording are generally reliable and inform the chart below. This amply demonstrates how essential it was for Henslowe to have a regular company in residence. There is no way of knowing how the first phase Rose had fared but, in the first five years of the phase two operation, these figures illustrate Henslowe's difficulties with changing companies (1592 and the first half of 1594), and the ever-present issue of plague closure. Only in two of these recorded years, 1594 and 1595, was the Rose open for even three-quarters of the year, yet Henslowe prospered sufficiently to join with his son-in-law to build a new and bigger playhouse, the Fortune. There clearly was money to be made as a playhouse owner.

[17] Laurie Johnson, *Shakespeare's Lost Playhouse: Eleven Days at Newington Butts* (Routledge, 2017), p. 15.

Potential v actual performances		
	Perfs	Weeks
Total possible per year	312	52
Actual 1592	107	19
Actual 1593 (plague)	31	6
Actual 1594	205	39
Actual 1595	216	39
Actual 1596	172	33
Actual 1597 (recording ceases)	20	3

Figure 4.2 Playing weeks and performances at the Rose 1592 – 1597.

1.2 The Fortune

Henslowe and Alleyn's (or, perhaps more accurately, Alleyn and Henslowe's) Fortune playhouse, which opened in 1600 on Golding Lane, north of the Thames and away from insalubrious Southwark, is the easiest of the playhouses on which to base calculations from scratch.[18] This is due to the detailed construction contract with Peter Street. Assuming it to have been built to the agreed specifications, precise dimensions are given for every aspect of the building. These, combined with extant information about standard seating measurements, mean that its capacity can be calculated with a greater degree of confidence than other playhouses. This has already been demonstrated in Chapter 2 in assessing its audience-holding capacity. Translating this information into financial detail illustrates the specific choices made by Henslowe and his new building partner, Edward Alleyn. There was a straightforward decision to construct three levels of gallery, probably one more than at the Rose. In the thirteen years that the Rose had been open, Henslowe had learnt the importance of the galleries for increased income and, presumably with Street's surveying assistance, the

[18] Edward Alleyn was the initial owner of the Fortune, using his public persona to secure permission to build it. Henslowe only later publicly became joint owner but, as the Street agreement makes clear, they were co-owners and operators from the start.

Fortune was built to maximise gallery capacity. The usable yard area was almost exactly the same as the Rose but, by working with straight lines rather than angled bays, the gallery capacity was increased by approximately 25% from the earlier playhouse. Or, looked at the other way round, the yard had reduced from holding nearly 40% of the audience at the Rose to less than 30% at the Fortune. The effect on the new playhouse's financial capacity was dramatic.

	Pence	ff	
Gallery @ 2d per person	3536	£14.73	
Cushion hire 1:10 1d	176.8	£0.74	
Lords' room @ 6d per person	96	£0.40	
Yard @ 1d per person	747	£3.11	
	4555.8	£18.98	**£18 19s 4d**

Figure 4.3 Estimated financial capacity of the Fortune from 1600.

The capacity had increased by only a quarter from the (two gallery) Rose but potential income had risen by half from the Rose's £12 14s, to £19. Most notably, the income from the standing yard was significantly less important as the galleries now accounted for nearly 80% of total potential income. At the Rose the figure was 70%. Also illustrating the shift in emphasis away from the yard was the yield (average price paid per attender). This was $1^{3/4}$d, up from $1^{1/2}$d at the Rose. Architecturally, the square shape of the Fortune was not a trend that took hold, but its owners must have been content with the new playhouse that arose from Henslowe's likely pique at the paucity of his share of Rose income.

Rather than the eleven audience bays at the Rose, the Fortune's galleries were in three blocks with long runs of seating. The specified gallery depth, 12ft 6in., allowed for six seated rows plus a seventh line of standing spaces in the first two levels of gallery, reducing to five rows in the topmost. There were unlikely to have been designated standing positions at this

highest level, due to sightlines, although patrons may have chosen to stand or lean there rather than sit on a cramped bench. The two side blocks of gallery could have held over six hundred people in each; the central block facing the stage would have had a slightly reduced capacity at the lowest level to create an entranceway into the yard. This no longer needed to be more than a few seats wide as the 1700 gallery patrons entered via dedicated external stairs. The contract with Street does not specify where the staircases were to be placed but logic suggests that they would have been at the corners of the front and side blocks, opening out into the otherwise awkward internal angles of the gallery blocks. The Fortune was physically larger than the Rose but it was the choice to create direct access to the gallery seating which transformed the owners' own fortunes.

2 Dividing the income

Speaking in legal pleading in 1635, Cuthbert Burbage described the development of the division of playhouse income: 'The Players that liued in those first times had onely the profits arising from the dores, but now the players receaue all the com*m*ings in at the dores to them selues & halfe the Galleries from the Houskeepers'.[19] This allocation of performance income between the company sharers (whom he describes simply as 'players') and the owner(s) of the space in which they played, seems to have become a settled method of operation early in the life of professional commercial theatre in London. This demonstrates an acceptance of participating in a shared activity with interdependence between players and venue. This

[19] Cuthbert Burbage explained the system of income division in the Sharers' Papers, The National Archives, LC 5/133, p. 50, semi-diplomatic transcription, <https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/resource/document/answer-cuthbert-burbage-et-al-petition-robert-benefield-et-al-concerning-division> [accessed 11 November 2024].

modus operandi would not necessarily have been anticipated. A demanding owner might have chosen to force playing company sharers to hire the playhouse, thus adding significantly to the company costs, whilst allowing those company sharers to retain all the income. A successful and confident playing company, on the other hand, could have demanded that the playhouse owner pay (or, at least, underwrite) its costs as the price for coming to him rather than going elsewhere. Sharing income, hiring the venue, and guaranteeing costs, are all operational models (with sophisticated variants) still in use today in the commercial theatre sector in many territories. Venues still charge rent for their theatre in many instances, plus a range of other charges, often labour-based, in addition. Today, the more successful and popular a production is (or may appear to be, before the reality is tested), the easier it is for its producer to insist that the venue guarantees to pay his costs, as well as its own. Both these models are inherently adversarial with either one party or the other in a position of negotiating dominance. But London entrepreneurs in the later sixteenth century, whether sharers in a playing company or owners of playhouses, appear to have appreciated very quickly that collaboration was the best route to commercial success. With everyone's interests aligned, they shared the pennies that were taken at the entrance doors.

This could have been achieved by simply dividing the proceeds equally between them, but that would have failed to acknowledge the proportion of expense on each side, when the players incurred significantly higher costs. Instead, they arrived at the convention (described by Cuthbert Burbage) of allocating areas of the house between themselves. The company sharers took all the entrance money from those standing in the yard, and the money from the galleries was shared between them and the playhouse owner. The entrance money was collected by gatherers, individuals supplied by both playing company and venue owner. The most practical scenario to allocate income is that, rather than counting all the pennies and

dividing appropriately, the money was taken by each gatherer to his or her employer. Thus in the second phase Rose (which, it is generally acknowledged, did not have external stairs), there was probably a company gatherer on each side of the wide entranceway, collecting a single penny from everyone who entered. Whilst many remained standing in the yard, some of these patrons were aiming for the galleries and had therefore already paid 50% of their total entrance fee. They had thus, effectively, already paid the company's 50% of gallery income to a company gatherer. Arriving at the ingressus to the galleries, they may have been met by Henslowe's gatherers who then took each person's second penny. The income of the house could thus have been collected and allocated correctly in one move. Unfortunately, it is impossible to know at this remove if the takings were collected as painlessly as this, or whether (as is highly likely) there were disputes about the position of gatherers and consequent division of income. Henslowe additionally sited gatherers by the entrance to the lords' room and retained the income. The only remaining category of payment was for cushion hire which may have been offered by roving attendants on behalf both company and playhouse. (For the financial capacity illustrations in this chapter, it has been assumed that gallery income and cushion hire are split equally.)

3 Costs

Chapter 2 established in detail the costs of operation borne by the owner(s) of the Rose and Fortune. These are therefore given here in summary only for those playhouses. The company sharers' costs for each playhouse are illustrated in greater detail below.

3.1 The second Rose

Company sharers' costs	
Play commissions & scripts (15)	£150
Licences (15)	£6
Costumes (15)	£225
Hired personnel (12)	£240
Apprentices' living (5)	£60
Total	**£681**

Figure 4.4 Company sharers' annual costs at the Rose phase 2.

The owner's costs of £164 per year (see Chapter 2, p. 135) included £41 of amortised building and repair costs.

From the evidence of Henslowe's own reporting, it can be seen that around fifteen new plays were introduced into the repertory each year. The company sharers therefore had to pay not only to commission fifteen plays, but also for the preparation of the requisite number of scripts and parts; this is allowed for at £10 per play. Each play had then to be licensed for performance, costing 7s, and costumes sourced at a high average figure of £15 per play (based on Henslowe's own figures for costume expenditure). Personnel expenses were equally high. These fell into two broad categories: players, of varying experience, from newly promoted apprentices to long-serving characters such as William Bird (or Borne) and Robert Shaa (Shaw); and necessary attendants. Hired players could easily double the strength of a company with six to eight of them in regular use.

Henslowe gives some guidance to wage levels in the period. In July 1597 he hired Thomas Hearne for two years, at 5s a week for one year, rising to 6s 8d for the second.[20] Six months later he hired William Kendall at the rate of 10s a week in London and 5s in the country – an early example of the regional differential still found in 2024.[21] In 1600, Admiral's man Thomas Downton hired an unnamed player for 'viii^{s} a week as long as they play & after they lie still one fortnight then to give him half wages'.[22] If the half-pay retainer was a common feature, it would have added appreciably to any company's costs during a dark period and no doubt was ignored during force majeure closures. The illustration above assumes eight players hired at the highest quoted wage, 10s per week. This provides some contingency for small additional payments to, for example, additional hired men for a large cast play or to gatherers called on to perform as extras. A company's necessary attendants would include the particularly valuable functions of tireman (for example, Steven Maggett with the Admiral's Men), responsible for sourcing and maintaining the costumes, and bookholder, responsible for holding, or keeping, the playbook during performances. Other hired men would have operated the stage trap and would have been used to swell the ranks on stage when required. For the purposes of calculating company costs, it has been assumed that there were four non-playing hired men paid ten shillings per week. Living expenses of 6s per week for five apprentices through the playing year are included, bringing the company

[20] *Diary,* fol. 233^{r}, p. 238.
[21] British Museum MS. Egerton 2623, fol. 19 in *Diary*, p. 268. The current weekly minimum salary under the terms of the *Agreement for West End Theatre Artists (including Performers, Stage Management, Booth Singers and Supernumeraries)* between Society of London Theatre and Equity, is £880.10 and, for touring, under the *Agreement for Performers and Stage Management working in Commercial Theatre* between UK Theatre Association and Equity, £570.37, a difference of approximately one-third. I am grateful to Jeffrey Brady, Senior General Manager and Head of Touring, Trafalgar Theatre Productions, for this information.
[22] *Diary,* fol. 20^{v}, p. 45.

sharers' total costs to £681 per year – more than four times those of the playhouse owner, Henslowe.

3.2 The Fortune

Company sharers' costs	
Play commissions & scripts (15)	£150
Licences (15)	£6
Costumes (15)	£225
Hired personnel (12)	£240
Apprentices' living (5)	£60
Total	**£681**

Figure 4.5 Company sharers' annual costs at the Fortune.

At the Fortune, the owners' annual costs of £157 include the sum of £49 to be amortised (written off) over the length of the lease. This represents both the initial capital (building) costs and sums incurred during periods of plague closure between 1603 and 1610. The original lease was for twenty-four years but the playhouse was closed for thirty months (2.5 years) in total during the first decade of the seventeenth century.[23] As a result, the usable lease, when income could be earned, was only twenty-one and a half years. As at the Rose, the company costs are based on fifteen new plays per year and, again, are more than four times those of the owners.

[23] J. Leeds Barroll, *Politics, Plague, and Shakespeare's Theater: The Stuart Years* (Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 173.

4 Income and profit: corporate

4.1 The second Rose

This section benefits enormously from having Henslowe's own records at hand to allow hypotheses (and instinctive reactions) to be checked for sense and logic. The figures in the Diary serve as a reminder of just how much reverse engineering can be done from Henslowe's bald numbers. In order not to over-estimate the commercial potential of the Rose phase two, in the sections that immediately follow, providing illustrations of potential income, the playhouse is assumed to have two levels of gallery only. This provides a floor for earnings for both owner and company; a third level of galleries merely adds surplus for both. The financial capacity of the Rose phase two with just two levels was estimated in figure 4.1 as £12 14s per performance, £76 for a full playing week of six performances. Henslowe's own records have demonstrated that, over the period 1592 to 1596, the actual average playing year was fewer than 28 weeks. However, 1593 was almost entirely dark due to plague and two further years were subject to frequent changes of playing company. A more realistic playing year in the later 1590s, once company stability had been achieved, is 40 weeks per annum. In the illustrations that follow, the value of a full playing week, £76, is multiplied by 40 to give the maximum potential income for a 'full' 40-week playing year. From this, at various levels of capacity, the costs of both owner and playing company summarised in section 3.1 above are deducted.

Starting to look at the playhouse operation in this way immediately reveals a difficulty with which Henslowe and the acting companies must have tussled: the location of gatherers and division of the takings. This is relevant to any playhouse with access to the galleries from the yard rather than direct access via an external stair. It may, indeed, have been one of the

reasons leading to the use of external stairs. The simple positioning of a gatherer could have had the effect of halving (or doubling) Henslowe's income as owner if he was receiving the standard half-gallery income. If the gatherer(s) at the main entranceway belonged to the playing company they would have collected one penny per customer, i.e. full payment for a penny stander in the yard, or half-payment for a gallery patron. The gallery customer would go on to make the balance of his or her payment with a second penny at the ingressus/yard entrance to the gallery. If the gatherer who received this was Henslowe's appointee, then Henslowe was, indeed, receiving half the gallery income: one penny per person. If, however, the system did not work in this way and gatherers were stationed in a less prescriptive way throughout the building, and the money contained in the gallery gatherers' boxes was divided equally between owner and playing company sharers, Henslowe would have received only one halfpenny per gallery patron. It is impossible, of course, to know exactly how the system operated but having Henslowe's figures to read alongside estimates of income may offer a key to work this out.

Owner income 2 galleries	pence								
50% total gallery income	1064				50% ingressus gallery income	532			
1:10 cushion hire	53				1:10 cushion hire	53			
Lords' room	72				Lords' room	72			
	1189	4.955	**£4 19s**	**39.04%**		657	2.74	**£2 14s 9d**	**21.57%**

Figure 4.6 Potential division of gallery income at the second phase Rose.

