THE LIVING LANGUAGE OF
STAGE MANAGEMENT

AN INTERPRETATIVE STUDY
OF THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT
OF PROFESSIONAL STAGE MANAGEMENT
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM,
1567 – 1968

by

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ABSTRACT

Stage management is a professional, technical craft which is essential to the product of the professional British theatre. Yet with no dedicated academic study into its development and no published resources chronicling its history, stage managers of the present age have no means of accessing their professional heritage. As a profession committed to practising and preserving theatrical traditions within their daily activities, it is anomalous that its practitioners have not the means to explore and understand the roots of many aspects of their daily practice, and regrettable that scholarship has not access to an academic study of its evolution or the contextual catalysts for its development in order to inform the wider body of research into British theatre history.

This study aims to address this complete absence of scholarship in the field by providing the first dedicated academic research into the development of professional stage management in Britain. It will draw upon the primary evidence of stage management documents such as prompt manuscripts and interpret them from the perspective of a professional practitioner, tracing the development of stage management from the support offered to the early modern companies of the Elizabethan age to the professionalisation and unionisation of stage management which emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. By so doing, this thesis constitutes an entirely original contribution to knowledge in relation to this important yet neglected aspect of the history of the British theatre, and will enable professional practitioners to access their professional heritage for the first time.

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1968:
The Theatres Act abolishes censorship

INTRODUCTION

Stage management has a vocabulary with which it communicates. No language functions unless it communicates something, and the language of stage management provides the communication which leads to the realisation of theatrical performance. It sits alongside the language of the director, the designers, the performers, and translates from theatre to theatre and generation to generation, bringing together the work of these separate strands of the profession and enabling the vision for the performance to be realised and replicated for the duration of its life in a company's repertory.

In this, stage management has been notably consistent since the establishment of the early modern playhouses in being the role which supports the realisation of professional performance, and also in the language it has used to accomplish this. Such consistency and commonality in both the function and the language of stage management make it possible for a contemporary stage manager to interpret the promptbooks and stage management materials from the earliest professional performances, and to read and recognise the language of stage management with which they are annotated. This thesis will demonstrate that the development of professional stage management is readable through the language which I as a practitioner speak, and will reveal the stability and consistency of support with which professional performance is enabled by professional stage management, in the context of its evolution over the last four hundred and fifty years.

In the absence of any published work on the history of British stage management, its story cannot, in the conventional sense, be read. Despite this, a principal aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that the history of stage management *can* be read, not in any book, but by means of 'the book', the common term of reference by which the prompt copy of a play is known within the theatre industry. It will be demonstrated that scholarship traditionally places little value on the information that can be gleaned from prompt copies, but I aim to argue convincingly that their value to theatre historiography increases significantly when they are properly read. This is not difficult, but requires on the part of scholars an engagement with the materials on their own terms, rather than the superimposition of a particular purpose or agenda upon them, as has too often heretofore been the case.

The foreword to Jacky Bratton's seminal work *New Readings in Theatre History* states:

> Over the last two hundred years some important ways of understanding theatre history have been undervalued or ignored by scholars. [. . .] By rejecting literary history, Bratton experiments with other ways of analysing the past, and the ways that have actually seemed relevant to the people on stage.[1]

This statement appositely reflects both the need for a fresh approach to research in this field, and the situation in which the history of stage management finds itself at the present time, notably with regard to the misguided use of prompt materials which has led to this particular theatre history being, as Bratton identifies in relation to the sources she draws

upon, both undervalued and ignored by scholars. Yet stage management is of vital importance to professional performance, and deserves appropriate academic recognition as the key element of theatre production which enables, by means of the various skills and responsibilities inherent within it, the presentation to a paying public of an integrated, professional performance.

Stage management is a craft in which communication, preparation, and anticipation are key (but invisible) skills demanded of its practitioners in order to adequately support and enable its (highly visible) sister crafts of performance and technical production. The key tool which enables the provision of such support is the promptbook. Surviving prompt copies of early modern plays reveal the initial role of 'stage management' at the inception of the professional theatre, and prompt materials continue to demonstrate how the function has evolved during the four and a half centuries since then to provide the key services of blocking, prompting, cueing, calling, communication, the provision and management of props and furniture, and the enabling of rehearsal and performance, which support constitutes stage management today. These functions define professional stage management in the United Kingdom at the present time, and the purpose of this research is to identify how professional stage management has developed, and why this is important to the body of knowledge surrounding professional theatre practice, by demonstrating the evolution of these key characteristics in the context of the evolving British theatre.

Promptbooks will be central sources in illustrating that evolution, and will be drawn upon in a series of case studies.

Over the course of the four intervening centuries between the first decade of the first Elizabethan age and the first decade of the second, the evolving history of stage management is reflected by accompanying changes in its nomenclature. This study will show how the stage management team of the professional theatre of the present day originated with the playhouse functions of 'book keeper' and 'stage keeper', before the emergence of the role of 'prompter' which was to remain a core element of professional stage management until the post-war unionisation of stage management brought the consolidation of the professional team structure into its current form. Emerging alongside the development of the deregulated theatre of the nineteenth century, the title of 'stage manager' reflects a growing imperative for careful attention to detail in the preparation of performances, alongside responsibility for the management of the stage during performance itself. Further developments in nomenclature throughout the twentieth century, from 'stage manager' to 'stage director' and the post-war emergence of the role of deputy stage manager (a title which affords little indication of the scope or responsibilities of the role), reveal a profession which has undergone a steady evolution at the heart of which is one core and central function: the cueing of performance. This has been a primary function of stage management since the emergence of the first professional playhouses, and its continued position as an intrinsic component and

defining characteristic of stage management will be substantiated throughout the thesis.

Since the promptbook has, from the emergence of the professional playhouses, been the document in which stage managers and their historical equivalents have recorded the details of their work, the study and analysis of surviving promptbooks will be the principal means of demonstrating the evolution of the role. Despite the frequency with which prompt copies are referred to by theatre historians, the text of the play contained within the promptbook and its realisation by performers has always hitherto been privileged as the main focus of research over the 'marginalia'[2] scribbled upon it. Even when marginal notes *are* examined, they are scoured for details relating to the movements, gestures, positions and characterisations of the performers, or for indications of the structural environment in which they performed, such as the scenic design for the play or the architecture of the theatre building. When promptbooks are found not to provide such information, they are scorned for their failure to enable the reconstruction of a particular production, and condemned for the lack of insight into the actors' performances which they offer to the theatrical scholar. Charles H. Shattuck laments that:

> Promptbooks are tricky, secretive, stubborn informants. They chatter and exclaim about what we hardly need to know: that certain characters are being readied by the callboy to make their entrances; that the scene is about to change or the curtain to drop; that the orchestra is about to play at the act-end. They fall blackly silent just when we most hope to be told where the actor stood or how he looked or what he did.

> Rarely do they give us a hint of voice or temper or histrionic manner.[3]

This reflects the extent to which information is traditionally sought from promptbooks about the performance of the play, and not the means by which the various aspects of that performance were achieved; the product, rather than the methodology, of stage practice has hitherto been the almost exclusive focus of promptbook analysis. Shattuck continues:

> They tell lies, as anybody knows who ever produced a play and failed to write into the book his own last-minute revisions or the happy inspirations that come to the actors midway in a run of performances. [. . .] Even if the actor's movement is recorded [. . .] the motive for it is not, and the movement without the motive is an absurdity.[4]

A far greater absurdity is the reliance of scholars on promptbooks for such details as 'voice or temper', or the motivations inspiring each actor's move. This is not their function. The purpose of a promptbook is not to record for future reconstruction the intricate details of the actors' performances. This failure to recognise the promptbook as a working document, an instruction manual for the consistent and co-ordinated regulation of the play, precisely illustrates how promptbooks have been traditionally subjected to misuse and misinterpretation in the academic study of theatre. Whilst the scholars and reconstructors of drama 'hardly need to know' that a performer's call is imminent, or that the orchestra is about to be cued, their recording within the promptbook is of critical importance if those things are to happen during the living run of the play. It must be accepted that documents which

are first and foremost tools of a particular theatre practitioner's trade will not necessarily yield the desired detail relating to performers' performances, either because the information recorded within them was recorded for very practical reasons, rather than for posterity, or because they were created for an entirely different and highly specific purpose. The promptbook is, quite simply, a manual for delivering the essential elements of the performance, in the correct place, at the correct time, in the correct manner, night after night. It is with such details that the annotations to be found within the pages of extant promptbooks concern themselves; nothing more can, nor should, be expected of them.

My purpose in making this point is not to facetiously dismiss the work of such a distinguished scholar as Shattuck, whose extensive work with prompt copies is one of the few bodies of scholarship to focus on the interpretation of stage management documentation. Rather, it is to argue for a renewed examination of prompt materials for what they can tell us about the staging conventions and capabilities of the past, about traditions and conditions of staging performances, about advancing stage technologies, and about the role and function of stage management and its development since the nascence of professional theatre in this country. Promptbooks as sources of evidence of theatre history have historically been used for the wrong reasons; and in seeking to learn how actors have interpreted the drama, evidence indicating how stage managers have supported and realised the production has hitherto remained unseen, unrecognised, and unresearched. Whilst prompt marks and symbols are

frequently looked at, or looked *through* in efforts to concentrate on the text beyond, these symbols are never, in their own right, read. This research will offer an entirely new reading of a theatre history which, in common with those important ways of understanding theatre history indicated by Bratton above, has been both undervalued and ignored for too long.

My thesis aims to address this academic invisibility of stage management by exploring the evidence of primary stage management materials (principally promptbooks, but also reports, diaries, memoranda, and other ephemera generated by or related to stage managers in the course of their work) since the emergence of the professional playhouses in Elizabethan England. Whilst acknowledging the professional Elizabethan companies' practice of touring their productions, performing in a range of venues from inn yards and guild halls to churches and country houses, a practice which both predated and continued far beyond the construction of the Red Lion[5] by John Brayne in 1567, this landmark event provides the date from which I have chosen to commence my search for evidence of professional stage management practice. R. A. Foakes' edition of Philip Henslowe's diary[6] indicates the value to this research of surviving sources from those companies with a playhouse in which to base themselves, and accumulate a stock of properties and scenic pieces requiring maintenance and management during their use in performance. An analysis of selected plots and promptbooks from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries will therefore form the basis for a major case study.

Following the identification of discernable 'stage management' support within the organisational structure of the early playhouses, the thesis goes on to explore the development of key aspects of stage management practice. These emerge as: responsibility for the timely entrance of the cast upon the stage; the recording of their basic moves against a master copy of the text; casting and rehearsal responsibilities; the timing of performances and the reporting of pertinent details relating to each one; the provision and management of props and furniture; and the precise cueing both of performers' entrances and, increasingly as capability developed, of the technical elements required throughout each performance. Selected case studies will demonstrate how primary evidence clearly indicates professional performance since the emergence of the original playhouses to have been underpinned by significant stage management support.

As professional stage management practice developed, so too developed a key aspect of it which enables the 'reading' of stage management's professional history and, hence, its application to the wider history of the developing British theatre: a language for stage management. This emerges not as an oral, phonetic language but a visual vocabulary developed through the practical necessity of rapid communication of instructions for the cueing of performance: a process which has developed in complexity as the centuries have unfolded. Its transferability, as introduced above, from generation to generation and theatre to theatre, has enabled a consistent model of stage management to occur and, for the first time in an academic study, to be read and recognised from sources dating back to the very first

professional playhouses. This research demonstrates how the evolving development of stage management can be read through the visual language of prompt annotations, and argues that the ability to read it informs and enriches scholarship's understanding of the process of theatre production since the emergence of the first British theatres. The research therefore begins by interrogating primary sources dating from the period in which the early professional playhouses developed, a period widely accepted to begin with the construction of Burbage's and Brayne's Red Lion in 1567.

As an appropriate end date for my research, I have selected 1968. By this point, in addition to the publication of the Theatres Act which brought about the abolition of censorship of plays, stage management had experienced a professionalisation and unionisation which established the core structure of the stage management team as it exists today. Additionally, the electronic prompt desk and tannoy system had, by this point, become established as the standard means of cueing and calling performances; training courses in stage management were emerging in the drama schools; and a standardised practice of linear marking of cues in the promptbook, colour-coded and corresponding to electronic cue-lights, had been established. It is therefore an appropriate point at which to draw together those aspects which I have identified as key to the development of British stage management practice and which are explored in this research.

The choice of these dates defines the scope of this thesis to span four hundred years. The thesis does not therefore attempt to be an exhaustive

survey of surviving prompt material, but presents an arguably representative selection of case studies which demonstrate different practices at different periods but which also demonstrate a continuity of practice as the role and function of stage management evolves. Emphatic consideration will be given to the development of what remains the most important practical function of stage management: the cueing of performance. A prominent focus on this particular aspect of the role is therefore maintained throughout.

To conduct this research I have adopted an inductive, historical methodology in which an extensive range of primary materials related to stage management practice have been interrogated, both for what they could reveal about the specific practice of the stage manager or theatre from which they originated, and for what they might indicate about the development of stage management as a key component of professional British theatre practice. The first two chapters span the seventy year period from the emergence of the first purpose-built playhouses in London in the late 1560s and 1570s to the late 1630s, shortly before the outbreak of the English Civil War. These chapters explore the context in which the playhouses emerged, incorporating a review of key literature in the field, alongside which prompt materials from the early London playhouses, dating from the 1590s to the 1630s, are analysed.

The third chapter spans the period from the Restoration to the end of the eighteenth century. It begins with the interrogation of a Restoration

promptbook for indications of stage management practice following the eighteen-year moratorium on playing, and explores the emergence of commonality of practice as evidenced by prompt materials and other sources generated by the prompters of what ultimately became the Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatres Royal. The impact on stage management of the developing technical capabilities is considered, in the particular context of the emergence of symbols within promptbook annotations to signify cueing instructions. The prompters Thomas Newman, John Stede, William Rufus Chetwood, Richard Cross, and William Hopkins are identified as influential practitioners, whose work and working methods arguably impacted significantly on the development of professional stage management.

Maintaining the focus on the development of stage management practice in the context of cued performance, the continuing evolution of practice throughout the nineteenth century, and the significant emergence of a common, visual language, is considered in Chapter Four, in which I explore the codification of prompt annotations, by symbol and by colour, as a key development. The focus on materials from Covent Garden and Drury Lane is maintained, and prompt sources from these two theatres are drawn upon for evidence of continuing developments in promptbook annotatory practice. The influence of John Philip Kemble on stage management practice is suggested, and the work of the stage manager George Cressall Ellis is identified as important to both the ongoing development of prompt annotation and to the body of knowledge relating to stage management

practice. Consideration is given to the impact of the 1843 deregulation of the theatres upon the emerging role of 'stage manager', and, in particular, the practice of the stage managers George Cressall Ellis and Frederick Wilton will be analysed. The extensive body of preserved promptbooks annotated in detail by Wilton during the thirty-two year period of his service at the Britannia Theatre in Hoxton, which began in 1843 and ended in 1875, forms the basis of a major case study in this chapter.

In the final chapter of the thesis, the consolidation of stage management practice is considered in the context of evidence from a range of London and provincial theatres from the first half of the twentieth century, and the work of Maud Gill, Britain's first female stage manager, at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre is explored in a major case study which indicates the evolving use of technology in the cueing of performance. The evidence of Gill's experiences identifies her as an important source of information relating to stage management practice in the early twentieth century, and also reveals a significant transition in the development of stage management: the evolution of a spoken language alongside the continually evolving visual stage management vocabulary. Finally, the focus of my research moves to consider the professionalisation and unionisation of stage management which took place following the Second World War, when the united efforts of stage managers such as David Ayliff led to the formation of the Stage Management Association, and the further development of an Equity Agreement for Stage Management, in the 1950s. Concluding case studies consider the emergence of training for stage management and the

evidence of post-war prompt sources to indicate the continued development of the stage management role and practice following the establishment and standardisation of stage management equipment and installations such as the electronic prompt desk, stabilising cue-lights, and ring intercoms enabling multi-way communication between production staff throughout performance.

Inspired by the concept of reading theatre histories in a new way, this close examination and interpretation of prompt materials on their own terms, with an informed appreciation of their function, vividly reveals working practices new to scholarship and a new language in the lexicon of British theatre history. From annotations which are unmistakably cueing instructions in early modern promptbooks, to promptbooks codified by symbol and colour for increasingly technology-dependent productions throughout the last two centuries, my thesis draws upon a rich heritage of primary sources to demonstrate that this fresh approach to researching stage management's professional history reveals a history which deserves to be read and a language which enables scholarship to do so; a language which can enrich the wider reading of British theatre history, and which can be traced through the vocabulary of professional stage management.

Notes to the Introduction.

[1] Jacky Bratton, *New Readings in Theatre History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Foreword (unpaginated).

[2] Defined by Edward A. Langhans, *Restoration Promptbooks* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: University of Illinois Press, 1981), p. xvii.

[3] Charles H. Shattuck, *The Shakespeare Promptbooks: A Descriptive Catalogue* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 20.

[4] Ibid., p. 3.

[5] Now widely acknowledged to have been London's first purpose-built playhouse; see Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 10 – 11.

[6] R. A. Foakes, *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

CHAPTER ONE

'Out of the Ordinary'

In order to establish the origins of professional stage management, by identifying what support was offered to the first professional companies by ancillary playhouse staff and how their performances were supported, an interrogation of extant prompt material from the early modern playhouses is essential so that nascent stage management practice may be identified. Before commencing this analysis, however, an exploration of the extent to which performers may have been supported before the development of the playhouses is appropriate in order to provide a context for the subsequent research. Although academic studies of the development of stage management are indeed rare, Alan Read's reference to the late sixteenth-century performance witnessed and recorded by Richard Carew in his *Survey of Cornwall*[1] is of interest, and this source, and its implications, will be considered in this chapter.

The source dates from the very early seventeenth century, having been published in 1602. It records, however, a performance of a Miracle play.[2] Since an effective ban on such performances was finally achieved by Elizabeth I in 1581,[3] it is reasonable to estimate that the performance took place prior to this date. The source can therefore be argued to be contemporary with the emergence of the early modern professional theatre; and, since it records a provincial and 'amateur' performance rather than a play presented in a London playhouse by a 'professed' company of players

working to the latest or highest standards of production, it can further be argued that such professional companies can be expected to have benefitted from *at least* a similar standard of support at their performances as did the Cornish group which features in the source below. It is therefore appropriate to consider this source both for the evidence which it offers of stage management support at this particular performance, and also for the implications which such evidence suggests in relation to the investigation of stage management support in the early modern theatre.

Carew's account is of key significance to scholarship in relation to the emergence of cued performance, a major characteristic of professional stage management, since it indicates the in-view cueing and prompting of the performers throughout the duration of the piece. The prominent activity of the person directing the proceedings offers an interesting parallel with the function of the professional playhouse book keeper which will be explored in detail. The following analysis of this source is intended to serve as the departure point for the investigation which will follow of the development of stage management practice in the early modern professional playhouses. Whilst acknowledging that the terms 'stage management' and 'stage management practice' are anachronistic in relation to the early modern theatre, they will be used throughout this study for all activities which would now be recognised as stage management within the scope of current, professional theatre practice. The analysis below will also enable a comparison of the developing procedures of professional performance

support with non-professional performance practice, as evidenced by this provincial account.

1.1   The Ordinary / Conveyour.

Richard Carew was a native of Plymouth, Justice of the Peace, High Sheriff of Cornwall, Queen's Deputy for the Militia, and Treasurer of the Lieutenancy in that county.[4]   In the latter part of the sixteenth century he undertook an extensive study of Cornwall, which he published as *The Survey of Cornwall* in 1602.[5]   In an early chapter, Carew discusses 'the Cornish mens recreations, which consist principally in feastes and pastimes',[6] and goes on to describe the following performance which he witnessed (the emphasis is mine):

> The Guary miracle, in English, a miracle-play, is a kind of Enterlude, compiled in Cornish out of some scripture history, with that grossenes, which accompanied the Romanes *vetus Comedia*. For representing it, they raise an earthen Amphitheatre, in some open field, having the Diameter of his enclosed playne some 40. or 50. foot. The Country people flock from all sides, many miles off, to heare & see it: for they have therein, devils and devices, to delight as well the eye as the eare: **the players conne not their parts without booke, but are prompted by one called the Ordinary, who followeth at their back with the booke in his hand, and telleth them softly what they must pronounce aloud.** Which maner once gave occasion to a pleasant conceyted gentleman, of practising a mery pranke: for he undertaking (perhaps of set purpose) an Actors roome, was accordingly lessoned (before-hand) by the Ordinary, that he must say after him. His turne came: quoth the Ordinarie: Goe forth man and shew thy selfe. The gentleman steps out upon the stage,

and like a bad Clarke in scripture matters, cleaving more to the letter than the sense, pronounced those words aloud. Oh (sayes the fellowe softly in his eare) you marre all the play. And with this his pasion, the Actor makes the audience in like sort acquainted. Hereon the promptor falles to flat rayling & cursing in the bitterest termes he could devise: which the Gentleman with a set gesture and countenance still soberly related, untill the Ordinary driven at last into a madde rage, was faine to give over all. Which trousse though it brake off the Enterlude, yet defrauded not the beholders, but dismissed them with a great deale more sport and laughter, than 20. such Guaries could have affoorded.[7]

Many aspects of this source invite closer analysis. Firstly, it is evident that this is not a production by a company of players in a purpose-built and furnished playhouse supported by gatherers, tiremen, and stage keepers: Carew describes a crude entertainment in an earthen amphitheatre in an open field. The audience is a rural one, and travels many miles to see it attracted by the 'devils and devices' which delight them. That such attractions were a feature of a homespun play in a field is, in itself, of interest. The players do not know the play, nor do they know each other: had they been familiar with either, the gentleman would have been discovered as an interloper and unable to take his chance to disrupt the performance with his joke. Finally, Carew's account indicates the figure of the Ordinary as an authoritative one: he instructs the performers to say the words which he will give them, he reproves the gentleman onstage for his behaviour, and calls off the performance once, in his opinion, the gentleman's joke has rendered the play irredeemable. Therefore, as a precursor to the study of stage management in the purpose-built playhouses, it is the Ordinary, as indicated by Carew's

account and in the context of the period, whose function will be explored first.

The term 'Ordinary' is a curious one, and appears to be unique within theatre scholarship to Carew's *Survey*. Read, in the study cited above, does not engage with the term, asserting that 'the prompter was simply a recognised figure in the proceedings' and dismissing him with no more than the suggestion that: 'He was the ordinary within the extraordinary.'[8] However, by assuming that the nomenclature reflects the 'ordinariness' of the one person upon the stage who was not performing a role within the play, Read ignores two significant factors: the etymology of the word itself, and the ecclesiastical traditions out of which the drama was born. The significance of language to stage management, and the inception of an idiosyncratic proprietorship of a language of its own, begins with the nomenclature of the Cornish Ordinary.

A further Cornish source, a Mystery cycle performed on three consecutive days and possibly dating from the fourteenth century, was known as the 'Ordinale', or authoritative text.[9] The Oxford Latin dictionary defines an 'ordinarius' as *An overseer who keeps order.*[10] That the keeper of this document should be called the 'Ordinary' is arguably a logical progression.

The Oxford English Dictionary indicates a widespread use of the term 'ordinary' in authoritative roles within a range of disciplines:

1. *Eccl.* and *Common Law.*   One who has, of his own right
    and not by special deputation, immediate jurisdiction in
    ecclesiastical cases, as the archbishop in a province, or the
    bishop or bishop's deputy in a diocese. [first usage 1292]

2. *Civil Law.*   A judge having authority to take cognizance of
    cases in his own right and not by delegation . . . [1607]

3. An officer in a religious fraternity having charge of the
    convent, etc. [. . .]   [1481]

8. *Naut.* [. . .] the establishment of the persons employed by
    the government to take charge of the ships of war, which
    are laid up in . . . harbour. [. . .]   [1789]

10. A rule prescribing, or book containing, the order of divine
    service [. . .] in the Roman Catholic rite, those parts of a
    service, esp. the Mass, which do not vary from day to day;
    spec., those unvarying parts which form the Mass as a
    musical setting (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus
    and Agnus Dei). [. . .]   [1494][11]

Further to this, the term has a solid ecclesiastical heritage which can be
drawn upon to support a deeper and long overdue interrogation of its
theatrical use.

As can be seen above, the Roman Catholic faith, which was the religion of
the state until 1534, defines an ordinary, in general terms, as the bishop of a
diocese or the superior of a community.[12] The 'ordo recitandi' is a document
produced annually for each diocese which lists concise instructions for each
day about the Office, the Mass, the feastday, and the colour of the vestments

to be worn by the celebrant.[13] As indicated above, the Ordinary of the Mass refers to those liturgical texts and rites which are invariable, an essential and permanent requirement of the sacrament.[14]   These all indicate a more appropriate interpretation of the term 'ordinary' as something reliable, orderly, unchanging, intrinsic, essential.   In contrast with Read's interpretation of 'ordinary' as 'normal', Carew's contemporary account, and the known origins of secular drama in the liturgical drama of the Middle Ages, indicate rather the development of the term 'Ordinary' as a reflection of the duties, and indeed the authoritative qualities, required of the person responsible for staging the performance, instead of simply being the only person onstage not performing a role as Read suggests.

A. M. Nagler has suggested that the lay Ordinary proceeded from the ecclesiastical 'director' of liturgical dramas:

> The clerical Master of Ceremonies who supervised the execution
> of the rubrics in the Ordinal was destined to become the
> interpreter of the stage directions in medieval production books.
> The first medieval stage directors were ecclesiastics.[15]

Whilst we must beware of anachronistic terms of reference such as 'stage director' in relation to the mediæval drama, Nagler's indication that the Ordinary assumed the function of a director of proceedings is an interesting one, which merits further investigation. In doing so, it is of key importance to recognise the origins of secular drama in parish representations of liturgical material.

'Ordinary' is a liturgical term. Canon 134 of the Code of Canon Law states:

§1. By the title of ordinary in the law are understood, in addition to the Roman Pontiff, diocesan bishops and others who [. . .] have been placed over a particular church or over a community which is equivalent to it [. . .] as well as [. . .] vicars general and episcopal vicars; and likewise for their own members the major superiors of clerical religious institutes of pontifical right, who possess at least ordinary executive power.

