

CHILDREN OF THE QUEEN'S REVELS

This is the first book-length study of the Children of the Queen's Revels, the most enduring and influential of the Jacobean children's companies. Between 1603 and 1613 the Queen's Revels staged plays by Francis Beaumont, George Chapman, John Fletcher, Ben Jonson, John Marston and Thomas Middleton, all of whom were at their most innovative when writing for this company. Combining theatre history and critical analysis, this study provides a history of the Children of the Queen's Revels, and an account of their repertory. It examines the 'biography' of the company – demonstrating the involvement in dramatic production of dramatists, shareholders, patrons, audiences and actors alike, and reappraising issues such as management, performance style and audience composition – before exploring their groundbreaking practices in comedy, tragicomedy and tragedy. The book also includes five documentary appendices detailing the plays, people and performances of the Queen's Revels Company.

LUCY MUNRO is a lecturer in English at Keele University. She has edited Edward Sharpham's *The Fleece* and is a contributor to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, *The Book of the Play in Early Modern England*, ed. Marta Straznicky and *Writers of the English Renaissance*, ed. Patrick Cheney, Andrew Hadfield and Garrett A. Sullivan. She reviews regularly for *The Times Literary Supplement*, *New Theatre Quarterly*, *Around the Globe* and *The Year's Work in English Studies*, and is a regular contributor to *Smoke: A London Peculiar*.

Cambridge University Press
0521843561 - Children of the Queen's Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory
Lucy Munro
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CHILDREN OF THE QUEEN'S REVELS

A Jacobean Theatre Repertory

LUCY MUNRO



Cambridge University Press
0521843561 - Children of the Queen's Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory
Lucy Munro
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo
Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521843560

© Lucy Munro 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN-13 978-0-521-84356-0 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-84356-1 hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external
or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that any
content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
0521843561 - Children of the Queen's Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory
Lucy Munro
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

*To the memories of my mother, Cheryl Munro,
and my grandmother, Valerie Evans*

Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xii
Introduction	I
1 Raiding the nest: a company biography	13
2 'Proper gallants wordes': comedy and the theatre audience	55
3 'Grief, and joy, so suddenly commixt': company politics and the development of tragicomedy	96
4 'Ieronimo in Decimo sexto': tragedy and the text	134
Conclusion	164
<i>Appendix A: The Chapel/Queen's Revels repertory (Summary)</i>	167
<i>Appendix B: The Chapel/Queen's Revels repertory (Data and analysis)</i>	170
<i>Appendix C: Biographical summary</i>	179
<i>Appendix D: Actor lists</i>	185
<i>Appendix E: Court and touring performances, 1600–13</i>	187
<i>Notes</i>	194
<i>Bibliography</i>	231
<i>Index</i>	253

Illustrations

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1 Title-page of Edward Sharpham, <i>The Fleeer</i> (London, 1607). Photograph courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University | <i>page</i> 22 |
| 2 Title-page of George Chapman, <i>The Widow's Tears</i> (London, 1612). Photograph courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University | 26 |
| 3 Fenchurch pageant in the processional entry of James I into the city of London, March 1604, in Stephen Harrison, <i>Arches of Triumph</i> (London, 1604). Reproduced with the permission of Guildhall Library, Corporation of London | 44 |
| 4 John Norden, map of London in <i>Speculum Britanniae</i> (London, 1593). Reproduced with the permission of Guildhall Library, Corporation of London | 64 |
| 5 Rehearsal picture from <i>Epicoene</i> , directed by Christian Billing for Mamamouchi's Miscreants, University of Warwick, 2000. Photograph by Florence Liber. Reproduced with permission | 91 |
| 6 Title-page of <i>The Works of Benjamin Jonson</i> (London, 1616). Photograph courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. | 101 |