The simple chart above illustrates this substantial difference in outcomes for Henslowe. If he received the true half value of the galleries, i.e. one penny at the gallery entrance from each customer (left hand column of chart), he stood to earn just under £5 per performance at capacity. This represents nearly 40% of the total income. If, however, his earnings only amounted to one halfpenny, i.e. half what was paid at the gallery

entrance/ingressus, his potential maximum income would have been less than £3 per performance: a rather dismal 21.5% of the total. To assess who earned what from the Rose, a decision has to be made about which of these competing scenarios makes the most sense of the recorded income: the owner receiving the 'real' 50% gallery income (1d per person) or, effectively, 25% gallery income ($^{1}/_{2}$d per person). Henslowe's average annual share of takings can help in arriving at an answer. In 1592 his average share per performance was £2 2s; in 1593, £1 17s; in 1594, £2 10s; 1595, £1 12s; and in 1596, £1 15s. The twenty performances given in January 1597, just before the accounting system changed to the impenetrable five column version, yield an average of just £1 5s. These figures support the right-hand version of the chart above, Henslowe in practice getting only 25% of gallery income.

However, these same figures conceal the dilemma posed by the number of performances for which Henslowe records at least £3 as his share of the house. Over the period of his three-column income recording (February 1592 to January 1597) he lists 751 performances and for exactly 10% of these his share of income is recorded as a theoretically impossible £3 or more. However, more than two thirds of these performances are either designated 'ne', when prices for at least some of the house may have been increased, or took place during the busy holiday seasons of Easter, Whitsun and Christmas. There are only two performances falling into neither category in 1592, 1593 and 1596; in 1594 there are five. Only in 1596 are there a statistically significant thirteen, of which six relate to a single play, *Hercules*. Commercial theatre today uses dynamic pricing, effectively raising prices in line with demand by increasing the number of tickets at higher prices, thereby reducing the number of cheaper seats available.[24] There is no reason to suppose that London commercial theatre in

[24] 'With dynamic pricing we have the potential to exceed 100% financial capacity': personal correspondence with Diane Benjamin, Executive Director, Sonia Friedman Productions, 12 April 2023.

the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was any less inventive in taking additional cash from its customers when it could. This could have been achieved by simply cramming more people into the galleries, with people sitting on risers and/or standing two or more deep at the rear of each gallery. Alternatively, sensing a full or nearly full house, the instruction may have gone out to the gatherers to take an extra gallery penny from later arrivals. Once audience members had made their way to the Rose, they were unlikely to baulk at being charged a premium to be squeezed in at the last minute.

Further weight is added to this interpretation of the figures if they are understood in the context of likely percentage attendance. If the 'true 50%' left-hand calculation in figure 4.6 is applied to Henslowe's highest ever income figure, £3 14s on 25 January 1593, attendance never exceeded 75% of total capacity (Henslowe's £3 14s share of income equals 75% of his potential maximum income share of income of £4 19s), with the average throughout the year nearer a meagre 30% of capacity.[25] If the hypothesis of early modern dynamic pricing outlined above is sufficient to account for the handful of anomalous high earning performances, the annual averages of recorded income listed fall well within the bounds of Henslowe's usual reporting. This provides a reasonable basis for using the right-hand example above in calculating how the total income was shared. This right-hand illustration shows a ratio of 21.5% income to Henslowe and 78.5% to the playing company. This may have felt equitable to the company sharers, whose costs were four times the size of the owner's, but Henslowe may have viewed it rather differently. The realisation of how small a proportion of the income he received may well have prompted thoughts about a new

[25] £3 14s ÷ £4 19s = 75%.

playhouse, one with direct entry to the galleries and thus a greater share of income for the owners.

Attenders	1804	1624	1443	1263	1082	902	722	541
Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (40 week) income	**£3,046**	**£2,742**	**£2,437**	**£2,132**	**£1,828**	**£1,523**	**£1,219**	**£914**
Owner's share 21.5%	£655	£589	£524	£458	£393	£327	£262	£196
Owner's costs	£164	£164	£164	£164	£164	£164	£164	£164
Owner's profit/loss	**£491**	**£425**	**£360**	**£294**	**£229**	**£163**	**£98**	**£32**
Company share 78.5%	£2,391	£2,152	£1,913	£1,674	£1,435	£1,196	£957	£717
Company costs	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681
Company profit/loss	**£1,710**	**£1,471**	**£1,232**	**£993**	**£754**	**£515**	**£276**	**£36**
Each company sharer (8)	**£214**	**£184**	**£154**	**£124**	**£94**	**£64**	**£34**	**£5**

Figure 4.7 Owner and company estimated profit or loss at second phase Rose.

This chart shows the theoretical relative fortunes of owner and playing company at various levels of attendance. 100% capacity was extremely unlikely ever to have been achieved and certainly not across a full 40-week year of performances. The most likely spread of average attendances was probably 70% (1263 people) down to 40% (722 people). It would have required 505 daily attendees (28% of capacity), across the year, for the company just to break even, i.e. with no profits for the company sharers. They would have needed an additional 144 people (649 in total, 36% of capacity) in attendance every day for the eight company sharers to pay themselves as much as they paid their hired men.[26] By contrast, Henslowe, the owner, continued to cover his annual costs even when the playing company was losing money, despite the disparity in income. For a period, at least, in 1595 and 1596 (and perhaps 1597, too, but the change in accounting practice makes it harder to tell) the Rose was clearly operating at a reasonably successful level. Henslowe's position gradually shifted from that solely of owner into that of underwriter, or even lender of last resort. It was

[26] See Andrew Gurr, *Shakespeare's Opposites: The Admiral's Company 1594 – 1625,* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 33, for identification of the company sharers.

always going to be in his interest to keep the company playing so that he could continue to earn from this piece of Southwark real estate.

4.2 The Fortune

The success of the design of the Fortune for the owning partnership is easily seen when the income is allocated in line with the customary arrangement: the playing company retaining the yard income whilst the gallery income was shared equally with the owners.

Allocation of income				
Company				
Company 50% gallery	1768			
50% cushion hire 1:10 1d	88.4			
Yard	747			
	2603.4	£10.85	£10 17s	**57.14%**
Owners				
Owners 50% gallery	1768			
50% cushion hire 1:10 1d	88.4			
Lords' room	96			
	1952.4	£8.14	£8 2s 9d	**42.86%**

Figure 4.8 Allocation of income between company and owners at the Fortune.

By adding direct entrance to the galleries, a third level of gallery, and by maximising the capacity with long straight runs of seating, Henslowe and Alleyn had doubled the proportion of income the owner would receive. It rose from 21.5% at the old Rose to 43% at the new Fortune. It seems unlikely that Alleyn, as the leading company sharer of the Admiral's Men, went into too much detail with his colleagues about the financial impact of their move to the Fortune in mid-1600. He and his father-in-law were probably keener for the players to be excited by the finish and decoration of their new base, as well as by Alleyn's imminent return to the stage, rather than to focus on the financial restructuring. At the same time, as owners

they would have appreciated that, without plays on the stage, they had no playhouse business from which to profit.

In order to look at annual income and profit for the Fortune, as with the Rose, it is necessary to decide first what constituted a playing year. Unfortunately, there is no regular Henslowe information to guide this decision and the figures that follow are, again, on the basis of 40 playing weeks. This allows time for some portion of Lent to be closed or dark; sporadic playing around Christmas; some down time in the summer for limited touring (not taken into account financially); and the possibility of intervening weather events. The Fortune was capable of taking £18.98 at a full house, thus £114 in a week of six performances, or over £4,500 during 40 playing weeks.

Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (40 week) income	**£4,556**	**£4,100**	**£3,645**	**£3,189**	**£2,733**	**£2,278**	**£1,822**	**£1,367**
Owner's share 42.9%	£1,952	£1,757	£1,562	£1,367	£1,171	£976	£781	£586
Owner's costs	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157
Owner's profit/loss	**£1,795**	**£1,600**	**£1,405**	**£1,210**	**£1,014**	**£819**	**£624**	**£429**
Company share 57.1%	£2,603	£2,343	£2,083	£1,822	£1,562	£1,302	£1,041	£781
Company costs	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681
Company profit/loss	**£1,922**	**£1,662**	**£1,402**	**£1,141**	**£881**	**£621**	**£360**	**£100**

Figure 4.9 Owner and company estimated profit and loss at the Fortune.

This chart shows the relative income of company sharers and owners at varying levels of attendance, again running from an unrealistic 100% down to 30%. The severe diminution of company earning potential, reducing their share of income from 78.5% at the Rose down to just 57.1% at the Fortune, means that the Admiral's Men now needed to be playing to 835 people (33% capacity) per performance throughout the playing year simply to pay the sharers the same annual amount as their hired men. At that level of business, Henslowe at the Rose would have been earning approximately £45 profit for the year; at the Fortune, he and Alleyn

would share £487 per year equally.[27] Provided that the Fortune remained open, and moderately successful, Henslowe and Alleyn were vindicated in the financial risk they had taken to build it.

5 Income and profit: individual

5.1 Hired staff

Sitting at the bottom of the playhouse hierarchy were the gatherers. These were the women and men who stood at the main doors, and at various entrance points to designated areas within a playhouse, to collect the entrance money. The positions were probably paid at a low rate per performance (or may even have been unwaged) but were nonetheless jealously sought after as they provided useful casual income. In their original deed of partnership for the Rose in 1587, Philip Henslowe and John Cholmley were each permitted to appoint deputies 'to Collect gather and receive all such sum and sums of money of every person and persons resorting and Coming to the said play house' and this system of appointing dedicated gatherers continued.[28] In an undated letter, William Bird, a leading sharer of the Admiral's Men, complains to Edward Alleyn on behalf of the players that

> there is one Jhon Russell, that by yowr apoyntment was made a gatherer wth vs, but my fellowes finding often falce to vs, haue many tymes warnd him ffro[m] taking the box. And he as often with moste damnable oaths, hath vowde neuer to touch, yet not wth standing his execrable othes he hath taken

[27] See appendix for calculations of breakeven and profitability.
[28] HADP, Muniment 16.

> the box, & many tymes most vnconsionablye gathered, for w^{ch} we have resolued he shall neuer more come to the doore.[29]

Alleyn is here being appealed to, as leading player of the company, to move his appointee. Bird goes on to propose that Russell should lose his gathering position and take on a higher paid role as 'a necessary attendant on the stage' and mend costumes in his leisure time. The players must have thought it preferable to pay his increased wage rather than run the regular risk of losing a proportion of their income to the techniques of theft described some decades later: they 'seeme to scratch their heads where they itch not, and drop shillings and half-Crowne pieces in at their collars'.[30] Henslowe carried on appointing gatherers at his playhouses and a few months before his death received the paper headed 'Articles of Grievance against Mr Hinchlowe', from his then playing company. One of these grievances complained of him 'having 9 gatherers more than his due' – pointing up an easy method of defrauding the company if one was so minded.[31]

Lacking evidence of the level of weekly or per performance wage for gatherers, it appears possible they were also permitted to keep odd pennies from their individual box. These boxes may have been simple ceramic money boxes, smashed to release their contents, and certainly a substantial number of such fragments were found during the Rose excavations of 1989.[32] However, these appear to have had no particular relationship with any one part of the building which argues against ceramic boxes, and the fragments could equally be from

[29] ADC, MSS 1, article 104 in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* p. 85.
[30] *The Actors remonstrance or complaint for the silencing of their profession and banishment from their severall play-houses in which is fully set downe their grievances for their restraint ... as it was presented in the names and behalfes of all our London comedians ... and published by their command in print by the Typograph Royall of the Castalian Province, 1643., London, 1643.* ProQuest, p. 6, <https://www.proquest.com/books/actors-remonstrance-complaint-silencing-their/docview/2248501298/se-2> [accessed 5 May 2023].
[31] ADC, MSS1, Article 106 in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* p. 89.
[32] Julian Bowsher and Pat Miller, *The Rose and the Globe: Playhouses of Shakespeare's Bankside, Southwark: Excavations 1988-91*, MOLA Monograph; 48 (Museum of London Archaeology, 2009), p. 142.

the collection boxes of food and drink sellers in the auditorium. The gatherers' boxes would have ended up in no more than two locations (one for the housekeepers, one for the company) to be counted, and a full week of performances would have required around fifty boxes. Although these boxes were cheap to purchase, they were an avoidable cost. Heather Knight (with Callan Davies) has recently undertaken an experiment in making and breaking similar pots and comes to the novel conclusion that they were, perhaps, ceramic money boxes brought into the playhouse by 'high-spirited young people' to be broken open 'joyfully' in situ.[33] This resonates with the fact that the most common form of collecting box at this period was small and wooden, rather than ceramic. It sometimes had a handle, or even leather-covered belt loops, and could be carried on the person. These were used in multiple situations, including the collection of tithes, and seem most likely to have been used in the playhouses. They would also have proved easier for the light-fingered John Russell to defraud the company.

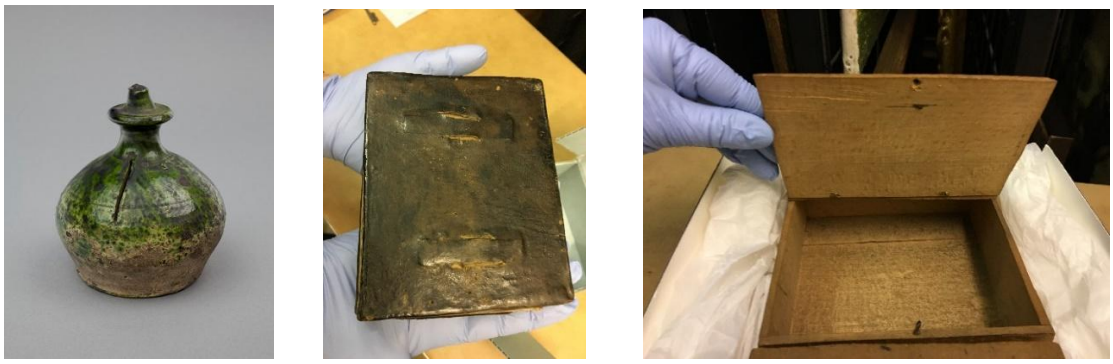


Figure 4.10 Left to right, 16th century ceramic money pot, SBT 1996 28 © Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; leather covered box with belt loops; wooden tithe collection box. Centre and right, images taken by M. Faiers by courtesy of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

[33] Heather Knight, 'The Making and Breaking of the Playhouse Pot', *London Archaeologist*, forthcoming. I am grateful to Heather Knight for sharing this article in draft form.