§2. By the title of local ordinary are understood all those mentioned in §1, except superiors of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life.[16]

This clearly indicates that an ecclesiastical ordinary holds a position of considerable authority: the Code of Canon Law states above that an ordinary can be the Pope, the bishop in charge of a diocese, a vicar general, or a major religious superior, according to the governance of the Catholic Church in whose traditions the Mystery and Miracle plays were rooted. 'Ordinary' in this sense refers to the state of being in holy orders; to being responsible for those ordained into holy orders; and for the 'ordering' of a religious community or of a diocese. With the original Mystery and Miracle plays performed by churchmen, it is natural that the function of [theatrical] Ordinary should have evolved from the ways in which liturgical drama was organised, supported, and carried out; and a natural progression to use liturgical nomenclature for a function which enjoyed such an authoritative parallel.

Read overlooks an essential and fundamental aspect of the Ordinary's origin in dismissing him as no more than 'the ordinary within the extraordinary'. Nagler's suggestion of a 'clerical Master of Ceremonies', and the clear indications of the authority of the ecclesiastical ordinary as evidenced by the law of the Church, render it hard to ignore the implied authority of the Ordinary of the Cornish Miracle. On the basis of Carew's account, it is certainly possible that the Ordinary may have had sole charge of the performance, with responsibility for its organisation as well as its æsthetic realisation. Further to this, once the origins of the term and the strong ecclesiastical links with liturgical drama are considered, in terms of both the designation 'Ordinary' and the content of the 'Guary Miracle', it is difficult to ignore the indications that the Ordinary's position would most certainly have been one of comprehensive authority.

Although a non-professional status is assumed in relation to the Ordinary as described in the Cornish extract above, an appreciation of his role and function is important to this study since the origins of the functions undertaken by the Ordinary's successors in the newly professionalised playhouses of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries are indicated therein. Whilst the term 'Ordinary' seems to be unique to Carew's account of the play which he witnessed, there is evidence to suggest that the role and function existed at other liturgical performances in the region, which indicates that such practice may have been more widespread than earlier scholarship has suggested. In the Cornish Mystery play *Gwreans an Bys*

(The Creation of the World) a similar function was undertaken by one called

the 'conveyour', as described by Philip Butterworth:

Line 339:   Adam and Eva aparlet in whytt lether in a place apoynted by

                 the conveyour & not to be sene tyll they be called & thei

                 knell & ryse

Line 389:   Let Adam laye downe & slepe wher Eva ys & she by the

                 conveyour must be taken from Adam ys side[17]

Butterworth convincingly argues that:

> The 'conveyour' of these stage directions possessed some
> authority since *he* decided where Adam and Eve should wait and
> *when* they should be revealed. *He* was the miraculous means by
> which Eve was created. *He* was involved in the theatrical magic.
> At one level, the functions required by these two stage directions
> are those embraced by the modern director and stage manager.
> [. . .] Like the "Ordinary" there is no denying the visual
> presence of the "conveyour" in the performance . . . [18]

In addition to these two instances, both particular to Cornwall, of a visible

functionary directing or facilitating the action onstage, further parallels can

be observed within the theatre of other cultures. Marvin Carlson has

discussed 'conventions that historical audiences somehow learned to accept',

citing as examples 'masks in the Greek theatre, the invisible Japanese

propman, the Elizabethan boy-actresses.'[19] Vsevolod Meyerhold further

discusses the visible yet 'invisible' stage-hands in the theatre of Japan,

facilitating the exit from the stage of living actors playing dead characters,

and holding candles to indicate to the audience a scene set at night.[20] Hence

the parallels for the Cornish Ordinary and 'conveyour', which can be

discerned within established theatre conventions of other cultures, can be

drawn upon in support of the legitimacy of the Cornish sources as evidence. Butterworth has remarked that the scholar E.K. Chambers 'was cautious in his acceptance of Carew's account and considered the practice to be exceptional', but rationally argues that:

> There seems little purpose in denying the account [the status of evidence] because of its uniqueness. Similarly, the case for dismissing the validity of the account because it does not fit in with preconceived notions of theatrical presentation is itself suspect.[21]

Given that historic parallels for the function of Ordinary / conveyour can in fact be drawn, as demonstrated above, there are clear grounds for arguing the legitimacy of Carew's account. Furthermore, it raises the notion of stage management as an *onstage*, rather than a *backstage*, activity – evidence of which is clear within promptbooks from the early modern playhouses.

In summary, whilst the *Gwreans an Bys* source indicates the function of 'conveyour' as facilitating the onstage representation of the events of the Creation, rather than prompting the performers with their lines as in the Guary Miracle, it does indicate that the onstage presence of a non-performing functionary whose role was to facilitate one or more aspects of the performance was not unique to the single performance which Carew witnessed, supporting the 'status of evidence' which Butterworth has argued for Carew's account. It further substantiates the validity of drawing upon these sources as a pertinent point of departure for the study of professional performance support, and, in particular, given the convincing evidence of

this aspect of the Ordinary's / conveyour's function within the sources drawn upon above, evidences the origin of a key stage management function: the cueing of performance.

The evidence of surviving materials from the first playhouses will be drawn upon extensively in the following chapter to argue conclusively that the cueing of performance has been an intrinsic component of the particular support for performers now defined as stage management since the earliest professional practice in this country. Before progressing to explore the evidence that elements of performances in the early modern theatres were cued by a person undertaking a function clearly recognisable as stage management, however, a brief background to the circumstances under which the early playhouses emerged will be offered. This provides the context for arguing that the support of another aspect of theatrical production has also fallen under the responsibility of the person undertaking the 'stage management' function since the early modern theatres: rehearsal.

1.2   Background to the Establishment of the Purpose-Built Playhouses.

Acceding in 1558, Queen Elizabeth I had been on the throne for nine years when, as Andrew Gurr has concluded, '[James] Burbage's brother-in-law and partner John Brayne built the Red Lion playhouse on the pattern followed by the Theatre and the later playhouses as early as 1567.'[22] She had reigned for fifteen years when the Act for the Punishment of Vagabonds and for Relief of the Poor and Impotent was passed in 1572, with serious implications for companies of players upon whom it became incumbent to

avoid the risk of being taken for masterless men.[23] Twenty-three years into her reign, and after three attempts, she finally achieved 'complete prohibition of the mystery cycles, followed by a ban (lasting for over 300 years) on all plays based on, or quoting from, the Bible' in 1581,[24] suggesting the Guary Miracle, which Richard Carew witnessed, to have been performed around or before 1580.

In 1576, the eighteenth year of Elizabeth's reign, the printing press pioneered by William Caxton was a hundred years old. Burbage's own playhouse, The Theatre, opened in that year to a London in which the people were 'already trained to find their would-be pleasures staked out on posts all over the city',[25] according to Tiffany Stern who comments that: 'from early on in the life of the theatre in London, playbills were an important and very visible preliminary part of the entertainment.'[26] In 1545, when the would-be queen was still a girl of only twelve years of age, the importance of lavish theatricals to the royal family and the Court was clearly affirmed when the hitherto temporary Office of the Revels was reorganised to become officially part of the Royal Household, and a new post of Master of Games, Revels and Masks was created.[27] The Master of the Revels, the Master of the Great Wardrobe, and the Master of the Tents were separate offices which together held responsibility for, and authority over, everything relating to the staging of plays, masques, royal entrances, and pageants for the entertainment of the royal household, to which the Revels Office was attached when the professional playhouses began to emerge in the final quarter of the sixteenth century. Very clearly, these playhouses emerged into a society conditioned to a print culture of advertising, where the upper echelons had established

three Court offices to oversee their own private entertainments, and where even an unrehearsed play in a field employed 'devils and devices' to attract its provincial audience. The professional theatre of the Elizabethan age was a commercial enterprise; with competition from proliferating playhouses, alternative entertainment such as animal baiting vying for their audiences' time and money, the precarious possibility of blanket closures in times of plague, the threat of arrest for any company not protected by the warrant of a noble patron, and occasional prestigious opportunities to perform at Court, the stakes for the emergent professional companies of players were undeniably high.

The first purpose-built playhouse to have been constructed in England is now generally accepted by scholarship to have been the Red Lion in Stepney; Stern correlates the 1567 performance of the play *Mery Tales* to 'the establishment of the first permanent professional playhouse in London'[28] and Gurr offers the following chronology for the emergence of the metropolitan playhouses:

> The first Middlesex amphitheatre, the Red Lion, built before the players had any government protection and probably as temporary in its playing life as its design, was set up to the east, in Stepney. The first durable building, the Theatre, was built on land leased for twenty-one years in Shoreditch, near Finsbury Fields, nearly a mile north of the City's eastern end. By then, in 1576, its builder, James Burbage, had a patent for Leicester's Company which for the first time secured their status. [. . .] Ten years later, in 1587, Henslowe opened the Rose south of the river in Southwark, near the baiting-houses and under the magistrates of Surrey.[29]

The increasing availability of such entertainment did not meet with universal approval: one William Harrison is recorded as opining that: 'It is an evident token of a wicked time when players wexe so riche that they can build such houses.'[30]   Nonetheless, the very existence of the permanent playhouses which sprang up around the capital during the final decades of the sixteenth century indicates that there was audience demand and, hence, commercial viability, as Gurr has effectively explained:

> . . . the significance of the Theatre is that it indicates the size of the potential market for popular plays, leading Brayne and Burbage to invest money in an auditorium like those of the animalbaiting arenas where the owners could take money at the door and accommodate thousands of paying Londoners [. . .] a single fixed venue needed much larger turnover of plays than was needed when the players were on their travels from one town to another. So the London playhouses became a massive stimulus to the production of new plays.[31]

Siobhan Keenan discusses the likelihood that, by 1595, the two leading companies, the Lord Admiral's Men and the Lord Chamberlain's Men, would attract audiences of fifteen thousand people weekly at their respective playhouses, the Rose and the Theatre,[32] statistics which indicate Burbage to have astutely calculated there to have been sufficient market potential to sustain the establishment of a permanent structure as early as the 1570s. Whilst Gurr has conceded that:

> [The Red Lion] does not seem to have been a great success, and may have been constructed too soon to be securely profitable as a regular venue for a playing company. By 1576, though, the new legislation and his 1574 warrant prompted Burbage to take another step towards real security, the

establishment of his own permanent playing headquarters in London. With his brother-in-law as co-financier, in 1576 he used his qualifications as a member of the carpenters' company and built the Theatre. On land leased for twenty-one years, and with a special proviso in the lease that he could dismantle and remove the construction if need be, he set up the framework that was later to be reused for the Globe, and gave it a grand Roman name as the first of its kind in London.[33]

– it can nonetheless be seen that there was undeniably a market for the permanent playhouses as the decades rolled on. The Theatre of 1576 was followed by the Curtain in 1577, the Rose in 1587, the Swan in 1595, the Globe in 1599, the Fortune in 1600, the Red Bull in 1604, and the Hope in 1614.

1.3   Background to the Practice of the Early Professional Companies.

In discussing the proliferation of the original playhouses, it must not be forgotten that touring was an integral part of the practice of the early modern companies; Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean have described the importance of professional players' touring activities to the political interests of their noble patrons.[34] Gurr identifies the 1583 formation of the Queen's Men as the catalyst for the definitive establishment of London as the base for the professional companies, and describes how the methodical way in which the company was constituted, by Francis Walsingham as Elizabeth's Secretary of State and Edmund Tilney as Master of the Revels, inevitably resulted in the Queen's Men becoming the dominant professional company of the 1580s.[35] Notwithstanding this initial dominance, given that plays were

a principal source of entertainment for royalty, the pleasing of royalty had to
be a key aim for any wise company. Leicester's Men, led by Burbage,
benefitted from the protection of a patron whom McMillin & MacLean have
described as:

> powerful, accommodating, and ready to get them opportunities
> to play at Court [. . .] Still more [valuable] was the explicit
> royal protection that the same company was offered,
> unprecedentedly, two years later, in a patent of 10 May 1574.
> This was the first royal patent for a company of adult players. It
> specified the permissible scope of the company in unambiguous
> terms, and came to serve as a model for all patents granted
> subsequently.[36]

A little under ten years later, the players who constituted the new Queen's
Men company were drawn from the ranks of the leading professional
companies, including Leicester's Men and Oxford's Men,[37] and, in addition
to becoming, as a result of the talent of the players and the patronage of the
Queen, the dominant company of the time, the existence of a company which
so clearly enjoyed the favour of the Crown may have inspired the increased
tolerance which their members began to enjoy from 1585, when their tacit
toleration by the City Fathers was indicated by their issuing of instructions
that the companies should conform their playing to a series of regulations.[38]

Playing companies had already been subject to regulation under a
government act published more than ten years earlier: the 1572 Act for the
Punishment of Vagabonds and for Relief of the Poor and Impotent. Under
this Act, the acquisition of a patron and a licence to perform in his name was
absolutely imperative to secure legal protection for the players, and, by

implication, to secure also the ongoing possibility of earning their living. The Act restricted the number of liveried servants that could be employed by a nobleman, decreeing that only servants of his immediate household could wear livery; this made it potentially more difficult for companies of players to be taken into the protection of a noble patron, since they now required to be enrolled as immediate household servants in order to be sure of protection from the risk of prosecution by town authorities. James Burbage wrote to the Earl of Leicester for such protection in the year in which the Act came into force, and it is clear from the letter that the value of Leicester's patronage was legal rather than financial (the emphasis is mine):

> To the right honorable Earle of Lecester, their good lord and master.
>
> Maye yt please your honour to understande that forasmuche as there is a certayne Proclamation out for the revivinge of a Statute as touchinge retaynors, as youre Lordshippe knoweth better than we can enforme you thereof: We therfore, your humble Servaunts and daylye Oratours your players, for avoydinge all inconvenients that maye growe by reason of the said Statute, are bold to trouble your Lordshippe with this our Suite, humblie desiringe your honor that (as you have bene always our good Lord and Master) you will now vouchsaffe to **reteyne** us at this present as your **household Servaunts and daylie wayters,** not that we meane to crave any further stipend or benefite at your Lordshippes hands but **our lyveries** as we have had, **and also your honours License to certifye that we are your household Servaunts** when we shall have occasion to travayle amongst our frendes as we do usuallye once a yere, and as other noble-mens Players do and have done in tyme past, **Wherebie we may enjoy our facultie in your Lordshippes name as we have done** heretofore.[39]

The 1572 Act stipulates a need for two licences, and it is clear from Burbage's letter to Leicester that one of these was a licence from the patron to certify that the players were indeed travelling and performing under his authority. The second licence which was required was the signature of the Master of the Revels, certifying his consent for the material contained within the company's copy of the script to be performed. Hence both the play and the players had to be licensed before they could even request permission from civic authorities to perform a play in their town. Once licensed, not only could the play be performed at the company's home playhouse in London, but it could also be toured out to generate income from fresh audiences around the country. In 1583, an attempt was made by an unlicensed troupe to impersonate a licensed company, the Earl of Worcester's Men, at Leicester, which attempt was discovered during the clerical process of verifying the licensing requirements.[40] The Earl of Worcester's pass, certifying the players as men in his service, had been stolen and the troupe attempted to perform under its authority; however, they were without the other crucial element required in order for a company to be granted unimpeded performance at any town in which they requested to play: the licence inscribed upon the 'book' – the company's master copy of the play text – inscribed by the Master of the Revels and signed by him. Without the licensed book, the fraud was discovered, indicating the critical importance to the companies of the 'book' or licensed copy of the script. Implicitly, this also demonstrates the importance to the company of the person amongst them who had responsibility for it. This argument will be elaborated in Chapter Two.

1.4   Touring Practices of the Professional Companies.

Acquiring a licence for the play from the Master of the Revels and a warrant to tour and perform from the company's patron was only the first step towards being able to perform a play around the country. Upon arrival in any provincial town, a process of soliciting municipal consent to the plays which were being toured, and agreeing the format which the company's stay there would follow, had to be undertaken. Companies would commonly present themselves and their patron's warrant to the mayor, who may have chosen to invite them to perform it before him; this would signify a compliment to the company's patron, but would also provide an opportunity for the content of the plays to be censored.[41] Occasionally, citizens of the town could attend the mayor's performance of the play; in Gloucester:

> if the Mayor like the Actors or would shew respect to their Lord and Master, he appoints them to play their first play before himselfe, and the aldermen and common Counsell of the City; and that is called the Mayor's play, where every one that will comes in without money.[42]

It is interesting to note that, whilst civic authorities wishing to discourage companies of players from lingering in their towns could have hidden behind the legislation of the 1572 Act and interpreted it harshly if they had so chosen, other mayors would see in the visit of a troupe of players an opportunity to court the approval of their patron, flatter influential citizens, or impress potential dissidents by using the 'mayor's play' or licensing performance of the text submitted by the company to offer an early form of corporate hospitality to burghers whom he wished to impress, citizens whom

he wished to reward, or indulge in any other propaganda opportunity which

the licensing performance for a company of players would present. Keenan

discusses the opportunities which sometimes followed a performance before

the mayor, citing productions in town halls, inn chambers, inn-yards,

churchyards, churches, church houses, schoolhouses, country houses, and

university colleges,[43] and so it can be seen that, even for companies with a

London playhouse base, touring was a fact of their annual operation, was an

important way to continue to earn a living from playing when it was not

possible or advantageous to remain in London, and was a potentially

prestigious activity in which the interests of the patron were represented by

the players, which must therefore of necessity have had to be taken into

consideration when productions were being planned.

1.5   Practical Support for the Players on Tour.

In considering the logistics of touring a repertory of plays, we must

remember not only the challenges that faced the players, but recognise that

they would have needed considerable support in their activities in order to

acquit themselves professionally and in a way that would reflect

appropriately upon their patron, by whose grace and favour they were

protected and in whose name they travelled. I have demonstrated that a

licensed playbook was a highly valuable commodity for the early modern

players, containing not just the words of the play to be performed but also

official authority from the Queen's appointed minister allowing that

particular company to perform that particular text anywhere in the land. So

important was the licensed 'book' of the play to the company that there

existed in the emergent professional theatre a position, within the company, of 'book keeper'. The extent of the support which was provided to the professional companies through the office of the book keeper will be described below; but, in addition to those responsibilities which the book keeper undertook when a company performed at its London playhouse base, it must not be forgotten that the exigencies of touring would have generated its own particular set of challenges which needed to be met. Whilst principal players within a company, such as Edward Alleyn with the Lord Admiral's Men or Richard Burbage with Leicester's (later the Lord Chamberlain's) Men, would have been concerned with soliciting the approbation of the mayor or aldermen, representing the company and their patron to the burghers who would consent or refuse to their playing, and making any necessary cuts or revisions to the text, someone – with an intimate knowledge of the content and requirements of the play – would have had to turn the guildhall, inn-yard or barn into a performance space, source any large items of furniture that were needed, set out and maintain the props, lay out and maintain the costumes (unless a tireman was also toured), deal with the administration of the company's arrival in the town such as presenting the patron's warrant and the licensed playbook, and then support the players during the running of their performances. It is highly logical to argue, given the evidence which will be presented below of the book keeper's activities in support of performances at the playhouses, that this support to the companies on tour was provided by the book keeper, as will be demonstrated in the following chapter.

1.6   Licensed Performance; the Office of the Revels.

After 1581, licences enabling the companies to perform the plays in their stock came only from the Master of the Revels; any theatre company wishing to stage a public performance of a play had to be granted permission by him to do so. Consequently, the Master of the Revels had ultimate authority over what could and could not be performed; and, as part of the process of preparing a play for performance which had of necessity to be undertaken, a copy of the play was required to be taken to the Revels Office where, subject to the Master's approval of its content, he would write upon the first or last page to the effect that the play was licensed for performance by that company. Figure 1.6.1 below shows the final page of a promptbook belonging to Shakespeare's company, which, by the time this play was licensed, had become the King's Men; the play is Thomas Middleton's *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* and the licence of the Master of the Revels, Tilney's successor George Buc, can be seen inscribed upon the final page: 'This second Maydens tragedy (for it hath no name inscribed) may with the reformations be acted publickly. 31. October 1611. G. Buc.'
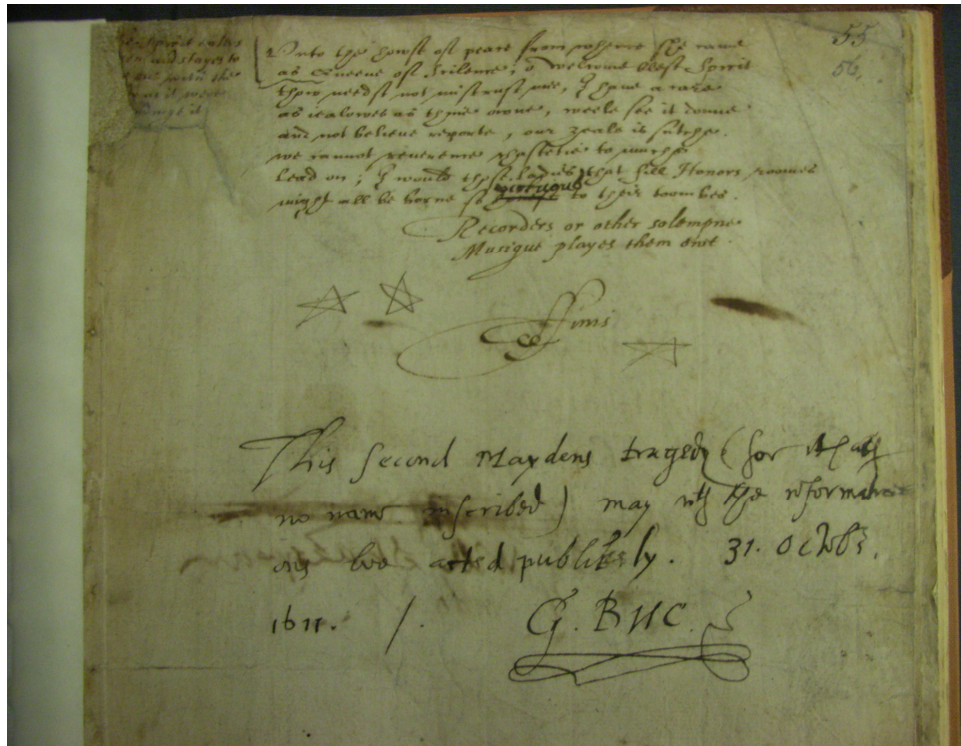
Figure 1.6.1: *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (British Library), final folio.

The 'reformations' to which Buc alludes in his licence were amendments or cuts – usually to censored passages to avoid any possibility of offending religion or royalty – which the Master of the Revels required the company to make and adhere to before he would sanction the play for performance by inscribing his licence upon it. As demonstrated above, the licensed copy of a play was extremely valuable since it was the company's permit to earn money from that play. As the name suggests, the book keeper was responsible for the care and maintenance of these licensed texts, from which all of that company's performances of the plays would be made. Since there was rarely another copy of the full play for the company to access, each player's individual parts were copied out for them on separate rolls of parchment by the company's scriveners, at the direction of the book keeper who was aware of the casting and who commonly had responsibility for

allocating minor roles, sometimes to 'hirelings' engaged for the occasion, sometimes to playhouse staff who were already engaged to work on the performance as 'stage keepers'.[44] Due to the length of time that it would commonly take for the Master of the Revels to read, approve, licence, and return the book to the company which had submitted it, the players' individual parts were sometimes copied and issued to the cast before the book was sent to the Revels Office, so that the lines could be learnt in the meantime. Buc's successor, Henry Herbert, disapproved of this practice because of the likelihood that he would insist on alterations, and once ordered that: 'The players ought not to study their parts till I have allowed of the booke'.[45]

An interesting parallel may be observed between the function which the book keeper provided for the emergent professional companies, and the Master of the Revels' responsibilities for the entertainment of the royal household. The Revels Accounts from 1603 suggest 'the ordinary duties of the Revels Office', which had responsibility for Court entertainment, to include:

> . . . procuring material from government offices and from the open market; hiring and supervising the work of carpenters, painters, tailors, winedrawers, and other artisans on the stages, scenery, costumes and lighting; contracting work to other government departments; attending and assisting at productions; storing and cleaning the garments and properties; and rendering an account of expenses.[46]

Although the Revels staff, whom we know from the Accounts to have been Sergeants and Yeomen of the Revels Office, are likely to have been charged

with undertaking much of the actual work implied above, this clearly indicates that the Master of the Revels had overall responsibility for overseeing every aspect of the pageants and performances organised for royal diversion, and indicates precisely what those responsibilities entailed. When royal diversion came to be provided by the professional companies of players, a sufficiently high standard of what would today be termed production values would have been essential in order to satisfy the royal audience and retain royal favour. Whilst ultimate responsibility for the organisation of each aspect of the pageantry can be ascribed to the Master of the Revels in the case of Court performance, the evidence of the extant plots and prompt copies will be drawn upon to argue that performances in the public playhouses were demonstrably under the control of the book keeper.

The concept of control deserves consideration here, because, in the same way that the Master of the Revels did not himself do the 'doing' of many of the tasks which fell under his responsibility, having his staff of yeomen of the Revels Office to do them for him, it is logical to suggest that the book keeper's responsibilities extended beyond the practical tasks which he himself personally carried out. Glynne Wickham's final survey of the early modern theatre describes the 'many humble men and women servicing London's playhouses as gatherers of admission monies, as scriveners who copied out actors' lines and cues, as printers of plays and playbills and as purveyors of refreshments';[47] if we ask who directed the printers in their advertisement of the play, or who directed the scriveners as to what required

to be copied out for whom, the logical conclusion is the book keeper, as will be demonstrated below.

In addition to the gatherers, scriveners, and refreshment vendors, the playhouses were further staffed by tiremen, who helped the players to dress; stage keepers, who operated live effects, and set and struck any items too large to be carried on by the players in the course of their entrances onstage; heralds, whose trumpets summoned the audience to the playhouse; and musicians, whose live flourishes and fanfares punctuated many characters' entrances and exits in addition to the playing of music integral to the play. With such a collection of assistants, each with individual functions, required to contribute in a co-ordinated way to a performance dependent on their support, a need for cohesive management is implied. Competent dressing in the Tiring House, music sounding in the correct place, the timely provision of properties, the accurate setting and striking of articles of furniture, and the competent operation of traps and stage effects, were all requisites of early modern performance. Such considerations indicate the scope of the practical support implicit in professional theatrical performance at this period, and the evidence below from primary sources comprehensively demonstrates the prompt book to have been, to coin Wickham's phrase, the key document of control.

