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Owners and collectors of the printed books of the early modern Lord Mayor's Shows

The inauguration of the Lord Mayor, the most important commoner in England, was a significant moment in the early modern City of London's ritual year. From around 1585, books deriving from the lavish celebrations of this annual practice were printed for posterity. This soon became the norm, and these works appeared regularly thereafter until the tradition of printing books of the Lord Mayors' Shows died out in the early years of the eighteenth century. The authors of these works were in this period almost always professional writers – primarily dramatists – who are better known for their more 'literary' productions. Probably because works produced by these writers that have not been treated as 'plays' have been largely sidelined, as a genre (or sub-genre) the books of the Shows have been rather neglected. Indeed, until quite recently they have not been subject to any thoroughgoing bibliographical study.¹

This article is intended to redress the balance, focusing in particular on the evidence that survives of the early modern ownership and reception of these ephemeral works. My analysis therefore practices what Gabriel Heaton has recently described as 'a collecting history', which through the study of how these books were collected and categorised can reveal not just their original cultural meaning but also their 'changing value'.² I will therefore trace the evolution of the apparent 'meaning' of these works for those of owned and collected them. As we'll see, these books were collected and grouped in diverse ways, which indicates that the mayoral Shows were not identified as belonging to one specific genre in this period.

There is a strong methodological case to be made for the value of focusing on a specifically delimited group of texts, as I do here. I am thus following and adapting slightly Lauren Shohet's conclusion about the equivalent study of masque texts: 'provenance records, material characteristics, and publication history ... suggest a range of cultural uses for masque and readerly approaches to it'.³ Such a study will give us a particular series of insights into the reception of the printed traces of the event of the Lord Mayor's Show, insights that form a useful supplement to the evidence that survives of how eye-witnesses related to

I am very grateful to Ian Gadd and Alan Nelson for their advice on this article.

¹ A fuller account of the publishing history of these works can be found in chapter 4 of my *Pageantry and Power: a cultural history of the early modern Lord Mayor's Show, 1585-1639* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2010). Some time ago, David Bergeron produced a bibliographical analysis of one of these works in isolation: see 'Heywood's "Londons Ius Honorarium"', *Studies in Bibliography*, 22 (1969), 223-6.

² *Writing and Reading Royal Entertainments* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2010), p. 248. Heaton's 'Conclusion' does for the texts of royal entertainments what I attempt here for the mayoral Shows.

³ 'The masque as book', in Ian Frederick Moulton, ed., *Reading and Literacy in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Turnhout: Brepols 2004), p. 164.

the day's entertainment, especially since these books stand as permanent witnesses to an ephemeral event.

To set the scene, I begin with a brief account of the print history of the early modern Lord Mayor's Show. In those years when a full-scale Show actually took place (in some years the festivities were curtailed), the costs were met by one of the City of London's Great Twelve livery companies, from whose ranks the Lord Mayors were elected. The livery companies in turn required contributions from members of their livery (the elite members) towards the inaugural day. Commissioning the publication of a permanent record of the day from a printer was almost always part of the process. The records from the mid-sixteenth century are a bit elusive, however. Prior to the appearance of the first fully-fledged book of a Lord Mayor's Show, five shillings was paid in 1566 by the Ironmongers' Company for printing an item that the Company called the 'poses speches and songs, that were spoken and songe by the children in the pagent'.⁴ This text, whatever form it may have taken, has not survived, and neither is there any indication in the Ironmongers' records of how many copies of this work were printed, nor by whom. George Peele's *The deuice of the pageant borne before the [sic] Woolstone Dixi*, printed in 1585 by Edward Allde (STC 15933) is chronologically important: it is the first surviving copy of a Show, and it is also the earliest evidence we have for the printing of something related to the Show that was for wider circulation. All the same, in these early days the books were scant indeed. The 1585 text does not attribute authorship to Peele: some early reader has added the name to the title page of the only extant copy. The 1590 book, conversely, does feature an author's name – 'T[homas] Nelson' – but it bears no imprint. In terms of their content, until 1605 the books tended to be only a few pages long and were composed almost exclusively of transcripts of speeches with little in the way of description of the pageantry or any other broader treatment of the day. Paratexts such as dedications do not feature until the mid-Jacobean period.

The print run of these texts (where this is disclosed by the livery company accounts) was generally 500 copies, although it was sometimes as few as 200 or 300. In at least one case, the 1638 Show called *Porta Pietatis*, an additional 300 copies were printed on top of the original 500. Reprints and amended editions are rare but not unheard of: the 1611 Show, *Chruso-thriambos*, for example, exists in two quite distinct editions, with one version containing numerous corrections to the other. The cost to the livery company concerned of printing the books – i.e. what they paid the printer – was generally between £2-£4. The books tended to be printed by workaday printers such as John and Nicholas Okes who had expertise in drama and/or short pamphlets, and a publisher was involved only infrequently.⁵ Equally, the books were not very often entered in the

⁴ *Collections* III, p. 46. Somewhat anachronistically, the Ironmongers use the same phrase in relation to the printing of the 1609 work that was printed as *Camp-bell* (GH MS 16,969/2, fol. 216v).

⁵ Nicholas and John Okes printed considerably more Shows than anyone else. Other printers who appear more than once in the record include Edward Allde, William Jaggard and George Purslowe.