Preface

This book focuses on the Jacobean career of the company variously known as the Children of the Queen's Revels, the Children of the Revels, the Children of Blackfriars and the Children of Whitefriars. Established as the Children of the Chapel in 1600, the Queen's Revels were the most prominent, politically contentious and dramatically experimental of the early seventeenth-century children's companies. In focusing on the Jacobean period, I potentially create a problematic divide between the careers of the Children of the Chapel and the Children of the Queen's Revels. However, after 1603 the patronage of Queen Anna of Denmark, the appointment of Samuel Daniel as licenser, the involvement of John Marston as shareholder and the increased experience of the performers take the company in new directions. In addition, the repertory of 1600–3 is affected to a large degree by the specific theatrical environment of the 'War of the Theatres' or *poetomachia*, in which the Chapel plays *Cynthia's Revels* and *The Poetaster* are usually thought to have been involved. The 'war of the theatres' has recently been analysed in detail (with widely divergent approaches and conclusions) by Matthew Steggle, Roslyn Lander Knutson and James P. Bednarz, and I have therefore chosen to focus on other aspects of the Blackfriars repertory.¹ Since it would be impossible to take into account the full complexities of the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean theatrical and cultural milieus in one book, I have (reluctantly) decided to focus on the Jacobean period. However, I include in Chapter One an account of the events of 1600–3 and discussion of plays performed in those years, some of which may have been revived after 1603. Data relating to the Elizabethan period has also been included in the documentary appendices.

A note on the texts used in this study. Some of the works on which I draw here have been extensively edited; others have received little or no editorial attention. I have decided, therefore, that a fairer impression will

be given by my using early modern texts as far as possible. Any emendations to quotations are indicated by square brackets; long 's' has been regularised, and black-letter has been converted to roman type. To facilitate cross-referencing, line or page references have been supplied from modern editions. For citations from manuscripts, in most cases references are provided to an archival source and a modern transcript. Where possible I have checked the transcript against the original; in the few cases where I have been unable to consult a manuscript personally, the transcript is cited before the archive details.

Following the practice of a number of modern historians, for some personal names I have chosen to use the version the bearers themselves preferred. Thus I refer to the Queen Consort of James I as 'Anna', rather than 'Anne', and to his cousin as 'Arbella Stuart' rather than 'Arabella'. Dates are given old-style, with the year assumed to begin on 1 January. Unless stated otherwise, dates of plays given in the text are those of first performance. Names of companies are generally given with the first citation.

This study has its origins in my King's College London PhD thesis, submitted in 2001, and it has taken a while to reach its final form. I have, therefore, a few people to thank. My greatest debt is to my PhD supervisor, Gordon McMullan. His support, belief and advice have been invaluable (as has his regular nagging about the merits of structure); he has been a good friend and a superb academic example. Kate McLuskie and Kiernan Ryan were stimulating and humane examiners, and I am extremely grateful for their detailed comments and advice. I would also like to thank the readers for Cambridge University Press for their informed criticism, in particular the readers of sample material and the anonymous reader of the penultimate draft. At Cambridge I would like to thank Sarah Stanton for her faith in the project and Rebecca Jones for her help with the final typescript.

I am particularly grateful for the help and support of friends who have read (suffered?) early drafts: Michela Calore, Kevin De Ornellas, Ralph Parfect, Tanya Pollard, Richard Proudfoot, Tom Rutter, Alison Stenton and Ann Thompson. Others have contributed comments, suggestions and advice: I would especially like to thank Eva Griffith, Sue Wiseman, Cathy Shrank, James Wallace, Rebecca Rogers, Kevin Quarmby, Anne Gill, Fiona Ritchie, Maggie Wilkinson, Mark Hutchings, Adam Smyth, Karen Britland, Lucie Sutherland, Max Fincher and Angus Wrenn. Leah Scragg's seminars at the University of Manchester provided my first

Preface

xi

encounter with the likes of Marston and Beaumont and Fletcher, and I am very grateful for her consistent support.

I am indebted to the British Academy, who funded my MA and PhD work, to the King's College Faculty of Humanities, and to the English Department Postgraduate and Research Committee. I am also grateful to the English departments of King's College London and Reading University for short-term teaching posts which enabled me to complete revisions to the typescript.

Some of the material presented here found its first audience at various seminars and conferences; I am very grateful to Sue Wiseman, Cathy Shrank, Janet Costa, Alex Davis, Tess Grant, Stephen O'Neill and Padraig Kirwan for inviting me to speak. I am also indebted to Sally-Beth MacLean, who provided me with some references from unpublished REED material, and to Richard Dutton, Jeffrey Masten and David Kathman, who let me read essays prior to publication. I would also like to thank Dr Kathman for his comments on Chapter One.