1.7   The Early Modern Repertory.

In investigating the early modern professional practice, we must consider the conditions in which the practitioners worked. The early modern companies typically offered their audiences a different performance daily from an average choice of thirty to forty plays per season, as can be seen from Gurr's survey of the Admiral's Men at the Rose playhouse.[48] Gurr's astute comment that: 'Nothing can have shaped the nature of playing so much as having to perform a different play every day, and to produce new plays at frequent intervals'[49] reminds us that these companies operated in a way which has all but disappeared from the theatre of our country today.

This being the case, consideration must be given as to how the early modern companies managed to sustain such a challenging mode of operating to a sufficiently high standard that the paying public continued to patronise their performances. I shall demonstrate below the key contribution of a document called the 'plot' to the companies' ability to survive the performance of a daily-changing repertoire in which up to forty plays per season could be performed at sometimes as little as a day's notice. It would, however, be naïve to suggest the importance and significance of the plot to be so great that no further strategies were necessary to assist the company in meeting the challenge of this daily-changing playing convention. Scrutiny must be given to the pertinent question of rehearsal, and it is appropriate to consider this here in the light of the playing conditions discussed above, the evidence of contemporary sources, and the legislation which governed the activity of the early modern companies as introduced above.

1.8   To Rehearse, or Not to Rehearse?

The definition of rehearsal has become a controversial topic within scholarship in recent years, with Tiffany Stern in particular arguing that rehearsal, as the term is understood today, did not exist in the early modern theatre. Playtext evidence from the period suggests this to be far from being the case, however, and supports the argument that not only were plays rehearsed, in the sense of the modern understanding of the term, but that rehearsal – the support, co-ordination, and management of which is today a major aspect of professional stage management responsibility – has consistently fallen under the responsibility of those playhouse assistants providing the function of stage management since the emergence of the earliest professional playhouses.

Stern has asserted that, in the early modern period, the term was used more often to describe a performance of a play than to describe the period of time during which a play is learned, prepared and practised as the term is understood today.[50] In particular, it is suggested that the term may have been used to describe a closed performance for the exclusive benefit of a licensing authority, such as the Master of the Revels in the first instance and, as described above, the civic authorities when on tour.[51] Once issued with their individual rolls of lines, players were expected to learn their parts privately, with the exception of boys apprenticed to a master actor who would have had the benefit of learning their role alongside their apprentice-master as part of their training. Stern has suggested that no collective rehearsal took place at all for performances by the professional London companies apart from an

occasional 'breakfast' run-through of the play on the morning before the play was given, which perhaps only a majority of players, rather than the full company, would attend (the emphasis is mine):

> Both university and provincial players had as a rule only one general rehearsal, and **I am inclined to think** that the same is **roughly** true also of the public theatre. [. . .] How general even 'general' rehearsal ever was is another question: it is unclear whether minor hirelings attended group rehearsal; walk-ons did not [. . .] Group rehearsals could not have been held in the evening – at least not on the public theatre stage – for the same reason that performances could not: it would be dark. [. . .] For the couple of hours preceding performance, there could be no rehearsal on the stage, as the theatres were already filling with people [. . .] breakfast-time **seems** to have been the most available period of the day for rehearsal . . . [52]

Stern's *inclination to think* that the single opportunity to rehearse a known play from their own repertoire by companies on tour when newly arrived in each town would *roughly* apply to the circumstances in which a company would prepare a new play for performance at their London playhouse, amidst stiff competition from rival playhouses and other sources of amusement and which they may have entertained hopes of being invited to present at Court, is tenuous. The legislation which governed the playing activities of the professional companies indicates that breakfast-time may in fact have been far from being the only available time for a company to rehearse. Before exploring the possibilities which the legislation suggests, however, a number of questions with regard to both the staging of the players' performances and

also the practical considerations of theatrical production are raised by Stern's hypothesis, and must be addressed.

Stern is confident that 'walk-ons' would not have attended group rehearsal, but I suggest that this is to overlook the very real possibility that those playing minimal walk-on parts would have been present already in the playhouse at the time of any rehearsal, since promptbook evidence confirms that stage keepers – playhouse staff whose function was to set and remove props and items of furniture and operate the traps or offstage effects – undertook such minor roles. Folio 70 recto of Heywood's *The Captives* contains the stage direction: 'Enter the Abbott the baker ffryar Richard prisoner and guarded Etc' within the text, whilst the margin carries the following, unequivocal annotation: 'stagekeepers as guard.'[53] I assert that playhouse staff already present in the building when the company came to rehearse could have been instructed in their roles, observed the action of the principal players, or even rehearsed their minor part onstage, with barely an interruption to their offstage duties, and without having to be separately called to a rehearsal. Stern's assumption cannot therefore be accepted without caution.

Further to this, and conversely, we may ask whether casual players and hirelings, brought in to augment crowd scenes or serve as guards, would in fact be able to do exactly as was required of them, in public performance, without any form of realistic practice? It is arguably unlikely that even the most experienced players would have been able to position themselves

perfectly in every scene, unrehearsed, without generating any kind of difficulty for any other player or aspect of the performance. It is more unlikely still that the inexperienced boy-players, cast in key roles such as Ophelia, Desdemona, or Juliet, would have been able to deliver adequate public performances after only a perfunctory, partial practice of the play upon the stage, orientating themselves around other members of the cast and such theatrical obstacles as furniture, props, and traps for the first time before a playhouse full of paying public. We must also ask whether their apprentice-masters, sharers in the companies and therefore with a vested interest in the profits, would have exposed their boy apprentices to such vulnerability, rendering themselves in turn vulnerable to audiences voting with their feet against unrehearsed performances. The notion that companies would open a new play without creating any opportunity to run scenes which involved changes of costume and character for some of the cast, and potentially dangerous entrances from beneath the stage, is one that implies risk-taking with their professional reputations to an extreme degree. Even if we accept that the players and company sharers had immense confidence in the stage keepers and playhouse assistants operating fire, smoke, thunder barrels, traps, and even positioning furniture, at each performance, we must question whether that confidence extended to deeming a thorough rehearsal of these elements unnecessary before that first performance before a paying public? It may of course be suggested that the technical elements of Elizabethan staging were so rudimentary, the staging of plays so basic, and the performers so experienced and skilled at playing extempore that the above considerations were never of issue. Naturally the technical

capabilities of the early modern theatre companies would have been crude, although resourceful, as will be amply demonstrated by the extant documentation which will be analysed below. Yet there must arguably have been some notion of desirable or 'professional' standards amongst the London companies, since it would be on the basis of their public performances that they would be chosen to perform for the Court. Shakespeare's 'rude mechanicals' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (c1596) discuss the need for a run-through of *The Most Lamentable Comedy and Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe* before presenting it at the wedding feast of Theseus and Hippolyta, from which the meaning is arguably clear:

> *Quince:* Masters, here are your parts; and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night, and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight: there will we rehearse; for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company, and our devices known. In the meantime I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants . . . [54]

Shakespeare makes it clear in this passage that this rehearsal was to be an entirely private practice of the play; equally clearly, he identifies all responsibility for it – the distribution of parts, the organisation of the rehearsal, and the preparation of a props list, with the character undertaking the book keeper's function, Peter Quince. Despite Stern's assertions, we must ask whether a playwright so accustomed to writing for the popular audience as was Shakespeare would have chosen to use here the specific term 'rehearsal' if there was doubt that his audience would understand the practice of the play that is implied by it. By the same token, it can be argued

that the comedy of the comic rehearsal in Act III Scene 1 is to a certain extent dependent on the audience recognising in Peter Quince a 'prompter', supplying those lines forgotten by his 'hempen home-spun' cast and berating them for their under-rehearsed performances.[55]

The concept of a player's 'part', his own personal lines written out for him from which he studied, and a 'cue', meaning the words of another performer which trigger a speech of one's own, are used here without any explanation for the benefit of the audience. May we, then, assume that these were familiar terms, particular to those employed in the theatre but commonly understood by a 'lay' audience? Similarly, we must ask whether Shakespeare would deliberately exclude his audience from the pun of Boyet's aside in *Love's Labour's Lost* (also c1596), when he comments 'out indeed' after the correct lines have been hissed at Moth who was 'out' in his part in the pageant of *The Nine Worthies*, performed in the final act, in which the comedy arises from the failure of the performance which requires continual prompting.[56]

As with the 'rehearsal' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Shakespeare is provoking comedy by the use of this technique, which would not have succeeded had it been exclusive rather than inclusive of his audience. Had they not recognised a 'prompter' in Quince and in Biron, the parodies would have gone unnoticed and the humour fallen flat. We can argue, then, that the concepts of rehearsal, and the prompting of lines as a central feature inherent to rehearsal, were sufficiently established in the public domain for

Shakespeare to portray and parody them with confidence. Peter Thomson

has argued that 'We must assume [. . .] that Elizabethan actors had a fine

memory for lines, whilst being prepared to admit, despite the surprising lack

of evidence, that a system of prompting was well established.'[57]

Shakespeare's apparent confidence in a widespread public understanding of

this playhouse function at the end of the sixteenth century, as illustrated by

the examples above, can be drawn upon in support of this assertion.

Stern argues that: 'Group rehearsals could not have been held in the evening

– at least not on the public theatre stage – for the same reason that

performances could not: it would be dark.'[58] This is certainly true for the

winter months. However, with a conventionally-accepted start time of two

o'clock, and even allowing for a three-hour performance despite

Shakespeare's indication of 'two-hours' traffic' on his stage,[59] this would

leave the playhouse free from five p.m. meaning that, from April onwards,

there would have been at least a further two hours of daylight for the

company's potential use until the arrival of autumn.

Is it reasonable to suggest that the players might have rehearsed the

following day's play immediately after concluding each day's performance?

Stern draws upon contemporary sources to conclude that: 'the actors went

straight to dine in the taverns afterwards.'[60] Yet the 1585 regulations

imposed by the City Fathers upon the Queen's Men and their fellow

companies, alluded to above, whilst prescriptive as to what the players were

not permitted to do, offer scope for suggesting that, within those parameters,

there were many things which they might well have done in the privacy of their own playhouse as long as public performance, after dark, on a Sunday, or until after evening prayer on holy days of obligation, was not one of them. Key extracts from the regulations are cited below, with factors which I identify as important emphasised in bold:

> That they hold them content with playeing in private houses at weddings etc **without publike assemblies**.

> That no **playes** be on the sabbat.

> That no playeing be on holydaies **but after evening prayer**: nor any received **into the auditorie till after** evening prayer.

> That no **playeing** be in the dark, nor continue any such time but as any of the **auditorie may returne to their dwellings in London before sonne set**, or at least before it be dark.[61]

The implications of these rules, if examined, are rather more optimistic from a player's point of view than first meets the eye. In essence, they indicate that the companies are unregulated when there are no members of the public gathered to watch them; that they may not *perform* – but might quite possibly practise – on a Sunday; that they may not play any later than would prevent the members of their audience from arriving home before nightfall; and that on 'holydays' they may not play during the daytime, but may offer public performance after 'evening prayer' as long as the public will still be able to return home before dark. This is a curious stipulation, and merits further consideration.

'Evening prayer' is another liturgical term, taken from the Liturgy of the Hours or the Divine Office.[62] In Roman Catholicism, the Divine Office is the prescribed set of daily prayers which, together with the Mass, constitutes the official public prayer of the Church. It is also known as Vespers; this is equivalent to the service of Evensong in the Church of England, but, the Church of England being but fifty years young at the enactment of the above regulations, it is unsurprising that the terminology at this time reflected the old faith.

Evening prayer, or Vespers, is not, as might at first glance be expected, the final prayer of the office; it would take place between four and six p.m., with the final office of the day being night prayer or Compline, taking place at nine. The regulation is not, therefore, stipulating a time period at the end of the day. Rather, at a time when the populace did not have watches but did have a very acute sense of religious obligation, it is making a very clear reference to the end of the *afternoon* in terms which everyone would understand. Therefore, these regulations appear to be making provision for evening performances on certain days, when playing was not permitted during the daytime due to religious observances; and we may assume any such evening performances to have taken place in the summer months only, when daylight and temperature could have enabled sufficient attendance by the public to sustain a performance, and have further enabled them to return home afterwards before nightfall.

This being the case, it is a very small step indeed to perceive that, from April until September, with normal, afternoon performances finishing from four o'clock onwards and with up to six remaining hours of daylight at the height of summer, it is far from impossible for an entire play to have been fully run through post-performance, with time for the company to take refreshment whilst the playhouse was emptying of its patrons. The same may be said of Sundays; certainly they would not have *performed*; but the only obstacle to rehearsing on a Sunday, namely the illegality of 'working' on the Sabbath, is only applicable in the event of wages being received. With all hirelings paid from the profits of performance, and the sharers benefiting only after that, the definition of 'work' is suddenly more fluid, and the regulations demonstrably provide scope for evenings, as well as mornings, to be utilised for the purpose of preparing a new play for performance.

Theatre practitioners are artists of the possible. With widespread competition and a vested interest on the part of the sharers in maintaining a profitable company, we must be prepared to accept that evening rehearsals were a very real and feasible possibility. Whilst Stern's assertion – that university and provincial players, and professional companies on tour, could only have had one general rehearsal before performing – is undoubtedly correct, it must be remembered that such companies toured a limited number of plays and would already have been familiar with them, offering on tour a selection from their London repertory. One general rehearsal of a familiar play would undoubtedly be amply sufficient, especially with a significantly reduced amount of costumes, props, and furniture, being limited to what

could be accommodated on their tour by their available transport. However, I argue that this would have been far from sufficient preparation for any new play about to be launched before a large London audience at the company's home playhouse, where both a living and a good reputation had to be earned and a poor reputation as a result of poor performance could not have been evaded; where profitability was in the balance, and royal command was a tantalising incentive. The stakes were too high.

1.9   Conclusion.

This chapter has established the context of the emergence of the professional playhouses, and has considered both the capabilities of the emergent professional companies and the challenges faced by them due to the conditions of touring and the constraints of legislation. Key factors of the conditions under which the companies operated, including licensing at governmental and municipal levels and the critical importance of patronage, have been explored, and the authoritative, liturgical precedent for the key professional function of book keeper has been demonstrated. The presence, from the very beginning of early modern theatre practice, of two key elements of professional stage management: rehearsal and cued performance, has been established. Having focused on the period prior to and at the inception of the establishment of the early modern professional theatre, the next chapter will comprehensively analyse primary playhouse sources to demonstrate that stage management support is clearly in evidence, was a key factor in achieving the challenging repertory of the early professional

companies, and that cued performance can clearly be discerned in playhouse documents which recognisably indicate active stage management in the early modern theatre.

Notes to Chapter One.

1   Alan Read, *Theatre & Everyday Life, An Ethics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), p.202.

2   Whereas a Mystery play tells a story from the Bible, a Miracle play focuses on the life of a saint.   *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that: 'A miracle play presents a real or fictitious account of the life, miracles, or martyrdom of a saint.'
URL http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/384847/miracle-play
accessed 16:00 Monday 6th June 2011.

3   Bans came into force in 1534 and 1543 before being lifted during the reign of Mary Tudor, but Banham asserts that 'by 1581 Elizabeth I had achieved complete prohibition of the mystery cycles, followed by a ban (lasting for over 300 years) on all plays based on, or quoting from, the Bible.' Martin Banham, *The Cambridge Guide to Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.179.

4   Richard Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall* (London: John Jaggard, 1602), British Library MS 191.c.7.

5   Ibid.

6   Ibid., p.68.

7   Ibid., p.72.

8   Read, p.202.

9   Bodleian Library, MS Bodl. 791, University of Oxford. Source located online: URL http://ww.the-camerino-players.com/medievaldrama/Bibliography_of_Cornish_Medieval_Drama.html accessed 17:07 Monday 6th June 2011.

10   Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879 (1958)), p.1277.

11   J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 2nd ed., vol. X: 'Moul – Ovum' pp.910-13. The fifth entry offers the definition 'A stage prompter' (obsolete) and references Carew's *Survey* of 1602 as the earliest recorded usage. (p.911).

12   Ibid.

13   Archdiocese of Birmingham, *Ordo for the Recitation of the Divine Office and the Celebration of Mass according to the Calendar of the Archdiocese of Birmingham for the Year 2011* (Birmingham: John F. Neale Publishing, 2011), pp.2 – 11.

14   See also Adrian Fortescue, J.B. O'Connell & Alcuin Read, *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described* (London: Burns & Oates, 2009), Fifteenth Revised Edition, pp. 62 – 90.

15   A. M. Nagler, *A Source Book in Theatrical History* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1952), p.49.

16   The Canon Law Society of America (James A. Coriden, Thomas J. Green and Donald E. Heintschel, ed.s), *The Code of Canon Law, A Text and Commentary* (London: Cassell Ltd., 1985), p.95.

17   Philip Butterworth, 'Book-Carriers: Medieval and Tudor Staging Conventions', *Theatre Notebook*, 46, No. 1 (1992), p.26.

18   Ibid.

19   Marvin Carlson, 'Theatre Audiences and the Reading of Performance' in *Interpreting the Theatrical Past: Essays in the Historiography of Performance*, ed. by Thomas Postlewait and Bruce McConachie (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2000), p.82.

20   Vsevolod Meyerhold, *Meyerhold on Theatre*, translated and edited by Edward Braun (London: Methuen, 1969), pp.99 – 100.

21   Philip Butterworth, 'Book-Carriers: Medieval and Tudor Staging Conventions', p.26.

22   Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 3rd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.11 after Janet S. Loengard, 'An Elizabethan Lawsuit: John Brayne, his Carpenter, and the building of the Red Lion Theatre', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 35 (1984), pp.298 – 310.

23   Siobhan Keenan, *Travelling Players in Shakespeare's England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), pp.4 – 7.

24   J. R. Stephens, 'Censorship' in *The Cambridge Guide to Theatre*, 3rd edn, ed. by Michael Banham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.179.

25   Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.38.

26   Ibid., pp.38 – 9.

27   Glynne Wickham, 'Documents of control, 1530-1660', in Theatre in Europe: a documentary history, 5 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), *English Professional Theatre, 1530 – 1660* ed. by Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry and William Ingram, pg 32 and Malone Society Collections vol xiii: *Jacobean & Caroline Revels Accounts 1603 – 1642* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) ed. by W.R.Streitberger, p.ix.

28   Stern, *Documents of Performance* p.38.

29   Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574 – 1642,* 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p.117.

30   E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* volume IV, p. 269, cited in Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage* p.7.

31   Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p.11.

32   Keenan, p.7.

33   Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p.31.

34   Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean, *The* Queen's Men *and their Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.5.

35   Gurr, *Shakesperean Stage* p.31. See also McMillin & MacLean, p.xiii.

36   Ibid., p.30.

37   Ibid., p.32.

38   As follows:

That they hold them content with playeing in private houses at weddings etc without publike assemblies.

If more be thought good to be tolerated: that then they be restrained to the orders in the act of common Counsell tempore Hawes.

That they play not openly till the whole [plague] death in London have been by xx daies under 50 a weke, nor longer than it shal so continue.

That no playes be on the sabbat.

That no playeing be on holydaies but after evening prayer: nor any received into the auditorie till after evening prayer.

That no playeing be in the dark, nor continue any such time but as any of the auditorie may returne to their dwellings in London before sonne set, or at least before it be dark.

That the Quenes players only be tolerated, and of them their number and certaine names to be notified in your Lordships lettres to the L. Maior and to the Justices of Middlesex and Surrey. And those her players not to divide themselves into several companies.

That for breaking any of the orders, their toleration cesse. (Ibid.)

39   Ibid., p. 29.

40   David Bradley, *From Text to Performance in the Elizabethan Theatre: preparing the play for the stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp.61 - 63.

41   Keenan, pp.15 – 16.

42   Cited in Keenan, p. 15.

43   Ibid., pp.15 – 16.

44   The book keeper would frequently allocate minor supporting roles and also crowd roles, either to hirelings engaged to perform or from within his own staff of stage keepers. See Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage* p.209.

45   See Andrew Gurr, 'A New Theatre Historicism' in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, ed. by Peter Holland & Stephen Orgel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p.76.

46   W. R. Streitberger, Malone Society Collections vol xiii: *Jacobean & Caroline Revels Accounts 1603 – 1642* (Oxford: The Malone Society, 1986), p.ix.

47   Glynne Wickham, 'Part one, documents of control, 1530-1660' in *Theatre in Europe: a documentary history*, 5 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), *English Professional Theatre, 1530-1660*, ed. by Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry and William Ingram, pp. 6-7.

48   Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage,* pp.103 - 4.

49   Ibid., p.103.

50   Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp.49 – 52.

51   For further discussion of the nature of such closed performances as 'rehearsals', see Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan*, p.49.

52   Ibid., pp.76 - 9.

53   Thomas Haywood, *The Captives* (British Library, MS Egerton 1994) folio 70 recto.

54   William Shakespeare, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' taken from *The Illustrated Stratford Shakespeare* (London: Chancellor Press, 1991), p.172.

55   *Quince:*   Why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus. You speak all your part at once, cues and all. – Pyramus, enter: your cue is past, it is, "never tire." (Ibid., p.177.)

56   *Moth:*   "A holy parcel of the fairest dames [*the Ladies turn their backs to him*]
                         That ever turn'd their – backs – to mortal views!"

        Biron: "Their eyes," villain, "their eyes."

        Moth: "That ever turn'd their eyes to mortal views. Out –"

        Boyet: True; "out" indeed.

        Moth: "Out of your favours, heavenly spirits, vouchsafe
                          Not to behold –"

        Biron: "Once to behold," rogue.

        Moth: "Once to behold with your sun-beamed eyes . . . "

        William Shakespeare, 'Love's Labours Lost', Ibid., p.162.

57   Peter Thomson, *Shakespeare's Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1992), 2nd edn., p.59. Thomson points out that the sustained policy of delivering such extensive repertories renders 'unquestionable damage to the notion of "polished performances" in the Elizabethan public theatres' yet astutely remarks that 'a professional company does not regularly undertake the impossible' with reference to the soaring numbers of plays offered by such companies and asserts that 'We must assume [. . .] that Elizabethan actors had a fine memory for lines, whilst being prepared to admit, despite the surprising lack of evidence, that a system of prompting was well established.' (p.59) Gurr maintains that the 'prompter' was not the same person as the 'book-keeper', although in the circumstances under which the plays were rehearsed and fed into the repertory it is hard to imagine anyone other than the book-keeper, apart from perhaps the playwright himself, being in a position to acquire the requisite knowledge of the text and its delivery in order to prompt effectively. Thomson continues: 'We do not [. . .] know where the prompter was positioned [. . .] but no company could stage ten plays in a fortnight without a reliable system of prompting.' It is difficult to disagree with this argument when the conditions, circumstances, and logistics of delivering the repertory are fully considered.

58   Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* p.78.

59   From the Prologue to *Romeo and Juliet.*

60   Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* p.78.

61   Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage* p.32.

62   *The Catholic Encyclopædia: an international work of reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and history of the Catholic Church*, ed. by Charles G. Herbermann and others, 15 vols (London and New York: The Robert Appleton Company, 1912), vol. xv, pp. 381 – 384.

CHAPTER TWO

'The Book's The Thing'

The sources drawn upon in Chapter One demonstrate that we must neither accept nor take for granted the notion that post-mediæval, pre-professional theatrical activity provided spectators with little or no 'theatricality' beyond the costumed appearance of the performers. Stephen Orgel reminds us that 'despite its largely religious subject matter, medieval theatre was essentially secular. Material elements such as masks and costumes were central to it, and it depended not merely on spectacle, but on spectacular stage effects.'[1] Such effects are alluded to in Carew's account of the Cornish Miracle, and are evidenced by surviving documents from the emergent playhouses of the Elizabethan era, which will be drawn upon below. Such materials are, by their very nature, scarce; Claire Sponsler observes that:

> One reason for the lack of surviving scripts is that many early plays probably existed in forms that were bad candidates for preservation, such as part sheets, roles, or **performance copies not often of a status deemed worth preservation** [my emphasis] in civic or literary records. Another reason is that dramatic texts were treated as ephemera, and were assumed to have fulfilled their cultural function once the performance was over, no matter how elaborate or expensive that performance had been.[2]

The notion of librarians and civic archivists passing judgment on authentic playhouse materials and deeming them unworthy of preservation is a

frustrating one, since the characteristics which are likely to have led to them being rejected and discarded – a dilapidated condition due to extensive use, scribbles and annotations revealing intimate details of the performance – are precisely the qualities which would have rendered them so valuable to theatre histories. However, this need not detract from the very valuable evidence which surviving playhouse materials do reveal – about the plays and their staging and the various effects within them, as well as about those who thumbed the pages and scribbled the notes.

2.1:   The Book Keeper.