Stationers' Register. In these respects, these works were in various ways unlike books commercially printed for a publisher and sold via retail outlets: for one thing, no pre-1650s printed Show that I have seen bears any sign of a price.⁶ Lauren Shohet argues that small print runs for some masque texts – and, by inference, for the texts of mayoral Shows – indicate reasons for publication beyond, or perhaps instead of, the purely economic: 'we must consider', she writes, 'the cultural as well as the economic logic of print presentation' of such works.⁷ The same point applies to all ad hoc printing of this kind: the Shows were as much as about broadcasting the wealth and prestige of the City to a large audience as they were about celebrating the inauguration of an individual Lord Mayor. The books of the Shows resemble, in some ways, the more extravagantly printed festival books that were produced in continental Europe to mark royal and ducal accessions and the like. The prime (although not exclusive) motivation for printing books of the Shows was therefore likely to have been commemorative, in the widest sense. It is also possible, given the collecting history I outline below, that for some these books functioned as news pamphlets analogous to accounts of royal progresses and the like. The texts may, in addition, have been used as guides for onlookers to the proceedings for those people who got hold of copies on the day.⁸ These works therefore lie partway between the two poles established by Alison Scott of 'giving literary texts to patrons (coterie exchange) and selling texts to printers (market exchange)'.⁹ One should be cautious about making assumptions about the publication contexts of ephemeral works like Shows, masques and royal entries, however: the absence of the name of a publisher and/or of a Stationers' Register entry for a work does not guarantee that the text in question was not offered for sale to the general public, since a large number of 'standard' printed books which definitely were for commercial sale lacked one or both of these characteristics too.

The habit of printing mayoral Shows got fully underway in the early Jacobean era and continued regularly thereafter. At least 31 separate Lord Mayors' Shows were printed in the pre-Civil War period.¹⁰ Printed texts remain for the Shows that took place in 1585, 1590, 1691, 1605, 1609, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1614, 1615, 1616, 1617, 1618, 1619, 1620, 1621, 1622, 1623, 1624, 1625, 1626, 1628, 1629, 1631, 1632, 1633, 1634, 1635, 1637, 1638 and 1639. Given the poor survival rates of these works, it is also possible that books were printed in some other years but that no copies have are extant. These works went to more than one edition only infrequently. 92 individual copies of printed Shows are known still to exist, around 60 of which are in the UK and the remainder in the US; I have personally

⁶ A copy of Thomas Jordan's 1671 Show held in the Bodleian has a price of '3d' written next to its author's name.

⁷ 'The masque as book', p. 167.

⁸ Abram Booth's drawings of the 1629 Show have captions that are likely to have been taken from a copy of the book, and the eyewitness account of Abraham Scultetus in 1612 also appears to have derived in large part from Dekker's text for that year (see my *Pageantry and Power*, pp. 123-7).

⁹ 'Jonson's masque markets and problems of literary ownership', *Studies in English Literature*, 47:2 (2007), p. 462.

¹⁰ Although mayoralty pageantry faltered somewhat during the 1640s, books of the Shows were produced during the latter days of the Commonwealth period: works have survived from 1655, 1656, 1658 and 1659.

examined 87 of these 92 books. Evidence of who owned the printed Shows will be discussed below. That such evidence exists at all is fortuitous, because the rate of attrition of the printed texts was considerable. For instance, of the 500 copies of the 1621 work *The sunne in Aries* that were printed, only two have survived, which is not atypical. Others, such as John Squire's *Tes Irenes Trophea* (1620), Webster's *Monuments of Honor* (1624) and Thomas Nelson's 1590 work *The Device of the Pageant*, exist solely as unique copies; of Munday's *Camp-bell* (1609) there is now only one, incomplete copy. There are now no more than 8 copies of an individual Lord Mayor's Show remaining.

Despite their relative scarcity, however, it is possible to build up a picture of how the printed Shows were consumed over time. I explore below how the libraries of contemporary book owners such as Humphrey Dyson, Brian Tywne and Robert Burton can help our understanding of this. I will also go on to discuss the evidence that remains of how individual copies of the Shows were bound up with other books, and how they were sometimes annotated to demonstrate use and interaction.

'Tendred into your hands': the distribution and ownership of the Shows

The printed books of the Shows may, as has been speculated by scholars, have been handed around to various important people on the inaugural day, quite possibly on a gratis basis (although it would seem that printed Shows in the later seventeenth century may have been sold). Subsequently, though, copies of these works have ended up far and wide from the City. Indeed, given the understandable assumption that civic dignitaries would have been among the initial recipients of these works, a rather surprising aspect of the ownership history of these texts is their extreme rarity in Company Halls. Although they were printed on their behalf, there seems to have been little or no incentive for the livery companies to keep copies of the printed Shows. Even the single copy of *Metropolis Coronata* owned by the Drapers' Company – the only early modern printed Show I have been able to locate in a Company Hall – was probably bought by the Company a considerable time after 1615.¹¹ It would appear that such ephemeral texts were not at all prized by the Companies since most of them had very little interest in 'literature' generally, even when they had paid for the printing of the works themselves. Equally, unlike the court masque where some ornately decorated works survive, there is scant evidence of a culture of presentation copies of mayoral shows. One possible exception to this rule is the sole surviving copy of Munday's *Chruso-thriambos*, which forms part of the Puckering bequest in Trinity College, Cambridge. It is possible that this copy can