Thanks are due to Nick Tanner and Martha Crossley for inviting me to attend rehearsals for their King's College production of *Eastward Ho*, and to Tony Bell, Deb Callan and Kate Hall for allowing me to watch rehearsals for Globe Education staged readings of *Eastward Ho* and *The Insatiate Countess*. I am especially grateful to Christian Billing, who battled with the London postal service to supply me with material relating to his production of *Epicoene* at Warwick University, and to Frances Liber, who took the photograph reproduced in Chapter Three. I also would like to thank the Beinecke Library, University of Yale, the Guildhall Library, London, and the Teylers Museum, Haarlem, for their help with the illustrations.

Family and friends have been hugely supportive, especially my dad, George Munro, my brother, Duncan, and flatmates who had to live with this work at various stages: Jess Leupolz, Julia Roberts and Jo Upton. I would also like to thank Sara Ayech, Amanda Beale, Ben Clancy, Liz Hampson, Clare Wadd and Clare Wiggins for tolerance and distractions.

Above all, I thank Matt Haynes for emotional, spiritual and grammatical support.

¹ See Matthew Steggle, *Wars of the Theatres: The Poetics of Personation in the Age of Jonson* (Victoria, BC: English Literary Studies, 1998), especially 21–61; Roslyn Lander Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); James P. Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Poets' War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

Abbreviations

Arber	Edward Arber, ed., <i>A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554–1604 A.D.</i> , 5 vols. (London: Privately Printed, 1876)
BL	British Library
Bowers	Fredson Bowers, gen. ed., <i>The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon</i> , 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968–96)
CA	H. N. Hillebrand, <i>The Child Actors: A Chapter in Elizabethan Stage History</i> (1926; repr. New York: Russell and Russell, 1964)
CSP Domestic	Robert Lemon and M. A. E. Green, eds., <i>Calendar of State Papers: Domestic Series, of the Reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, and James I (1547–1625)</i> , 12 vols. (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1856–72)
CSP Venetian	R. Brown <i>et al.</i> , eds., <i>Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives of Collections of Venice and in Other Libraries of North Italy</i> , 38 vols. (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1864–1947)
DNB	Brian Harrison, gen. ed., <i>The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)
ELH	<i>English Literary History</i>
ELN	<i>English Language Notes</i>
ELR	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
ES	E. K. Chambers, <i>The Elizabethan Stage</i> , 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923)
GL	Guildhall Library

Abbreviations

xiii

Greg, <i>Bibliography</i>	W. W. Greg, <i>A Bibliography of English Printed Drama to the Restoration</i> , 4 vols. (London: Bibliographic Society at the University Press, Oxford, 1939–59)
HSS	C. H. Herford, Percy Simpson and Evelyn Simpson, eds., <i>Ben Jonson</i> , 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925–52).
JCS	G. E. Bentley, <i>The Jacobean and Caroline Stage</i> , 7 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941–68)
MRDE	<i>Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England</i>
MSC	<i>Malone Society Collections</i>
MSC 6	David Cook and F. P. Wilson, eds., 'Dramatic Records in the Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber 1558–1642', <i>MSC 6</i> (1961), 1–175
MSC 13	W. R. Streitberger, ed., 'Jacobean and Caroline Revels Accounts 1603–1642', <i>MSC 13</i> (1986), 1–182
NA	National Archives, Kew (formerly the Public Record Office)
<i>N&Q</i>	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
RD	<i>Renaissance Drama</i>
REED	<i>Records of Early English Drama</i>
RES	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
RORD	<i>Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama</i>
SBP	Irwin Smith, <i>Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse: Its History and Its Design</i> (New York: New York University Press, 1964)
SEL	<i>Studies in English Literature</i>
ShS	<i>Shakespeare Survey</i>
SP	<i>Studies in Philology</i>
SPC	Andrew Gurr, <i>The Shakespearian Playing Companies</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996)
SQ	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>
STC	A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, rev. W. A. Jackson, F. S. Ferguson and Katharine F. Pantzer, <i>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475–1640</i> , 3 vols. (London: Bibliographical Society, 1986)
TLS	<i>Times Literary Supplement</i>
TN	<i>Theatre Notebook</i>