Whilst scribes were chosen for their 'professional' hands,[3] and engaged to write out the lines that the players were to pronounce, the scribbling of notes, moves, additional lines, and other annotations was the responsibility of a particular member of the playhouse staff: the book keeper. This functionary is referred to under various titles by scholars of the Elizabethan stage; David Bradley[4] refers to the 'stage reviser' and 'plotter' whilst Andrew Gurr refers to a 'book-holder' or 'book-keeper' and accords him the equivalent function of 'stage director':

> It would be wrong to leave the business of staging without a word
> on the question of whether or how much anyone may have served
> as stage director. [. . .] The manipulation of the business, the
> stage-management side, fell naturally into the hands of the only
> member of the company who had to be reasonably familiar with
> the whole text of the play, the book-holder or book-keeper. He
> was responsible for seeing that the players were ready on their
> cues, and for having properties to hand for carrying on or being
> discovered as and when they might be needed. He had several

'stage-keepers' to help him, who also served as supernumeraries.
[. . .] He lurked in the tiring-house, as we learn from such
references as the one in *The Maid in the Mill,* a King's Men play
of 1623, where a woman's screams are heard *'within'*, and a
character says 'they are out of their parts sure: it may be 'tis the
Book-holder's fault; I'll go see.'[5]

Writing half a century earlier, the scholar W. W. Greg asserts:

No doubt it is 'book-holder' that is strictly applicable to the
prompter, while 'book-keeper' suggests one who had charge of
the company's manuscripts. Indeed an attempt has been made to
distinguish the terms according to the function implied, while
admitting that the offices may often have been combined. On the
whole, however, the two words seem to have been used
indifferently.[6]

Primary sources confirm both the designation of the stage management
function as comprising the book keeper and stage keeper roles, as Gurr
describes, and the hierarchy of the structure, with the stage keeper(s)
subordinate to the book keeper. The induction to *Bartholomew Fair*[7] by
Ben Jonson is spoken by a Stage-Keeper character, ostensibly to tell the
audience that the players are delayed because 'He that should begin the play,
Master Littlewit, the Proctor, has a stitch new fallen in his black silk
stocking',[8] and proceeds to criticise the content of the play and the author
for failing to take his advice[9] before the Book-Holder enters and berates
him:

Book-Holder: How now? What rare discourse are you fallen
                   upon? huh? Ha' you found any familiars here,
                   that you are so free? What's the business?

> *Stage-Keeper:* Nothing, but the understanding gentlemen o'
>   the ground here, asked my judgment.
> *Book-Keeper:*   Your judgment, rascal? For what? Sweeping
>   the stage? Or gathering up the broken apples
>   for the bears within? Away, Rogue, it's come
>   to a fine degree in these spectacles when such
>   a youth as you pretend to a judgment.[10]

The excerpt indicates some of the likely tasks of the stage keepers, and working references to playhouse features such as the tiring-house and the arras confirm these aspects of the early professional companies' working environment. To maintain consistency, the terms 'stage keeper' and 'book keeper' will be used throughout this thesis in referring to these roles.

The book keeper was, as the name suggests, responsible for maintaining the company's stock of 'books' or official, licensed copies of their play texts. The sources drawn upon in the preceding chapter clearly demonstrate the importance of the book to the company, with the license inscribed upon it establishing the company's right to earn income from performances of it. This was, however, a function with a broad remit by no means limited to text-based tasks. Aside from the supervision and regulation of the play in performance, a considerable administrative responsibility is suggested in the role of the book keeper, since it can reasonably be argued that he held ultimate responsibility for many of the theatre company's administrative tasks. Chief among these, next to the annotation and maintenance of the book itself, was the creation of the 'plot', a document of critical importance to the company, as will be demonstrated below. He is likely to have held

such responsibility because the book keeper, with his comprehensive knowledge of both the company and the detailed requirements of mounting the performance, was perhaps best placed above any other person engaged by the company[11] to be able to achieve or implement those tasks which were key to the company's delivery of the plays which they presented.   The primary sources drawn upon below will comprehensively demonstrate that the book keeper had a consummate knowledge of the play, its players, and their joint requirements, and that his practical application of this knowledge to the regulation of each performance clearly indicates recognisable stage management practice, which directly supported and enabled the company in the performance of their repertory.

This being so, the employment relationship between the players and sharers of the early modern theatre companies and those engaged in support roles has yet to be rigorously engaged with by scholarship.   The sources drawn upon in this thesis clearly indicate that plays offered by the professional companies could be supported to a competent standard with a degree of accountability evidenced by the more detailed annotations which will be analysed below, yet the nature of the tiremen's, stage keepers' and book keeper's positions within the theatre company remains unclear.   John Russell Brown simultaneously identifies why the book keeper's function was key to the daily pursuit of the company's work and dismisses it as unimportant, when he incongruously asserts that:

> Instead of a director, there would be a 'book keeper', as the
> Elizabethans called their functionary who combined the jobs
> of prompter and stage-manager. The title is significant: this

man held the 'book' and so **anchored performances**, ensuring that properties were ready and actors called as required by the play-text. **He was not an important member of the company,** for the name of none of them has survived in the records.[12]   (My emphasis)

It is, in fact, widely known that this is far from being the case. Perhaps the best known amongst the names of book keepers and auxiliary playhouse staff which have survived to scholarship is that of Edward Knight, the King's Men's book keeper. In recalling the frequency with which Knight is mentioned in letters from Henry Herbert, the Master of the Revels who succeeded George Buc who succeeded Tilney, Stern comments that:

> [G]iven what little information there is about sixteenth- and seventeenth-century actors, and who played each part, it is amazing how often we know not only the name but also character details about the book-holder. In *Summers Last Will*, Will hears *'Dick Huntley'* the book-holder telling the players to 'Begin, begin'; John Taylor used to know 'one *Thomas Vincent* that was a Book-keeper or prompter at the Globe playhouse'; John Crouch in *Man in the Moon* (1649) writes about 'Peters' who was *'Book-holder* at the Bull-playhouse.' A book-holder occasionally appears in an induction, for he inhabits a strange, semi-fictional world, standing both within and without a play, allowed to become part of its fabric.[13]

John Taylor was a player in the King's Men company, and is mentioned by name in a props list which survives in the 1613 promptbook for Massinger's *Believe As You List*, analysed below. His reference to Thomas Vincent as a book keeper at the Globe suggests that Vincent may have been Knight's

predecessor. Although the role and contribution of the book keeper has not previously been the focus of discrete academic research, reputed scholars have been alluding to and acknowledging the importance of the role for some time. Gerald Eades Bentley's argument in acknowledgement of both the skill and the extent of the book keeper's role is pertinent to this research, and so it is appropriate to revisit it here:

> It has been suggested [. . .] that the prompter's function in the metropolitan companies may have been carried on from time to time by various fellows of the troupe. Such an arrangement seems [. . .] to be improbable, except possibly in emergencies. When companies produced as many different plays and as many revisions involving as many men and boys as did Elizabethan, Jacobean and Caroline theater organizations, the prompter's chores must have been so multifarious and vital and many of them so nerve-wracking that irregular substitutions would surely have produced chaos.[14]

The plots and prompt materials drawn upon below emphatically support Bentley's conclusion.

Gurr has implied that the book keeper might have received a higher wage than the 'hirelings' due to the nature of his role within the company.[15] More recently, Jane Milling has suggested that: 'some of them were asked to post a bond to indicate their willingness to stay with a company.'[16]   This indicates that scholarship is moving towards an acceptance and appreciation of the key nature of the book keeper's function within the company; persuasive evidence of the importance of the role can be found within the extant documents from the period.

2.2:   The Plot and the Book.

Two key documents supported the performance of plays in the Elizabethan playhouses: the promptbook, and the plot. Both are clearly recognisable as 'stage management' documents or, as Glynne Wickham has described, 'documents of control'.[17] R. A. Foakes reminds us that: 'there were three documents involved in the production of a play: the play script, as read over by the company, the stage plot, and the actors' parts.'[18] The actors' parts were rolls of parchment on which each player's own lines were written; these were learned in isolation, rather than in the context of the rest of the play, since it was not practical for a full copy of the script to be copied out for each member of the cast. As Shattuck has indicated, these were working documents seen and used only by the individual players themselves, and personal to their own experience within the production. The plots and promptbooks, however, were 'public' documents, i.e. generated for the use of the whole company, and essential tools in enabling the company to get through each performance.

The promptbook is a master copy of a play text, against which instructions for running performances of that play are written and from which each performance is regulated. Promptbooks were highly valued documents of the Elizabethan company; they were in some cases the company's only full copy of the entire script, but, more importantly, as indicated above, they contained the company's licence to perform that play, enabling them to earn their living from it. Gurr observes that: 'Apparel and playbooks were the company's two vital resources. [. . .] When the Globe and the Fortune

were burnt, and when Beeston forsook Queen Anne's Men for his own

enterprises, it was the loss of playbooks and apparel that the players

bewailed . . .'[19] The plot, however, is less self-explanatory. Greg defines it

thus:

> Theatrical plots are documents giving the skeleton outline of
> plays, scene by scene, for use in the theatre, a small group of
> which has survived from the last twelve years of Elizabeth's
> reign. In this sense the word 'plot' is a highly specialized term
> of the early playhouses. [. . .] We may suppose that these were
> prepared for the guidance of actors and others in the playhouse,
> to remind those concerned when and in what character they
> were to appear, what properties were required, and what noises
> were to be made behind the scenes. The necessity for some
> such guide would be evident in a repertory theatre, and we may
> feel assured that the plot was exhibited in a place convenient
> for ready reference during performance.[20]

Those which have survived to us today provide clear evidence that this was

the case, since a square hole is cut into the top of each sheet indicating that

they were pegged up in the tiring house for easy reference by the company.

Within his extensive work on the documents of Philip Henslowe and the

Rose playhouse, Foakes offers an illuminating description of differences

between the plot and the edition of the play which would have been

submitted to the Master of the Revels for licensing, in the context of a Rose

production of George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*:

> The 'plot' survives for a revival, in the late 1590s or possibly
> 1600, of George Peele's play *The Battle of Alcazar* with Edward
> Alleyn playing Muly Mahamet. The plot interestingly shows

that the staging was often more elaborate than the Quarto of 1594 suggests. For instance, in the 'plot', but not in the Quarto, pages are required to accompany courtiers or ambassadors onstage in three entries; and in Act 3 the 'plot' calls for an elaborate dumb-show involving Nemesis, three devils, three ghosts, and three Furies with scales, who kill three of the characters in the play and have vials of 'blood' to show for it. Here, as frequently, the plot spells out how many persons are needed on stage, and what properties are required, whereas the printed text merely has a stage direction that reads 'Enter the Presenter and speakes.' The 'plot' here, and frequently elsewhere, provides a fuller and more detailed sense of how the play was staged than the printed text, and this may have been the case with *Tamburlaine* as well. The 'plot' also contains the names of twenty-five actors, eleven sharers, seven hired men and seven boys, and shows the Admiral's Men performing with extravagant casting, such as two mute pages to accompany a chariot, and with lavish spectacle. *Tamburlaine* [. . .] also required a large cast, and may have been, like *The Battle of Alcazar*, even more breathtaking than the printed text suggests. Have we taken enough account of the use of 'plots' in the Elizabethan playhouse in considering the staging of plays, and the possible inadequacies of stage directions in printed plays?[21]

Whilst appreciative of the scope of detailed information which the plot, rather than the extant text, can afford to scholarship, Foakes' criticism of the 'possible inadequacies' of printed plays further illustrates the scholar's habit of displaying unrealistic expectations of one kind of document whilst failing to recognise the value of another. The script is the embodiment of the *playwright's* craft, and can only reasonably be expected to faithfully record the content of the drama. The plot, being clearly identifiable, four hundred

years later, as a stage management document, can very legitimately be expected to contain the absolute detail of the *staging* of the playwright's craft; the theatrecraft. Foakes is correct to caution against the inevitable 'inadequacies' which stage directions in printed plays will display, their focus being the accuracy of the words, not the staging, of the play. In recognising the authority of the information detailed within the plot, however, Foakes importantly identifies it as a valuable source of information regarding the staging of plays. As such, it is of key relevance to the investigation of the development of stage management to analyse the five plots which have survived from the late Elizabethan period.

2.3   Case Study: Five Stage Plots, dating from 1590 to 1599.

The plot was a document intended for fast reference by the cast during performance. Five surviving plots are now held at the British Library, and principally list cast entrances augmented by a brief summary of their moves. Gurr surmises that:

> . . . the board to which it was fastened hung on a peg in the tiring-house.   Presumably it was hung up so that the players could consult it, not the book-keeper. He held a copy of the complete script . . .'[22]

and indeed it can be argued that it would have been the book keeper who produced this document, since his very thorough knowledge of the play and the company would have afforded him the requisite knowledge to generate this document in such a manner as to be of maximum benefit to the company. Bradley writes:

. . . the general director of affairs, whether we call him by the name of Stage-reviser or Plotter, was most probably the man who made out the Plot, the ground-plan of the action to be performed. [. . .] The prompt-book, or simply 'Book', as theatre terminology has it, must always have been the final authority for directing a performance, whether or not it was the same book as that actually in the hands of the prompter, but there are strong grounds for believing that any production of an Elizabethan play initially involved the making out of a Plot.[23]

Bradley's suggestion of the book keeper as a 'general director of affairs' is an interesting one. The book keeper would certainly have been one of the few, and possibly the only, member of the company to have an overview of the play in its entirety, and the evidence of the manuscripts analysed in these case studies clearly indicates that the essential elements of the production, necessary to keep the performance running, were co-ordinated by the book keeper by means of the key tools of promptbook and plot. If we do not try to equate the description of 'general director of affairs' to our contemporary production role of director, whose principal function is to direct the movements of the cast in their impersonations of their roles, but instead interpret the phrase to mean the person who directed the actions of whichever personnel were involved in carrying out the full range of technical theatrical activities which supported the players' performances, it is clear that Bradley's definition is a very apposite one. The evidence emphatically supports the argument that the plot of a play, and the instructions for running it in the form of annotations in the promptbook margins, were generated by the book keeper, as will be demonstrated below, due to his encompassing knowledge of the production and the company

which the playhouse materials suggest. However, in contrast with Bradley's conclusion that the making out of the plot was one of the initial actions in the preparation of a play, the plots themselves arguably suggest that they were constructed after the text of the play was finalised, for the specific and practical purpose of enabling the company (none of whom had access to a complete script and who were only really aware of the content of those parts of the play in which they were involved onstage) to survive the challenge of each public performance.   They are therefore 'stage management documents', generated by the book keeper as tools to aid the company's navigation through the play, and a full exploration of the surviving stage plots is therefore appropriate to this research.

The five plots bound as Additional Manuscripts 10,449 at the British Library are from the plays *The Plott of Frederick & Basilea*, author unknown, from c.1597; *The Plott of the Battell of Alcazar*, by George Peele, from c.1598-99; *Fortune's Tennis*, by Thomas Dekker, c1600; *Troilus & Cressida*, by Henry Chettle and Thomas Dekker, c1599; and *The Dead Man's Fortune,* author unknown, c.1590.   They all belonged to the Admiral's Men; *Frederick & Basilea*, *the Battell of Alcazar*, and *Troilus & Cressida* are believed to have been performed at the Rose playhouse, *The Dead Man's Fortune* is believed to have been played at the Theatre,[24] and *Fortune's Tennis* is believed to have played in the opening season at the Fortune. Roslyn L. Knutson discusses 'the small jobs that, as a company-affiliated playwright, Dekker was on hand to perform' and observes:

> He was also available for a very special occasion in the life of
> the Admiral's Men: their move to the Fortune playhouse in the

summer or autumn of 1600. He had already written *Old Fortunatus*, which fortuitously advertised the company's new theatre; and in September he was paid 20 shillings for a project called 'Fortune's Tennis'.[25]

All of the plots are roughly similar in size to a sheet of A3 paper, but the detail of their content varies considerably. Of the plot of *Fortune's Tennis*, only fragments remain, yet it is possible to discern that the sheet was ruled down the middle dividing it into two columns. Only the lines of the column division can be seen in the remaining fragment of the left-hand side, but the larger fragment reveals that the right-hand column consisted of a list of entrances, with a line ruled underneath each one. Similarly, the plot for *Troilus and Cressida* lists the entrances to be made and presents this information in two columns, but these are heavily interspersed with the note 'Alarum' to the left of each column showing the places in the action at which they sounded. It can be argued that these are given as useful points of reference for the players, since it is reasonable to assume that the alarms were cued by the book keeper using the promptbook for the play, where such notes would be reproduced as marginal annotations. Not having access to a full script, the sounding of each 'alarum' would be a logical and effective marker with which to punctuate the progress of the play, and for the players to therefore navigate their path (and time their entrances) by means of them. The *Plott of Frederick & Basilea* is similarly divided into two columns; however, only the first is used, and the whole of the plot is fitted into the first column. This plot purely consists of a list of entrances. The ink has dried to a brown colour, giving it a much older appearance than the other sources.

The plot of *The Dead Man's Fortune* is also divided into two columns, the first of which is divided by horizontally-ruled lines into nineteen sections, or boxes, with the second column divided into nine. With the sole exception of the first box, which reads 'Stage Plott of the Dead Man's Fortune', every single one begins 'Enter . . .' followed by the name of the character entering, supporting the theory that the plot was a document generated to support the cast during performance. There are no references to props, furniture, or effects being cued apart from three annotations in the left-hand margin, which say 'musique'. The ink is strong and black, showing no sign of having faded, and the document is in superb condition.

The plot of *The Battle of Alcazar*, believed to have been produced ten years after the plot for *The Dead Man's Fortune* was compiled and therefore being a 'younger' document, conversely shows much more severe signs of ageing. The ink looks old and faded, having turned to brown, and the edges of the paper are eroded. This may indicate that this plot received significantly more use than the others, perhaps if the play was popular and often revived. This plot too is divided into two columns, which are fully crammed with information. It is explicit in the level of detail with which both sound and properties are recorded, in the margin to each of the two columns of the plots: there are thirteen references to either sound or alarms, and an extensive catalogue of gruesome items which contributed to the stage realism, including 'raw flesh', 'scales', '3.violls of blood & a sheeps gather' [its heart, liver and other offal], 'dead mens heads & bones' and, again, 'blood'.[26] This was required for the semblance of a disembowelment. This

is of interest to the investigation of early stage management practice because, although not a great deal of 'running' responsibilities (i.e. tasks to be performed during the performance) are indicated by this plot, the need for extensive preparation in advance of the performance is clearly implied. Someone would have had to acquire the bones, scales, blood, and offal on the morning of the performance or the day before, store them, and prepare them for their intended use onstage; the costumes would have had to be rigged with suitable receptacles from which the players' innards could later apparently be gouged, or from which blood could pour. Given the importance of costumes to the playing companies, preparations for the immediate cleaning of bloodstained clothing would also have needed to be made. This plot is therefore a valuable source for the study of Elizabethan stage management practice, for the information which can be inferred about the requirements of supporting this play from the explicit information which the document contains about the sort of items which the players are known to have used.

Since all five of these sources are from Admiral's Men productions, they can be compared with one another for indications of commonality of practice within that company. Spanning a ten-year period between 1590 and 1600, it is possible that the same book keeper supported the company throughout the whole of that time, but equally possible that each plot was prepared by someone different; despite close scrutiny of the actual documents themselves, I was unable to identify whether they were in the same or separate hands. However, the format is identical for each one: a

large sheet of paper, divided into two columns, in which each entrance is noted and ruled off underneath, creating individual sections or boxes for each item. These are supplemented, to a greater or lesser extent, with annotations to the left of each column detailing props, stage effects, or noises off. Although this body of evidence is too narrow in scope for inferences to be drawn as to whether this was standard practice for all of the Elizabethan playing companies, all of the Admiral's Men's plays, or just all of the plots made out by one single book keeper, it is nonetheless important evidence which indicates that, in one company at least, there was a person who undertook to provide a focused guide in a systematic way to aid the players in their navigation of each play, and who was aware of the precise timing and requirements of sound, and any other, effects. This is significant to the study of the development of professional stage management.

Those responsible for the more spectacular aspects of early modern theatre production were arguably very resourceful; further to the capacity to effect disembowelling as described above, decapitations could be effected on stage with the aid of a purpose-built table in which the performer could safely hide his own head, and there was extensive use of smoke, fire, and traps. Butterworth has described how, well before the inception of the professional playhouses, devils could be made to spit fire, how performers would be stuffed with flaming pipes in order to appear alight,[27] and how one performer in the role of Satan in a French Mystery play actually caught fire whilst entering through a trap and was badly burned, yet managed to continue performing after being quickly put out:

> Then Lucifer began to speak, and during his speech the man who
> played Satan, when he prepared to enter through his trapdoor
> underground, his costume caught fire round his buttocks so that
> he was badly burned. But he was so swiftly succored, stripped,
> and reclothed that without giving any sign [of pain] he came and
> played the part, then retired to his house.[28]

We must ask how it could be possible that, after sustaining serious burns from clothing set alight, any performer could be reclothed and returned to the stage so swiftly to perform his part. A 'trapdoor underground' is described as the means of Satan's entry; presumably there were men standing by to operate it, and possibly others in attendance whose task was to light the flame effects. Had the performer's entrance not been manned, it is arguably unlikely that he could have received the necessary assistance in time to prevent more serious injury. It must be considered that stage attendants needed to be resourceful not only in making the semblance of spectacular effects possible, but also in having the capacity to protect their performers as much as possible from danger and physical harm in a substantially less risk-averse performance culture than our own.

In considering the planning and logistics of a daily-changing programme of plays, any of which might require the use of any of the techniques discussed above, considerable skill, planning, organisation, and management is indicated. The plots analysed above provide direct evidence of stage management support. If bladders have to be sourced and stored, and filled with blood, and set correctly in readiness for use, or if a decapitation table has to be fetched from its storage location, made ready, and checked, or if a

body-suit of leather has to be fitted to a player and prepared with pipes from which flames will spurt, 'stage management' is clearly required, both in preparing the stage effects and initiating and co-ordinating their implementation, and in keeping the performers, and those assisting them, reasonably safe as far as practicalities permit. The primary evidence drawn upon above, and that of the extant promptbooks which follows below, irrefutably demonstrates that the early modern professional theatre was supported, and its activities and its theatricality enabled, by concomitantly professional stage management in the practice of which, even at the rudimentary level of the plot, can be recognised the emergence of a common language. This incipient language becomes demonstrably evident within the body of extant prompt manuscripts, which will next be examined.

2.4   Case Study: Fourteen Prompt Manuscripts, 1590 to 1635.

In the introduction to his major survey *Dramatic Documents of the Elizabethan Playhouses,* Greg comments:

> An attempt [. . .] has been made to give a list of possible prompt copies known to be still in existence and to record their main features. But [. . .] the field is a wide one, and it is still very imperfectly explored. That despite its importance it should not hitherto have attracted workers is a curious fact and not without significance; but it is impossible in such a work as the present to do more than draw attention to the want and point the way for further investigation.[29]

It is more than eighty years since Greg recognised the importance of exploring the extant prompt copies, and called for further investigation. The

sources are familiar to scholars; yet the focus of their interrogation of such materials is overwhelmingly concerned with the texts of the drama, the structure of the companies, or the reconstruction of performance. They require to be interrogated for what they may reveal of the nature or development of stage management. A fresh examination of the evidence is therefore warranted, and new questions must be asked of the material.

Greg prefaces his analysis of the prompt materials surveyed in *Dramatic Documents of the Elizabethan Stage* by asserting:

> Considering their importance [. . .] it is surprising that more attention has not been given to those prompt copies of early plays that have actually survived. [. . .] If we allow the term an extension so loose as to cover the drama down to the closing of the theatres in 1642, **there remain not less than fifteen manuscripts of Elizabethan plays showing reasonably clear signs of use or origin in the playhouse** [my emphasis], and about the same number of manuscripts generally similar in type but less intimately connected with the stage. These thirty or so manuscripts afford a wealth of evidence that is of first-rate value, is indeed indispensable, [. . .] and there can be no question that its thorough investigation is among the most pressing tasks that await students of the Elizabethan drama.[30]

In response to, and taking as my stimulus, Greg's call for further investigation of these materials, the next body of evidence interrogated for this thesis comprises those sources identified by Greg which are now preserved at the British Library, the National Art Library, and Cardiff Central Library in the United Kingdom.

Before embarking on any analysis of prompt manuscripts, it must be acknowledged and borne in mind, as stated above, that no promptbook has ever been prepared in order to enable historians to reconstruct the staging of the performance as it was first given. Scholars repeatedly try to use them as reconstructive tools, but this has never been their primary purpose. The function of the Elizabethan promptbook was twofold: to satisfy the censor that the content was acceptable, in order for the company to be granted a license to perform it; and to record explicitly the essential running requirements of the play, in order for the company to be able to continue to earn a living from it. When examined in the light of these twin facts, the sources yield emphatic evidence that those undertaking the stage management functions of the day recorded precisely that: clear running information to support the performance of the play within a season played in repertoire, as will be demonstrated below. There is therefore great scope and indeed an urgent need for a fresh re-examination of primary playhouse documents from this perspective, in order to exploit the richness of the evidence which they contain and facilitate the academic study of professional stage management. The following case studies will analyse the materials for evidence of stage management activity, focusing on those primary texts which bear prompt annotations,[31] and will introduce the ways in which prompt texts were annotated for the purposes of professional presentation.

The evidence of prompt copies from the emerging public playhouses provides key information about how early professional performances were

supported and managed. For this case study, fourteen[32] prompt manuscripts were studied at the British Library, the National Art Library, and Cardiff Central Library, and analysed for evidence of the function of the book keeper and his staff. Those chosen for study were the manuscripts identified by Greg as showing 'reasonably clear signs of use or origin in the playhouse'.[33]

The sources,[34] spanning almost the entire period from the construction of James Burbage's Theatre in 1576 to Cromwell's closure of the playhouses in 1642, yield a wide range of information about the staging and running of the various performances. Typically, they contain notes detailing the casting of players to roles, details of certain props which needed to be set out, and instructions directing stage staff to carry out tasks important to the running of the piece. Setting aside the four anonymous manuscripts, five companies – the Lord Strange's Men, the King's Men, the Red Bull Company, the Lady Elizabeth's Men, and the King's Revels Company – and five playhouses – the Rose, the Globe, the Red Bull, the Cockpit, and the Salisbury Court Playhouse – are represented. If we include the King's Men's indoor Blackfriars theatre, this takes the playing spaces represented to six. For this analysis the sources will be grouped together by company and playhouse, and examined for any similarity of practice both within each company and between the companies.

2.4.1:   The anonymous plays / plays from an unknown company
or playhouse.

The four anonymous sources are *Edmond Ironside, or, War Hath Made All Friends* from c1590 – 1600, *Richard II, or, Thomas of Woodstock* from c1592-5, *Charlemagne, or, The Distracted Emperor* from c1605, and *The Launching of the Mary*, licensed 1633. It is known that *The Launching of the Mary* was written by Walter Mountford, but it is included with the anonymous sources here because the company and playhouse are not known, and without such information the source is limited as to what it can offer to a comparative study of stage management practice by company.