¹¹ The ESTC omits this copy. I am grateful to Penny Fussell, archivist of the Drapers' Company, for her advice on this work. The Fishmongers' Company do have a copy of the lavish 1844 edition of *Chrysanaleia*, complete with coloured images of the pageantry, which was also produced on their behalf, but this is a Victorian re-working of the original seventeenth-century text. One copy of the 1613 Show has 'Goldsmiths Co.' written on it in what may be an early 19th-century hand: perhaps this book was owned by that Company at some stage.

be traced back through the Puckering family to 1611. There is a strong likelihood that members of the royal family attended that year's Lord Mayor's Show, and given the connection between the royal household and Thomas Puckering (who was Prince Henry's companion), it is at least feasible that this copy was actually given to a member of the royal party (perhaps Puckering himself) on the day of the Show.¹² In addition, tantalisingly, there are contemporary references in the Goldsmiths' Company records to a copy of a Jacobean Show presented to Queen Anna which does not appear to be extant.

In general terms, a combination of personal connections and presence on the day would probably have determined the original destination of mayoral texts, for if there was a commercial trade in these works, it seems to have got underway later into the period. There are, for example, no Lord Mayor's Shows (nor any other festival books) featured in Andrew Maunsell's *Catalogue of English printed Bookes of 1595*. Nevertheless, these works do crop up in a number of collections dating from the seventeenth century onwards. The ownership of these works appears to be more socially diverse than that of masque texts. The notable known collectors include: Humphrey Dyson, whose distinctive signature appears on the title page of a copy of the Lord Mayor's Show for 1628, Thomas Dekker's *Britannia's Honor* (STC 6794); Robert Burton, who owned a copy of Munday's 1616 Show *Chrysanaleia* (STC 18266); and Anthony Wood, another Oxford collector, who possessed at least two Shows. Other contemporary owners include one John Robinson, whose name is written on the title pages of copies of *Descensus Astraeae* (STC 19532) and of the second edition of *The Triumphs of Truth* (STC 17904), as well as a copy of Dekker's *Magnificent Entertainment* (STC 6510). The initials 'B.J.' appear in an early (possibly c. 1720) hand on the title pages of four printed Shows, those from 1585 (the unique copy), 1615, 1631 and 1637, all of which are now part of the Gough collection in the Bodleian. A copy of Munday's *The Triumphes of re-united Britania* looks to have gone through a number of hands, for it bears on its title page the names of various individuals in apparently contemporary hands (none of which is entirely legible, unfortunately).

As well as being associated with individual owners and existing as single items in what remains of people's libraries, copies of printed Shows can be found contained in variously miscellaneous volumes. Indeed, a large proportion of these works survive in bound volumes, confirming Peter Blayney's comment that 'a library is more likely to be preserved than is an equivalent number of separately-owned books'.¹³ The miscellaneous quality of many of these collections in itself marks out a significant difference between the printed books of the Lord Mayor's Show and those of stage-plays. In the case of the latter, from Jonson's 1616 *Workes* onwards there was a slow (if not always unproblematic) movement towards the publication of play collections. Benedict Scott Robinson describes this phenomenon as the bringing of 'the printed play – an ephemeral text, and

¹² Unfortunately, despite the expert assistance of David McKitterick, I have not been able to authenticate this possibility.

¹³ Blayney, *The Texts of King Lear and Their Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1982), p. 38.

the record of an even more ephemeral performance – into high culture by presenting it according to the material, typographical conventions of serious literature'.¹⁴ The Shows were undoubtedly ephemeral works based on ephemeral performances, but it is questionable if they were ever – even today – considered to be 'serious literature'. As we will see, such works were not usually treated in the same way as play-texts by early modern readers and book owners.

However, as I have already indicated, it is clear that these works were considered worth keeping and, in some cases, collecting as a discrete sub-genre along with similar texts. Individual books of the Shows, in collected form, exist today in a number of libraries across Britain and the United States. In some cases, vestiges, such as page numbers, remain of earlier collected volumes that have now been broken up. Pageant books were collected under various rubrics, and the ways in which they were categorised can be seen to have evolved. The Bodleian holds the Gough bequest, which includes a bound volume containing a large number of Shows ranging chronologically from the earliest known printed Show, Peele's *The device of the pageant*, to Thomas Heywood's final Show, and the last one printed before the Civil Wars, *Londini status pacatus* (1639; STC 13350), along with a number of post-Civil War mayoral shows.¹⁵ This volume does not appear to have a title although the contents are focused on celebratory texts of various kinds. The twelve Shows once owned by the Duke of Devonshire are now in the Huntington Library, although unfortunately no legible sign of early modern ownership survives on any of these works.¹⁶ A similar collection of works in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, contains the sole surviving copy of John Taylor's Show, *The triumphs of fame and honour* (1634; STC 23808), bound with another 18 texts; Taylor's Show is the earliest work by date, the latest being 1649. This volume is largely composed of pseudo-political works dating from the 1640s. The chief connection between the disparate works, however, is that almost all are by Taylor.¹⁷ *The triumphs of fame and honour* (as far as one can tell, given the damage to its top edge) is unmarked by any owner or reader. This aside, the majority of the works in this collection are in very good condition, suggesting that they were bound up soon after printing and/or purchase, although not necessarily in their present binding.¹⁸ Indeed, in general terms, mayoral texts in this kind of condition are those which have tended to survive in the greatest numbers. I will return to the condition and usage of these books below.

