The Publication of The Mayor of Quinborough (1661) and the Printer's Identity

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Thomas Middleton's *The Mayor of Quinborough* (1661) is a record of theatrical revisions that the play had undergone and, at the same time, of editorial procedures for producing the play as drama for the use of a reading public.[1] The quarto version (Q) of *The Mayor of Quinborough* preserves a variant reading of a play *Hengist, King of Kent, or the Mayor of Queenborough*, which was probably written between 1616 and 1620, the text of which is extant in two manuscripts – the Portland Manuscript (P) and the Lambard Manuscript (L).[2] The quarto text (Q) was published by Henry Herringman with no printer's name in 1661.[3] The printer has not yet been identified. The existence of both manuscript and print versions of *The Mayor of Quinborough* permits comparison of the texts before and after the theatrical revisions and literary editing for publication, and gives us a glimpse of textual editing as a play was transmitted from the theatre to the reader's mind. I contextualise this transition within the social framework of the contemporary English book trade investigating the networks of the stationers who made it

[1] Thomas Middleton, *The Mayor of Quinborough* (London, 1661).

[2] The Portland Manuscript (P) is owned by the University of Nottingham's Hallward Library (MS Pw V20) and is available as Thomas Middleton, *Hengist, King of Kent, or the Mayor of Queenborough*, ed. by Grace Ioppolo, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford, 2003). The Folger Shakespeare Library possesses the Lambard Manuscript (L) (MS J.b.6), whose text is represented in Thomas Middleton, *Hengist, King of Kent; or the Mayor of Queenborough*, ed. by R. C. Bald (New York, 1938). The Lambard manuscript was the text used for Thomas Middleton, *Hengist, King of Kent; or, The Mayor of Queenborough*, ed. by Grace Ioppolo, in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and others (Oxford, 2007). Further references to the two manuscripts will be made by their initials, 'P' and 'L'.

[3] For a modern edition of the 1661 text, see Thomas Middleton, *The Mayor of Queenborough; or, Hengist, King of Kent*, ed. by Howard Marchitello (New York, 2004).

possible for the play to survive in print.[4] Although previous studies have not attempted to identify the printer of *The Mayor of Quinborough*, doing so is indispensable for discovering the division of the editorial work between the editor and the printer. By examining the stationers' networks this paper attempts to identify the printer of the play and to explore the editorial and compositorial practice of his printing house.

The earliest reference to the title of the play was made by Sir George Buc, Master of the Revels, in one of his cancelled playlists which includes plays composed between 1615 and 1620.[5] He names the play '[Th]e Maior of Quinborough' with a later inserted alternative title 'or Hengist K. of Kent' instead of the other way around as it appears in the title-page of P. What is intriguing about his naming of the play is that it is much the same as the title of the quarto version.[6] Among the plays detailed in the same slip with '[Th]e Maior of Quinborough' are 'The Tragedy of Jeronimo', which is probably Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1589), and 'The Tragedy of Ham[let?] (1601?)[7], both staged in Elizabethan times, years before Buc began his career as Master of the Revels.[8] Inclusion of some older plays with '[Th]e Maior of Quinborough' in the same list suggests that the plays were being considered for a court performance, and it seems unlikely that Buc had just licensed *Hengist* for the stage when he included it under the alternative title since the play had already undergone public performance before it was nominated for court performance.[9] If the

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[4] Historical and sociological approaches to the transition from script to print have been embraced recently by David M. Bergeron, *Textual Patronage in English Drama, 1570-1640* (Aldershot, 2006); Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago, 1998); Sonia Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* (Cambridge, 2007); Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge, 2003); Julie Stone Peters, *Theatre of the Book, 1480-1880: Print, Text, and Performance in Europe* (Oxford, 2000); Michael Seanger, *The Commodification of Textual Engagements in the English Renaissance* (Aldershot, 2006).

[5] For Sir George Buc, see Richard Dutton, *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (Iowa City, 1991); Mark Eccles, 'Sir George Buc, Master of the Revels' in *Thomas Lodge and Other Elizabethans*, ed. by Charles J. Sisson (Cambridge, MA; 1933), pp. 409-507. The cancelled play-lists are Revels' Office waste. All four lists have been cancelled by cross lines or vertical or horizontal strokes. They were inserted to make corrections in Buc's *History of the Life and Reign of Richard III* dated 1619. For the lists, see Frank Marcham, *The King's Office of the Revels, 1610-1622* (London, 1925); E. K. Chambers, 'The King's Office of the Revels, 1610-1622, by Frank Marcham', *Review of English Studies*, 1 (1925), 479-84; Bald, *Hengist*, p. xiii.

[6] Marcham, *King's Office*, pp. 10-11.

[7] E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1923; repr. 1967), III, 395-97, 486-87.

[8] Marcham, *King's Office*, pp. 10-11; Chambers, 'The King's Office', p. 481.

[9] That Buc had the plays in the lists under consideration for court performance has also

play '[Th]e Maior of Quinborough' was added after it had been publicly staged, it is highly possible that the play had already undergone theatrical revision and been given the new title by 1619-1620 when the list was made.