The book of *Edmond Ironside* of c.1590 is in very good condition, and the ink remains a vivid black. The text of the play is written in a beautiful script which looks almost germanic; it is likely therefore that this copy was written out by a professional scribe. The act separations are in a different hand and a different ink, which has browned; arguably these are the book keeper's markings. In the same hand and ink is a note at the bottom of folio 107 recto: 'Enter H. Gibs: an actor.'   Apart from this, no other prompt annotations were discernable.
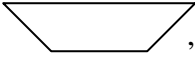
The book of *Richard II, or, Thomas of Woodstock*, thought to date from around 1595, contains refererences to props to be used, such as 'paper', 'booke' against the point in the text where these items were needed. These annotations are in a clear, black ink, in contrast to the ink in which the text is written which has faded to brown. This source also notes the entrances of

players against character entrances, and these too may be assumed to be annotations made by the book keeper.

With regard to the promptbooks of *Charlemagne* (c1605) and *The Launching of the Mary* (1632), the only marks which I could discern on the pages of the *Charlemagne* book which were not part of the scribe's text of the play were groups of pencil crosses, indicating censorship. The *Launching of the Mary* book has the date 1632 written on the flyleaf, although the licence shows that permission to perform it was granted on 27th June 1633. A number of names, presumably those of players in the company, have also been written on the flyleaf, and are all heavily crossed out in a still vividly-black ink; it is possible that these were the players for whom the various characters were intended when the play was written, but that different members of the company took the roles once the play was licenced or at a subsequent revival. No prompt annotations, indicating any aspect of the staging or logistics of this play in performance, were evident in either of these two sources.

2.4.2: The Lord Strange's Men.

The book of *Sir Thomas More*, which has elicited considerable interest from scholars because a part of it is believed to be written in Shakespeare's own hand, is thought to date from around 1593. For my research it was viewed on microfilm, due to the fragility of the original. The first five folios, believed to be written by Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, I found wholly illegible, being in a heavy and closely-written script which has bled

into itself and which is extensively crossed out. Folio six recto was legible, and interestingly, when the writer ran out of space at the bottom of the page, he continued the text up the left-hand margin, despite the verso remaining blank. This is unlikely to have been the action of a professional scribe, supporting the acknowledged arguments that this manuscript is in the autograph hands of the collaborating playwrights. Players' lines are separated by horizontally-ruled lines, and stage directions are noted in the right-hand margin. Folio seven verso has the annotation 'Enter a Messenger' enclosed in a trapezoid-shaped box ⬡, and folio ten verso has the annotation 'exeunt' written in the right-hand margin. A line is then drawn off to the left of this note, leading to the place in the text at which the company were to leave the stage. Beyond this, and the accepted identification by scholars of Hand C as that of an anonymous but professional playhouse scribe,[35] there was little else which I could identify in this manuscript as being a prompt annotation or in the hand of a book keeper.

2.4.3: The King's Men.

The four King's Men promptbooks, for *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (licensed 1611), *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt* (1619), *The Honest Man's Fortune* (dated 1613; licensed 1624/5) and *Believe As You List* (licensed 1631) span a period of twenty years from 1611 to 1631 and Philip Massinger is believed to have contributed to all of them, in whole or in part. The oldest, the book of *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, has occasional blotches and smudges of ink, and the ink in which the text of the play is

written has begun to fade to brown. Some crosses, which indicate censorship against words or passages identified as having the potential to offend, are marked in a darker black ink. Prompt annotations are discernably different from the text of the play; the colours of the ink, and the handwriting, though neat and easily legible, are visibly different. On the first page of the play (folio 29 recto) the title appears hastily written in an ink which is fading to grey, and against the opening lines of the play a prompt annotation states that the scene is set in 'A senate', shown below.
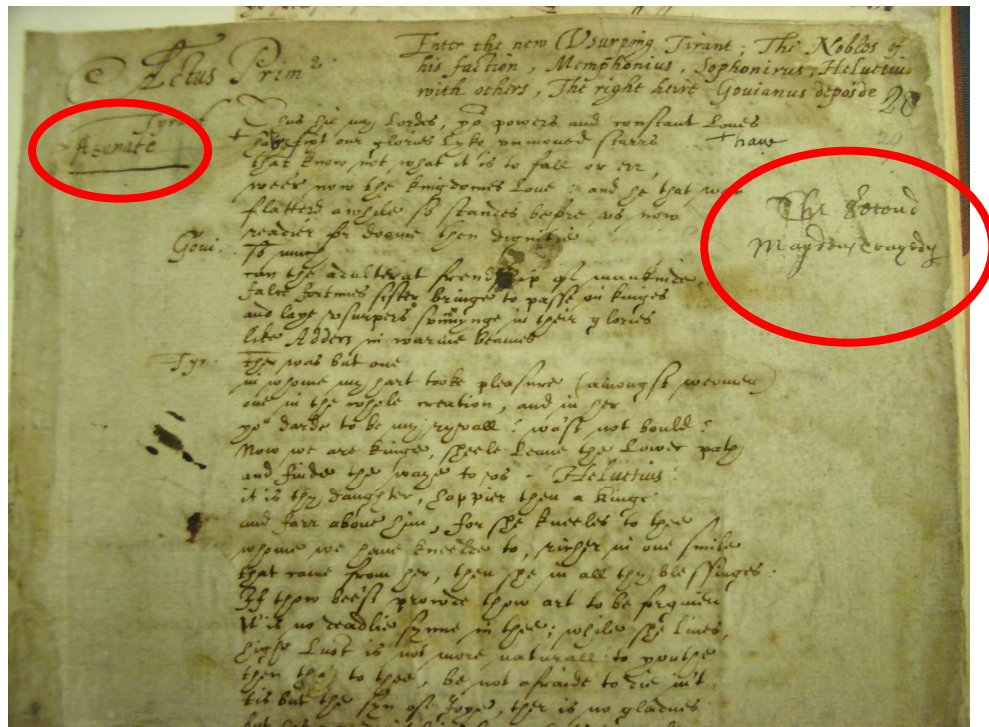
Figure 2.4.3.1:   *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (BL), folio 29 recto.

Offstage noises, such as knocks on folios 42 verso and 43 recto, are written in the left-hand margin and underlined. There are some notes relating to moves or action, such as 'Enter Gouianus dischargnig a Pistoll' on folio 37 verso, 'Enter Bellarius passing over the Stage' on folio 39 recto, and, on

folio 48 recto, the note 'Kills her self' in a bracket { to the right of the relevant piece of text.

One annotation in *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* is of significant interest because it clearly links this manuscript with a performance and with the King's Men company. It reads 'Enter Mr Goughe Q'[36] at the bottom of folio 48 recto, and is clearly a book keeper's annotation; the handwriting is markedly different from the body of the text which can be seen in Figure 2.4.3.2 below, and may indicate that the book keeper had some responsibility in relation to this player's entrance, since it is the only one marked in this way. Robert Gough is known to have been a player with the King's Men.[37]
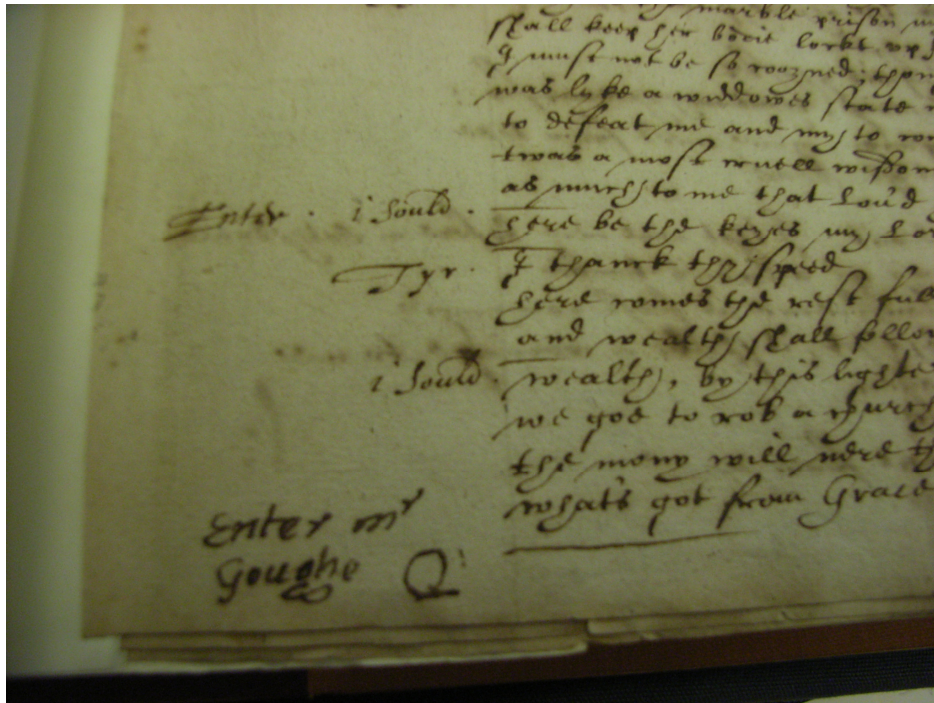
Figure 2.4.3.2: *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (BL), folio 48 recto.

Other annotations include a reference to costume on folio 30 recto: 'Gouianus: Enter with the Lady clad in Black' and, on folios 32 and 55 recto, 'A florish'. The note 'Knock' appears four times on folio 48 recto, and these are supplemented by a note in the right hand margin which reads 'A great knocking'. Two further annotations, in the same clearly different hand from that of the scribe, read 'Enter Ladye Rich Robinson' on folio 51 recto, and 'Enter Soldiers with the Ladye' on folio 52 recto. Since Richard Robinson belonged to the King's Men company from 1611, this is a clear indication that he was cast as the 'Lady to Gouianus' (or Govianus' wife) for this production.   The final page of the manuscript holds the licence of the Master of the Revels, George Buc, permitting the play to be performed: 'This second Maydens tragedy (for it hath no name inscribed) may with the reformations be acted publickly. 31 October 1611.'

The promptbook from *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* from 1619 is, as Greg commented, 'written in the elegant professional hand of Ralph Crane'[38] who was a professional scribe and who is known to have been working for the King's Men from 1618. In a very different hand to Crane's, in thick, black ink, there are numerous annotations relating to the casting of the play and the movements of the players; on folio 2 recto is the note 'Enter 2 Capitaines', and on folio 4 recto, a player's name 'Mr. Rob' has been written against a character name, and it is likely that this refers to Richard Robinson, who joined the King's Men in 1611. Folio 3 verso lists a group entrance: 'Entre Bredero Vandort Officers', and, on folio 4 recto, below Crane's act division 'Scæ^a 3^a. Enter Pr. of Orange', the same contrasting

hand has written 'Cra : William. ~~Collonelles~~ & Capitaines.' At the top of folio 4 verso, a further note appears in the right hand margin: 'Guard at dore', and numerous other annotations relating to the detail of entrances and exits occur throughout the manuscript.

In addition to information regarding the cast involved in entrances and exits for scenes, the *John van Olden Barnavelt* promptbook contains two interesting notes relating to the practical staging of the play. Folio 16 verso has a scruffy note which looks very hurriedly-written and which says: 'Tapor : pon & inke Table' in the left margin, showing that these needed to be readied for use in the following scene. Then, on folio 27 verso, the direction 'Entre Provost Barnavelt Lords Guards (a Scaffold out out)' appears immediately before the exit of those involved in the preceding scene, and is written in an equally scruffy and hurried fashion. This is very clearly running information, relating to the setting of stage furniture which the book keeper may have instructed or supervised, and the contrasting appearance of these two notes in comparison to the other annotations which the manuscript bears suggest that they may even have been inscribed mid-performance. Even aside from such speculation, these annotations clearly indicate the use of this manuscript as a promptbook from which performances of this play were regulated, and indicate further the promptbook as key tool in the book keeper's management of performance.

The Honest Man's Fortune was written in 1613 and first performed by the Lady Elizabeth's Men; it is possible that, when they disbanded, their

promptbooks came into the possession of the King's Men along with those of their players who joined the King's Men company, who included Nathan Field, Joseph Taylor, Robert Benfield, and William Ecclestone. Taylor succeeded Burbage as their leading player, and may have performed in both the Lady Elizabeth's and the King's Men's productions of this play: Herbert's licence on the final page reads: 'This Play, being an olde One and thir Originall Lost was reallowd by mee, this: 8. Febru. 1624 Att the Intreaty of Mr. Taylor.'

The new manuscript which received Herbert's licence is believed to be in the hand of Edward Knight. Thick lines are drawn to separate stage directions from the text of the play; annotations, which appear in the margins, are in a similar hand to that in which the text of the play has been written, suggesting that they may have been made by the same person but at a different time, i.e. closer to or during a performance itself. With Knight being the company's book keeper, this would support the suggestion that he copied out the play for the promptbook and that his annotations were the result of his direct experience of running the play in performance and responding to its needs.

The majority of the annotations relate to entrances and exits, with occasional notes as to who played certain parts such as the note on folio 6 verso which shows 'G. Rick' written above the instruction 'Enter Orleans.' Folio 31 verso bears the note 'A banquet : set out', but the most vivid annotation within this manuscript appears on folio 12 recto, where the following details

of a fight scene are inscribed: 'Within: Clashnig of weapons: some crynig downe with their weapons: then ENTER Loganile Dubois: their swords drawne. 3 : or : 4 Drawers betwene em:'. Whilst we can only speculate as to whether this particular action is recorded in such detail because the book keeper was involved in choreographing it, because the book keeper had some responsibility to be discharged in relation to it, because it had to be carefully observed for the players' safety, or so that the players could check from these notes exactly what their moves were each time they came to perform it, this particular annotation is nonetheless of significant interest to the study of stage management since it demonstrates a close working knowledge of the requirements of the play and the activities of the players on the part of the book keeper, and is the earliest example I have found of the detailed recording of performers' moves, later to become a primary stage management responsibility. Such notation is known in the professional theatre today as 'blocking'; although an anachronistic term in the context of the early modern playhouses, it will be used henceforth in this thesis to describe promptbook annotations which describe in detail the movements of the performers.

The National Art Library's manuscript of Philip Massinger's *Believe As You List*[39] was licenced for performance on 16th May 1631, as evidenced by the Master of the Revels' permission which is inscribed upon it and which reads: 'This Play, called Believe as you Liste, may bee acted. this 6. of May, 1631. Henry Herbert.' It is believed to have belonged to the King's Men and also to be written in Massinger's own hand; the prompt annotations

made upon it have been ascribed to the book keeper Edward Knight, who is believed to have belonged to the King's Men from 1624 to 1633.[40] The annotations which the manuscript bears strongly support the argument that the promptbook was a key tool in the accurate running of the performance; it clearly indicates co-ordinated performance, and it is annotated in rich detail. There are a number of setting instructions, such as 'Table ready: & 6. chairs to sett out' on folio 9 recto; 'the great Booke: of Accompte ready' on folio 12 recto, indicating that the company's own account book was used as a prop in this scene, and '2 chaires set out' on folio 18 verso. These are very plainly instructions that would be understood today as 'cues'; the setting of the various items mentioned had to occur at the point where those instructions were written in the promptbook, supporting the argument that the reason for recording them against the master copy of the script was because the promptbook was used as a tool in the management of the performance. This can be argued with confidence; were this not so, and the promptbook's sole purpose the recording of the words and actions pronounced and performed by the players, it would surely have been inappropriate to inscribe such annotations upon it. The very technical, practical nature of the annotations, calling for the setting of furniture and the readying of props at precise times, would otherwise have made them very much out of place in a document whose sole purpose was to preserve the content of the performed text.

This argument is further supported by a significant running instruction which appears on folio 18 verso: 'Gascoine: & Hubert below: ready to open

the Trap doore for Mr Taylor' whose entrance comes about 100 lines afterwards;[41] Joseph Taylor joined the King's Men in 1619. Folio 19 recto contains a similar note relating to the entrance of a character: 'Antiochus ready under the stage'. The *Believe As You List* promptbook is also of interest for notes relating to the readying of players before their marked entrances in the text. Gurr has observed that Knight marked the players' entrances three or four lines prior to their first speaking due to the time which it would take them to cross the large stage of the Globe.[42] Further to this observation, the prompt manuscript contains two annotations of interest relating to the warning or readying of players prior to their entrances. Folio 9 recto bears the note 'Mr. Hobbs called up', an indication of his being called or fetched in preparation for his entrance.[43] Folio 27 verso contains the instruction:

Be ready : ye 2 Marchante : Wm Pen : Curtis : & Garde :

which is the first occurence of the annotation 'be ready' amongst the sources examined for this study. As will be demonstrated, this term was to become a linguistic convention of stage management practice common to promptbooks for three hundred years, only superceded in the twentieth century by the cueing instructions 'warn' and, subsequently, 'stand by'. 'Wm Pen' and 'Curtis' are references to the company: William Penn played the Second Merchant, and Curtis Greville was cast as Third Merchant.

A further significant feature of this manuscript is a detailed list of props required for the play, which appears at the very end of the promptbook and which separates the props into those needed for each Act. This is key

evidence of recognisable stage management practice in the early modern theatre, since it demonstrates the organisation and management of props centralised through the pivotal document of the promptbook.   Although there are some gaps due to erosions or tears in the page, this list is as follows (illegible letters are marked x):

Act : 1 :   Writing out of the booke with a small pexx of silver for Mr

           Sxxxxxx[44]

           3 : notes for Mr. Pollard[45]

Act : 2 :   A writing for Mr Taylor[46]

Act : 3 :   A letter for Mr. Robinson[47]

           2 . letters for Mr Loxin[48]

Act : 5 :   A letter for Mr. Bxxfxieds[49]

Although this is the only prompt manuscript within the collection to contain a separate list of property requirements, comparable detail can be observed in the marginal notes of other promptbooks and within the plots, most notably the plot for *The Battle of Alcazar*, as indicated above.

These notes from *Believe As You List* reveal more than the simple recording of items required during the play. The form of the annotations indicates a responsibility for ensuring that the correct articles were distributed to the players who needed them: 'for Mr Pollard'; 'for Mr Taylor'. This is support for the players at a very personal level. This indication that the book keeper assumed responsibility for identifying performers' needs for certain props and ensuring that they were distributed to them links the book keeper as

closely to his company of professional players as the earlier Cornish sources link the Ordinary / conveyour to their performers; a key link in interpreting the history of supported and managed performance.

2.4.4:   The King's Revels Men.

Two of the promptbooks in this collection at the British Library were from the King's Revels Men; the anonymous *The Two Noble Ladies and the Converted Conjurer*, believed first performed at the Red Bull playhouse around 1622-3, and Henry Glapthorne's *The Lady Mother,* licensed in 1635 and believed performed at the Salisbury Court Playhouse. The book of *The Two Noble Ladies* is heavily annotated, in a hand different to that of the scribe who wrote the text, with the majority of the annotations relating to stage directions and being enclosed in ruled boxes. Players' names are inscribed against many of the characters mentioned (although in this manuscript the word 'actors' is written) and an interesting note, relating to a ghost or spirit, occurs on folio 234 verso: 'Thunder : Ent.Spirrit   Geo. Stue' which confirms thunder as one of the effects produced during performance by the stage keepers and which may refer to George Stutville, who is known to have performed with the Revels company at the Red Bull.

The key characteristic of the book of *The Lady Mother* as a prompt script is what Greg describes as 'the almost regular duplication of entrances in the left margin'.[50] What Greg describes as 'duplication' can easily be identified as a signifier that the player about to enter was being readied for his entrance. About a third of a page before the entrance, the name of the

character to enter is written in the margin of the text. At the point of entry, the name is written again. Although these 'duplications' are not accompanied by any other helpful annotation, such as 'ready' as can be seen in later examples, there is a strong case for arguing that the repetition of the names denotes the book keeper calling the players performing those characters for their entrances, or checking that they were in position. In other words, they are recognisable as a warning or stand-by for each character's entrance.

Whilst there is little else within these two promptbooks to indicate responsibility on the book keeper's part for the setting or resetting of properties, furniture, or special effects, the several annotations within both sources which relate to the entrances and movements of the cast arguably link the book keeper closely with the cast in performance, and demonstrate his close working knowledge of the action and requirements of the play. This confirms the remit of the book keeper, supported by the evidence of the plots, as extending equally to responsibility for the company of players and their timely entrances as to responsibility for the correct setting of props and furniture and the cueing of stage effects. This enables a hypothesis to be drawn that the essential elements of the role of stage management as it is today understood can recognisably be traced to the emergent professional playhouses of Elizabeth and James I.

<u>2.4.5:</u>   <u>The Lady Elizabeth's Men.</u>

Thomas Dekker's *The Welch Embassador* dates from 1623, and the neatly-copied source may be a 'best' copy rather than one which saw sustained playhouse use, although the extent and detail of the annotations indicate that, if it was a 'best copy', it may have been copied directly from a playhouse manuscript. The annotations in both sources strongly support the identification of the promptbook's primary function as a tool in the accurate running of the performance, as will be demonstrated in the analysis below.

The promptbook for *The Welch Embassador* shows a systematic identification of forthcoming entrances with the term 'bee redy', with every entrance to be made by every performer, with only eight exceptions, accompanied throughout the play by the 'bee redy' warning. 'Bee redy' evolved through the centuries, as the sources analysed within this thesis show, into 'ready', 'warn', and, ultimately, 'call' to ready the members of the company, and 'stand by' for the operators of technical cues. It is a clear indicator of a responsibility on the part of the book keeper for the timely entrances of the cast as required, and directly links the early modern playhouses with an aspect of practice which is abundantly recognisable within current professional practice as a fundamental stage management responsibility.

Further consistencies can be observed in the *Welch Embassador* manuscript. Each 'bee redy' warning is marked in the left-hand margin of the script, even on recto leaves, and each is presented in a uniform manner. A short

line is drawn above and below the warning, which consistently takes the form of the words 'Bee redy' followed by the name of the character or characters about to enter. Generally only between a third and two-thirds of a page is allowed as the interval between the warning and the entrance, and this could indicate two things: firstly, that, in order for such warnings to be effective, the majority of entrances must have been made from the tiring house (this is not an unreasonable supposition), since there would hardly have been time to run and alert someone standing in a distant area of the playhouse; and secondly, that, since all actual entrances are clearly indicated in the text, there can have been little reason to diligently mark in warnings for each one unless the book keeper did assume responsibility for alerting players to an imminent entrance.
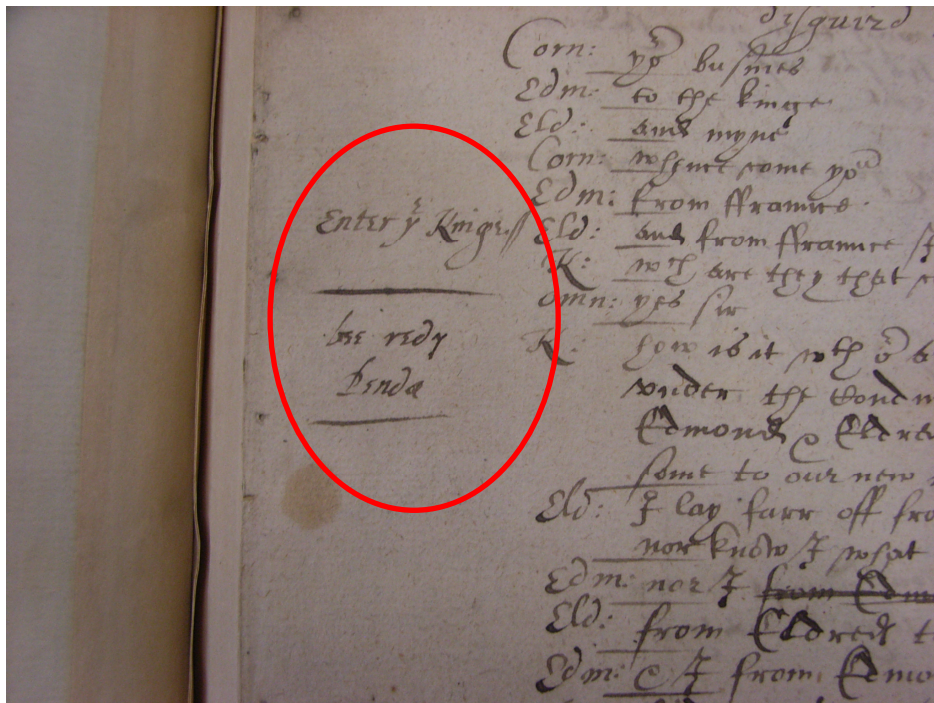
Figure 2.4.5.1: *The Welch Embassador* (Cardiff Central Library)
folio 1 recto (showing entrance and 'ready' annotations.)

An interesting exception to the uniform 'Bee redy' is found on folio 9 recto, when the book keeper's attention is drawn to a note not to be missed by an inked drawing of a pointer ☞ to mark an annotation within the text. The pointer draws the eye to the following stage direction:

> shews Penda wth a Leadinge staff
>
> voltimar at his back : his sword in him

This is shown in Figure 2.4.5.2 below.
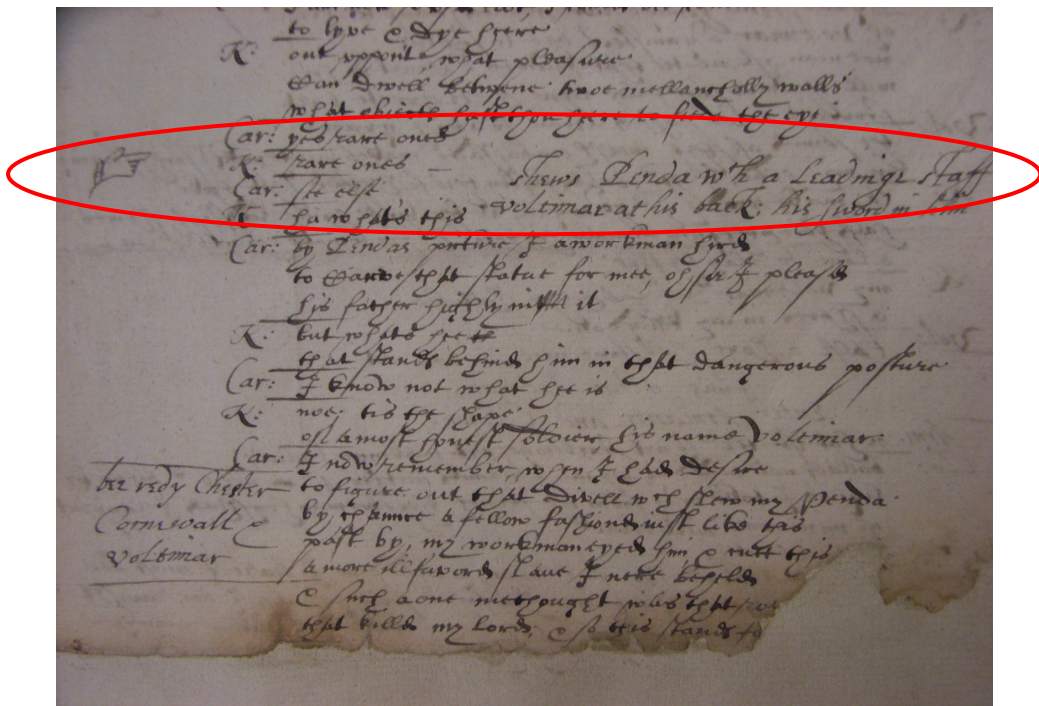
Figure 2.4.5.2: *The Welch Embassador* (CCL): folio 9 recto.