Given the nature of these publications one might expect their original owners to have been London-based, even if not members of the citizenry. Surprisingly, this is rarely the case: of all the early modern book collectors who owned mayoral

¹⁴ 'Thomas Heywood and the cultural politics of play collections', *Studies in English Literature*, 42:2 (2002), p. 361.

¹⁵ This Gough volume lists mayoral Shows running up to 1708 on a handlist although it only now contains works up until 1691. It also contains coronation entries from 1605 and 1660.

¹⁶ Henry Huntington's general preference was for 'clean', unmarked books.

¹⁷ The way in which these works are bound together (the binding probably dates from their ownership by the Spencer family at Althorp) certainly indicates wholesale Taylor authorship: the spine of the volume bears five images of boatmen and the title, 'Taylor the water poet'.

¹⁸ The varying condition of the contents of this volume suggests that these 19 works were put together in their current form some considerable time after publication.

Shows whose identity I have been able to specify, Humphrey Dyson is the only one whose civic connections are strong. For one thing, he was a citizen of London and a member of the Wax Chandlers' Company, which might in itself be sufficient cause for ownership of these texts since it is possible that he may have got hold of a copy of a Show on the day of the performance. Dyson's co-editorship of the 1633 edition of Stow's *Survey* (along with Munday and others) also demonstrates his orientation towards the civic domain, not least because Munday, Dyson's main collaborator and the preceding continuer of Stow's work, had himself been one of the most ubiquitous pageant-writers of the previous three decades. Dyson could perhaps have gained access to copies of Lord Mayor's Shows as part of the research involved in re-editing *The Survey*; indeed, it has been claimed by Bernard Quaritch (although he does not provide any evidence for the supposition) that Dyson 'doubtless received ... copies of the pageants' from Munday.¹⁹

Dyson was certainly interested in such works, for his extensive library of printed books and manuscripts dating from 1485-1631 focused primarily on what he called 'the State Ecclesiasticall ... [and] Temporall of the Realme of England'. He organised the inventory of his library in six chronological notebooks, ordered by monarch.²⁰ It is probable, therefore, that he regarded mayoral Shows as quasi-political texts concerned with the government of the City, or at least concerned with the *representation* of its government. If this is the case, and bearing in mind Tessa Watt's important warning that one should not assume that the readerships of particular kinds of text are 'homogeneous', such an attitude would throw an interesting light on the way in which the Shows might have been received and contextualised by an educated contemporary reader and collector.²¹

The bound volume of 23 separate works, entitled 'Pageants, Progresses &c 1558-1628' within which Dyson's copy of *Britannia's Honor* sits includes eleven Shows in total, ranging chronologically from Munday's *Triumphs of reunited Britania* (1605; STC 18279) to *Britannia's Honor*, alongside masques, printed accounts of royal progresses and related texts such as Thomas Churchyard's *A handeful of gladsome verses, giuen to the Queenes Maiesty at Woodstocke this Prograce* (1592).²² Dyson's signature appears only on the copy of *Britannia's Honor*: all the same, it is likely, although not definitively evidenced, that Dyson himself owned all of these books since they certainly meet the usual criteria by

¹⁹ *Contributions Towards a Dictionary of English Book-Collectors* (London: Bernard Quaritch 1969), p. 99.

²⁰ Dyson's catalogues are held at All Souls, Oxford.

²¹ *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991), p. 3. Shoet states that Dyson paid 6d for 'two of his three accession accounts'; Munday's description of a civic entertainment held to mark Prince Henry's installation as Prince of Wales, *Londons Love*, cost Dyson 4d, and it would appear he bought it in the year it was published, 1610 ('Masque as book', pp. 161-2.).

²² Ten of the works bound together in this volume bear Dyson's signature. Blayney writes that 'those who bought [playbooks] regularly would wait until they had what they considered to be a suitable number, and would then have them bound as a single volume', which may explain the genesis of this volume ('The publication of playbooks', p. 414).

which he chose which books to buy and keep.²³ A large proportion of Dyson's books were bought by one Richard Smith; this collection was in turn sold off in 1682. Richard Chiswell's auction catalogue for Smith's books includes 'Bundles of Books in quarto, English', which contained, alongside a range of named works relating to coronations, royal funerals and marriages, some additional 'tracts relating to Triumphs and Solemnities, to the number of 28 more'.²⁴ It is certainly feasible that these 28 additional works, the titles of which are not recorded in the catalogue, contained other mayoral Shows. All the evidence points towards the Shows being categorised as accounts of 'solemnities' and 'triumphs' at this juncture: in other words, very much in terms of the way they were presented to their original audiences.