The likelihood of gatherers being allowed to keep odd coins from their collection to supplement their meagre wages is strengthened by evidence in Henslowe's Diary: this practice perhaps underlies the very regular shillings or sixpences that Henslowe notes when recording his share of income. On only two occasions, both near the start of his record-keeping, are receipts shown as stray pennies rather than rounded amounts suggesting that gatherers were each permitted to retain up to fivepence (5d) in odd pennies from their collection.[34] The resulting additional maximum of 2s 6d per week was a useful top-up amount and gatherers' positions were considered highly desirable. Several of the named gatherers a few years later were women. The wife of 'M^{r} Rose' is named in a letter to Alleyn asking for 'a gathering place' and Henry Condell bequeathed a place to Elizabeth Wheaton, so it is highly likely that women worked at the Rose, too, perhaps even a pawnbroking client such as Goody Street or Goody Watson.[35] The gatherers were also used to swell the ranks on stage when crowds or retinues were required, for which they may have been paid extra. The extant 'plott' (employed in performance preparation) of *Frederick and Basilea* indicates two scenes in which they were added to the onstage personnel.

[34] On 19 February and 3 March 1592, *Diary*, fol. 7^{r}, p. 16.
[35] ADC, MSS 1, article 66, in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* p. 63; will of Henry Condell, TNA, PROB10/457 in Honigman and Brock, *Playhouse Wills*, p. 159.

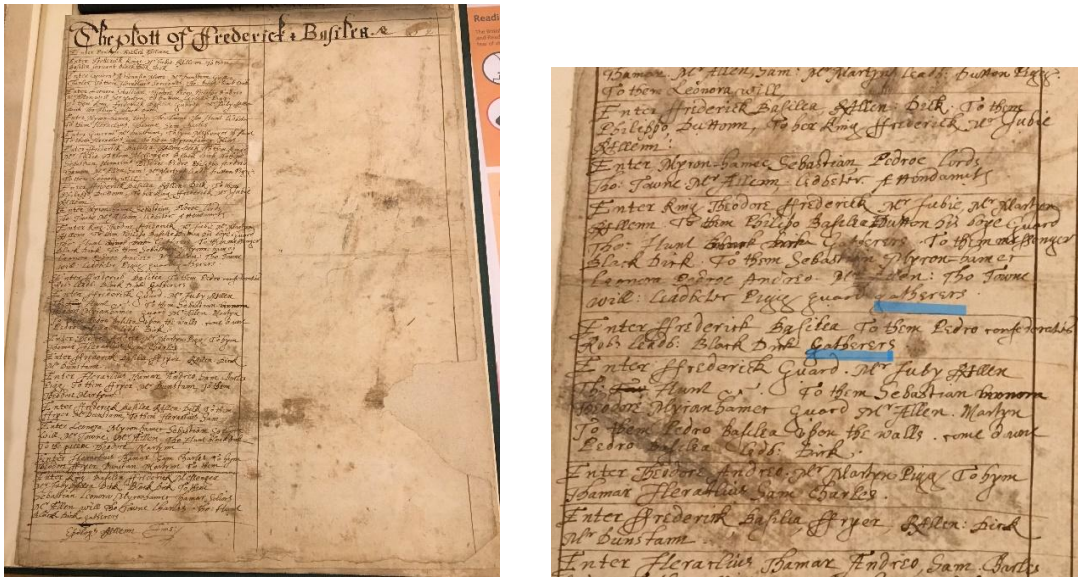


Figure 4.11 Left, the Plott of 'Frederick and Basilea'; right, enlargement indicating gatherers used on stage. British Library Add MS 10449 fol. 2. Photos M. Faiers.

One rung up the playhouse ladder from the gatherers were the hired men. As demonstrated above (3.1, pp. 255—56) these were both players and necessary attendants, such as costume personnel and bookholder. In total there may have been around twenty hired personnel, and perhaps a dozen gatherers, who needed performances to take place in order to earn any income at all, with the possibly rare exception of a retainer paid during a scheduled lay off. Unlike the owner and sharers, they did not depend on the success of particular plays or playhouses, or even times of year, for their income. The gatherers would have found stray fourpences in their boxes whether the total income was four pounds or four shillings; and the wages of the hired men were a fixed financial charge on their close colleagues, the company sharers.

5.2 Sharers and housekeepers

Sections 4.1 and 4.2 above have illustrated generic potential profit for sharers and owners at the Rose and the Fortune. This section will now focus on the individual theatrical earnings of Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn. For each of them, playhouse profits formed only a portion of their considerable wealth, with the greater part of their income derived from property. Although both are now inextricably linked to the theatrical environment of the time, Henslowe, in particular, might have been surprised by that, as he seemingly regarded himself as primarily a gentleman and court servant. For Edward Alleyn, playing was in his past life. He ceased performing more than twenty years before his death, to devote himself to his legacy project at Dulwich College, and to the management and acquisition of property.

5.2.1 Philip Henslowe

The examination of Henslowe's possible theatrical earnings that follows excludes his final venture in this sphere: the Hope. Commissioned by Henslowe and his new partner, Jacob Meade, in 1613/14, as a dual-purpose playhouse and baiting arena, with a demountable stage, the Hope is an anomaly in this series of estimates and calculations in being a building with a variable capacity and irregular theatrical use.

At the Rose, once again, the evidence supplied by Henslowe himself allows for a reasonably accurate reconstruction of his net income, or profit after costs have been deducted. His average income per performance in any year, 1592 to 1596, can easily be calculated by dividing his total recorded income by the number of performances given. This figure, in turn, can be used to extrapolate the likely average audience percentage. Figure 4.6

shows that Henslowe's maximum share of income was 21.5%, or £2 15s, per performance, thus the average income for 1592 (£2 2s) represents 77% of £2 15s. The variable percentages of capacity in figure 4.7 can then be used to calculate Henslowe's estimated personal yearly profit figure, as sole owner of the Rose. This exercise provides a possibly surprising picture of the Rose's early success.

Year	*Performances*	*Henslowe total income*	*Average per perf*	*Estimated profit*	*Estimated audience*
1592	107	£225	£2 2s	£86	77%
1593	31	£57	£1 17s	-£66	70%
1594	205	£307	£1 10s	£143	55%
1595	216	£345	£1 12s	£181	59%
1596	172	£240	£1 8s	£86	50%
		5 year	average	£86	63%

Figure 4.12 Henslowe's estimated average annual profit (loss) at the second phase Rose 1592 – 1596.

In 1592, the refurbished playhouse clearly began performances extremely well and was regularly around three-quarters full.[36] The gamble to spend money on the building had clearly paid off. As well as enduring the horrors of plague in 1593 (Henslowe lost his younger stepdaughter to the disease in October) it must also have been commercially frustrating for him and the playing companies that they were unable to consolidate the success of 1592 due to the lengthy closures, and Henslowe made a significant loss on the operation.[37] As a result, the 70% average attendance figure for 1593 probably means very little. The Rose returned to performances well in 1594, the year when business really began to settle for Henslowe, playing to a moderately successful average of 55% capacity, which then grew the following year. The reduction in profitability in 1596 may well have been caused by the impact of regular

[36] See Appendix for the details of the pro rata calculations of cost, 1592 to 1596.
[37] See Chapter 1, p. 41.

performances at the nearby Swan, which had opened the previous year.[38] 1596 also marked the beginning of Henslowe's altered relationship with the Admiral's Men, advancing funds for many of their production activities and, no doubt, having to write off some of that expense as the price of keeping the Rose open. (The five-year average figure of £86, representing 63% capacity, is included for the sake of completeness but is largely meaningless).

In early 1597 Henslowe changed his accounting practice, and it becomes impossible to verify what his new five column system represents.[39] If the first three columns continue to record his own share of the gallery takings, his gross income for the thirty playing weeks of 1597 is only £198 before his costs are deducted, leaving him with a profit of just £34. This appears so far adrift from the figures of earlier years as to throw serious doubt on this interpretation of the five-column accounting. In Autumn 1597, Alleyn ceased performing, a withdrawal that perhaps caused Henslowe to stop reporting on daily takings, whoever they belonged to, resuming only in July 1598. He does record regular payments from the Admiral's Men but there is no way of confirming (or not) that these represent his share of income being handed over by the company. (It is unlikely that the tenant company physically received all income and then paid the owner and controller of the building). Alternatively, these may have been regular payments being made to reduce the company's debt to him. In either case, it seems as though performances were proceeding on a reasonably regular basis.

At the end of July 1598 his recording practice changed again when he noted 'Here I Begyne to [th] Receue the wholle gallereys'.[40] This defines the figure explicitly as his income

[38] Ingram, *Brazen Age,* p. 108.
[39] Differing opinions are offered by Greg, *Commentary,* p. 129*;* T.W. Baldwin, 'Posting Henslowe's Accounts', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 26,* 1927*,* pp. 42—90; Carson, *Companion,* pp. 40—42; Foakes, *Diary*, pp. xxxviii—xl; Holger Schott Syme, *Theatre History, Attribution Studies, and the Question of Evidence,* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), pp. 10—19.
[40] *Diary,* fol. 48^{r}, p. 94.

so that, effectively, he had first call on a substantial portion of the company's share of receipts to put towards their debt to him. This method of recording continued for the next two years: across twenty-three playing weeks in 1598 he earned £175; in 1599, £255 across thirty-three weeks; and in 1600, £166 across twenty-five playing weeks. This was a total of less than £600 over the three years and, from the 'whole galleries', was a disappointing figure. The galleries had the potential to yield over £6,100 income across this number of playing weeks therefore, mathematically, it looks as though the Rose was playing to under 10% capacity. However, Henslowe's new habit of simply writing 'Rd' (received) weekly, generally on a Saturday or Sunday, masks how many performances took place each week. It is probable that fewer than six were being given on a regular basis. Unlike the playing company with hired men who could be laid off during dark periods, the owner's costs were constant, and his hard costs (i.e. excluding those building and lease costs that had to be carried forward and written off each year) came to an estimated £369 for the same period. This may have left him with around £225 clear profit over the three years. This represents a perfectly respectable level, yet nowhere near what he had been earning when the Rose first opened, and before he became too directly entangled in the finances of his tenant company.

As the Rose declined in profitability for Henslowe through the later 1590s, so other income streams were growing. From early in the decade he received an annual fee as a Groom of the Privy Chamber to the Queen, probably of £20; he had substantial and growing property investments in Southwark bringing in over £200 per annum in rental income by 1604.[41] At least one of those properties was a tavern or tap-house, no doubt earning him a share in its

[41] The annual fee for a royal groom was £20 by 1607, *The Offices of England Collected According to the Yeare of 1607,* James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, fol. 21^{r}, <https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/10001689> [accessed 29 October 2024]; *Diary,* fol. 177^{v}, p. 249.

profits, in addition to rent. He may also have continued to run whatever business had been left by Agnes's first husband, possibly a dyeing operation. Following either the death of John Cholmley, or the dissolution of their 1587 agreement (or both), Henslowe may, of course, have operated the catering at the Rose himself. Cholmley's original 'little house' on the plot has been partially excavated and deemed too small to have been more than a storeroom and possibly kitchen, an idea supported by the volume of broken cookware found in and around its remains.[42] By 1602, when Henslowe first recorded the tenants of his investment property, the unnamed tenant of the little house was paying £6 per year rent.[43] In earlier years, during the lifetime of the Rose, it may have formed part of the playhouse's catering, perhaps in conjunction with the James Head, five minutes' walk distant, which Henslowe bought in 1595.[44]

For perhaps three years, mid-1600 to mid-1603, Henslowe should, in theory, have enjoyed profits from the joint operation of the Rose and the Fortune. However, the Rose appears to have been already in decline before the decision to build a second playhouse, a decline marked by Henslowe advancing increasing sums to cover the Admiral's Men's production expenses. On July 10 1600, there was a final reckoning at the Rose with the players acknowledging that they were indebted to him for £300. Four weeks later, Henslowe had the last of his almost daily dinners with carpenter Peter Street, keeping him on track with the construction of the Fortune.[45] The Fortune opened sometime between August 8, when the dinner dates ceased, and 11 November, when Henslowe paid over part of the first week's

[42] Roger Clegg, Reconstructing the Rose, 6.1 <https://reconstructingtherose.tome.press/chapter/john-cholmleys-victualling-house/> [accessed 29 October 2024].
[43] *Diary,* fol. 3^{v}, p. 9.
[44] 'Winchester House and Park', in *Survey of London*, ed. by Howard Roberts and Walter H. Godfrey (London County Council, 1950), 22 BANKSIDE (THE PARISHES OF ST. SAVIOUR AND CHRISTCHURCH SOUTHWARK), pp. 45–56 <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol22/pp45-56> [accessed 29 October 2024].
[45] *Diary,* fol. 69^{v}, p. 136 and fol. 99^{r}, p. 193.

earnings to Alleyn.[46] It appears that the Rose remained untenanted for almost exactly two years until, on August 21 1602, Henslowe paid for the company supper at the Mermaid to celebrate concluding a deal for Worcester's Men to move into the old playhouse.[47] Less than a year later, in June 1603, during that year's long plague closure, Henslowe declared that he would rather pull down the Rose than pay the nearly trebled ground rent being demanded by the parish of St Mildred.[48] Thus there was only the period from the end of August 1602 until the death of the Queen in March 1603 (immediately followed by the extended plague shutdown) when Henslowe may have been earning from the two playhouses. However, as he advanced more than £250 towards Worcester's Men's production and script costs during this window, it is highly unlikely that he ever enjoyed joint profits from his first two playhouse ventures. It appears that his income from the Rose, and then the Fortune, was sequential.

Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (40 week) income	**£4,556**	**£4,100**	**£3,645**	**£3,189**	**£2,733**	**£2,278**	**£1,822**	**£1,367**
Owner's share 42.9%	£1,952	£1,757	£1,562	£1,367	£1,171	£976	£781	£586
Owner's costs	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157
Owner's profit/loss	**£1,795**	**£1,600**	**£1,405**	**£1,210**	**£1,014**	**£819**	**£624**	**£429**
Henslowe & Alleyn each 50%	**£898**	**£800**	**£702**	**£605**	**£507**	**£410**	**£312**	**£214**

Figure 4.13 Henslowe's estimated profit for 40-week season at the Fortune.

Lacking Henslowe's daily (or even weekly) recording for the Fortune, his income and profit from this venue can only be estimated by using information from figures 4.8 and 4.9 above. Thus it appears that the straight-sided seating configuration of the Fortune had the potential to dramatically increase Henslowe's personal earnings, even as owner of only 50%

[46] *Diary*, fol. 70^{v}, p. 137.
[47] *Diary*, fol. 115^{r}, p. 214.
[48] *Diary*, fol. 114^{v}, p. 213.

of the playhouse rather than his sole ownership of the Rose. Where his most financially successful year at the Rose, 1595, appears to have earned him a profit of £181 at 59% attendance, he could have achieved the same level of profitability with the Fortune less than one-third full. Looking at a realistic average spread of annual attendance percentages, ranging from 40% to 70%, Henslowe stood to earn between £312 and £605 per year, with the caveat, of course, that there may rarely have been a year of six performances per week for 40 weeks. This vastly increased earning capacity of the new playhouse demonstrates why he appears to have been relatively unconcerned to secure new tenants after the Admiral's Men left the Rose. It also explains why, in 1603, after just three years of the Fortune in operation, he abandoned the Rose entirely when terms for a new lease were proposed.