This pointer mark is unique amongst the annotations in all of the promptbooks studied from this period; this note is the only one within any of the sources from the period to be identified with any mark which suggests a vigilance on the part of the book keeper so strongly as does this one. As with the example discussed above from the *Honest Man's Fortune*

manuscript, this annotation refers to an instance of stage combat. Whether the book keeper marked this for particular attention because of a concern for the players' safety, or whether he was responsible for the issue of the weaponry, or whether indeed it was marked much later by a subsequent 'book keeper' or equivalent mounting a later production from this manuscript, we can again only speculate; but it clearly indicates that vigilance was required here for one reason or another, which supports the assertion that specific responsibilities were assumed by the book keeper in relation to the running of the performance which had to be carried out with dependable regularity. Another annotation referring to stage combat, on folio 21 verso, reads:

> Enter Cornwall with his sword drawne, after him Colchester and
> Kent drawne the Prince like Cupid Voltimar keepes in the midst,
> Penda Edmond & Eldred draw & guard the Kinge; Winchester &
> Ladies step betwene all.

The detail of this evidences the notation of blocking[51] as a responsibility of the book keeper for this production. In contrast to the previous example, however, this action is not accompanied by any marginal indication to alert the book keeper to exercise particular vigilance, so we must assume that some aspect of the staging of the first extract described above warranted some particular attention. The very obvious marking of the point in the script at which such care was called for strongly supports the argument that the book keeper actively engaged with and assumed responsibility for the performance of the play, using the annotated prompt manuscript as a tool for its accurate re-representation.

This argument is further supported by the marginal annotations which occur throughout the source. In addition to the entrance warnings, the *Welch Embassador* manuscript contains extensive notes relating to other aspects of the performance, including costume, musical cues, and the setting of furniture. Instrumental features such as 'Florish', a musical flourish or fanfare, and 'Hautboyes' (oboes), which accompany the entrances of important characters, are marked in the margin of the page, adjacent to the point in the text at which the particular sound is desired. Folios 6 verso, 8 verso and 11 verso all carry the note 'Florish' adjacent to the entrance of the 'Kinge', whilst 'Hoboyes' accompany the entrance on folio 18 recto when 'Enter Winchester, Colchester, Chester, then Kent then Penda the Welch Embassador'. There is also an offstage sound effect recorded on folio 20 recto: 'Knock within. Enter Eldred.'

Costume notes are similarly marked, and are of interest as much for the information which is not given as for that which is revealed. At no point is the costume for any character described; as argued above, the function of the promptbook is not to record for posterity the details of the appearance of the play. The five notes relating to costume in this source indicate rather the appearance of a character in disguise: a change of costume, or the addition of a garment which deviates from the character's norm, during the course of the performance. One reason for this may possibly be because the book keeper had some responsibility for ensuring that it happened, or for warning the tireman that a costume change was imminent. Whilst this is again speculation, it is supported by all of the indications demonstrated by the

several sources analysed for this case study which support the argument that the promptbook was the key tool for the accurate running of each performance of the play. 'Enter Penda like a comon soldier' (folio 1 recto), 'Enter Cornwall and Carintha, vail'd in black' (folio 9 recto), 'Enter Voltimar and Edmond like an Irish man' (folio 13 verso), 'Enter Winchester like a fryer leading the Prince vaild' (folio 17-recto) and 'Enter Clowne like Vulcan' (folio 22 recto) all indicate a distinction from the character's base clothing, either by means of a different costume, such as 'like a fryer', or a more simple add-on to obscure identity: 'vail'd'.

Notes relating to the setting of furniture or which contain detail specific to the entrance of a player are indicated both within the text, and, occasionally, within the warning 'bee redy' annotation for the character connected with it. This occurs on folio 9 recto, with the warning 'Bee redy Penda & Voltimar above'. Penda's and Voltimar's next entrances occur on folio 9 recto and are the ones identified by the pointed finger marker: 'shews Penda wth a Leadinge staff voltimar at his back : his sword in him.' 'Above' may be interpreted in two ways; it may simply mean upstage, or it may alternatively mean 'at height' if the company had access to a balcony or similar raised playing area above their tiring house. If this was the case, then perhaps the prospect of a stage fight with weaponry at height may have been the reason for wishing to draw particular attention to it by the use of the finger pointer.

Notes relating to the setting of furniture are found on four occasions within this source. In Act Three, the warning 'bee redy Carintha at a Table' on

folio 13 verso is followed on folio 14 recto by the entrance note 'Enter Carintha at a Table readinge'. Folio 19 verso has the instruction 'Sett out a Table' in the margin adjacent to the point in the text at which it is required, and at the bottom of the same page is the direction 'Enter Clowne in his study writinge: one knockes within'. These are clear instructions relating to the running of the play; they occur in the margins of the text, rather than within the body of the text itself, and unless Carintha and the Clown carried on their own tables it can be assumed that there were personnel available for this purpose. As indicated above, it is likely that stage keepers were charged with such tasks, and that their work was directed and supervised by the book keeper according to his own instructions in the promptbook.

Figure 2.4.5.3 below shows folio 13 verso from the source, with the costume note relating to Edmond disguising himself 'like an Irish man' and the warning for Carintha's entrance at a table. Such clear running instructions for the practical operation of the play demonstrate the extent to which the promptbook was the key tool in the running of each performance, and supports the assertion that the book keeper's responsibilities encompassed supporting the company to make their entrances at the correct point wearing the correct items of costume and with the correct props, noting key blocking in the promptbook, and co-ordinating the cueing of stage effects and furniture setting. This source provides unequivocal evidence to demonstrate that, in the early modern theatre, performance was indeed managed by the book keeper from the prompt copy of the text.
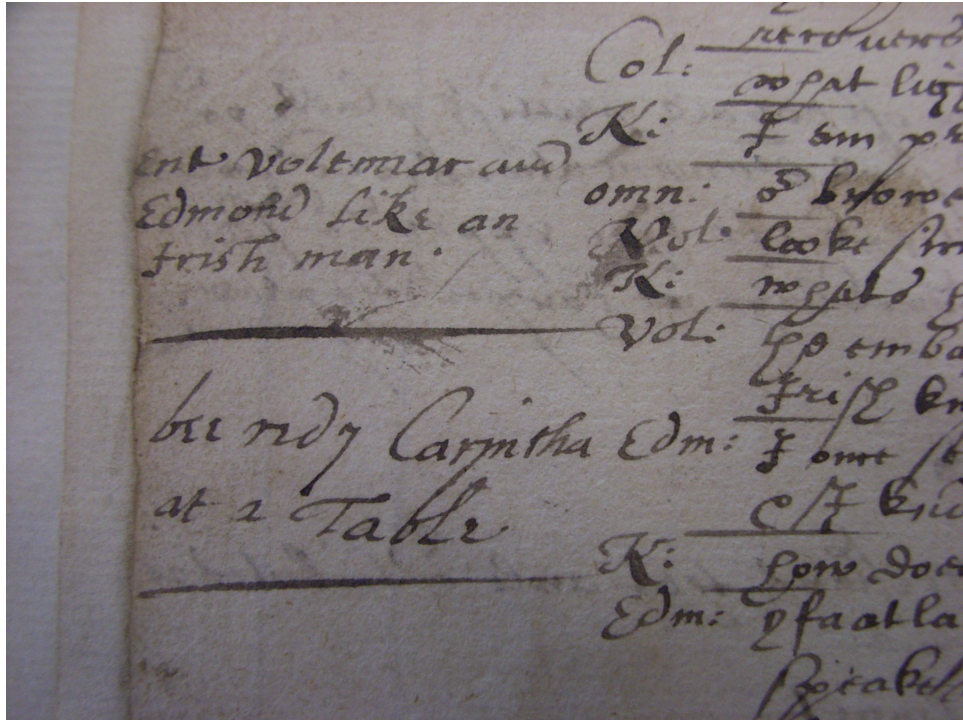
Figure 2.4.5.3: *The Welch Embassador* (CCL): folio 13 verso.

The promptbook from Heywood's *The Captives*, first performed at the Cockpit in 1624, shows clear evidence of playhouse use, with several annotations relating to cast moves which are generally distinguished from the text of the play by being written in the margins and by the use of ruled lines above and below each note. These marginal notes are written in an ink which has remained vividly black; some are further marked with a cross to draw attention to them, such as the marginal notes on folio 58 recto which reads '∗ and Tempest', and on folio 59 verso, which reads '✕ Bell rung'. This is the earliest source which I have found to mark offstage effects with any form of symbol.

This promptbook is also the source which provides such unambiguous evidence of stage keepers undertaking walk-on parts, with the stage direction on folio 70 recto 'Enter the Abbott the baker ffryar Richard prisoner and guarded Etc' supplemented by the marginal annotation: 'stagekeepers as guard.' The extensive cuts, annotations and revisions in this source further indicate its use as a working playhouse manuscript.

The final promptbook of this case study, that of Massinger's *The Parliament of Love*, also from 1624, appears to be a best copy, and I was unable to discern any marginal annotations relating to the exigencies of staging or to playhouse use.

2.5:   Henslowe's Diaries; the repertory, and 'stage management'.

The documentary evidence of promptbooks and stage plots which have been explored above can be supplemented by other records from the period to corroborate these indications of the development of stage management within the early modern theatre. Whilst we can appreciate, as discussed in Chapter One, the necessity of touring beyond London for the emergent professional companies, the diaries of Philip Henslowe indicate the advantages to a company of having a theatre building as their base. His inventories from the Rose playhouse demonstrate a massive accumulation of stock items of props and scenic pieces pertaining to the plays in his company's repertory. The accumulation and storage of such items was made possible by the long-term tenancy or ownership of a playhouse;[52] this enabled an extensive repertory of plays featuring such set pieces as

described below, with, it must be remembered, an implicit need for their construction, co-ordination and management before, during, and after performance. Support for the players in their performance of such plays, at an appropriate level to match and enable their professional standards, is therefore once again indicated.

Foakes' transcription of Henslowe's diaries reveals an inventory taken in the spring of 1598 at the Rose playhouse which indicates the scale and the attempts at realistic representation of plays within the Admiral's Men's repertory, with tombs, steeples, one 'Hell mought, Mercures wings, owld Mahemetes head' and 'the sittie of Rome' as notable examples.[53] Butterworth discusses the frequent use of Hell mouths in liturgical drama, observing:

> In the *Anglo-Norman Adam* (twelfth century) a stage direction informs: "et in eo facient fumum magnum ex[s]urgere," (and in Hell they shall make a great smoke arise,). The records at Coventry concerning the Cappers and their play of *The Resurrection and Descent into Hell* and the Drapers and their pageant of *Doomsday* refer to their respective Hell mouth properties. Payments occur in the accounts of both guilds towards the building, refurbishment and maintenance of Hell mouth.[54]

Coupled with the indications from promptbooks and stage plots of a strong appetite amongst Elizabethan playgoers for a convincing verisimilitude on stage[55] (the implications of which for those providing 'stage management' support are that an inventive creativity in the provision of props and devices to provide the semblance of gory or supernatural occurrences would have

been essential), such a stock of items reveals something of the nature and scale of productions at the early modern playhouses; in this case, the Rose.

Gurr asserts that Henslowe's inventory 'is also the most precise indication we have of a company's normal resources in time of prosperity.'[56] If this statement is to be accepted, then it must also be acknowledged that the inventory offers not only a broad reflection of a company's 'normal resources', but also a strong indication of a company's normal activities, with the implication therefore that a backstage infrastructure of support was in place to create, maintain, store, and retrieve such articles during the playing season, and set, reset, and strike them during performance. This is supported by the references to such articles and the cueing instructions relating to them within the prompt sources analysed in this chapter.

In an article focusing on highlighting an ignorance of the contribution of women to the Elizabethan theatre, Stephen Orgel raises a significant question with a more general relevance when he asks:

> If Early Modern theatre is not to be treated as literature, but as a professional, cultural, financial institution, **who did the work in it?** [My emphasis.] We know a good deal about the performers, but the most striking aspect of that particular segment of the workforce was the absence of women within it, a significant gap that was filled by young men who became, in effect, the apprentices of the company.[57]

Whilst the focus of Orgel's paper was to reflect the wider demographic of the early modern theatrical workforce, it is appropriate to apply his question

to the investigation of emergent stage management practice. Since it can be stated with confidence that there were approximate Elizabethan equivalents to the modern stage manager, as discussed above, supporting the 'professional, cultural, financial institution' that was the early modern theatre, Orgel's question as to who did the work in it can emphatically be answered by the evidence of 'stage management' support within the extant playhouse materials. Notwithstanding the validity of his argument on the contribution of women to the infrastructure of theatrical presentation in the early playhouses, there is a striking absence too of any evaluation of both the necessity for and the contribution of the early modern equivalent of the 'stage management team' to the emergent professional theatre. I assert that there is ample primary evidence to substantiate a case for this.

2.6:   Analysis; the implications of the evidence.

Whilst it may be ambitious to suggest a highly evolved and sophisticated level of operation in the early modern playhouses, the primary sources examined above do indicate an expectation on the part of the playhouse audience for realistic special effects such as fire, smoke, or excessive physical violence, and a creative capability on the part of the playhouse attendants to satisfy those demands. Although the most striking example of such evidence is found in the vivid detail of the plot of *The Battle of Alcazar,* the frequent use of traps and stage devices evidenced by the extant promptbooks clearly indicates co-ordinated performance. The surviving manuscripts from Massinger's *Believe As You List* and Dekker's *The Welch Embassasdor* in particular can be drawn upon to support the assertion that,

despite rudimentary equipment, the productions offered by the London playhouses were well planned and competently executed, with the detail of their execution meticulously recorded in order for them to be precisely regulated. Both of these manuscripts indicate organisation, co-ordination, and, arguably, accountability in the role of the book keeper.

Whilst there are some typical characteristics common to many of the prompt manuscripts, there are other characteristics which are particular to just one or two. In many promptbooks, a brief note of the personal entrances of certain players, or else simply a note of which player undertook a given role, is evident; this is a very regular trait, and was common to seven of the fourteen books surveyed: *Edmond Ironside*, *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt*, *The Two Noble Ladies*, *The Captives*, *The Honest Man's Fortune*, and *Believe As You List.* Included in these seven are all four of the King's Men books, one from the King's Revels company, one from the Lady Elizabeth's Men, and one anonymous book, *Edmond Ironside*. This is the earliest source of the seven, dating from the 1590s, so this aspect of practice can be dated from the very end of the sixteenth century, and may be reflective of much earlier practice. All but four of the eleven manuscripts which date from the early seventeenth century show evidence of this practice of noting the personal entrances of players; it is possible that this may indicate an evolution of practice and, with such a high proportion of the extant sources demonstrating this trait, is it tempting to suggest an indication of commonality of practice between the companies.

However, without a greater scope of source manuscripts, this must remain merely speculative.

Four of the promptbooks studied demonstrate 'warnings' to players to ready themselves for entrances; this can be seen in *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* and *Believe As You List*, from the King's Men, and extensively and regularly throughout *The Welsh Embassador* and *The Lady Mother,* promptbooks of the Lady Elizabeth's Men and the King's Revels Men respectively. Seven manuscripts, *Sir Thomas More* (The Lord Strange's Men), *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (King's Men), *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* (King's Men), *The Two Noble Ladies* (King's Revels Men), *The Welsh Embassador* (Lady Elizabeth's Men), *The Captives* (Lady Elizabeth's Men) and *The Honest Man's Fortune* (King's Men) contain certain details of the blocking of the play, three of which (*The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, *The Welsh Embassador*, *The Honest Man's Fortune*) involve weaponry or combat.

References to properties, furniture and effects also occur in seven manuscripts: *Richard II* (company unknown), *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (King's Men), *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* (King's Men), *The Two Noble Ladies* (King's Revel's Men), *The Welsh Embassador* (Lady Elizabeth's Men), *The Honest Man's Fortune* (King's Men) and *Believe As You List* (King's Men). Such references range from a brief mention of an effect ('spirrit', *The Two Noble Ladies*; 'tempest', *The Captives* – both from the Lady Elizabeth's Men) to more detailed references to props and furniture as in *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* (King's Men), *The Welsh Embassador*

(Lady Elizabeth's Men) and *The Honest Man's Fortune* (King's Men). Costume notes are rarer, featuring only in two manuscripts: the King's Men's *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, and the Lady Elizabeth's Men's *The Welsh Embassador*.

Details relating to practical aspects of the staging of the production are really only evident in three manuscripts: *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt*, which lists a requirement for a taper, pen, ink, and a table in the margin of folio 16 verso, and calls for a scaffold to be set out on folio 27 verso with the entrance of Barnavelt, Lords and Guards; *The Honest Man's Fortune*, which details a banquet to be set out on folio 31 verso; and the tempest which is called for in *The Captives*. It is also *The Captives* which indicates that stage keepers undertook walk-on parts, with its reference on folio 70 recto to Friar Richard entering as a prisoner with 'stagekeepers as guard' as discussed above.

Evidently it is the promptbooks of *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (King's Men, 1611), *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* (King's Men, 1619), *The Welsh Embassador* (Lady Elizabeth's Men, 1623), *The Honest Man's Fortune* (King's Men, 1624), and *Believe As You List* (King's Men, 1631) which reveal the greatest details about the staging and indeed the management, within the context of the period, of the plays, with *Believe As You List* revealing detailed indications of the responsibilities involved in its running. As discussed above, it includes 'be ready' notes warning players of their imminent entrances, records Mr. Hobbs 'called up,' instructs the player in

the role of Antiochus to be in position under the stage for an entrance through a trap, names the stage keepers whose responsibility it was to lift the player through the trap, and, as well as recording details of the casting against the script, lists props and furniture to be used both against the text throughout the play, and in the props list which appears at the end.

This source is highly significant in that it instantly reveals practice which is recognisable as stage management; for the purpose of research into stage management practice, questions must be asked which are not necessarily revealed by the manuscript. With the exception of *The Welsh Embassador*, these sources are from the King's Men company, and it can be assumed that the book keeper who prepared and worked from the three later King's Men manuscripts was Edward Knight. If this was the case, then it may be inferred that Knight, an experienced book keeper with the leading company of professional players, recorded those notes essential to the running of the play which would guarantee that, at its various performances, everything was in its place to ensure its smooth running and professional execution. Although possibly a tenuous suggestion, this is supported by those elements common to the King's Men promptbooks which clearly demonstrate a responsibility on the part of the book keeper for setting out the correct items of props and furniture at the appropriate times, or ensuring that members of the cast were in position for their more complex entrances through traps with sufficient stage keepers to support them.

It may be suggested that, since these promptbooks all date from the last fourteen years of the forty-five year period spanned by the materials analysed in this case study, some evolution of practice since the very earliest professional performances may be indicated. Against this, evidence may be drawn upon from the earliest known promptbook, from a passion play enacted at Mons in 1501,[58] in which the following annotation is recorded:

> Remind those who work the secrets of the thunder barrels to do what is assigned to them by following their instruction slips and let them not forget to stop when God says "Cease and let tranquility reign."[59]

This is a remarkable piece of evidence, because implicit within it is the suggestion that a high degree of planning and preparation must have taken place; but perhaps the most remarkable realisation to which this source points is the clear indication that those working 'the secrets of the thunder barrels' and any other effects featured in the play were sufficiently literate to be able to read individually-issued instruction slips and act upon them. With such clear indication from a promptbook that the person 'on the book' in performance was responsible for reminding the effects operators to carry out their jobs according to their instruction slips, and the fact of those slips' existence (who made them out? Who allocated the work? Who would have known exactly what was required, and translated that knowledge into practical instructions, tailor-made to the individual stage keepers, to be carried out at an appropriate time?), and this in 1501, we may conclude that it is not so very remarkable that promptbooks should be indicating such details well over a hundred years later. However, the sources are not

entirely comparable, with the Mons example coming from a different country and culture; and the fact that Knight's books are remarkable for the details of the practicalities of staging that are contained within them perhaps reflects more about Knight, an experienced book keeper with a prominent company, than anything else. Without further knowledge of other book keepers from other companies, and indeed without a greater number of extant promptbooks to interrogate, it is difficult to infer conclusions. However, the evidence of these manuscripts, when analysed in comparison with the other promptbooks which have survived to scholarship, does allow us to identify that, in the King's Men from the sixteen-teens to the 1630s, a clear responsibility for the readying of players, the setting of properties and furniture, the operation of effects, and the instructing of support staff, was assumed by the book keeper.

Orgel's question, as to who was doing the work in the early modern playhouse, is a pertinent one, and invites a wider academic consideration of the precise practicalities involved in early modern staging. Furthermore, the primary evidence surviving from the playhouses demands that scholarship must recognise the considerable impact that the book keeper's function must inevitably have had upon the emergent professional theatre of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is particularly so in terms of enabling the companies of players to stage performances to the expected standards through the support which the book keeper offered, in terms of cued practical operations, checked and pre-set props, and the generation of the plot. As the seventeenth century progresses through the 1630s and towards

the enforced closure of the playhouses in the 1640s, it can be clearly identified from the promptbooks of the King's Men that a consistent responsibility for the readying of players, the setting of properties and furniture, the operation of offstage effects, and the instruction of support staff, can be discerned and identified with the book keeper from the pages of the surviving materials.

2.7:   Conclusion.

Orgel has remarked that 'For the practice of theatre history, "What did audiences see?" is a far more productive question than "What did playwrights create?".'[60]   I have demonstrated in this chapter that what the audience saw was actively managed in the early professional playhouse by the book keeper, who, in conjunction with assistants fulfilling various backstage functions, provided engaged and competent support to the repertory of the emergent professional theatre company. Key to the ability to do this was the use of an annotated prompt manuscript, the function of which was to enable the accurate, smooth, and safe running of what may be termed the technical elements of the performance. The book keeper's recording within the promptbook of instructions to cue those actions, performed by other tiring house functionaries, upon which the play or the players relied, therefore provides clear evidence of the essence of professional stage management at the nascence of professional theatre practice.

The playhouse sources analysed in this chapter span the period between 1594 and 1631. Nine years later, playing was interrupted by the English Civil War. Although certain companies persisted in staging sporadic performances in defiance of the ban imposed by the new parliament, the next chapter will examine post-Restoration sources for evidence of the development of the function of stage management following the Interregnum period.
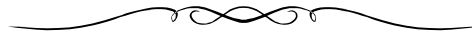
Notes to Chapter Two.

1   Stephen Orgel, 'A View from the Stage' in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, ed. by Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p.2.

2   Claire Sponsler, 'Drama in the Archives: Recognizing Medieval Plays', in Holland & Orgel, pp.112 – 13.

3   In his comprehensive *Dramatic Documents of the Elizabethan Playhouses,* W. W. Greg refers to the 'elegant professional hand' of the scribe Ralph Crane in his analysis of the prompt-book of Fletcher & Massinger's *St. John van Olden Barnavelt.* W. W. Greg, *Dramatic Documents of the Elizabethan Playhouses* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), p.268. Professional scribes wrote not only for the playhouses, but undertook legal and ecclesial scrivening too; Ralph Crane is known to have written Richard Burbage's will.

4   David Bradley, *From Text to Performance in the Elizabethan Theatre: Preparing the Play for the Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.2.

5   Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574 – 1642*, 3rd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp.192-3.

6   W. W. Greg, *Dramatic Documents from the Elizabethan Playhouses* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), p.194.

7   Written by Ben Jonson and first performed on 31st October 1614 at the Hope by the Lady Elizabeth's Men.

8   Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair* (London: Nick Hern Books Ltd., 1997), p.4.

9   *Stage-Keeper:* But these Master *Poets*, they will ha' their own absurd courses; they will be informed of nothing! He has, sir reverence, kicked me three or four times about the Tiring-house, I thank him, for but offering to put in, with my experience. I'll be judged by you, gentlemen, now, but for one conceit of mine! Would not a fine pump upon the Stage ha' done well, for a property now? And a punk set under upon her head, with her stern upward, and ha' been soused by my witty young masters o' the Inns o' Court? What think you o' this for a show, now? He will not hear o' this! I am an ass! I! And yet I kept the stage in Master Tarleton's time, I thank my stars. Ho! And that man had lived to have played in *Bartholomew Fair*, you should ha' seen him a-come in, and ha' been cozened i' the cloth-quarter, so finely! And Adams, the Rogue, ha' leapt and capered upon him, and ha' dealt his vermin about, as though they had cost him nothing. And then a substantial watch to ha' stolen in upon 'em, and taken 'em away, with mistaking words, as the fashion is in the stage-practice.

10   Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, pp.4 – 5.

11   Those with a share in the ownership or management of a theatre and/or theatre company were known as 'sharers'; those employed on a casual basis were known as 'hirelings'. It is not evident whether any book keeper became a sharer in an Elizabethan or Jacobean theatre company; however, it is clear from the extent of duties undertaken by the book keepers and the closeness of their responsibility to the company's stock of promptbooks that a continuity in the employment of the company's book keeper would have been desirable. For further discussion of this issue, see G.E. Bentley, *The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's Time, 1590 –*

1642 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 80-1, and Jane Milling, 'The development of a professional theatre, 1540 - 1660', in *The Cambridge History of British Theatre,* ed. by Jane Milling and Peter Thomson, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), Volume 1, *Origins to 1660*, p.152.