Another collection of similar works held in the archives at Longleat House reinforces the latter conclusion. This volume, the provenance of which is uncertain, comprises six Lord Mayors' Shows, dating from 1613 (Middleton's *Triumphs of Truth*; STC 17903) to Elkanah Settle's *The Triumphs of London* (1692; Wing S2724). Its contents thus have a clear focus, the nature of which is encapsulated by the heading 'Triumphs. City of London. 1613-92' embossed on its spine, accompanied by the arms of the City.²⁵ There is a rather different rationale for the contents of a later volume entitled 'Miscellaneous tracts' held at Worcester College, Oxford, which includes a copy of Heywood's *Londini Artium & Scientiarum Scaturigo* (1632; STC 13347). This collection of 13 separate works dating from 1630-1710 was probably started by William Clarke, the secretary to the Putney Debates and a noted collector of ephemeral works, and later added to by his son George.²⁶ The volume contains a number of Leveller tracts from 1649, along with pamphlets about religious controversies. The only two works in the volume that might be regarded as literary are Heywood's Show and a copy of the 1637 edition of *Greene's Groatsworth of Wit* although it is more probable, given the nature of the works that surround it, that *Londini Artium* is in the volume on the basis that it was a 'political' work, broadly defined.

Better-known bibliophiles of the early modern period and later had copies of mayoral Shows too. Anthony Wood's substantial collection of some 6700 books contains copies of Dekker's *Troia-Noua Triumphans* (1612; STC 6530) and Heywood's *Porta Pietatis* (1638; STC 13359).²⁷ Although the volume in which

²³ Quaritch claimed that all the Shows in this volume were owned by Dyson (*Contributions Towards a Dictionary of English Book-Collectors* (London: Bernard Quaritch 1969), p. 99). The situation is unclear, however: Dyson scholar Alan Nelson describes this volume as 'a bit of a mystery' (personal communication).

²⁴ *Bibliotheca Smithiana* (London 1682), p. 384.

²⁵ Kate Harris, the archivist at Longleat, advises that the volume may have been bound together in the early nineteenth century and may originally have been part of a larger collection.

²⁶ The volume is probably still in its original 18th-century binding. I am grateful to Joanna Parker, Librarian at Worcester College, for her advice on this volume's provenance. This copy of Heywood's 1632 Show is the only complete one still extant. For more on Clarke's books, see Michael Mendle, 'Preserving the ephemeral: reading, collecting and the pamphlet culture of seventeenth-century England', in Jennifer Andersen and Elizabeth Sauer, eds., *Books and Readers in Early Modern England*, pp. 209-10.

²⁷ Kiessling comments on Wood's 'knowledge of history, heraldry and ceremony', and notes that Wood 'held an extensive collection of publications related to political life ... [including] over 1200

these works are bound does not have a title to identify the collection, as does the one at Longleat, it too has an internal coherence focused on commemorative texts, mostly relating to royal events.²⁸ The contents of the volume range over almost a century, from Bynneman's *Joyfull receyving of the Queenes most excellent Maiestie* (1578) to Jordan's mayoral Show from 1671. The arrangement may have been Wood's own work: Kiessling comments on the 'elaborate care [Wood] took in bringing together items on similar topics', which he arranged in chronological order. For this particular volume, though, it is possible that the works were bound together by the Ashmolean Museum after Wood's death, following the same principles: on balance, however, taking into account the binding, the limited cropping and the existence of a handlist, I would argue for Wood himself as the organiser of this volume.²⁹ As far as previous owners are concerned, only one of the original owner(s) of the contents of this particular volume is identifiable.³⁰ Dekker's 1612 *Troia-Nova Triumphans* (STC 6530) appears in another Bodleian volume, P42 (3) Art. It is bound alongside five other works with which it seems to share little in terms of precise content beyond the fact that they are all works about foreign languages, countries and/or controversies. No evidence of an owner's identity nor a handlist for the volume as a whole has survived for this book, unfortunately, although the condition of its contents does suggest an early modern date for the compilation of the volume, which has been in the Bodleian since the library's earliest days.³¹

Mayoral Shows crop in other Oxford libraries. Corpus Christi College library holds a copy of Munday's 1616 Show *Chrysanaleia*. This book was owned by Brian Twyne, and it appears to have been his only copy of a mayoral Show. Twyne (1581-1644) was a cleric, antiquarian and Greek scholar based at Corpus who had no apparent London connections beyond having been born in Southwark.³² Indeed, the volume within which Munday's Show is bound has less apparent coherence than others within which Shows are collected, such as the Longleat collection. The Corpus volume, still in its original 17th-century binding, contains nine texts of various types and authors, ranging from three Greek and Latin

items concerned with parliament and government', although he himself seems to categorise the Shows as 'entertainments of various kinds' purchased only for Wood's 'casual reading' (*The Library of Anthony Wood* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society 2002), pp. xvii and xxii). Two of Wood's 'favourite authors', according to Kiessling, were Dekker and Taylor: he owned ten works by the former, twenty-four by Taylor – a number being publications deriving from Taylor's time in Oxford in the 1640s – and, in addition, eight by Heywood (p. xxii).

²⁸ Heaton notes that 'Wood's collection of pageant texts falls into a much wider pattern of his antiquarian collecting interests, and especially his careful preservation of popular ephemeral publications' (*Writing and Reading Royal Entertainments*, p. 256).

²⁹ See Kiessling, *The Library of Anthony Wood*, pp. xlv-xlvii.