5.2.2 Edward Alleyn

Reviewing the possible theatrical income of Edward Alleyn, arising from his involvement with the Rose and the Fortune is to probe only a very small proportion of his overall financial circumstances. Where Henslowe may have gained a dyeing business through his marriage, Alleyn and his elder brother John eventually (after litigation) inherited several properties from their father.[49] Owning property provided financial stability and creditworthiness, and gave Alleyn a solid foundation on which to build his property empire, albeit an empire latterly with a charitable impulse. Both John and Edward became players at an early age and Edward quickly established himself, even as a teenager, as a leading performer. By February 1592 he

[49] S.P. Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn (1566-1626), actor, theatre entrepreneur and founder of Dulwich College', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 03 January 2008, Oxford University Press <https://www-oxforddnb-com.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-398> [accessed 29 October 2024].

was with Strange's Men at the Rose, playing in the first performances recorded by Henslowe. It is impossible to know when Henslowe and Alleyn first met, whether in 1592 at the Rose, or earlier. If earlier, their relationship may have given rise to Strange's residency. In either case, Alleyn's income from the Rose was solely as a performer, a sharer in first Strange's and, for a longer period, as one of the Admiral's Men. His likely 'annual' income can therefore be illustrated thus, on the basis of the Rose with just two levels of gallery:

Attenders	1804	1624	1443	1263	1082	902	722	541
Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (40 week) income	**£3,046**	**£2,742**	**£2,437**	**£2,132**	**£1,828**	**£1,523**	**£1,219**	**£914**
Company share 78.5%	£2,391	£2,152	£1,913	£1,674	£1,435	£1,196	£957	£717
Company costs	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681
Company profit/loss	**£1,710**	**£1,471**	**£1,232**	**£993**	**£754**	**£515**	**£276**	**£36**
Each company sharer (8)	**£214**	**£184**	**£154**	**£124**	**£94**	**£64**	**£34**	**£5**

Figure 4.14 Alleyn's estimated profit or loss as company sharer at the second phase Rose 1592 – 1597.

These figures, based on a 40-week playing year (see 4.1 above), demonstrate that Alleyn and his sharer colleagues needed the Rose to be filled to 36% average capacity to pay themselves 11s per week – just one shilling more than their highest paid hired men. This still left the balance of the year (twelve weeks) without any income at all. Taking those additional weeks into account, they needed to be playing to 40% capacity attendance, or 722 people at every performance, to pay themselves 12s per week throughout the year. This level of attendance would still only cover their basic costs of wages, apprentice board and lodging, costumes and plays, with no contingency for abrupt or long-term closure or any other unexpected offstage drama. And, as demonstrated above with Henslowe's income, playing in the 1590s was sporadic, at best.

Given that Alleyn was obviously equipped with financial nous and an entrepreneurial spirit, it is easy to see how performing at the Rose from 1594 to 1597 might have led him to consider how he could earn more by owning, as well as performing. His hand is frequently

seen in the Diary, acting as witness and making loans, indicating that he was already assisting Henslowe in the management of the Rose. If he was the instigator of the Fortune project, it must have been an easy task to persuade his father-in-law to partner with him. In preparation for this, Alleyn 'left playing' in Autumn 1597 to begin the process of acquiring leases and planning the public relations campaign for the building of the Fortune.[50] From the start of 1600, Henslowe worked alongside him as the practical co-ordinator supervising construction. Presumably because he was a more publicly acceptable 'face' for the new playhouse, Alleyn was initially the sole legal owner until Henslowe formally took on his own 50% share of their joint project.

Alleyn made a return to the stage for the first seasons at the Fortune, from Autumn 1600 to early 1604 (although little playing was possible during the plague-dominated 1603).[51] During this period he was earning both as company sharer in the Admiral's (later Prince's) Men and as 50% owner of the playhouse. He saw his theatrical income rise dramatically, with his share of playing profits now providing less than 20% of his total profits. His enthusiasm for the Fortune scheme appears to have been thoroughly justified.

[50] *Diary*, fol. 43^{r}, p. 83.
[51] S.P. Cerasano, 'Edward Alleyn's 'retirement' 1597-1600', *Mediaeval and Renaissance Drama in England* 10 (1998), pp. 99-109.

Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (40 week) income	**£4,556**	**£4,100**	**£3,645**	**£3,189**	**£2,733**	**£2,278**	**£1,822**	**£1,367**
Owner's share 42.9%	£1,952	£1,757	£1,562	£1,367	£1,171	£976	£781	£586
Owner's costs	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157	£157
Owner's profit/loss	£1,795	£1,600	£1,405	£1,210	£1,014	£819	£624	£429
Henslowe & Alleyn each 50%	**£898**	**£800**	**£702**	**£605**	**£507**	**£410**	**£312**	**£214**
Company share 57.1%	£2,603	£2,343	£2,083	£1,822	£1,562	£1,302	£1,041	£781
Company costs	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681	£681
Company profit/loss	£1,922	£1,662	£1,402	£1,141	£881	£621	£360	£100
Alleyn as company sharer	**£240**	**£208**	**£175**	**£143**	**£110**	**£78**	**£45**	**£13**
Alleyn combined income	**£1,138**	**£1,008**	**£878**	**£748**	**£617**	**£487**	**£357**	**£227**

Figure 4.15 Alleyn's estimated profit as co-owner and company sharer at the Fortune 1600 – 1604.

Once he had permanently ceased performing, Alleyn drew only his profits as 50% owner of the playhouse but, even so, these provided a very good annual return on his total investment. He gradually purchased all the ground leases and adjacent properties to allow for future expansion, and calculated his expenditure as £1320 'in all'.[52] At 50% annual attendance, this investment would have been recouped in under three years, and Alleyn was to enjoy fifteen years as co-owner with Henslowe. At his father-in-law's death in 1616, he became sole owner, and his theoretical profits doubled; but so, also, did the headache of running the playhouse. It is therefore unsurprising to find that, two years later, Alleyn leased the Fortune at a preferential rent of just £200 per year to the ten sharers of his old playing company, now the Palsgrave's Men.[53] In order to free himself of the day to day responsibility of the playhouse, as well as support his former colleagues, he would now receive from the players the income he could have expected, as sole owner, from just 20% annual attendance.

This arrangement subsisted until 9 December 1621, when the Fortune was destroyed by fire.[54] By this point Alleyn was no longer one of the leading theatrical personalities of his

[52] Memorandum book of Edward Alleyn, HADP, MSS8, fol. 6^{v} <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-8/006-verso/> [accessed 3 August 2023].
[53] ADC Muniment 56 in Greg, *Henslowe Papers,* pp. 27—28.
[54] Alleyn recorded, 'this night att 12 of y^{e} clock y^{e} fortune was burnt' in his diary and account book, HADP, MSS9, fol. 56^{r} <https://henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/catalogue/mss-9/056-recto/> [accessed 29 October 2024].

generation and, rather than building playhouses, had endowed Dulwich College, which he perceived as his legacy. Nevertheless, he arranged for the rebuilding of the Fortune (in substantial brick) and instituted a new financial scheme for its ownership. This comprised twelve shares (many subdivided) for a 51-year lease; thus, effectively, he gave away his theatrical interest almost entirely. By the time of his death in 1626, he held only one twenty-fourth of the building.[55] Unlike the first Fortune, its replacement was described as being 'round' so that, although this reference is from 75 years after the rebuilding, any attempt to reconstruct its physical and financial capacity, and therefore Edward Alleyn's income from it, is impossible.[56]

[55] Herbert Berry in Wickham, et al., *English Professional Theatre,* pp. 638—39.
[56] James Wright, *Historia Histrionica an Historical Account of the English Stage, Shewing the Ancient use, Improvement and Perfection of Dramatick Representations in this Nation in a Dialogue of Plays and Players.* London, Printed by G. Croom for William Haws, 1699, p.6. ProQuest <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxyd.bham.ac.uk/docview/2264187329?accountid=8630> [accessed 29 October 2024].

Part Two

Introduction

The subject of Part Two is a review of the potential commercial outcome of the operation by the King's Men at the Globe and Blackfriars. By focusing on the multiple responsibilities of John Heminges, Chapter 3 examined how the company and the housekeepers of the playhouses functioned. The second part of the current chapter now aims to quantify the financial results of this activity, beginning by calculating what could be earned from the playhouse: section (6), Pricing the House. A very short section (7) recapitulates the costs incurred by both company sharers and housekeepers, previously detailed in Chapter 3. Section (8) looks at corporate income and profitability at each of the first and second Globes, and the Blackfriars. It concludes by examining the combined outturn of the two venues. The final section, (9), illustrates the potential financial results for key individuals associated with the King's Men: Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, William Shakespeare, and John Heminges. The analysis of Heminges's possible earnings includes estimates of what he may have earned from the putative operation of ancillary sales in both playhouses, proposed in Chapter 3. The remainder of this chapter is solely concerned with the economics of the King's Men, and some of its members, arising from their performances in London so that touring is assumed to cover only its related costs rather than deliver additional company or personal profit.

6 Pricing the house

6.1 The first and second Globe

The previous chapter illustrated the likely audience capacity of the Globe, based on the archaeological remnants uncovered in the late 1980s, and supported a figure of around three thousand patrons: 1955 in three levels of galleries, 1014 standing in the yard, plus sixteen seated in the lords' room(s). For the purpose of this exercise, Globe 1 (1599 to 1613) and Globe 2 (from 1614) will be treated as having the same physical capacity as it is understood that the rebuilt playhouse occupied the footprint of its predecessor.[57] Despite the scant contemporary references, it is possible to calculate with reasonable certainty the financial capacity of the Globe, based on the following assumptions: (a) that patrons in the yard paid a single penny; (b) that all three levels of gallery attenders paid twopence; (c) that 10% of those in the galleries hired a cushion for additional comfort; and (d) that those in the lords' room paid sixpence.

Total income			
	Pence	ff	
Gallery @ 2d per person	3910	£16.29	
Cushion hire 1:10 1d	196	£0.81	
Lords' room @ 6d per person	96	£0.40	
Yard @ 1d per person	1014	£4.22	
	5215	£21.73	**£21 14s 7d**
Per week	**£130**		
Per 40 week playing year	**£5,215**		
Per 20 week playing year	**£2,608**		

Figure 4.16 Estimated financial capacity of the first Globe.

The chart above demonstrates that the seated galleries, with approximately double the capacity of the standing yard (1955 to 1014), provided nearly four times as much income

[57] 'The Globe Playhouse near Maidlane built by the company of Players with timber about 20 years past upon an old foundation', *The Parish of St Saviour, Southwark, Views of New Buildings, 1635,* <https://stsaviour.folger.edu/foundations.html> [accessed 29 October 2024].

as that yard. As a result, what would now be called the ticket yield (average price person across the whole house) would have been a very healthy penny three-farthings (1.75d) – assuming the house was full. Even though he visited London in 1585, a decade and a half before the Globe was built, Samuel Kiechel estimated that the house could be worth £10 to £12 per performance, a reasonable assessment of a playhouse of the Globe's size filled to around 60% of capacity.[58] With a capacity per performance of almost £21 15s, a playing week of six performances had the potential to take £130 in entrance fees. From 1599 until the eighteen-month plague closure which began in mid-1608, the King's Men performed on a regular basis solely at the Globe, although there were additional one-off performances at court and, less frequently, at the inns of court. However, their performing year was highly unlikely ever to have comprised fifty-two weeks, with disruptions to the schedule arising due to Lent, the Christmas revels season, weather events, illness within the company or more generally in the City. In Chapter 3 a playing year of 40 weeks was proposed, so that a Globe-only playing year will therefore be illustrated in the charts that follow as 40 weeks, and apply only to the period 1599 to 1608.

6.2 The second Blackfriars

Calculations in Chapter 3, based on the known dimensions of the upper chamber at the second Blackfriars and the standard seating space allowance per person, arrived at a possible audience capacity of 524. Audience members were distributed through two levels of gallery, and the newly seated pit area, in the lieu of the yard of the open-air playhouses.

[58] Rye, England as Seen by Foreigners, p. 88.

Although the Burbage brothers would long ago have written off their father's expenditure of £600 on, first, purchasing, and then £400 on creating the indoor playhouse, a successful business plan relied on substantially higher entrance charges than the one penny minimum at the Globe. This they probably deemed achievable as audiences were already accustomed to paying significantly more to watch the boy players who were the previous performers at the Blackfriars.[59] A new financial model was therefore adopted by the King's Men at the Blackfriars, with the varied costs of entrance appearing closer to a modern pricing structure. However, the precise pricing of each area is not easily derived from the scattered evidence, so the figures that follow in the pricing breakdown represent my own assessment and therefore must all be caveated in the financial illustrations that follow. The lowest priced seats were now located away from the stage in the higher gallery level, and cost 6d.[60] A seat in the ground floor gallery surrounding the pit was 1s, whilst sitting on a bench in the pit itself cost 1s 6d. Those who chose to become part of the spectacle of the play by sitting on a stool onstage had to part with 2s for the privilege, and those who chose to see and be seen in boxes close to, or above, the stage, paid as much as 2s 6d.[61]

[59] Mary Edmond, 'Burbage, James (c. 1531–1597), Actor', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/3950.
[60] Oliver Jones, 'Documentary Evidence for an Indoor Jacobean Theatre' in *Moving Shakespeare Indoors: Performance and Repertoire in the Jacobean Playhouse,* ed. Andrew Gurr and Farah Karim-Cooper (Cambridge University Press, 2014), p.69.
[61] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574 - 1642*, 4th edn (Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 195; Melissa D. Aaron, *Global Economics: A History of the Theater Business, the Chamberlain's/King's Men and Their Plays, 1599-1642* (University of Delaware Press; Eurospan distributor, 2005), p. 88.

Total income				
		Pence	ff	
Pit @ 1s 6d	174	3132	£13.05	
Stage stools @ 2s	16	384	£1.60	
Gallery 1 @ 1s	142	1704	£7.10	
Gallery 2 @ 6d	160	960	£4.00	
Box seats @ 2s 6d	32	960	£4.00	
			£29.75	**£29 15s**
Per week	**£179**			
Per 30 week playing year	**£5,355**			

Figure 4.17 Estimated financial capacity of the second Blackfriars.