12   John Russell Brown, *Free Shakespeare* (Huntington: A&C Black, 1997), p.52.

13   Stern, *Shakespeare to Sheridan*, pp.94-5.

14   Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's Time, 1590 – 1642* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984) pp. 80-1.

15   'Musicians and Necessary Attendants', of whom twenty-four were recorded in a list made by the Master of the Revels, Henry Herbert, on 27th December 1624, could not be arrested or pressed for soldiers without the consent of the Lord Chamberlain or the Master of the Revels. Edward Knight is listed as 'Book-Keeper; Necessary Attendant' on this list; one Anthony Knight is also recorded as a necessary attendant of the company, as is John Rhodes, possibly the King's Men Tireman.

16   Jane Milling, 'The development of a professional theatre, 1540 - 1660' in Jane Milling and Peter Thompson (ed.s), *The Cambridge History of British Theatre, Volume 1: Origins to 1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.152.

17   Glynne Wickham, 'Documents of control, 1530-1660' in *Theatre in Europe: a documentary history*, 5 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

18   R. A. Foakes, 'Henslowe's Rose / Shakespeare's Globe' in Holland & Orgel, p.27.

19   Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p.194.

20   Greg, pp. 1 – 3.

21   Foakes, 'Henslowe's Rose / Shakespeare's Globe' in Holland & Orgel, p.15

22   Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, p.36.

23   Bradley, p.2.

24   See Greg, *Dramatic Documents* pp. 189 – 308, where this is discussed at length.

25   Roslyn Lander Knutson, 'Working Playwrights, 1580 – 1642' in Milling & Thompson, p.360.

26   British Library Add.MS.10,449, *Stage-Plots of Old Plays.*

27   Philip Butterworth, *Theatre of Fire: Special Effects in Early English and Scottish Theatre* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1998), p.32.

28   Ibid., p.26. From the Mystery of St. Martin at Seurre, 1496.

29   Greg, p.xii.

30   Ibid., pp.189-90.

31   This is an established term used by other scholars to describe not notes which refer to the actual prompting of lines to performers, of which there are very few, if any, but to all annotations made by the person keeping the book relating to blocking, mood, props, furniture, costume, or alterations to the text. Any kind of note, in fact, made by the person keeping the book of the play in relation to the staging of that play.

32   Greg, p.190. Greg states that there were fifteen such manuscripts; the fifteenth, *John A Kent and John A Cumber,* is no longer held at the British Library and so was not analysed as part of this study. The manuscript is now in the Huntington Library in America.

33   Chronologically, as follows:
Edmond Ironside, or, War Hath Made All Friends c1590 – 1600
Playwright, company and playhouse unknown.

Richard II, or, Thomas of Woodstock c1592-5
Playwright, company and playhouse unknown.

Sir Thomas More c1593
Contributing playwrights believed to be Anthony Munday, Henry Chettle, Thomas Haywood, William Shakespeare, and Thomas Dekker; believed to have been performed by the Lord Strange's Men at the Rose.

Charlemagne, or, The Distracted Emperor c 1605
Playwright, company and playhouse unknown.

The Second Maiden's Tragedy licensed 1611
by Thomas Middleton and possibly Philip Massinger;
the King's Men, believed performed at the Globe / Blackfriars.

Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt 1619
by John Fletcher and possibly Philip Massinger; the King's Men, believed performed at the Globe / Blackfriars.

The Two Noble Ladies and the Converted Conjurer c1622-3
Playwright unknown, believed performed by the King's Revels Men at the Red Bull.

The Welsh Embassador c1623
by Thomas Dekker and possibly John Ford, believed performed by the Lady Elizabeth's Men at the Cockpit.

The Captives 1624
by Thomas Heywood; the Lady Elizabeth's Men, believed performed at the Cockpit.

The Parliament of Love 1624
by Philip Massinger, the Lady Elizabeth's Men, believed performed at the Cockpit.

The Honest Man's Fortune first written 1613; this MS Licensed 1624/5
by Philip Massinger, John Fletcher, and Nathan Field, believed first performed by the Lady Elizabeth's Men at the Whitefriars; this MS believed performed by the King's Men, Globe / Blackfriars.

Believe As You List licensed 1631
by Philip Massinger; the King's Men, believed performed at the Globe / Blackfriars.

The Launching of the Mary licensed 1633
by Walter Mountford; company and playhouse unknown.

The Lady Mother licensed 1635
by Henry Glapthorne; the King's Revels Men at the Salisbury Court Playhouse.

34   These manuscripts were, in alphabetical order, as follows:

Believe As You List licensed 1631
BL MS Egerton 2828 (microfilm)

Charlemagne, or, The Distracted Emperor c1605
BL MS Egerton 1994

Edmond Ironside, or, War Hath Made All Friends c1590 - 1600
BL MS Egerton 1994

Richard II, or, Thomas of Woodstock c1592-5
BL MS Egerton 1994

Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt 1619
BL Add.MS. 18653

Sir Thomas More c1593
BL Facsimile J.S.Farmer, 1910

The Captives 1624
BL MS Egerton 1994

The Honest Man's Fortune licensed 1624/5
NAL Dyce MS.9 (25F.9)

The Lady Mother licensed 1635
BL MS Egerton 1994

The Launching of the Mary licensed 1633
BL MS Egerton 1994

The Parliament of Love 1624
NAL Dyce MS.39

The Second Maiden's Tragedy licensed 1611
BL MS Lansd.807

The Two Noble Ladies c1622-3
BL MS Egerton 1994

The Welsh Embassador c1623
BL MS Facs.249 (rotograph) and
CCL MS.4.12 (original manuscript).

BL denotes manuscript held at the British Library, London.
NAL denotes manuscript held at the National Art Library, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.
CCL denotes manuscript held at Cardiff Central Library.

35   See J. M. Nosworthy, 'Shakespeare and Sir Thomas More' in *Review of English Studies* (1955), vol VI (No. 21) p.12.

36   It is possible that the 'Q' stands for 'cue', as in the contemporary understanding; Shakespeare writes: 'Pyramus, enter; your cue is past: it is 'never tire' . . . in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, suggesting that this usage was in the vocabulary of the time.

37   Possibly from 1591 until 1624, when he died.

38   Greg, p.268.

39   National Art Library (Victoria & Albert Museum), MS Dyce 9(25F.9).

40   Grace Ioppolo, *Dramatists and their Manuscripts in the Age of Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton and Heywood* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p.76.

41   William Gascoyne is listed as a 'Necessary Attendant' on Herbert's list of 27th December 1624.

42   Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Company 1595 – 1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.122.

43   Thomas Hobbs and Curtis Greville were actors and hired men from 1626 until 1637 and 1633 respectively; in 1634, Greville became a sharer in the King's Revels Men.

44   Eliard Swanston played with the King's Men from 1624.

45   Thomas Pollard was an actor and sharer with the King's Men (dates unknown).

46   Joseph Taylor joined the King's Men in 1619.

47   Richard Robinson joined the King's Men in 1611.

48   John Lowin is believed to have played with the King's Men from 1603, and to have become a sharer in 1604.

49   Robert Benfield was a member of the King's Men between 1616 – 1619.

50   Greg, p.307.

51   Whilst usage of the term 'blocking' is anachronistic in the context of this period, it will be used throughout this thesis as the industry-standard term for the recording of cast movements in the promptbook, at the point in the text at which they were to occur.

52   This can be evidenced by the extensive inventory compiled by Henslowe in the spring of 1598. See R. A. Foakes, *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 317 - 25.

53   Foakes, *Henslowe's Diary*, pp. 319-320.

54   Butterworth, *Theatre of Fire* p.12.

55   Gurr discusses at length the means by which gruesome stage effects were realised, stating that: 'many other realistic details testify to the esteem the players had for realism on this level. In the plot of the Admiral's *Battle of Alcazar* three characters are executed and disembowelled on stage. [. . .] Some plays had execution scenes involving decapitation. [. . .] A list of other realistic devices in staging might include the appearance of the mariners *'wet'* after the shipwreck in *The Tempest*, a device also used in the horse-courser scene of *Faustus*. Smoke was provided to make mists and fog . . . Realism could easily be supplied by means of noises off, and was.' Gurr, *Shakespearean Stage*, 3rd edn pp.182 – 4.

56   Ibid., p.187.

57   Orgel, 'A View from the Stage' in Holland & Orgel, p.6.

58   Known as the *livre de conduite du régisseur* (the current French name for the job title of stage manager) from the play *Le Mystère de la Passion* by Arnoul Gréban; it includes *le compte des dépenses* or account of all expenditure for the production. The implicit suggestion that the *régisseur* **conducted** the performance is significant.

59   Hendrik Baker, *Stage Management and Theatrecraft: A Stage Manager's Handbook* (London: J. Garnett Miller, 1968), pp. 51 – 2.

60   Orgel, 'A View from the Stage' in Holland & Orgel, p.2.

CHAPTER THREE

'An Alternative Triumvirate'

The restoration of the crown to Charles II in 1660, at the conclusion of the English Civil War, was followed in 1662 by the new King's bestowal of letters patent onto Thomas Killigrew and William Davenant. This of course led to the establishment of the King's (under Killigrew's patent) and the Duke's (under Davenant's patent) Companies, and of the first two Patent Houses, which ultimately became the Theatres Royal at Drury Lane[1] (under Killigrew's patent) and Covent Garden[2] (under Davenant's). These Patent Houses were followed by the establishment in 1720 of the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, which in 1766 gained a royal patent to perform the legitimate drama in the summer months, and subsequently by the proliferation of provincial theatres throughout the eighteenth century, such as those at Bath (1705), Ipswich (1736), Liverpool (1749), Plymouth (1758), Richmond (1765), Bristol (1766), or Edinburgh (1767).[3] These were regulated by means of the Licensing Act of 1737, which suppressed all non-patent theatres and required plays to be passed by the Lord Chamberlain before performance.

In this chapter, sources dating from the 1670s to the late eighteenth century will be analysed for evidence of developing stage management practice. Selected extracts from diaries, memoranda, and published works by stage managers will be considered in addition to promptbook evidence in order to discern information about the nature and development of stage management

into and throughout the eighteenth century. In particular, the work of the prompters Thomas Newman, John Stede, and William Rufus Chetwood, all of whom worked at both theatres, and the emergence of commonality of practice at Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields / Covent Garden, will be explored; their practice is identified as inter-linked and influential, for which reason they constitute the 'alternative triumvirate' of the title of this chapter.

The first source to be considered will be a promptbook, dating from 1679 and believed to have belonged to the King's Company, Thomas Killigrew's players. There will then follow an interrogation of other key materials for primary evidence of the nature and function of stage management up to the end of the eighteenth century. Amongst these will be the periodical *The Prompter,* the Drury Lane prompter W.R. Chetwood's book *A General History of the Stage*, the diaries and memoranda books of David Garrick's prompters Richard Cross and William Hopkins, and the promptbook for Garrick's *Macbeth*. These sources have been selected because they offer first-hand accounts from stage managers relating to their job and function; the promptbooks have been selected for what the annotations which they bear can reveal about the responsibilities of the prompters who worked from them, and, in the case of the promptbook from Garrick's *Macbeth*, for the nascent use of symbols and colour within the annotations which it displays. These case studies will be supplemented by other primary materials which will be drawn upon to inform this study and demonstrate the development of the function of stage management within the professional theatre of the eighteenth century.

3.1:   <u>Case Study: King's Company Promptbook from 1679-80.</u>

Writing in *Theatre Notebook*, Edward A. Langhans records that:

> At the National Library of Scotland is a copy of the 1676 first
> quarto of Sir George Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, [. . .] with a
> manuscript cast list and prompt notes that almost certainly date
> from 1679 or 1680 in Edinburgh, when a number of players from
> the King's Company in London were in the Scottish capital. We
> have known for some time that internal dissention in the King's
> troupe in 1678-79 caused Joe Haines, Cardell Goodman, Thomas
> Clark, James Gray, Philip Griffin, Katherine Corey, and Samuel
> Pepys' friend Mrs Knepp to head for Edinburgh in hopes of
> better opportunities. Most of the group journeyed north in the
> spring of 1679. [. . .] The prompt hand throughout the copy
> matches that found in such King's Company promptbooks as
> Shirley's *The Sisters* and *The Maides Revenge*, so the King's
> Company prompter (Charles Booth?) evidently joined the rebel
> players from London.[4]   (Langhans' parentheses.)

Whilst valuable, Langhans' article focuses on the information which may be
gleaned from the promptbook about the members of the acting company.
Langhans remarks that: 'Unfortunately, the prompter did not use the names
of the players in his actor warnings within the promptbook', and concludes:
'Even though the prompt notes tell us little about Edinburgh staging
practices in the late seventeenth century, we must be grateful for the
information we have gained about the performers.'[5]

This demonstrates, yet again, a primary source of stage management
documentation being interrogated by a scholar for information which it was
destined never to contain. The prompter referred to the characters' names,

rather than those of the performers, in his 'actor warnings' or calls because
that was the convention, and so it remained until the twentieth century.
With plays remaining in a company's repertoire for years, it was possible
that the actors playing the various parts would change, especially minor
roles such as messengers and servants; but a page or a footman would
always be needed on page twenty-three or whatever it may be, and it is for
this reason that it was the character names that were marked into the
promptbook. Yet the primary function of a promptbook is not to provide
future generations with information about the staging capacity of a company
or details about the actors, but to facilitate the running of each performance
of a play whilst that play remains 'live' in the repertory – and *The Man of
Mode* was in the King's Company repertory for nine years, from 1676 until
1685. Dating from 1679, this promptbook provides a number of significant
details which contribute valuably to the body of knowledge relating to the
nature and function of stage management in the first twenty years following
the Restoration. It is therefore appropriate to consider its content in detail.

A variety of information about the running of this company's production of
The Man of Mode can be observed in this promptbook, and, notably, such
information is recorded very consistently. Every entrance made by every
member of the cast has been marked in, with no exception, and, as with the
early seventeenth-century prompt-books analysed in Chapter Two, about
half a page-length's warning is given before the entrance of each character.
There has been no insertion or binding of blank leaves amongst the printed
pages for annotations, as can be observed with later prompt copies, so

consequently all the prompter's warnings and instructions have been made against or within the relevant lines of text. Detailed notes have been made of any props required throughout the play, and occasionally actors' names are noted against the entrances of minor characters. Entrances are marked with a large ink *E*, marked in either margin; Figure 3.1.1 below shows three examples of this style of annotation from pages two and three of the source.[6] Langhans interprets these as 'the familiar cross-hatch marks (‑\\\\\\‑) found in King's Company promptbooks',[7] but I contend that they are clearly 'E's for 'Enter', as is evident in the representative example from the source below.
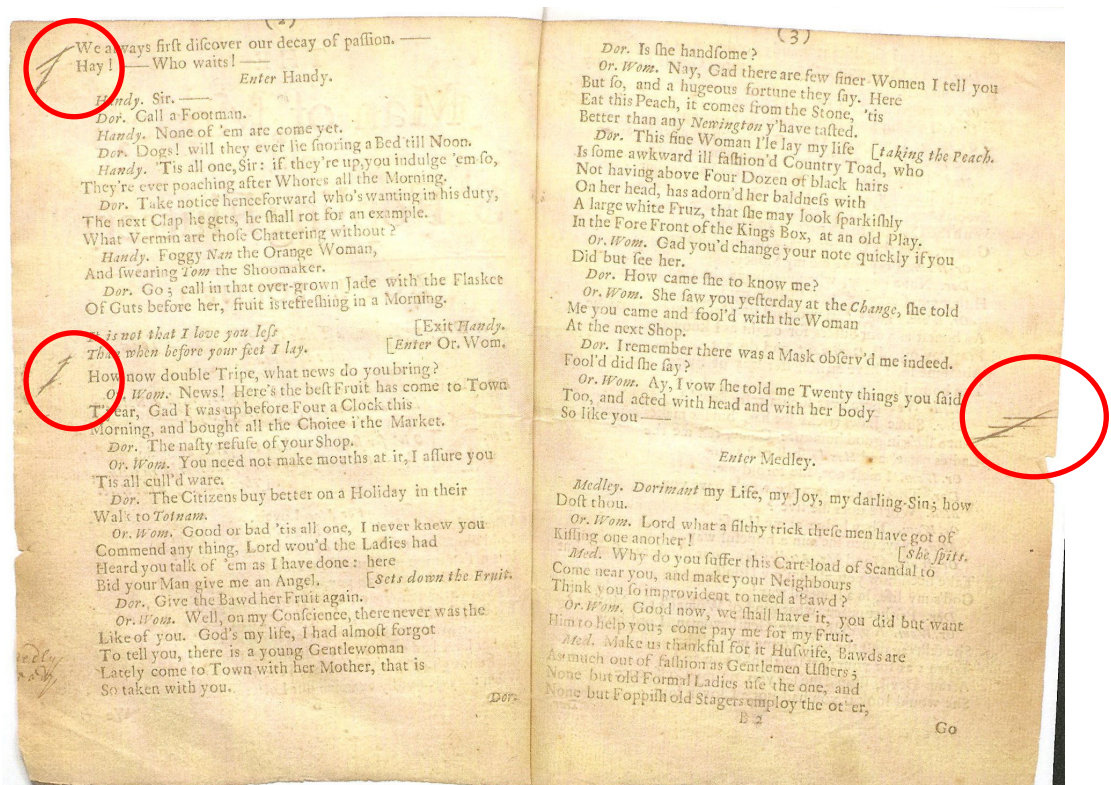
Figure 3.1.1: *The Man of Mode* (National Library of Scotland): pp.2 - 3.

As discussed above, unless characters are unnamed (in which case their function, such as 'footman'or 'page' is written), it is the character's name and not the actor's name which is written in the warning for each entrance. This method is consistent, and typical entries are 'Sr Fopling & Page ready' on page forty or 'Bellinda and Pert ready' on page eighty-one.[8]

When actors are required to carry props onstage with them, this is noted and the detail is explicit: Figure 3.1.2 below shows the first of such annotations, 'Oriang Woman ready w^t ffruit', at the bottom of page one of the source.
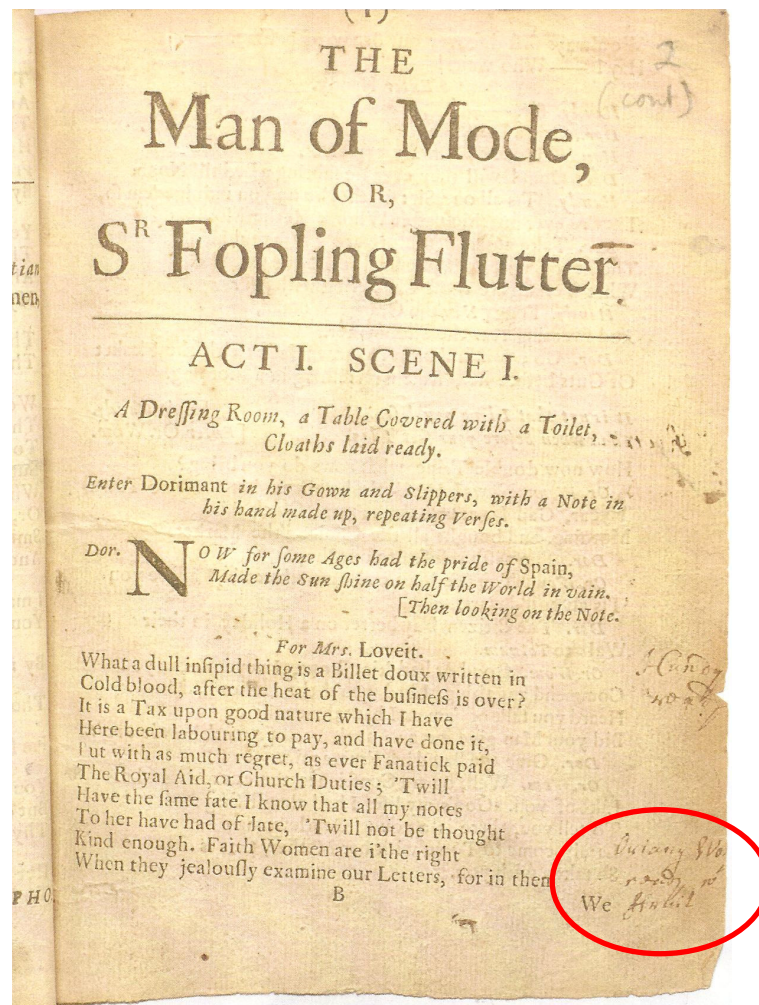
Figure 3.1.2: *The Man of Mode* (National Library of Scotland): p.1.

A full half-page is allowed from this warning note to her entrance, which is the second entrance marked 'E' on page two, shown in the first example, Figure 3.1.1. Further similarly-detailed annotations relating to the entrances of performers with props include 'Bellair w^t a Note ready' (p.18); 'Mrs. Loveit Pert Letter & Pocketglass' (p.21), and 'Old Bellair, Butler & a Bottle of Wine ready Glasses' (p.66). Warnings also appear for larger articles to be prepared in readiness, such as 'Table & Candle ready' (p.62) or 'A Table, Candle, Toilet, Handy tying up Linnen ready' (p.67) for entrance on the following pages, shown in Figure 3.1.3 below.
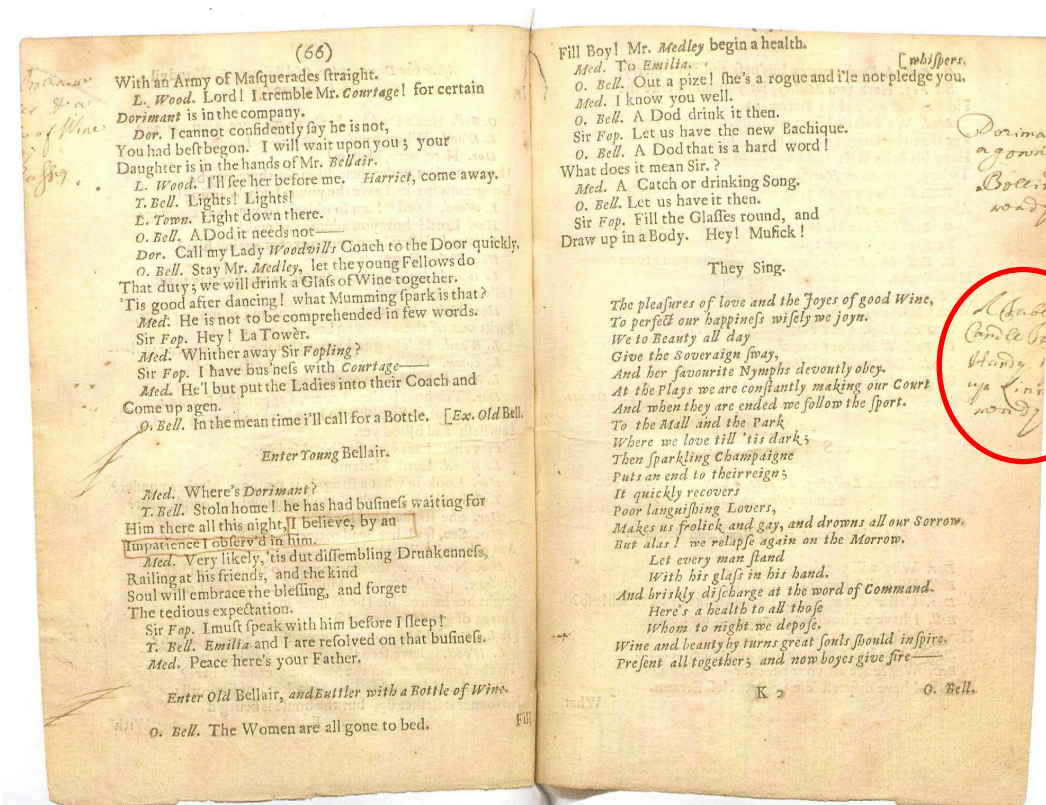
Figure 3.1.3: *The Man of Mode* (National Library of Scotland): p.67.

It is possible to be sure that this is indeed the content of the annotation, despite the loss of so much of the prompter's writing due to the edges of the pages having been cut, because the same information can be found in the

printed stage directions within the text on the following page. However, it is clear from this promptbook that the articles were to be readied at the point shown above, on page sixty-seven, since the stage attendants charged with setting them must have needed to be ready in time to carry them on and set them at the change of scene, hence the appearance of this annotation at this point.