³⁰ The sole work in this volume that bears a recognisable owner's name is *The royall passage of her Maiesty from the Tower of Lon[don] to her palace of White-hall* (1604: STC 5792), which is signed 'Edw[ard]. Hoby'. Only the title page of this work remains in the volume. Dyson owned a copy of the same work.

³¹ The 'Art.' volumes were catalogued as such by 1620 (see Kiessling, *The Library of Richard Burton*, p. xxiii).

³² See Hegarty *ODNB*, 'Brian Twyne'. Twyne's grandfather John had been an alderman and mayor of Canterbury (see Martin *ODNB*, 'John Twyne'). I am very grateful to Joanna Snelling, the librarian at Corpus, for her help with Twyne and his books.

scholarly works, to a ‘true and wonderfull’ account of the appearance of a dragon in Horsham, and what the handlist calls ‘Sir Thomas Overbury’s Wife’s Characters’ from 1614. With the exceptions of the first work in the volume, printed in 1588 (which may have been added later), and a 1604 work, seven of the texts date from between 1614-1616.³³ The handlist at the beginning of the volume describes the Lord Mayor’s Show that it contains as ‘Mundays Chrysanaleia’, perhaps indicating a familiarity with the author. In addition, the citation of Munday’s name may show that the writer considered *Chrysanaleia* as more of a ‘literary’ than a commemorative text, one deserving of an ‘author’.³⁴ In general, however, unlike some of the other collections here discussed, Twyne’s volume itself offers few clues, beyond the coincidence of dates, as to why he thought this Show worth owning and binding up with the other texts beyond the raw fact of ownership.³⁵ The ascription of an author also features in the handlist at the beginning of one of the ‘Art’ volumes in the Bodleian (which also dates from the seventeenth century). This volume contains Robert Burton’s copy of *Chrysanaleia* and the text has his initials on its title page. The handlist describes the work as ‘Chrysanaleia or the Honour of Fishmongers by Andr. Mundy’.³⁶ This perhaps suggests a *lack* of familiarity with the writer, for *Chrysanaleia*’s dedication is signed ‘An. Mundy’, and the printed title page calls the author ‘A.M’. ‘Andr.’ (i.e. ‘Andrew’) may thus have been a reasonable guess for ‘An.’; the spelling of ‘Mundy’ follows the printed text itself.

Chrysanaleia is, in fact, one of the more collected mayoral Shows. As well as featuring in Brian Twyne’s collection, it also appears to be the one of the very few mayoral Shows in Robert Burton’s extensive book collection (Burton probably also owned a copy of Middleton’s *Civitatibus Amor*, an account of an entertainment to celebrate Prince Charles’s investiture as Prince of Wales, although this book is not as yet located).³⁷ Burton’s collection, taken as a whole, reveals what Kiessling has called ‘his interests ... in modern phenomena’.³⁸ Kiessling’s view is that

³³ Twyne had gained a lectureship at Oxford in 1614: Hegarty writes that ‘with an income and release from paternal pressure to marry, he could focus on antiquarian learning’ (*ODNB*). Twyne left some 750 works to his college, basing his bequest on those books the library did not already hold.

³⁴ Although Ovenell states that ‘in the case of volumes which contain a number of works bound together, Twyne himself has generally added to the fly-leaf a list of contents’ (‘Brian Twyne’s library’, p. 6), Julian Reid, the archivist at Corpus, is of the opinion that the handlist to this particular volume is not in Twyne’s hand (personal communication from Joanna Snelling). Twyne’s library at Corpus also includes other works by Munday and two more works of the same kind as the mayoral Shows, Dekker’s *Magnificent Entertainment* and Drayton’s *To the maiestie of King James. A gratulatorie poem*.

³⁵ Ovenell comments that it is difficult to ‘relate [his library] ... to the life and character of Brian Twyne’, who is described as having ‘catholic’ literary interests (‘Brian Twyne’s library’, p. 10).

³⁶ According to Kiessling, this volume was (re)bound in 1646, when the contents may well have been rearranged and the handlist added (see Kiessling, *The Library of Richard Burton*, pp. xix, xxii, xxix and 296). The handlist calls the volume’s contents ‘Tracts’; there seems no particular rationale for their inclusion nor the order in which they were bound.

³⁷ See Kiessling, *The Library of Richard Burton*, p. 201. Burton’s copy of Munday’s work also bears the name of another (probably previous) owner, Robert (?) Lenehan.

³⁸ Kiessling, *The Library of Richard Burton*, p. xxxi. Kiessling categorises Munday’s text as belonging to Burton’s collection of ‘encomia’, which was pretty extensive, comprising some 75 works (*ibid*, pp. 373-4). He also notes that although Burton owned a considerable number of