What had been created by James Burbage, and subsequently fully exploited by his sons, was a playhouse with less than 20% of the audience capacity of the Globe yet with the potential to earn 140% of its income: in round figures, £30 per performance at the Blackfriars and £22 at the Globe. The average ticket yield of a full house was 1s $1^{1/2}$d. Once the Blackfriars came into full usage in 1610, the King's Men had what were described in James Wright's 1699 memoir of the stage of his youth, *Historia Histrionica,* as their summer playhouse, the Globe, and the Blackfriars as their winter house.[62] This offered them the ability to maximise the number of performances and therefore their income through the year. The exact division of the calendar across the two venues can only be estimated but it seems likely that the Globe operated from later April until the beginning of September when the Blackfriars took over and played until around Easter time. Allowing two full weeks per year without performances to accommodate the sporadic performance calendar at Christmas time, plus a few dark days for the changeover between venues, gives annual seasons of 20 weeks at the Globe and 30 weeks at the Blackfriars. This allocation of time is therefore illustrated in the income projections which follow.

[62] James Wright, *Historia Histrionica.*

The method of allocating the income between the sharers of the King's Men and the housekeepers of the Globe almost certainly followed the pattern of similar open-air venues, such as the Rose and the Fortune, where the playing company took the income from the yard plus half the gallery payments. The owning consortium of housekeepers received the other half of the gallery money. This basic model of shared income became more complex with the operation of the Blackfriars. Income from those closest to the stage still belonged to the playing company but these were no longer the substantial number of penny yard-standers. They were now the more select bench-sitters in the pit, probably paying 1s 6d – eighteen times the Fortune or Globe yard price. The sharers of the King's Men also took 2s from all those seated on stools on the stage itself. Their commercial desire to continue a practice previously used by the children's company must have overcome the logistical concerns of giving up valuable playing space. The Blackfriars housekeepers are assumed to have taken 2s 6d for each box seat, with the income from the remainder of the house, the two levels of galleries, shared between company and owners. With only a single entrance into the playing space, collecting the income appropriately between company and housekeepers was probably impossible. The relatively tight space had to accommodate at least one, possibly two, gatherers at the head of the main entrance stair to take 6d from everybody entering. A few steps further on, another gatherer would have been required to take an additional 1s from those wanting to sit on the pit benches. Entry to the lowest, 1s, gallery would have been guarded on each side of the main entrance. Here, a second sixpence could be taken from patrons entering and gatherers could also ensure that the original sixpenny customers continued climbing up to the higher, cheaper level. To sit in a box, or on stage, must have meant making oneself known to a representative of the housekeepers (for a box) or company (for a stage stool) and being conducted there personally once the additional payment was

made. Other than the income for box seats and stage stools, the coins would have been counted by seating area and then divided as necessary between the company sharers (as a group) and the housekeepers. With a preponderance of player-housekeepers in the company in the early days at the Blackfriars, no doubt a separate non-housekeeper company sharer was required as a scrutineer to watch the division. It is easy to see how, in later years with changes of personnel (and certainly by the time of the Sharers' Papers), ill will and mistrust could breed.[63]

7 Costs

Chapter 3 established in detail the relative costs of operation borne by both the playhouse owner operators (housekeepers) and sharers of the King's Men, and these are given here, in summary only.

7.1 The first and second Globe

Globe 1: 40-week season

Housekeepers' costs	£184	Company sharers' costs	£605

Globe 1: 20-week season

Housekeepers' costs	£139	Company sharers' costs	£382

Globe 2: 20-week season

Housekeepers' costs	£150	Company sharers' costs	£382

[63] The Sharers' Papers document the dispute between the then housekeepers of the King's Men and three of the company sharers who sought to purchase shares in the playhouses. TNA, LC 5/133.

7.2 The Blackfriars

Blackfriars: 30-week season

Housekeepers' costs	£146	Company sharers' costs	£648

These summary figures illustrate clearly just what a high proportion of the total cost of production and venue operation was borne by the sharers of the King's Men in both playhouses, and at all times. At the first Globe they paid 75% of the total costs and at the Blackfriars, 78%. The increase at the Blackfriars was largely due to the cost of candles: almost 10% of their £648 total. Only at the second Globe did the sharers' proportion reduce to around 70% of the total. As can also be seen from the figures above, the company sharers who petitioned to buy housekeeper shares in 1635 were not wrong in claiming that the players had expenses 'amounting to £900 or £1000 per annum or thereabouts' across the Globe and Blackfriars.[64]

8 Income and profit: corporate

8.1 The first and second Globe

8.1.1 Globe 1: 40-week season 1599 – 1608

The analysis of financial capacity for the earliest phase of the Globe in figure 4.16 shows a gross potential total of £21 15s per performance. Employing the apportionment of income outlined in section 2 above gives the playing company 59% of total receipts (from the yard

[64] TNA, LC 5/133.

and half the galleries) and the housekeepers 41% (half the galleries and the lords' room). Figure 4.18 multiplies the daily gross potential by six performances to arrive at a weekly total, and then by 40 to give a figure for the entire 40-week season. From this are deducted the costs in 7.1 above to give the profit figure. The profit is divided to demonstrate the value of each share, by ten in the case of housekeepers (five held by the Burbages, five by sharer colleagues); and by nine for the company sharers. The housekeeper profit line also includes an estimated 10% profit share from the tap-house known to have been on the premises (the operation of which is considered below in the context of John Heminges's personal income) and an allowance for the 'between £20 & £30 per annum from the tap-houses & a tenement & a garden belonging to the premises'.[65] The percentage range of capacity runs from an undreamt of 100% down to a desperate 30%, with the most likely spread for a large playhouse being between 40% and 70%.

Globe 1 40 wks p.a.								
Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (40 week) income	**£5,215**	**£4,694**	**£4,172**	**£3,651**	**£3,129**	**£2,608**	**£2,086**	**£1,565**
Owners' share 41%	£2,149	£1,934	£1,719	£1,504	£1,289	£1,074	£860	£645
Owners' costs	£184	£184	£184	£184	£184	£184	£184	£184
10% share taphouse profit	£50	£45	£40	£35	£30	£25	£20	£15
Owners' profit/loss	£2,015	£1,795	£1,575	£1,355	£1,135	£915	£695	£476
Per share (10)	**£201**	**£179**	**£157**	**£135**	**£114**	**£92**	**£70**	**£48**
Company share 59%	£3,067	£2,760	£2,453	£2,147	£1,840	£1,533	£1,227	£920
Company costs	£605	£605	£605	£605	£605	£605	£605	£605
Company profit/loss	£2,462	£2,155	£1,848	£1,542	£1,235	£928	£622	£315
Per company sharer (9)	**£274**	**£239**	**£205**	**£171**	**£137**	**£103**	**£69**	**£35**

Figure 4.18 Housekeeper and company estimated profit over 40-week season at the first Globe.

From these figures it is easy to see that at a realistically modest average of 50% attendance throughout a typical 40-week playing year, it would have been possible to earn a very decent living as either company sharer or housekeeper – or both. A skilled craftsman, by

[66] TNA, LC 5/133.

statute earning 16d per day, working six days a week every week of the year, earned £20 16s (less than the total potential income from a single full house at the Globe); the two chaplains of the Globe's parish church, St Saviour, Southwark, shared a stipend of £60 per annum.[66] A company sharer in the King's Men working for 40 weeks through the year had the potential to earn around £100 from the playhouse. In 1611, John Newton, a sharer in the Duke of York's Men, claimed he could earn between 20s and 30s per week, or £50 to £75 per year: a claim which looks realistic (although for a different playhouse), on the basis of figure 4.18.[67] For a sharer in the King's Men, this income was supplemented by the standard payment to the company of £10 per performance for plays presented at court, often more than a dozen per year, plus the award of £3 6s 8d to each sharer as one of the 'Players of Enterludes' in the royal household.[68] No wonder that some of the virulent antitheatrical language, for example, 'It is a woeful sight to see two hundred proud players jet in their silks', had more than a whiff of jealousy about it.[69] However, there would rarely have been a typical playing year, so that the figures above cannot be considered any more than indicative of the personal income individuals might have been hoping to accrue during a year.

The bulk of housekeeper profits were probably paid out periodically, monthly or on quarter days, with a prudent reserve held back (most likely by Cuthbert Burbage and/or Heminges) for issues which might arise later in the year.[70] The company sharers, similarly,

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[67] Jeremy Boulton, 'Wage Labour in Seventeenth-Century London', *The Economic History Review,* Vol. 49/2 (May, 1996) pp. 268-290 (p.269) https://www.jstor.org/stable/2597916 [accessed 19 February 2025]; William Batterton, or Butterton, was one of the chaplains of St Saviour's in 1603, Liberi Clerici evidence record, 11060 <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/DisplayLibClDetail.jsp?CDBLibClDeID=199771> [accessed 30 October 2024].

[67] Callan Davies, *What Is a Playhouse?: England at Play, 1520-1620* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2022), p. 114.

[68] The Offices of England 1607, fol. 18^{r} .

[69] BL, MS Harleian 286, Maliverny Catlyn letter to Francis Walsingham, January 1586, in Callan Davies, 'Spying the Playhouses', *Before Shakespeare* <https://beforeshakespeare.com/2017/02/07/post-from-the-past-1-spying-the-playhouses/> [accessed 5 April 2023].

[70] See Chapter 3, p. 183.

almost certainly would not have received a full distribution of profits on a frequent basis. Their expenses were significantly higher than the housekeepers' and, apart from wages to hired men and boys' living payments to apprentice masters, would have varied hugely from week to week, dependent on timing of both seasonal and production cycles, delaying the calculation of profits. It seems logical that sharers would have received a regular weekly payment on account (perhaps at the level of hired man wage) with the then current balance settled monthly or on quarter days. This can be seen in Henslowe's Diary where he made frequent loans to established and senior sharers in the Admiral's Men, suggesting that, like their waged fellows, they were usually living on a few shillings per week.[71] (Notably, many of these loans were repaid by weekly instalments at the end of a week, as though the borrower was waiting for payday.)

8.1.2 Globe 1: 20-week season 1609 – 1613

With the advent of the Blackfriars as the King's Men's winter house, the number of playing weeks at the Globe was halved.[72] Some costs could be pro-rated down but the profits from their summer house were drastically reduced. For the housekeepers (and player-housekeepers), profits went down by more than 50% as the shareholding base had been expanded to fourteen shares; for those who remained only company sharers the reduction was also severe. When compared with the profits from 40 weeks (figure 4.18) the chart below illustrates why the Burbage brothers felt the need to offer their Globe housekeeper partners

[71] Loans to William Bird (Borne) and Richard Jones, *Diary,* fols. 103^{r}-103^{v}.

[72] To allow the Globe to stand idle for 60% of the year was not economic and, logically, it seems possible that the King's Men may have used it to host one-off events. The same is possible with the use of Blackfriars in the remaining months. As there is no known evidence of such use for either, any income derived from this source is ignored in my calculations.

a free share each in the ownership of the Blackfriars in compensation for the projected annual profit they were forgoing.

Globe 1 20 wks p.a.								
Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (20 week) income	**£2,608**	**£2,347**	**£2,086**	**£1,825**	**£1,565**	**£1,304**	**£1,043**	**£782**
Owners' share 41%	£1,074	£967	£860	£752	£645	£537	£430	£322
Owners' costs	£139	£139	£139	£139	£139	£139	£139	£139
10% share taphouse profit	£25	£22	£20	£17	£15	£12	£10	£7
Owners' profit/loss	£960	£850	£740	£630	£521	£411	£301	£191
Per share (14)	**£69**	**£61**	**£53**	**£45**	**£37**	**£29**	**£21**	**£14**
Company share 59%	£1,533	£1,380	£1,227	£1,073	£920	£767	£613	£460
Company costs	£382	£382	£382	£382	£382	£382	£382	£382
Company profit/loss	£1,151	£998	£845	£691	£538	£385	£231	£78
Per company sharer (9)	**£128**	**£111**	**£94**	**£77**	**£60**	**£43**	**£26**	**£9**

Figure 4.19 Housekeeper and company estimated profit over 20-week season at the first Globe.

The new playing regime got off to a bad start with an eighteen-month closure of the theatres from July 1608 to December 1609, making it very nearly two years before the Globe was operational for its newly reduced April to September playing season. This must have been a particularly anxious period for everyone in the company, uncertain as to whether audiences would return to the Globe after the launch of the comfortable and weatherproof Blackfriars. It appears that audiences did return, and in good numbers; section 8.3 below illustrates the combined Globe and Blackfriars playing year.

8.1.3 Globe 2: 20-week season 1614 onwards

The rebuilding of the Globe in less than year was a remarkable achievement, led by John Heminges and his scrivener son-in-law, John Atkins. However, it came at an enormous price, literally, with a construction cost of £1400, and with a reduction in profitability for the

owners.[73] The housekeepers had to decide collectively whether to write off their individual contribution to the rebuilding cost or, collectively, to carry it forward to future years, to be repaid to them over the life of the lease. It may well have been differing views about how to handle the necessary cash requirement in the summer of 1613 that led to Shakespeare giving up (or, probably more accurately, selling) his shares in both the King's Men's theatres. The illustration below takes the long view, that the housekeepers carried forward the rebuilding cost, amortising it across the twenty-two years of the renegotiated land lease. The profits of each individual housekeeper were also negatively impacted by the increase in the number of shares, from ten (in 1600) to sixteen by 1614. This expansion of the shareholder base had been driven by the deaths of some of the first shareholders, whose heirs now held shares in the property, and by the inclusion of newer company members as co-owners.

Globe 2 20 wks p.a.								
Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (20 week) income	**£2,608**	**£2,347**	**£2,086**	**£1,825**	**£1,565**	**£1,304**	**£1,043**	**£782**
Owners' share 41%	£1,074	£967	£860	£752	£645	£537	£430	£322
Owners' costs	£150	£150	£150	£150	£150	£150	£150	£150
10% share taphouse profit	£25	£22	£20	£17	£15	£12	£10	£7
Owners' profit/loss	£950	£840	£730	£620	£510	£400	£290	£180
Per share (16)	**£59**	**£52**	**£46**	**£39**	**£32**	**£25**	**£18**	**£11**
Company share 59%	£1,533	£1,380	£1,227	£1,073	£920	£767	£613	£460
Company costs	£382	£382	£382	£382	£382	£382	£382	£382
Company profit/loss	£1,151	£998	£845	£691	£538	£385	£231	£78
Per company sharer (9)	**£128**	**£111**	**£94**	**£77**	**£60**	**£43**	**£26**	**£9**

Figure 4.20 Housekeeper and company estimated profit over 20-week season at the second Globe.

[73] The construction cost of the rebuilt Globe was finally accepted as £1400 during the lengthy litigation concerning the land lease during the 1630s. TNA, Req.2/7006/bottom, transcribed in Herbert Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses* (AMS Press, 1987), pp. 94–95.