The two manuscripts of the play are probably in different hands, but were evidently transcribed from the same theatrical script and share a general similarity of script.[10] They preserve theatrical notes referring to minor actors' real names, one of which is 'Brigs Robrt St Blackson' appearing six lines ahead of a dumb show in P.[11] The two scribes of P and L also faithfully copied down the sound directions such as 'Showte' and 'Musique / Musick' in the left margin where the company's book-keeper would have added them in the playbook for staging.[12] Theatrical annotators often inserted real names of the players in the margin pointing to their entrance or the speech headings of their roles, and stage directions for offstage sound in the left-hand margin of playbooks specifying its timing.[13] If either of the manuscripts was the playbook, those theatrical annotations would appear in a different hand from that of the rest of the text, but none of the stage directions was a later addition and all of them were copied down consistently in the same scribal hand as that of the rest of each manuscript.

The texts of P and L largely correspond with each other, both including two sections marked by vertical lines in 3. 1. and 5. 2.[14] That vertical lines were conventionally used to mark the text for deletion is attested by those left in many extant manuscript plays.[15] Most of the

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been pointed out by Chambers, '*The King's Office*', p. 484.

  [10] Bald's view that P is 'a transcript by the same hand as that of *L*, and has many features in common with it' (*Hengist*, p. xxvi) is rejected by Peter Beal, *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, 5 vols (London, 1980-93), I, pt. 2, 345. Ioppolo supports Beal in *Hengist* (2003), p. ix.

  [11] Ioppolo, *Hengist* (2003), p. 18.

  [12] Bald, *Hengist*, pp. xxix-xxx.

  [13] William B. Long, 'Stage Directions: A Misinterpreted Factor in Determining Textual Provenance', TEXT, 2 (1985), 121-37 (p. 126).

  [14] Bald, *Hengist*, pp. 38-39, pp. 95-96; Ioppolo, *Hengist* (2003), p. 30, pp. 79-80.

  [15] In some manuscript plays such as *The Book of Sir Thomas More*, *Edmond Ironside, or War Hath Made All Friends*, and *The Launching of the Mary*, many lines marked by vertical strokes are crossed off. In *The Poor Man's Comfort* which is extant both in manuscript and in print, like *Hengist*, two lines in a passage marked by a vertical stroke in the manuscript are omitted from the 1655 printed edition. See *The Book of Sir Thomas More*, ed. by W. W. Greg, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford, 1911; repr. 1961); *Edmond Ironside, or War Hath Made All Friends*, ed. by W. W. Greg, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford, 1928); Walter Mountfort, *The Launching of the Mary*, ed. by W. W. Greg, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford, 1933); Robert Daborne, *The Poor Man's Comfort*, ed. by Kenneth Palmer, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford, 1955), p. 27; Robert Daborne, *The Poor-Mans Comfort* (London, 1655), sig. C3v.

play manuscripts which preserve the vertical strokes marking the text
for deletion are judged to have been playbooks or books that had been
designed to meet the needs of the stage, whether or not they were
actually performed.[16] The absence of the passages marked by vertical
strokes in Q *The Mayor of Quinborough* indicates that the marked
passages were eventually cut from a later version of the play in
accordance with the implicit instruction given by the vertical lines and
that Q derives from the revised version. In addition, the
correspondence of the two vertical lines between P and L suggests that
the lines were also transcribed from their copy-text, which is
undoubtedly a playbook; therefore, it seems safe to conclude that the
passages marked by the vertical lines were cut in theatrical revision. The
omission of the two passages in Q indicates that a playbook behind the
copy-text of Q derives from the same antecedent as the manuscripts.

Whilst the traces of some theatrical revisions of the play are
detected in the text of the dialogue, such as the 175 lines in the
manuscripts not present in Q, and the 25 lines added to Q, those of
editorial procedures are found in stage directions. Q omits two songs
and twenty stage directions for music and noises out of the twenty-four
standing in the manuscripts. Fourteen stage directions which describe
the visual performance on the stage were introduced into Q.[17] Songs
were usually kept separate from a playbook since they were used by
musicians on stage. Printed plays often contain only headings for songs
in the text and the actual songs printed at their back pages.[18] The
absence of the two songs from Q *The Mayor of Quinborough* can be
attributed to the fact that they had been on other sheets of paper and
lost by the time the printer's copy of the play was prepared. Since many
of the stage directions for music and properties added by the
book-keeper for theatrical use are found in the left margins of extant
manuscript playbooks, a paucity of those in printed plays has been
occasionally regarded as an indication that their copy-texts descended
from authorial foul papers which did not receive theatrical
annotations.[19] However, considering the signs of theatrical revision

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[16] For the lists of manuscript plays classified according to their purposes, see W. W. Greg, *Dramatic Documents from the Elizabethan Playhouses: Stage Plots, Actors' Parts, Prompt Books* (Oxford, 1931; repr. 1969), pp. 191, 237-369.

[17] Bald, *Hengist*, pp. xxix-xxxi.

[18] Tiffany Stern's analysis of lost songs of the early editions clarifies the theatrical function of moveable sheets of songs. Tiffany Stern, 'Re-patching the Play,' in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, ed. by Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (New York, 2004), pp. 151-77 (pp. 157-58).

[19] William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, ed. by J. W. Lever (London, 1965; repr. 2008), p. xxiv.