Burton tended increasingly to buy his books as new, especially in the 1620s-30s; otherwise, he bought them second-hand from booksellers.³⁹ *Chrysanaleia* is here bound with another 22 largely literary works ranging in date from the 1590s to 1633. In this case there is a handlist, probably drawn up by John Rous, the Bodleian librarian in the 1640s. Burton himself probably did not have *Chrysanaleia* bound with the others with which it is now attached. Although the individual copy itself does not bear a price, and it is not possible to ascertain exactly when Burton first owned it (he dated the purchase of many of his books but not this one), on balance it seems most likely that Burton did buy his copy of *Chrysanaleia* from a bookseller some years after it was printed, albeit perhaps only a short while afterwards. This may demonstrate that even if the mayoral texts were originally distributed gratis, within a relatively short timeframe (Burton died in 1640) they were available for sale to collectors and others with an interest in such works. To back this up, there is a record of purchase by Burton in 1609 of an analogous, although much earlier text (bought second-hand, of course), *The passage of our most drad Soueraigne Lady Quene Elyzabeth through the citie of London to westminster* (1559), for which he paid an Oxford bookseller four pence.⁴⁰ It is likely that Twyne managed his purchases in much the same way as Burton: furthermore, since both were Oxford-based, this raises the interesting possibility that mayoral Shows may have been as readily available via Oxford booksellers as in London.

As well as collections with a fairly considered rationale such as Dyson's and Wood's, as we have seen, individual Shows also appear in more miscellaneous volumes, especially once we get to the later seventeenth century and beyond. It is more difficult to propose any underlying conceptual or organisational basis for such collections although there does seem to be an emergence of a sense in which these works were regarded as 'literature'. New College in Oxford holds a copy of Middleton's *Triumphes of loue and antiquity* (1617; STC 17902), bound with another fifteen works dating from 1615-48, some of which are strictly political works from the civil war period and some of which are plays. The volume itself probably dates from the late seventeenth century and may have been bequeathed to the college by an alumnus of the King family.⁴¹ The transition from treating the Shows as current affairs and/or quasi-political texts is more thoroughgoing after the seventeenth century. A composite eighteenth-century volume called 'Plays Various', held in St John's College, Oxford, contains a copy of Heywood's *Londini Speculum* (1637; STC 13349) alongside other works dating from 1612-62. In this case, clearly, the owner of this particular collection regarded the Show as a dramatic or pseudo-dramatic work fit to sit alongside *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* and *The Jew of Malta*. The handlist does call Heywood's text 'a City Triumph', though, so it is still generically distinct. Alternatively, it is equally

literary and pseudo-literary works, 'he almost never made annotations in the scores of ephemeral publications in his collection' (ibid., p. xxxiv).

³⁹ Kiessling, *The Library of Richard Burton*, pp. 340 and xiv.

⁴⁰ See Kiessling, *The Library of Richard Burton*, p. 333. This text was bought with a number of others as part of a posthumous library sale; Burton got these works for a relatively low price. The previous owner of the Elizabethan coronation text was one Robert Brissenden, an Oxford scholar.

⁴¹ I am indebted to Naomi van Loo for her advice on this volume.

possible that it was bound into this volume because of its authorship, as it follows Heywood's play *Love's Mistress*. This volume may have been put together by Nathaniel Crynes, an early eighteenth-century book collector, whose name appears on some of the contents' title pages. Staying with the early eighteenth century, the Bute Collection, latterly owned by the Crichton-Stuart family of Falkland, includes copies of five of Middleton's Shows (those for 1613, 1617, 1619, 1621 and 1622) as well as two others, Dekker's *Londons tempe* and Heywood's *Porta pietatis*. Although these books bear no sign of early provenance, they are considered by Marion Linton to date back to the original ownership of much of the Bute Collection by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, as part of what the latter's grand-daughter called 'several volumes of differently sized and wretchedly printed plays'. Indeed, Linton notes that 'five of Middleton's pageants ... are bound in one little volume'.⁴² This 'little volume', with the seven Shows in total bound in date order, has survived intact in the National Library of Scotland.

How did early owners and readers interact with the printed Lord Mayor's Shows?

That the collecting of the Shows seems to have begun relatively soon after their moment of publication suggests that they were considered by some owners to hold value as quasi-historical documents and thus worth owing whilst still current. In terms of their usage by readers, sporadic evidence (alongside owners' names, initials and other marks) exists in some copies of these books of what Pearson calls 'the direct interface between author and reader'.⁴³ What is common to all the surviving copies of mayoral Shows is that, where it exists at all, contemporary marginalia only very rarely extend past the title page of the text; even there handwritten annotation tends to be solely owners' or readers' names. One is drawn to the conclusion that it was generally considered more important to own a copy of one of these works than to read it, or at least to read it more than once, quite probably because the majority of the owners had already seen the Show and so had little cause to want to revisit its content.⁴⁴

There are a few exceptions to this norm, however. One of the most heavily annotated books – the Bodleian's copy of *The Triumphes of re-united Britania* – carries some signatures as well as the strikingly appropriate comment 'Champion for the Citty or the Citty's Champion' next to Munday's name (although the comment may, of course, refer to the Lord Mayor). The rest of the text, however, is unmarked and indeed very clean. One copy of *The triumphs of loue and antiquity* bears the handwritten note 'Free of Skynners' on its title page, probably alluding to the Lord Mayor's Company, and the title page of the British Library copy of Dekker's 1612 *Troia-Noua triumphans* has a similar annotation, this time 'Marchantailor', which may refer either to Dekker or to the Lord Mayor for that year, John Swinnerton, since both men were members of that Company.

⁴² Linton, 'The Bute Collection of English plays', *The Times Literary Supplement*, December 21 1956, p. 772.