8.2 The Blackfriars

Commencing performances at the Blackfriars at the very end of 1609 after the eighteen-month plague hiatus brought about a complete transformation of the finances of the King's Men, sharers and housekeepers alike. Much smaller than the Globe, it had the ability to take nearly half as much again in entrance fees per performance. Where a respectable-to-good Globe attendance might have averaged around 50% to 60% of capacity, the Blackfriars is more likely to have played to a high level of average capacity, perhaps as great as 80%. At these respective levels (50% and 80%) the winter season at Blackfriars had the potential to earn both company sharers and housekeepers roughly six times as much as during summer at the Globe. And for both sharers and housekeepers, the 500-plus seats at the Blackfriars over winter could easily earn them twice as much as they had been receiving for a 40-week playing year at the Globe.

Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Annual (30 week) income	**£5,355**	**£4,820**	**£4,284**	**£3,749**	**£3,213**	**£2,678**	**£2,142**	**£1,607**
Owners' share 32%	£1,719	£1,547	£1,375	£1,203	£1,031	£860	£688	£516
Owners' costs	£146	£146	£146	£146	£146	£146	£146	£146
10% share taphouse profit	£13	£12	£10	£9	£8	£7	£5	£4
Owners' profit/loss	£1,587	£1,413	£1,240	£1,067	£894	£721	£547	£374
Per share (7)	**£227**	**£202**	**£177**	**£152**	**£128**	**£103**	**£78**	**£53**
Company share 68%	£3,636	£3,272	£2,909	£2,545	£2,182	£1,818	£1,454	£1,091
Company costs	£648	£648	£648	£648	£648	£648	£648	£648
Company profit/loss	£2,988	£2,624	£2,261	£1,897	£1,534	£1,170	£806	£443
Per company sharer (9)	**£332**	**£292**	**£251**	**£211**	**£170**	**£130**	**£90**	**£49**

Figure 4.21 Housekeeper and company estimated profit over 30-week season at the second Blackfriars.

Whether the Burbage brothers sat down with their Globe housekeeper colleagues to pore over income projections is unknown but, given the relatively small number of seats to fill, allied to the obvious spending power of audiences for the boy players at the Blackfriars, the likelihood of success at the new venue must have seemed clear. Yet it was possible to argue that, with its enormous capacity, using the Globe all year round still had potential to

deliver equally good results. The Burbages made their core housekeeper colleagues (Heminges, Shakespeare, Condell, and Sly) an offer that they could not refuse: a free share in the Blackfriars in exchange for giving up half the playing year at the Globe. In doing so, Cuthbert and Richard also ceded their own dominance, taking just one share each out of the seven rather than retaining half the total, as they still did at the Globe. This apparently democratising gesture concealed a hard-headed financial view that the new playhouse would be a major profit stream for all.

Provided the existing Blackfriars audience came to see the King's Men, just as they had the boys, and that at least some of the loyal Globe audience crossed the Thames, the Blackfriars was set to be a success. A sharer in the company, such as new star John Lowin or long-time member Richard Cowley, stood to earn nearer £200 than £100 per annum from the indoor playhouse alone, if it played to more than 60% average capacity (just 315 people). This was despite the vastly increased company costs as, for the first time, the stage required lighting and, from evidence in the Sharers' Papers, this was the sole responsibility of the players, rather than a shared cost.[74] The second substantial new cost the company had to take on was the consort of musicians resident at the Blackfriars. Part of the attraction for audiences there had been the musicians who played both before and during performances.[75] It was commercially prudent as well as creatively stimulating to retain them but, once they were part of the 'necessary attendants', it would have been impossible to relinquish them at the Globe. Thus the musicians (eight are assumed in the calculation of costs) became an ongoing expense at the Globe, also.[76]

[74] TNA LC 5/133, pp. 44-51. (See chapter 3, p. 231 for details of candle costs).
[75] Linda Phyllis Austern, *Music in English Children's Drama of the Later Renaissance* (Gordon and Breach, 1992), p. 311 <http://archive.org/details/musicinenglishch0000aust> [accessed 12 June 2024].
[76] Adams, *Dramatic Records,* p. 74.

8.3 Globe and Blackfriars combined profits

The extraordinary leap in potential profitability for the sharers and Blackfriars housekeepers of the King's Men is shown in the illustration below. Figure 4.22 uses the costs of Globe 1 and Blackfriars; the difference in outcome is negligible for Globe 2 and Blackfriars and is therefore ignored. Although the illustration is worked in detail it must be remembered that all figures can only be indicative; there are simply too many variables (physical capacity, price breaks, costs etc) for these to be accurate. Despite this, in broad outline, they provide a picture of an industry well placed to provide good rewards for its workers – provided there was stability. If Shakespeare did, indeed, sell his playhouse shares following the Globe fire, as someone careful with money and investments, he might have been wiser to have kept them and passed them on to Susannah.

Globe 1 & Blackfriars								
Percentage of capacity	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Globe owners' profit 20 wks	£950	£840	£730	£620	£510	£400	£290	£180
Per share (16)	£59	£52	£46	£39	£32	£25	£18	£11
Blackfriars owners' profit 30 wks	£1,587	£1,413	£1,240	£1,067	£894	£721	£547	£374
Per share (7)	£227	£202	£177	£152	£128	£103	£78	£53
1 share in each playhouse	**£286**	**£254**	**£223**	**£191**	**£160**	**£128**	**£96**	**£65**
Globe company profit 20 wks	£1,151	£998	£845	£691	£538	£385	£231	£78
Per share (9)	£128	£111	£94	£77	£60	£43	£26	£9
Blackfriars company profit 30 wks	£2,988	£2,624	£2,261	£1,897	£1,534	£1,170	£806	£443
Per share (9)	£332	£292	£251	£211	£170	£130	£90	£49
Combined company share	**£460**	**£402**	**£345**	**£288**	**£230**	**£173**	**£115**	**£58**
Share in each playhouse	£286	£254	£223	£191	£160	£128	£96	£65
Company share	£460	£402	£345	£288	£230	£173	£115	£58
Combined player & housekeeper	**£746**	**£657**	**£568**	**£479**	**£390**	**£301**	**£212**	**£123**

Figure 4.22 Housekeeper and company sharer estimated combined profit from first Globe and second Blackfriars.

9 Income and profit: individual

The remainder of Part Two will focus on the individual theatrical finances, as far as they can be established, of Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, William Shakespeare, and John Heminges. Richard Burbage and Heminges are of obvious interest and importance in such a survey and the inclusion of Shakespeare illustrates the potential income of a company sharer and player-housekeeper with one share in the ownership of each playhouse. Cuthbert Burbage is introduced as an example of someone intimately linked with the playhouses through ownership, not active participation, operating at arm's length as a well-connected advocate with officialdom on the players' and housekeepers' behalf. These individual examples all demonstrate the very high level of potential profitability that owning a playhouse (or share of a playhouse) offered, more than justifying the initial outlay and allowing the Burbages, Shakespeare and Heminges to consider themselves, and be considered by others, as gentlemen.[77] If owning land was a recognised marker of gentility, owning a share of a playhouse was acquiring a similar significance.

[77] The Burbage brothers are both described as gentlemen in a case of burglary in 1615, 'Middlesex Sessions Rolls: 1615', in *Middlesex County Records: Volume 2, 1603-25*, ed. John Cordy Jeaffreson (London, 1887), *British History Online* https://www.british-history.ac.uk/middx-county-records/vol2/pp107-119 ; Heather Wolfe and Michael Witmore, 'William Shakespeare, Poet and Gentleman', https://www.folger.edu/blogs/collation/william-shakespeare-post-gentleman/; John Heminges was given the descriptor, 'gent.', when his son William entered Christ Church, Oxford in 1621, *Alumni Oxonienses 1500-1714*, ed. Joseph Foster (Oxford, 1891), *British History Online* https://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714/pp. 679-705 [all accessed 25 February 2025].

9.1 Richard Burbage

Richard Burbage: 1600			
Globe only	%age of capacity		%age of capacity
	60%		50%
Globe 1 housekeeper 2.5 shares	£285		£230
Globe 1 company sharer	£137		£103
Total	**£422**		**£333**

Figure 4.23 Richard Burbage's estimated combined profits as housekeeper and company sharer at the first Globe in 1600.

From the outset of the Burbage brothers' Globe scheme, they jointly held 50% of the shared ownership. The total number of shares fluctuated as original shareholders left (Will Kemp dancing off to Norwich) or died (Thomas Pope and Augustine Phillips) and newcomers (Henry Condell and William Sly) were admitted, but their proportion remained constant at 25% each. Once again with the caveat that these examples cannot be proved to be accurate, the illustration above shows Richard Burbage's earning potential in 1600, once the Globe was fully established and playing for perhaps 40 out of 52 weeks. Assuming that the Globe played to an annual average attendance of 50% to 60%, he stood to earn between £340 and £429.[78] This is vastly more than a gentleman needed to have at his disposal to live in London yet nowhere near the level of senior lawyers or the merchants who comprised the City aldermanry.[79] However, these profits were amassed only gradually during the first decade of

[78] Although this percentage of average attendance may appear low, it is worth noting that the benchmark for commercial investment in theatre production in 2024 is frequently predicated on recoupment of production costs at 60% capacity being reached by the end of the first actors' contract period: 'If the production is a play or a limited run musical the production should be able to recoup the estimated production costs plus a 10% contingency at 60% of Net Box Office Capacity, within 13 weeks from the press night if the production is a play and within 20 weeks if it is a musical, or within the length of the star's contract or other limiting factor (e.g. availability of theatre), whichever is the sooner.' *Stage One investment guidelines 2020-2021*, by courtesy of the Theatre Investment Fund Ltd and the Society of London Theatre.

[79] To be nominated as an alderman, a man had to be worth at least £1333 6s 8d (two thousand marks). TLA, Repertories of the Court of Aldermen, VII, fols. 45^{v}-46, in Steve Lee Rappaport, *Worlds within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London*, Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy and Society in Past Time; 7 (Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 217.

the seventeenth century as this was a period of erratic performance scheduling, subject to regular plague closures, particularly in 1603 to 1605 and 1608 to 1609. Whilst the idea of bringing the Blackfriars into use by the King's Men, as James Burbage had originally intended, may have developed during the closed period from 1603, it was not until after that of 1608-09 that the family ambition could be fulfilled.

Richard Burbage: 1610				
Globe 1 & Blackfriars	%age of capacity		%age of capacity	
Globe 1 housekeeper 3 shares	60%	£112	50%	£88
Blackfriars housekeeper 1 share	80%	£177	70%	£152
Globe 1 company sharer	60%	£60	50%	£43
Blackfriars company sharer	80%	£251	70%	£211
Total		**£600**		**£494**

Figure 4.24 Richard Burbage's estimated combined profits as housekeeper and company sharer at the first Globe and Blackfriars in 1610.

Ten years later, the Blackfriars was running successfully but the contribution of the Globe to Burbage's income was drastically diminished by the curtailment of the latter's playing season. Figure 4.24 illustrates the potential for Burbage to have increased his personal income by just under 50% as a result of the Blackfriars operation. Although the Globe continues to be estimated at 50% and 60% capacity, it is safe to assume that the more intimate indoor house played to a higher percentage of capacity, illustrated here at 70% to 80%. Today, in an era of allowances for ticket discounts and complimentary tickets, a consistent average level of 80% of financial capacity could equate to near-capacity houses. In 1610, any discounts would have been surreptitious, and at the risk of the gatherers, but complimentary tickets were in the gift of the owners, and were not unknown. In 1587 Henslowe and Cholmley had agreed they would 'suffer their friends to go in for nothing' and

the playwright (as now) was able to attend his own work free of charge.[80] 80% of financial capacity may therefore have equated to around 90% of practical capacity. With the addition of the Blackfriars, Richard Burbage's potential personal annual profit as owner and player had increased to something between £500 and £600.

Richard Burbage: 1618				
Globe 2 & Blackfriars	%age of capacity		%age of capacity	
Globe 2 housekeeper 4 shares	60%	£127	50%	£100
Blackfriars housekeeper 1 share	80%	£177	70%	£152
Globe 2 company sharer	60%	£60	50%	£43
Blackfriars company sharer	80%	£251	70%	£211
Total		**£616**		**£506**

Figure 4.25 Richard Burbage's estimated combined profits as housekeeper and company sharer at the second Globe and Blackfriars in 1618.

By 1618, the year before his death, Richard Burbage's opportunity to profit from both his acting and his property ownership remained largely unchanged. As previously, despite a further increase in the number of Globe housekeepers, his personal share remained at 25% and only the need to recapitalise to fund the rebuilding after the fire of 1613 had altered the financial situation. Because this expense was probably spread over the length of the lease, its effect on Burbage's income would have been barely noticeable, although his heirs would

[80] HADP, muniment 16; 'I must … let *Players* know / They cannot recompence your labour: Though / They … take no money of you nor your Page', John Stephens, *To His Worthy Friend, H. F. Vpon His Notes from Black-Fryers.* , London, 1617*. ProQuest*, <https://www.proquest.com/books/his-worthy-friend-h-f-vpon-notes-black-fryers/docview/2147748730/se-2> [accessed 30 October 2024]; '[poets] pay nothing for their entrance', Sir William D'Avenant, *The Works of Sr. William Davenant, Kt. Consisting of those which were Formerly Printed and those which He Design'd for the Press: Now Published Out of the Authors Originall Copies.* , London, 1673*,* p. 75, *ProQuest*, <https://www.proquest.com/books/works-sr-william-davenant-kt-consisting-those/docview/2240971245/se-2> [accessed 30 October 2024]; in 2024, the playwright 'may attend any performances of his/her Play thereafter [following press night] free of charge', under the terms of the *Agreement Between the UK Theatre Association and the Writers' Guild of Great Britain* <https://writersguild.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/UK-Theatre-Writers-Guild-Agreement-May-2015.pdf> [accessed 11 November 2024].

continue to see it as a small extra cost until the lease's expiry in 1635. When he died the following year, he left a nuncupative and deliberately vague will which disguised his probably extremely substantial wealth.[81] He is often cited as having left 'they say better than £300 land', which is easily possible and comes (with no source) from the great letter writer, John Chamberlain.[82] But he probably left a great deal more besides to his executrix wife, Winifred.

9.2 Cuthbert Burbage

James Burbage's elder son is included in this survey as an example of the gains that playhouse property ownership could bring without the need to participate actively in performance, or, as characterised in the Sharers' Papers, 'without taking any pains themselves'.[83] At the inception of the Globe, from his 25% share of the playhouse, Cuthbert could have anticipated annual profits of £230 at 50% average capacity, possibly rising to £285 at 60%. Although it might have appeared to those of the company sharers who were not housekeepers that this was money for doing nothing, Cuthbert would have viewed it differently: it represented the repayment of the capital and/or goodwill that he had contributed towards the building cost and was also the reward for the risk he took in making the investment in the first place. Like Richard, when the Blackfriars partnership was created, he took only one share of the original seven rather than the 1.75 that would have mirrored the Globe pattern, but this holding, along with that in the Globe, had the potential to yield him between £250 and £300 per annum in profits. After his brother's death, he joined with his sister-in-law Winifred and her

[81] Will of Richard Burbage, TNA, PROB 1/32 in Honigmann and Brock, *Playhouse Wills,* pp. 113 – 115.
[82] John Chamberlain, *The Chamberlain Letters: A Selection of the Letters of John Chamberlain Concerning Life in England from 1597 to 1626*, ed. by Elizabeth McClure Thomson (Murray, 1966), p. 150.
[83] TNA, LC 5/133.

new husband, player Richard Robinson, to guard those original shares for as long as possible, before allowing some to be purchased by newer players. When Cuthbert died in 1636 he followed the family tradition and left no will, thus concealing the extent of the 'lands, houses and tenements standing and being in the parish of St Ann Blackfriars', inherited by his daughter and subsequently left in her own will.[84]

9.3 William Shakespeare

Shakespeare is included here principally as an example of an original company sharer who became the owner of a single share in the Globe, and later the Blackfriars, at the Burbages' invitation. It might also have appeared perverse to have ignored him. Any income from his playwriting is excluded as there is no evidence of separate remuneration for this. It could, of course, be that his role as writer in residence and dramaturg was his work in kind for the King's Men, occupying him whilst Heminges kept the accounts and others sourced costumes and props. It is equally possible that he was paid in similar fashion to the many playwrights whose fees are recorded in Henslowe's Diary. In this case he would have earned, perhaps, £20 per year, or 10% of his likely income as sharer and housekeeper at the half-full Globe in 1600.

[84] The will of Cuthbert's daughter, Elizabeth Bingley, TNA, PROB 11/338/398.

William Shakespeare: 1600				
Globe only		%age of capacity		%age of capacity
		60%		50%
Globe 1 housekeeper 1 share		£114		£92
Globe 1 company sharer		£137		£103
Total		**£251**		**£195**

William Shakespeare: 1610				
Globe 1 & Blackfriars	%age of capacity		%age of capacity	
Globe 1 housekeeper 1 share	60%	£37	50%	£29
Blackfriars housekeeper 1 share	80%	£177	70%	£152
Globe 1 company sharer	60%	£60	50%	£43
Blackfriars company sharer	80%	£251	70%	£211
Total		**£525**		**£435**

Figure 4.26 William Shakespeare's estimated theatrical income.

The second, 1610, example in figure 4.26 illustrates the profound effect of the opening of the Blackfriars for anyone holding a single share in each playhouse. Shakespeare's average earning potential more than doubled from around £200 per year to closer to the £500 per year he probably received between 1610 and 1612. The absence of specific mention of the playhouse shares in his will (unlike John Heminges, for whom they formed the bulk of his estate) has led to much speculation about when, or if, he disposed of them.[85] In the words of Schoenbaum 'we do not actually know if he disposed of his shares or held on to them until the end.'[86] The most common view is that he sold them back to his housekeeper colleagues to avoid contributing to the cost of reconstructing the Globe after the fire of June 1613. The housekeepers were then required to supply additional cash for the rebuild and, as experience had shown them that such investment was likely to repay itself several times over, this makes it appear that a decision to divest himself of the shares at that point was not primarily financial. If he had not already withdrawn from the playhouse-owning consortium, the fire

[85] Wills of William Shakespeare, TNA, PROB 1/4 and John Heminges, TNA, PROB 10/484 in Honigmann and Brock, *Playhouse Wills*, pp. 105 – 109 and pp. 164 – 169.
[86] S. Schoenbaum, *William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life*, Reprinted 1987 (Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 212.

may have been the catalyst for doing so, but was probably not the underlying reason. Robert Bearman, however, advances the view that Shakespeare may have used the proceeds of selling the shares to fund his purchase of the Blackfriars gatehouse three months before the fire, whilst Lena Cowan Orlin questions whether he ever owned them at all: 'Perhaps we should ask whether no documents exist because Shakespeare neither paid in nor sold up'.[87] This latter view runs counter to evidence from Stratford of his careful land and property investments; such an astute investor would hardly have passed up the opportunity to make the serious money illustrated above by playhouse ownership.

9.4 John Heminges

Of all the individuals considered in this review, John Heminges is the one whose wealth grew most rapidly as a result of his theatrical career. Philip Henslowe may have been wealthier at his death by virtue of his property holdings; Edward Alleyn appears to have had phenomenal wealth but also primarily derived from his active pursuit of property – albeit that that was given impetus by the profits gained through playhouse ownership. Heminges, however, seems to have started with no more than his own income as a player, possibly added to by any modest estate inherited by his wife, Rebecca, on the death of her first husband. As a sharer, first (possibly) in the Queen's Men, next Strange's, and then the King's Men, his earnings would have been sufficient for him to live in comfort and raise a family in his chosen residence in the parish of St Mary Aldermanbury. As a player, with no known family

[87] Robert Bearman, *Shakespeare's Money: How Much Did He Make and What Did This Mean?* (Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 140.

background in property, it was the enormous risk that he took in putting in his share of around £150 in cash and (possibly) credit to the construction of the Globe, that literally paid dividends and enabled him to become of 'great wealth, living and power'.[88]

But the Burbage consortium's decision to proceed with constructing the Globe may also have spurred an entrepreneurial thought in Heminges: that he could use his status as a member of the Grocers' Company to operate the catering franchise at the playhouse and thereby gain a third income stream to add to those of sharer and soon-to-be playhouse owner. In Chapter 3, section 6, p. 228, I proposed that the tap-house(s) and other ancillary sales were operated by Heminges on behalf of the company and that the 'between £20 & £30 per annum' referred to in the Sharers' Papers reflects the variable profit share paid over by the then operator (after Heminges's death) to the housekeepers. £20 to £30 would have been a remarkably low contribution from the tap-house operation if it represented the entire annual profits. In 2024, the ratio of audience members spending on ancillary sales, i.e. purchasing a programme and/or buying a drink or confectionery, is usually estimated to be one in three or four. The table below illustrates one in three Globe attenders spending a single penny on food or drink, with the cost of sales (i.e. the cost of the ale or pie or fruit itself, plus the labour to serve it) representing half the income. The remaining half is therefore profit.

GLOBE 1	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Attenders per performance	2985	2687	2388	2090	1791	1493	1194	896
1:3 taphouse customers 1d spend (in pence)	995	896	796	697	597	498	398	299
Profit (50%) after cost of sales (in pence)	498	448	398	348	299	249	199	149
Total weekly profit 6 performances	£12	£11	£10	£9	£7	£6	£5	£4

Figure 4.27 Estimated first Globe weekly tap-house profit.

[88] John Witter bill of complaint against Heminges and Condell, TNA, Req.4/1/1, in Wickham et al., *English Professional Theatre,* p. 201.

From this, it is easy to see that to have made only £20 to £30 per year from ancillary sales would have meant a disastrous catering operation, running at a loss most of the time. The catering was therefore probably run as a separate business by John Heminges. The figures above make sense of this if he paid a 10% share of tap-house profits as rent to his housekeeper colleagues.

GLOBE 1	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Attenders per performance	2985	2687	2388	2090	1791	1493	1194	896
1:3 taphouse customers 1d spend (in pence)	995	896	796	697	597	498	398	299
Profit (50%) after cost of sales (in pence)	498	448	398	348	299	249	199	149
Total weekly profit 6 performances	£12	£11	£10	£9	£7	£6	£5	£4
Profit 40 week playing year	£498	£448	£398	£348	£299	£249	£199	£149
Less 10% share to housekeepers	£50	£45	£40	£35	£30	£25	£20	£15
Net profit per 40 week playing year	£448	£403	£358	£313	£269	£224	£179	£134

Figure 4.28 Estimated tap-house profits for 40-week season at the first Globe.

This form of catering concession still persists, and 10% is a reasonable level for the profit to be paid to the owners or landlords.[89] Figure 4.28 demonstrates that, on this basis, and in the pre-Blackfriars years, the Globe housekeepers could have received £25 to £30 of tap-house income at 50% to 60% attendance across a 'full' playing year – in line with the assertion in the Sharers' Papers years later. Heminges, on the other hand, had the potential to make substantial profits of £250 to £300 a year to add to his earnings as sharer and housekeeper. As always, this relied on consistent performances, reasonable attendance levels and, additionally in this case, audience members with sufficient cash remaining once they had paid their entrance fees.

When the King's Men took over the Blackfriars as their winter venue the Globe tap-house profits plummeted, as illustrated in figure 4.29.

[89] This is commercially sensitive information but such arrangements remain routine in 2024.

GLOBE 1	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Attenders per performance	2985	2687	2388	2090	1791	1493	1194	896
1:3 taphouse customers 1d spend (in pence)	995	896	796	697	597	498	398	299
Profit (50%) after cost of sales (in pence)	498	448	398	348	299	249	199	149
Total weekly profit 6 performances	£12	£11	£10	£9	£7	£6	£5	£4
Profit 20 week playing year	£249	£224	£199	£174	£149	£124	£100	£75
Less 10% share to housekeepers	£25	£22	£20	£17	£15	£12	£10	£7
Net profit per 20 week playing year	£224	£201	£179	£157	£134	£112	£90	£67

Figure 4.29 Estimated tap-house profits for 20-week season at the first Globe.

To compensate, the Blackfriars may also have had catering newly attached to it in some way. The Sharers' Papers' reference to plural 'tap-houses' makes that likely and there were spaces within the Blackfriars precinct which may have served that purpose, provided that there was somewhere en route to, or immediately adjacent to, the playhouse chamber. There may also have been mobile salespersons within the playhouse itself, although narrow gangways, benches, and a single entrance would not have made circulation (and therefore sales) easy. The other commercial consideration is that of volume: with an average attendance closer to 400 and the same ratio of one in three people purchasing, food and drink sales were never going to be a major income stream per performance as they were at the Globe – although cumulatively over a 30-week season they were worth pursuing. Figure 4.30 assumes one in three people spending twopence each as the majority were better able to afford a higher spend but, given the lack of firm evidence of a tap-house directly associated with the Blackfriars, the figures are more speculative than those for the Globe.

BLACKFRIARS	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Attenders per performance	524	472	419	367	314	262	210	157
1:3 taphouse customers 2d spend (in pence)	349	314	279	245	210	175	140	105
Profit (50%) after cost of sales (in pence)	175	157	140	122	105	87	70	52
Total weekly profit	£4	£4	£3	£3	£3	£2	£2	£1
30 week season profit	£131	£118	£105	£92	£79	£66	£52	£39
Less 10% profit share to housekeepers	£13	£12	£10	£9	£8	£7	£5	£4
Net profit per 30 week playing year	£118	£106	£94	£83	£71	£59	£47	£35

Figure 4.30 Estimated tap-house profits for 30-week season at the second Blackfriars.

When Heminges oversaw the rebuilding of the Globe in 1613 and 1614 he also supervised the building of a separate house at the not inconsiderable cost of £200, on behalf of the King's Men, according to John Atkins in a later lawsuit.[90] Heminges moved to Southwark in 1621/22 and at that point took up residence in this building which had probably functioned as the Globe's tap-house until then. The tap-house operation may then have transferred to the Globe tavern, the site of which has recently been established by Héloïse Sénéchal, with Heminges possibly handing over the business to the innkeeper.[91] Wherever the Globe tap-house was located, adjacent to the playhouse from 1614 to 1622, or elsewhere, it was capable of being open all year round as a regular establishment. (This is probably what Cholmley had wanted to do at the Rose in 1587.) Operating costs for the non-performance weeks would not be high, making a tap-house an easy additional source of income. It would have been hard for the King's Men to argue for a share of profits during dark weeks and no doubt Heminges could have faced them down if he wished. However, this can only be speculative and no such income has been included in my calculations of theatre-based income.

GLOBE 2	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Attenders per performance	2985	2687	2388	2090	1791	1493	1194	896
1:3 taphouse customers 1d spend (in pence)	995	896	796	697	597	498	398	299
Profit (50%) after cost of sales (in pence)	498	448	398	348	299	249	199	149
Weekly profit	£12	£11	£10	£9	£7	£6	£5	£4
20 week season profit	£249	£224	£199	£174	£149	£124	£100	£75
Less 10% profit share to housekeepers	£25	£22	£20	£17	£15	£12	£10	£7
Less £200 building cost amortised over lease	£12	£12	£12	£12	£12	£12	£12	£12
Net profit per 20 week playing year	£212	£190	£167	£145	£123	£100	£78	£55

Figure 4.31 Estimated tap-house profits for 20-week season at the second Globe.

[90] TNA, Req2/706 transcribed in Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses*, pp. 94–95.
[91] Héloïse Sénéchal, '"The 'Dwellinge Howse on the Banckside': John Heminges, Black Boy Alley, and the House Adjoining the Globe"', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, forthcoming, 2025.

It is now possible to make an assessment of John Heminges's earning potential at various points in his career, firstly as one of the original housekeepers of the new Globe in its initial full year of performances.

John Heminges: 1600				
Globe 1 only	%age of capacity		%age of capacity	
Globe 1 housekeeper 1 share	60%	£114	50%	£92
Globe 1 company sharer	60%	£137	50%	£103
Globe 1 taphouse profit	60%	£269	50%	£224
Total		**£519**		**£419**

Figure 4.32 Heminges's estimated combined housekeeper, company sharer, and tap-house profit at the first Globe in 1600.

Figure 4.32 clearly shows that Heminges was able to earn around half his total income from the Globe tap-house, with the possibility of £420 to £520 in combined profits. Despite having only 12.5% stake in the Globe, compared with Richard Burbage's 25%, he could earn approximately £100 a year more than Richard, making him easily the wealthiest of the sharers and housekeepers. By 1610, with the playing year split between the two playhouses, he was probably wealthier still, although he would have required some capital reserve to have seen him and his still growing family through the plague-disrupted early years of the century, until he took on the lucrative office of seacoal meter in 1608. By 1610 Heminges's shareholding in the Globe had been first diminished when Condell and Sly became housekeepers, but then rose back to 12.5% (now represented by 1.5 shares) of the total, at the death of William Sly.

John Heminges: 1610				
Globe 1 & Blackfriars	%age of capacity		%age of capacity	
Globe 1 housekeeper 1.5 share	60%	£56	50%	£44
Blackfriars housekeeper 1 share	80%	£177	70%	£152
Globe 1 company sharer	60%	£60	50%	£43
Blackfriars company sharer	80%	£251	70%	£211
Globe 1 taphouse profit	60%	£134	50%	£112
Blackfriars taphouse profit	80%	£94	70%	£83
Total		**£773**		**£644**

Figure 4.33 Heminges's estimated combined housekeeper, company sharer and tap-house profit at the first Globe and second Blackfriars in 1610.