⁴³ 'Provenance and rare book cataloguing', p. 2.

⁴⁴ I am grateful to Maureen Bell for her elucidation of this point.

Generally speaking, however, although one is likely to find copies with damaged or stained covers since the works were originally sold unbound and could have stayed in that condition for some time, the majority of extant Show texts are both in excellent condition and lacking in signs of active use, which suggests they were prized, unread, or perhaps both. Indeed, one copy of Heywood's *Londini status pacatus* was left uncut for a considerable time and thus cannot have been read by its immediate contemporary owner(s). William Hardin's argument that the printed Shows stand as 'a lasting account of how [the City oligarchy] wished to perceive themselves and the metropolis' therefore seems accurate only in principle: what is the value of 'a lasting account' that no one reads?⁴⁵ As we have already seen, the likely ownership of most copies of the Shows seems to have extended outside of the limited realm of the City companies, in any case. For example, the Thynne family of Longleat, who had strong civic family connections but who were not of the citizenry, may have owned their copies of *The triumphs of truth*, *Metropolis Coronata* and *The triumphs of loue and antiquity* since they were first printed, especially since only a few years separates these works.⁴⁶

A rare exception to the norm of non-annotation, as far as mayoral Shows go, is the Bodleian copy of *Londini status pacatus*, where someone has carefully counted the lines of the verses of every substantive speech and written the number at the end of the relevant passage. The title page of this book also bears, in what looks like the same hand, the comment 'G [i.e. good?] Speeches', which may – exceptionally – indicate a reader's aesthetic appreciation of the contents: perhaps the reader's liking for the speeches manifested itself in a desire to count the lines.⁴⁷ The same reader appears to have annotated a copy of Middleton's *Triumphs of loue and antiquity* which also forms part of the Gough bequest: in this work there are broken lines in the margins, the number of lines of one speech are counted (as with the previous work), and the pages are numbered. Since this is the book that bears the inscription 'Free of Skynners' on its title page (as mentioned above) it is possible to surmise that the owner was contemporary with the book. Interestingly, both of these copies bear more signs of use than is the norm.

There may well have once been more owners' and readers' annotations on these texts than are visible now, of course. The vogue within later, especially nineteenth-century, collecting for 'clean' copies of early printed books, and the consequent cropping and washing suffered by these books has doubtless lost what we now regard as invaluable evidence of early ownership of and interaction with these works. We also have to take into account the gulf between our modern concerns and those of this period. One can therefore reverse Bill Sherman's

⁴⁵ Hardin, 'Spectacular Constructions', p. 17.

⁴⁶ Christiana, a daughter of Richard Gresham (Lord Mayor in 1537) and sister of Thomas Gresham (the founder of the Royal Exchange) married Sir John Thynne in the sixteenth century (see Blanchard, *ODNB*, 'Gresham, Sir Richard').

⁴⁷ There is also some manuscript annotation inside the Bodleian's unique copy of Peele's 1585 Show; unfortunately, most of it has been covered over by the binding with the result that it is barely legible.

observation that ‘the practices which made books useful to Renaissance readers are not always interesting to us’.⁴⁸ The case of the printed mayoral Shows is thus a signal instance of how the practices which are of interest to us are not as often in evidence in the textual remains of the Shows as we would like.

All the same, it is clear that the printed books of the Lord Mayors’ Shows were considered to be worth collecting from the outset and that this trend continued into the eighteenth century and beyond. Dyson, Burton, Wood and the others discussed above established the practice. By the mid-seventeenth century the books were more likely to be regarded as suitable for the collections of scholarly bibliophiles, and in due course later collectors such as James Bindley (1739-1818) and the actor John Philip Kemble (1757-1823) left their traces in a number of copies of these works. Indeed, Kemble’s collection of some 4000 playbooks and related items, including mayoral Shows, has been described as ‘unrivalled’.⁴⁹ His characteristic annotations – ‘Collated & perfect J.P.K [date]’ and ‘First edition’ – appear, for instance, on copies of the 1638 and 1639 Shows, *Porta Pietatis* and *Londini Status Pacatus*.

The fate of the books of the Lord Mayors’ Shows reveals the changing ways in which these works were estimated from their original moment of production onwards. The overarching story of the consumption of these works is one of recurrent re-categorisation. Mayoral pageant books were initially commemorative of a recent event, then preserved by antiquarians as quasi-historical documents, and finally, reflecting the prevalent priorities of the time and illustrated by Kemble’s collection and the Shows’ inclusion in the Bute collection of ‘English Plays’, collected as literary works by authors of note. The Lord Mayor’s Show, as a shifting genre, therefore stands as evidence of how book collecting follows wider cultural trends.

⁴⁸ Sherman, “‘What did Renaissance readers write in their books?’”, in Andersen and Sauer, eds., *Books and Readers in Early Modern England*, p. 131 .

⁴⁹ Peter Thomson writes that ‘Kemble sold his collection ... to William Cavendish, sixth duke of Devonshire, and they now provide the nucleus of the Devonshire collection at the Huntington Library. A residue of 1677 titles, 181 prints and drawings, as well as manuscripts and notebooks, was auctioned by Evans in Pall Mall over ten days from 26 January 1821’ (*ODNB*).