The advent of the Blackfriars offered Heminges the potential to make approximately £200 more per annum than the Globe alone had done, with more than 60% of the total £600 to £700 coming from the new playhouse where he earned both as company sharer and housekeeper. If he did, indeed, run a second tap-house at the Blackfriars his earnings could have risen by a further £100. It is noticeable, though, that the projected Blackfriars tap-house earnings are significantly lower than those at the Globe, even with a reduced 20-week season there. The sheer volume of patrons was key to a successful tap-house.

A few years later, in 1618, the Globe shareholding had changed again with Heminges now holding three out of sixteen shares, or 18.75%. Players had come and gone from the playhouse owning group and, in the case of his late son-in-law William Ostler, Heminges had appropriated his share to add to his own. Rebuilding the Globe and building the new tap-house would have placed some strain on Heminges's cash reserves but the more settled company operation of the next few years, possibly the final years of his performing career, looked commercially bright for him.

John Heminges: 1618				
Globe 2 & Blackfriars	%age of capacity		%age of capacity	
Globe 2 housekeeper 3 shares	60%	£96	50%	£75
Blackfriars housekeeper 1 share	80%	£177	70%	£152
Globe 2 company sharer	60%	£60	50%	£43
Blackfriars company sharer	80%	£251	70%	£211
Globe 2 taphouse profit	60%	£123	50%	£100
Blackfriars taphouse profit	80%	£94	70%	£145
Total		**£801**		**£726**

Figure 4.34 Heminges's estimated combined housekeeper, company sharer, and tap-house profit at the second Globe and second Blackfriars in 1618.

Despite the changes in the housekeeper group, and the additional cost of building the new tap-house to be written off, his potential income remained at around £600 to £700, more if a

Blackfriars tap-house is included. However, a decade later, in the final years of Heminges's life, his theatrical income would have been halved if he had given up both his playing share in the King's Men when he ceased performing, and the operation of the ancillary sales. Only his housekeeper profits remained in that case.

John Heminges: 1628				
Globe 2 & Blackfriars	%age of capacity		%age of capacity	
Globe 2 housekeeper 4 shares	60%	£149	50%	£117
Blackfriars 1.75 shares	80%	£310	70%	£267
		£459		**£384**

Figure 4.35 John Heminges's estimated income as housekeeper only of the Globe and Blackfriars.

It is impossible to confirm that this was, indeed, the situation but the debt evidence in Heminges's own will, and lawsuits after his death, suggest that his earnings were seriously diminished by the end of his life.[92] Even in Heminges's highest earning period, in the early years of the second Globe and Blackfriars, it is highly unlikely that there was ever a consistent pattern of earning as illustrated. Real life dramas would have intruded all too frequently but with the opportunity for substantial income for some of the time, Heminges's theatrical earnings alone would regularly have been at the level deemed appropriate for anyone styled 'esquire': 'betwixt 1000 and 500^{l}' according to his contemporary, Thomas Wilson, in *The State of England, 1600.*[93]

[92] Kirle v Heminges, TNA, C2/ChasI/K5/42.
[93] Thomas Wilson, 'The State of England, Anno Dom. 1600', *Camden Third Series*, 52 (1936), pp. 1–47 (p. 23), doi:10.1017/S2042171000004787.

Conclusion

The analysis contained in this chapter demonstrates that, when the commercial London playhouses were able to operate consistently, the theatre business was not only viable but thriving for those who participated in it. Calculations in chapters 2 and 3 had previously established the physical, or audience, capacity of the second phase Rose, Fortune, first and second Globe, and Blackfriars playhouses; utilising that information allows for an estimation of how much each of those playhouses could potentially earn in entrance fees. Most notably it illustrates the transformative effect, from the owners' perspective, of Henslowe and Alleyn's choice to build the Fortune square rather than follow the trend for a polygonal shape. The choice may have been forced upon them by the boundaries of the plot of land: a polygon with a maximum diameter of 80 feet (the length of the Fortune's sides) would have permitted a building probably no larger than the Rose. Nevertheless, together with Peter Street, they created a playhouse that shifted the proportion of audience space (and therefore income) away from the penny-standing yard to the twopenny galleries. For the King's Men, the Globe was, essentially, a reconstruction project, but it had the advantage of sheer size, and both iterations of that playhouse could hold approximately 450 more people than the Fortune and earn nearly £3 more than the Fortune at each performance. Once the King's Men took over the Blackfriars as their second playhouse they had their own moment to innovate by introducing a different pricing structure. Not only was this much smaller playhouse vastly more expensive to attend, with a minimum price of sixpence, proximity to the stage, whether in a box or seated amongst the action, was now the criterion for price. Its audience capacity was less than 20% that of the Globe, yet it could earn 40% more than the Globe. In very

different buildings, Henslowe and Alleyn, and the King's Men, had learned how to maximise their profitability.

The illustrations of individual income from the playhouses show that whilst a company sharer, with no investment in the playhouse itself, might earn around £120 in a good year, his income could double if he also held a single playhouse share. This can be seen in the examples of Edward Alleyn and William Shakespeare, both of whom benefitted from this joint income stream and were both significantly wealthier than their sharer colleagues. Philip Henslowe and Cuthbert Burbage were solely owners, although in different playhouses and in different proportions. Their income was high because they held a sizeable share of each playhouse, respectively 100% of the Rose and 50% of the Fortune; and 25% of the Globe and 14.28% (one-seventh) of the Blackfriars. But it is the examples of Richard Burbage and John Heminges which demonstrate to greatest effect the commercial advantage of being both owner (housekeeper) and company sharer. Towards the end of his life, Richard Burbage could comfortably have been receiving between £500 and £600 per year in playhouse profits from his 25% share in the Globe and one-seventh share in the Blackfriars. For John Heminges, despite his smaller shareholding in the Globe, the rewards were even greater if he did, indeed, run the ancillary sales for the King's Men: around 1618 the annual income he derived from the playhouse could have been £600 to £700 per year, or even £100 more if a Blackfriars tap-house is included.

Viewed as a whole, these illustrations of corporate and personal profit show a successful industry at work. It remained subject to short notice disruption in performances and (at the outdoor playhouses) to the vagaries of weather and, always, to fickle public taste. Yet it was capable of sustaining a workforce numbering in the hundreds, supplying

entertainment for the hundreds of thousands who attended these London playhouses. And the personal wealth that could accrue makes it unsurprising that bitter family litigation followed the deaths of both Philip Henslowe and John Heminges.

Conclusion: [He] 'had the weekly proffitts & Revenues of the A[foresaid] partes & shares And […] receive[d] the same amounteinge sometimes to the summe of sixe pound*e* by the weeke & more'.*

At law in 1632, Thomas Sheppard claimed that his brother-in-law, William Heminges, had been in receipt of £6 per week, or more, from the shares he had inherited from his father, John: four shares in the Globe and 1.75 in the Blackfriars.[1] The research and calculations undertaken in this thesis have, broadly, validated Sheppard's assertion. By the time of his final illness, John Heminges was no longer on stage and had given up any association with the tap-house(s) of the King's Men; he only held his playhouse shares. At an assumed average annual attendance of just 40% at the Globe, and 60% at the Blackfriars, my calculations demonstrate that he could still have been receiving £6 per week, around £300 per year. Thus the detailed examination of playhouse finances contained in Chapter 4 offers a simple, mathematical method to test certain information given in primary sources. This method has employed whatever (often very limited) evidence remains of playhouse finances from contemporary documentation, litigation, literary and dramatic references, and previous scholarly deductions. By synthesising these historical sources with information gained from the archaeological explorations of the Rose and Globe in the late 1980s I have evolved a new approach to reviewing the profitability of the playhouse.

When applied to the individual subjects of the thesis, Philip Henslowe and John Heminges, the result is surprising, and the potential profit figures, astonishing. I have

* Sheppard v Call, TNA, C2/ChasI/S3/21.
[1] Ibid.

demonstrated that Henslowe, for example, could earn more than £500 in a 'good' playhouse year at the Fortune. To this must be added his unknown income from the Bear Garden, probably derived in large part from gambling; his royal offices; and his property portfolio: perhaps more than £1000 per year in total. For around twenty years, until his final decade, John Heminges stood to earn £700 per year from his various playhouse functions. At the same time, he was receiving fees of around £150 to £200 per year as a seacoal meter. These figures put Henslowe and Heminges if not into the very highest earning bracket of judges and aldermen, into something very close to it. Whilst financial success does not necessarily equate to status, this exploration has also allowed their careers to provide clear examples of the growing societal stature of the theatre industry as social mobility evolved, so that gentility no longer required land ownership but could include any man who 'can live without manuell labour, and thereto is able and will beare the port, charge and countenance of a gentleman'.[2] Henslowe, Heminges and other playhouse owners fulfilled these criteria.

The first question I had asked myself, years ago during that technical rehearsal, had been 'were playhouse owners dedicated theatre professionals or multi-faceted entrepreneurs'? Although initially it appeared that Heminges and Henslowe slipped easily into those respective categories, the wider exploration of them, in Chapter 1, as men of commerce, family men, and active members of their community, shows the distinction blurring, and my parenthetical question (was the picture more nuanced?) becoming ever more apposite through their careers. The biographical evidence of this opening chapter paints a portrait of each of them as much more than either a theatre professional or simply an entrepreneur, as

[2] *Harrison's Description of England* (1577) in Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680*, (Taylor & Francis Group, 2002), p. 28.

the word is understood now.[3] They defy easy categorisation but might be termed aspirational, entrepreneurial, gentlemanly and, in later life, of the upper middling sort.[4] Henslowe began with the advantages of a modest but armigerous gentry family, becoming a major property owner and holding senior royal appointments. Heminges had further to climb. Of a rural, agricultural background, he achieved his status initially through the advantages of the apprentice system and latterly through professional success in the playhouse, social connections in his home parish, and his proximity to the court. In 1588, Heminges had probably described himself, wishfully, as a gentleman.[5] By the later stages of his career this was not in doubt and was most visibly celebrated in the florid, Latin, register entry of Margaret Heminges's marriage in 1627, with her father recognised as 'generosus', gentleman.[6] As well as the public acknowledgement of gentility, Henslowe and Heminges each had in his home a clear marker of upper middling status: the joint Henslowe/Alleyn household contained the celebrated portrait of Joan Alleyn (perhaps a gift to her mother?), and Heminges owned portraits of daughters Rebecca and Margaret, 'set up in my house'.[7] These images declared their owner's status to all who saw them.

The detailed calculation that underpins potential playhouse profit offers a different way of reviewing theatrical activity, shown most clearly in Chapter 3 by the consideration of Heminges's varied and growing responsibilities with the King's Men across three decades. The

[3] A person who owns and manages a business, bearing the financial risks of the enterprise; (now) *spec.* a person who sets up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks. "Entrepreneur, N." Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford UP, September 2024, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/9546158863 [accessed 27 February 2025].

[4] Both Henslowe and Heminges are of upper middling status using the Cultural Lives of the Middling Sort social status calculator, https://research.kent.ac.uk/middling-culture/class-calculator/

[5] See p. 41

[6] TLA, Parish Register, St Mary Woolchurch Haw, City of London, P69/Mry14/A/001/Ms07644

[7] Both Henslowe and Heminges are of upper middling status using the Cultural Lives of the Middling Sort social status calculator, https://research.kent.ac.uk/middling-culture/class-calculator/; Joan Alleyn's portrait https://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/explore-the-collection/401-450/joan-alleyn/[accessed 21 February 2025]; will of John Heminges, TNA, PROB10/484.

figures make obvious the wide financial gulf between various categories of playhouse personnel: between housekeepers and company sharers, and sharers and the hired men with whom they literally shared scenes. As illustrated with the Sheppard/Heminges example above, the calculations also allow for a richer understanding of some disputes. This is particularly the case with the motives behind the actors' complaint known as the Sharers Papers, as well as the vehement defence of the housekeepers' position mounted by John Shank and Cuthbert Burbage.[8] A deeper comprehension of the financial context of certain relationships is an important consequence of this study.

The thesis has taken a commercial view of the infrastructure of the playhouse industry of the time, a dimension infrequently explored in literature on theatre of the period. The search for profit almost certainly drove Henslowe's playhouse and wider entertainment ambitions, but for Heminges, the move into shared ownership of the Globe and Blackfriars was more likely to have been stirred by the King's Men's collective desire for stability and control of their playing spaces. With that stability and control came security, which in turn allowed the industry to grow exponentially. Substantial profits may have been an unanticipated bonus when the Globe consortium first came into being.

Philip Henslowe and John Heminges left behind legacies of playhouse practice and playhouse ownership. If they were to view the current ownership of commercial theatres in the West End of London they might both be surprised. Heminges would see a landscape he could understand: of the forty-two theatres that comprise the commercial West End, forty-

[8] The Sharers' Papers, TNA, LC5/133, <https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu/resource/document/answer-cuthbert-burbage-et-al-petition-robert-benefield-et-al-concerning-division> [accessed 18 November 2024].

one are now owned by corporations and/or private equity funds.[9] He would still broadly recognise this model of shareholding and corporate finance. What might be a pleasant surprise to him is that two-thirds of these theatres are run by companies with an active production arm, creating work to sit in their own venues, thereby maximising their control, and reducing reliance on third parties and outside forces. The model can be traced back four hundred years to the operation of the housekeepers of the King's Men, under the leadership of Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, and John Heminges. Philip Henslowe, on the other hand, might be astonished to find that ownership of theatres by wealthy individuals, which he exemplified, has all but died out. Personal ownership (whether by actor-managers or other practitioners, or by speculators) remained the norm until the final quarter of the twentieth century. Today only one West End theatre, the St Martin's (home of *The Mousetrap*), remains in private hands. Henslowe would be even more surprised, perhaps, to learn that the family that built it, and still owns it, is that of Willoughby de Broke, a branch of same family as Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby, debt-ridden owner of the orange satin doublet pawned with Henslowe in 1594.[10]

Across its chapters, the thesis has demonstrated the viability of the theatre industry as a commercial project in the period under review. A playhouse could break even for its owner(s) at an extremely modest average annual attendance percentage. For the tenant playing company, it required a slightly higher, but still attainable, average. Theatre was a successful business. Henslowe and Heminges stood at the upper end of this success but were

[9] Excluding Shakespeare's Globe Theatre Trust. 'Theatre Owners: Who Owns the West End?' <https://www.westendtheatre.com/theatres/theatre-ownership/west-end-theatre-ownership/> [accessed 12 November 2024].
[10] 'House of Willoughby' <https://europeanheraldry.org/united-kingdom/families/families-s-z/house-willoughby/> [accessed 12 November 2024].

only two of the people who prospered by it. The financial illustrations I have produced show that the industry also provided a living for probably hundreds of participants, from gatherers and casual stage staff, to hired players and sharers. More remains to be done to look at the lives of some of these theatre workers.

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