It is not clear from the annotations whether props and articles of furniture were made ready and checked by the prompter himself, or by other staff under his direction;[9] but such detailed setting notes as those contained within this promptbook suggest an expectation of the accurate setting of those articles required, prior to performance, on each occasion that the play was offered, and the checking of such articles mid-performance prior to the performers making their entrances. This suggests a degree of diligence and care, both for the needs of the performers and the play, to be an ongoing characteristic of stage management within this company, in continuity with the support provided to the companies in the Elizabethan and Jacobean playhouses as established in the preceding chapter. [10]

Occasional notes also appear in this prompt copy in relation to costume. The annotation 'Enter Dorimant in his Gown and Bellinda' (p.68) is one of the few instances where the prompter has written 'Enter X and Y' beside an entrance; his large, handwritten letter *E*s usually suffice to denote entrances since character details are printed in the text. Although we are unlikely ever to know why these rare annotations have been made in relation to the

wardrobe, it can be suggested that this was an instance where perhaps vigilance, or perhaps assistance, was called for to ensure that this change of costume took place. Figure 3.1.4 below shows the warning note for this entrance; the note 'a gowne' can clearly be seen beneath the name 'Dorimant' and above 'Bellinda ready.'
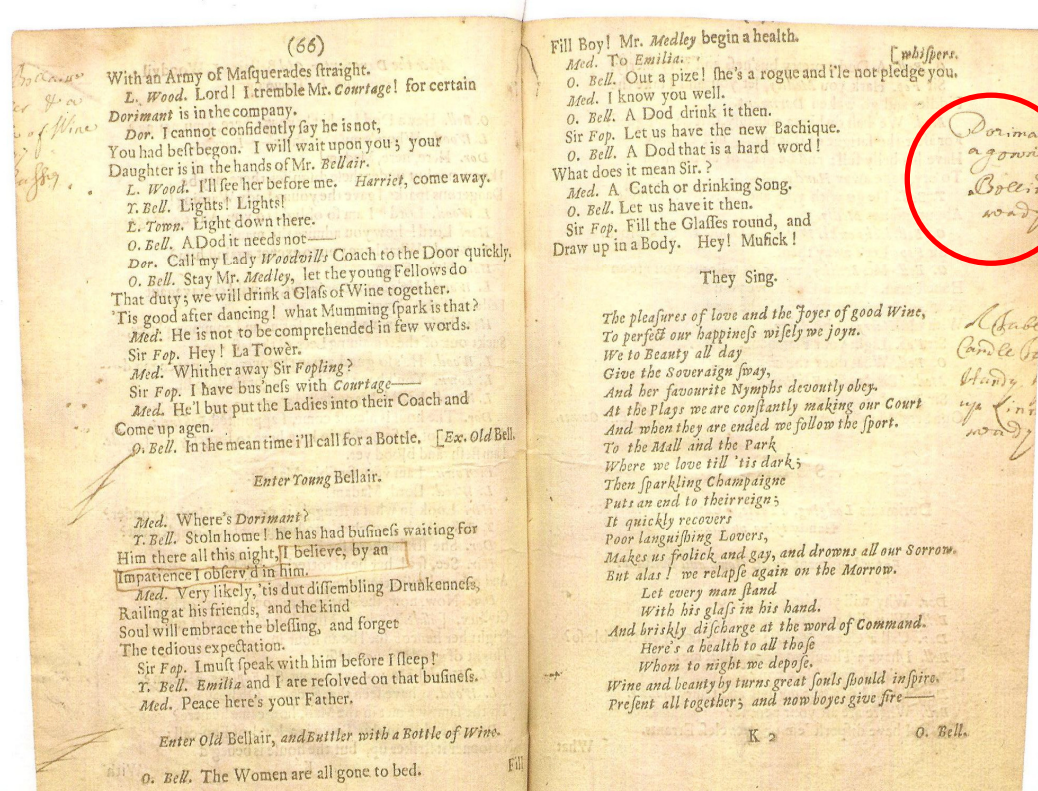
Figure 3.1.4:   *The Man of Mode* (National Library of Scotland): p.67.

A particular warning is written in towards the end of each act, there being five in this play, for the orchestra to prepare: 'Musick ready' is written, and a page and a half is allowed for these warnings on each occasion. The longer length of these warnings suggests that the prompter or a call boy may have had a longer journey from the prompt corner to the pit, to warn the musicians, than was needed when calling performers from their dressing or green rooms.

Additionally, at the end of Acts One, Two, Three, and Four, the prompter has written 'Strike' following the end of the text. Langhans comments:

> There are no scenic notes or scene-shift signals; either they were put in another book or, more likely, the Edinburgh theatre for which the promptbook was prepared had no scenery. The ends of all the acts are warned with the phrase "[M]usick/[re]ady" but the actual endings are not cued with the usual "Ring" but with "Strike" – strike the bell or gong, one guesses, or perhaps strike up the music. I have not found "Strike" used in other promptbooks of the period, and it may have been unique to Edinburgh. A London prompter working with Scottish actors would probably have used cue words with which those players were familiar.[11]

As Langhans indicates, 'Ring', 'R', 'R. A. B' (for 'Ring Act Bell') or 'W' (for 'whistle') are more common annotations at the ends of acts in promptbooks, as will be shown in later sources. Arguably the annotation 'strike' in this particular source is directly related to the scene changes between acts, as the instruction does not appear at the end of Act Five.

Some detailed annotation of blocking, that is, the recording of moves made by performers against the prompt copy of the text, is evident within this source. This takes the form of supplementary information marked next to character entrances; the chief examples are as follows. On p.44 the prompter has marked an entrance then written: 'Harriet, Y. Bellair, she pulling him', and shortly afterwards, in the same scene, an entrance is marked and then supplemented with the note: 'Young Bellair, Harriet and after them Dorimant standing at a distance' on p.46. Figure 3.1.5 below

shows the prompter's warning note for Bellinda and the footmen carrying a sedan chair; on p.74 of the text (not illustrated), the prompter has written 'Enter the Chair with Bellinda, the men set it down and open it' against the cuepoint in the text, but Figure 3.1.5 below shows the warning note for it on the preceding page (p.73) so that the cast may be sufficiently ready for this entrance. It is worthy of note that a full page-length is given between the warning and point of the entrance, rather than the customary half-page; arguably this indicates that the prompter allowed these performers an extra half-page to ready themselves for this particular entrance due to the additional complication of Elizabeth Youckney, playing Bellinda, having to be carried onstage in the sedan by two other actors playing the chair-men.[12]
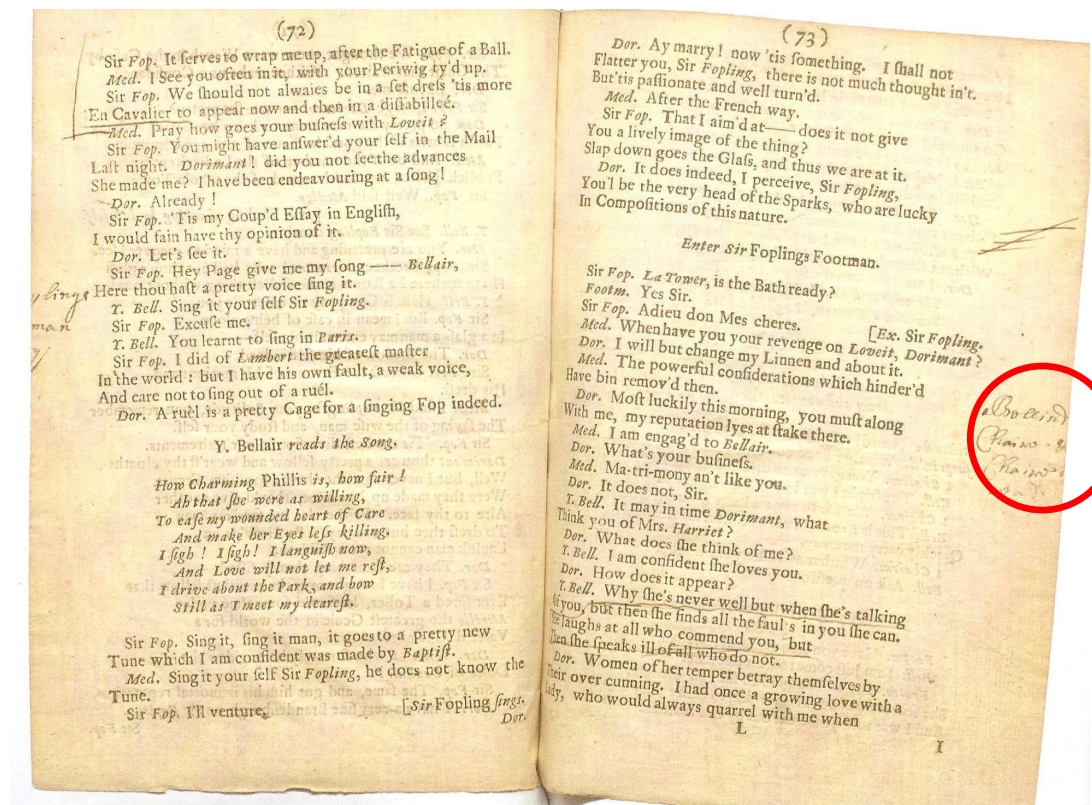
Figure 3.1.5: *The Man of Mode* (National Library of Scotland) p.73.

The final entry of note which I wish to explore for this case study occurs on p.77: there is, in the annotations around his entrance, an unusually detailed set of notes relating to the entrance of a footman. The warning for the footman's entrance is marked between a third and a half of the way down p.76: 'Footman ready'. The instruction in the printed text, '[Enter Footman]' a third of the way down p.77, is then marked with the prompter's *E*. Then, where the script directs 'Exit Footman' a couple of lines later, the prompter has written 'Footman ready to return' before marking his second entrance two-thirds of the way down the page with the mark *E* again. This clearly indicates a responsibility on the part of the prompter, who perhaps had to ensure that the actor playing the footman did not leave the stage after his first exit but remained in the wings for his re-entrance. Given the importance of pace and timing to the performance of comedy, this can be drawn upon, in conjunction with the examples demonstrated above, to argue a clear responsibility on the part of the prompter, whom Langhans identifies as Charles Booth, for the successful running of the company's performances of this play and a substantial degree of support for the cast in performance.

In assessing the value of this source to the investigation of the development of stage management, we must consider what the source tells us about stage management as reflected by the explicit and implicit information which it yields. We must also consider it in the light of what is known about the wider conditions in which the drama was produced in the Restoration theatre. A brief survey of registered stage staff from the patent companies is made available by Jocelyn Powell,[13] from which it can be seen that, in 1664,

the Duke's Company had twelve men registered as scene-keepers who would have worked under the prompter's direction. It is reasonable to suggest that the more prestigious King's Company would have had at least a similar number, although whether there would have been quite so many at the prompter's disposal in Edinburgh is less certain. Langhans has indicated the likelihood that the Edinburgh theatre in which the 1679 *Man of Mode* took place would have had little or no scenery,[14] but the promptbook indicates extensive setting and striking of props and furniture along with warning notes for them to be readied, as discussed above, so that we may be confident that the prompter certainly had a staff, however small, of scene-keepers whose actions he evidently directed.

In this, the prompter of the Restoration theatre can be directly linked with the book keeper of the early modern companies, although the title 'prompter' has evidently superceded the Elizabethan playhouse term. In seeking a catalyst for this development in nomenclature, we may look to the nature of theatrical production in the Restoration, late seventeenth-, and early eighteenth-century period as a possible candidate; Kalman Burnim has described group rehearsal as constituting 'little better than a *theatrical muster* . . . for the night's review, without little more preparation than their [the actors'] base appearances'[15] (Burnim's emphasis), whilst Stern discusses the convention that many performers would not invest time in learning a play properly until they felt confident that it would survive for a longer run than its opening performance.[16] In such circumstances, Stern's consequent speculation that 'actors will have continued to be heavily

dependent on the prompter during performance'[17] offers a plausible reason
why the service of prompting became inextricably linked with the person
who inherited the playhouse book keeper's function in the Restoration
theatre.

It is clear from the promptbook examined above, however, and from the
other primary evidence which will be considered below, that, in addition to
prompting the cast, the wide and authoritative remit of the pre-Civil War
book keeper was sustained in the function of the Restoration prompter, who
does not appear to have been the second-in-command to any higher 'stage
management' authority: the term 'stage manager' does not begin to emerge
until much later, and initially reflects the function of instructing the
performers in their movements and stage business which is now associated
with the director in the contemporary British theatre. Rather, records such
as wage lists indicate that the prompter was the head of a complement of
staff of his own, as Langhans has described in his comprehensive
descriptive bibliography:

> At least two people worked under a prompter in a major
> London theatre like Drury Lane or Covent Garden, and
> perhaps that was the minimum in all theatres, large and
> small. A Covent Garden paylist dated 22 September 1760
> (British Library Egerton MS 2271, published in *The London
> Stage*) has under "Prompters etc." three names: Stede at 10s.
> daily, Young (*recte* Younger) at 5s., and Robertson at 1s. 6d.
> Younger was probably the assistant or underprompter and
> Robertson perhaps the callboy. Stede's salary may have
> included money he would pay to other helpers. Prompters
> were responsible for preparing promptbooks, partbooks,

callbooks, and who knows what other documents, and for attending at rehearsals and performances. Many also acted (Richard Cross, Robert Hitchcock, and John Brownsmith are examples). Indeed, prompters were among the most important members of a theatre company.[18]

Langhans' evaluation of the importance of the prompters is easy to defend: their close and inextricable link to the business of the theatre, namely the production of the play, by their regulation of the technical elements which constitute it and their support of the actors preparing for it, is the unequivocal reason for this, in continuation of the essential support established by the prompter's antecedent, the book keeper, as other reputed scholars such as Bentley, Milling, and Gurr have recognised.

It has been established that 'study' or the learning of one's part in a play, both in terms of the lines to be spoken and the manner of their performance, was a private activity to be conducted alone or in small groups, possibly with the benefit of someone recognised as having sufficient experience to act as coach; the interpretation of a character was something which an actor was expected to bring, quite finished, to group rehearsal. Recent research into rehearsal practice at the Restoration indicates that supporting such activity is likely to have been a prominent aspect of the prompter's role. Stern has shown that:

> Study might be instructed by several people – the author, the
> manager, other actors, teachers from outside the theatre, and
> the prompter – all of whom shared the burden of helping the
> separate actors with their roles. [. . .] The theatre's emphasis

on private study meant that instructors were desirable for each
major actor – a job that no single person could fulfil.[19]

The evidence of the Drury Lane prompter W. R. Chetwood, drawn upon
below, confirms this, and supports Stern's assertion that:

> The need to train new actors (including adult women) from
> scratch at the beginning of the Restoration, and the part in that
> training process that managers, actors, and prompters
> necessarily took, drew the emphasis of all productions away
> from what playwrights could teach, towards what theatrical
> aficionados could teach.[20]

If this is the case, it can be suggested that an appreciation of the value to
theatrical production of the practical, current, and therefore critically valid
experience of theatre practitioners was emerging from the early days of the
Restoration theatre, driven by the particular circumstances of the time and
therefore supporting the argument of this thesis that professional stage
management has been in evidence, and has constituted an essential source of
support for fellow practitioners such as performers, consistently since the
emergence of the first professional playhouses.

If we accept the indications discussed above that the Restoration company
relied on the prompter both for prompts during performance of unfamiliar
plays and for instruction or coaching in their preparation, the *Man of Mode*
promptbook complements this with clear evidence that the prompter warned
each performer to be ready, or checked that they were ready, to go onstage,
a regular half-page in advance of each entrance; recorded the movements
that they were to make, in considerable detail in some cases, in the

promptbook; noted (and arguably checked) the props to be carried on with them, or particular items of costume to be worn; and recorded any particular stage business, such as the double entrance of the footman discussed above. Importantly, it confirms that, in continuity with the practice established in the early modern playhouses, the promptbook was a tool in which cued performance was enabled, centralised, and co-ordinated. The annotations readying furniture to be carried on, and the instructions to strike the bell for music at each act-end, are clear indicators of cued performance in continuation of the practices identified from the pre-Civil War playhouses, and establish the function of prompter as key to both the support and the regulation of the play in performance at this period.

3.2:   *The Prompter* (1734) and *A General History of the Stage* (1749)

Langhans has indicated above that, in the late seventeenth century, the staging facilities at provincial theatres did not match the sophistication of those at the two patent houses. As the century drew to a close and the eighteenth century dawned, the technical capabilities of the Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields theatres continued to evolve. In his *Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber*, the comedian, playwright, actor-manager, and ultimately Poet Laureate Colley Cibber recorded the patent companies' tactic of introducing impressive staging in an attempt to maintain competition with their rivals, the other patent house:

> These two excellent Companies were both prosperous for some
> few Years, 'till their Variety of Plays began to be exhausted:
> Then, of course, the better Actors (which the King's seem to

have been allow'd) could not fail of drawing the greater
Audiences.   Sir William Davenant, therefore, Master of the
Duke's Company, to make Head against their Success, was
forc'd to add Spectacle and Musick to Action; and to introduce a
new Species of Plays, since call'd Dramatick Opera's, [sic] of
which kind were the Tempest, Psyche, Circe and others, all set
off with the most expensive Decorations of Scenes and Habits,
with the best Voices and Dancers.[21]

The result of more ambitious technical capacity is a need for more stage
attendants to operate the various mechanisms; a large corps of people would
undoubtedly have been needed in order to meet the complex and detailed
demands in theatres whose managements wished to develop to the full the
emerging technological capabilities.   As this study progresses to explore
evidence demonstrating how professional performance was supported and
managed during the eighteenth century, the means by which the attendants
who were engaged to operate the stage and scenic machinery were co-
ordinated, and the consolidation of the prompter as a position of authority
over all that took place on the stage, will be explored.   To initiate this, two
sources will be analysed which provide an insight into the role of prompter
in the mid-eighteenth century: Aaron Hill's satirical periodical *The
Prompter*, and William Rufus Chetwood's *A General History of the Stage.*

In 1734 the dramatist Aaron Hill chose 'The Prompter' for the tongue-in-
cheek title of his new, twice-weekly theatrical newspaper.   The manner in
which the theatrical prompter subtly advised and guided his actors through
each performance allegedly inspired Hill to so call his publication, since the
professed intention of 'The Prompter' was to 'prompt' or advise changes in

the performance styles and policies of the patent houses. The opinions expressed amount to a satirical and sarcastic commentary on the drama being offered and about the acting that was observed in the London theatres between 1734 and 1736; yet it is valuable to this study as a primary source since it confirms many details regarding how the prompter who was observed, W.R. Chetwood, actually exercised control over the various practical elements contributory to performance at the theatre where he was engaged at the time: the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

According to Hill's testimony,[22] the prompter managed performance not only by whistling or ringing for scene changes and supplying any lines forgotten by the company, but also by softly calling instructions about positioning, blocking and plot points to the cast in general when he considered this to be required. The man whom Hill observed, and in whose 'honour' Hill was inspired to name his thinly-veiled artistic recommendations to the patent houses, was William Rufus Chetwood. Chetwood held the position of prompter at Drury Lane between 1722 and 1741; he was observed at his duties in Drury Lane's prompt corner by Hill, who published his observations in the following manner:

> In one of my walks behind the scenes [. . .] I observed an humble but useful officer standing in a corner and attentively perusing a book which lay before him. He never forsook his post but, like a general in the field, had many *aides de camp* about him, whom he dispatched with his orders, and I could perceive that though he seemed not to command, yet all his instructions were punctually complied with, and that in the modest character of an adviser **he had the whole management**

and direction of that little commonwealth. [My emphasis]. I enquired into his name and office and was informed that he was the prompter. [. . .] [H]e, without ever appearing on the stage himself, has some influence over everything that is transacted upon it [. . .] He stands in a corner, unseen and unobserved by the audience, but diligently attended to by everyone who plays a part; yet tho' he finds them all very observant of him, he presumes nothing upon his own capacity; he has a book before him, from which he delivers his advice and instructions. [. . .] He takes particular care not only to supply those that are *out* in their parts with hints and directions proper to set them right, but also, by way of caution, drops words to those who are perfect, with an intention to keep them from going wrong. [. . .] I have already taken notice of the scouts and messengers which attend him. By dispatching one of these he can, at a minute's warning, bring the greatest characters of antiquity, or the pleasantest of the present times, upon the stage, for the improvement or diversion of the audience. [. . .] Among his *Instrumenta Regni*, his implements of government, I have taken particular notice of a little bell which hangs over his arm. By the tinkling of this bell, if a lady in Tragedy be in the spleen for the absence of her lover, or a hero in the dumps for the loss of a battle, he can conjure up soft music to sooth their distress. Nay, if a wedding happens in a comedy, he can summon up fiddlers to dispel care by a country dance. [. . .] Another tool of his authority is a whistle which hangs about his neck. This is an instrument of great use and significance. [. . .] At the least blast of it I have seen houses move as it were upon wings, cities turned into forests, and dreary deserts converted into superb palaces. [. . .] Therefore, when we daily see so many men act amiss, can we entertain any doubt that a good Prompter is wanting?[23]

In the extract above, the promptbook, prompt corner, the prompter's bell and whistle, and several 'prompter's aides' (described by Hill as 'scouts and messengers': call boys to fetch the members of the cast, and possibly assistants to be despatched with messages to the orchestra or stage attendants as Hill suggests), are detailed. Hill's suggestion that 'he had the whole management and direction' of the stage is important, because it indicates that those carrying out the scene-changes, furniture setting, and the operation of effects were co-ordinated by the prompter. The means by which this was achieved, i.e. the central tool in which the details of those elements were recorded, and from which they were subsequently regulated, was, of course, the promptbook.

A suggestion of the prompter as an authoritative figure, his 'instructions punctually complied with' and with 'influence over everything transacted' upon the stage, is also intimated by Hill's account, and it is interesting to note that he observed Chetwood to take 'particular care not only to supply those that are *out* in their parts with hints and directions proper to set them right, but also, by way of caution, drops words to those who are perfect, with an intention to keep them from going wrong.' This information, although its bias against the incumbent theatre managements must be borne in mind, is significant since it can be said to indicate an active management of the performance by this particular prompter in this instance. It also alludes to the role which Chetwood may have played in supporting the private study of certain actors when learning their parts, as introduced above. Importantly, the source not only confirms that Chetwood cued

elements of performance, but also provides evidence of *how* he did so: a bell
was used to cue music, and a whistle initiated scene-changes.

Whilst Hill's account of Chetwood at work offers an insight into the
function of the eighteenth-century prompter during performance,
Chetwood's own published works afford us a similarly illuminating
perspective on the backstage world which he as prompter inhabited.
Chetwood was born c1700 and died in 1766; following his career at Drury
Lane he was prompter to Thomas Sheridan at the Smock Alley Theatre in
Dublin between 1742 and 1748, and afterwards returned to London where
he established himself as a bookseller. He wrote a handful of plays, satires
and 'imaginary voyages' as well as two operas and two theatre histories, *A*
General History of the Stage, From its Origins in Greece down to the
present Time in 1749 following his retirement from the theatre, and *The*
British Theatre in 1752, in which he gives himself an entry and describes
himself thus:

> Mr. William Rufus Chetwood.
> This author was for twenty Years Prompter to *Drury-lane*
> Theatre, and accounted very excellent in that Business; he was
> for some time an eminent Bookseller in *Covent-Garden*, and
> has wrote several Pieces of Entertainment . . . [24]

It is perhaps unfortunate that this is Chetwood's own appraisal of himself,
since its subjectivity renders it less reliable for the purposes of research than
a testimonial from a colleague would be.   Unfortunate because a
contemporary might well have described Chetwood in similar terms to those
that he himself chose: he had a good career as prompter for twenty years at

London's greatest theatre, and nearly ten years at Ireland's. Hill's account of him in *The Prompter* reflects an opinion of Chetwood as a respected prompter who maintained high standards and discipline backstage, and his own reactions to technical 'blunders' in performance can be argued to reflect both integrity and a high standard of professional care for the responsibilities with which he was charged. He was an active contributor to the theatrical canon of his day, as indicated above, and in his two histories, although their scope is limited chiefly to biographies of Chetwood's own acquaintances from the English and Irish theatres, he is generous in his appraisals of those whose careers he remembers in both works. It is perhaps our misfortune that Chetwood was driven to writing his own testimonial, which he clearly felt himself rightly to deserve, in the absence of any of his colleagues writing one for him (yet another instance of the enforced anonymity of the stage manager), since his personal bias must indicate caution in accepting those parts of Chetwood's testimony which reflect his own achievements. Fortunately, however, his writings also provide invaluable primary evidence of the nature and the fabric of professional theatrical production at the time when he was practising, and, since the majority of references to his own work as a prompter are far more casual than his accounts of his more prestigious achievements later in his life, Chetwood's histories constitute a major and valid primary source in the investigation of the development of professional stage management practice which it is very appropriate to examine here.

Chetwood's first history, *A General History of the Stage*, not only offers an insight into the performers and repertory of the period, but also affords us an inside view of the theatrecraft of the early- to mid-eighteenth century, since its author had the benefit of considerable experience at Drury Lane, Smock Alley, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Richmond, and Belfast. His readers could learn, for example, that:

> *Foils* are the Name of those Swords us'd in the *Theatre,* with the Edges ground off, and a blunted Point[25]

or that:

> Green-Rooms are the Chambers where the principal Performers retire, till they are called to their Entrances where they are to go on the Stage.[26]

These terms of reference endure in the vocabulary of contemporary theatre practice today, and such insights are valuable contributions to our wider knowledge about the theatrical heritage which relates to stage management.

Amongst the many performers and backstage workers discussed by Chetwood was one James Williams, who by Chetwood's own definition must have worked closely with him in his professional capacity:

> Mr. James Williams, Must not be forgot, since what he does, he does well;   [. . .] In one ingredient to make up a Play, I think him the best I have ever known; that is, a *Property-man* [s].

In his footnote, Chetwood explains that:

> [s] *Property-man* is the Person that receives a Bill from the *Prompter*, for what is necessary in every new or reviv'd Play; as Purses, Wine, Suppers, Poison, Daggers, Halters, Axes,

> and many more Implements of Execution, with a thousand
> other, &c. &c. &c.

before lyrically appending:

> *His bloodless Weapons only kill in Jest,*
> *And those that drink his Poisons fare the best.*[27]

The rhyming couplet aside, useful information can be gleaned from this entry and from others like it. For example, this extract allows us to infer that the provision of a 'bill' or list to those responsible for providing the stage props may have been a recognised responsibility of the eighteenth-century prompter, since it was evidently a recognised procedure in the production process at Drury Lane. It may be further argued that if the prompter was providing such information to the property-man, then it is likely that he may also have provided similar 'bills' to the carpenters, dressers, flymen, scene-drawers, and other stage staff under his direct or indirect supervision. This entry from Chetwood is therefore key evidence in the investigation of the development of stage management, since it clearly indicates a specific responsibility of the Drury Lane prompter throughout the 1720s and 1730s.

In addition to this perspective on the duties central to the prompter's function, *A General History of the Stage* also affords an insight into the wider role of the prompter. The administrative aspects of the role of the playhouse book keeper, as analysed in the first two chapters, is echoed in a comment directed against the egos of certain performers in his experience

which suggests Chetwood's involvement in preparing copy for the printers who produced the playbills:

> Distinguished Characters in Bills were not in Fashion, at the Time these Plays were perform'd; they were printed in Order according to the Drama as they Stood, not regarding the Merit of the Actor [. . .] and so every other Actor appear'd according to his Dramatic Dignity, all of the same-siz'd Letter. But latterly, I can assure my Readers, I have found it a difficult task to please some *Ladies*, as well as *Gentlemen*, because I could not find Letters large enough to Please them . . . [28]

The intent of this comment is clearly to remark upon the conceit of some performers whom Chetwood had encountered with regard to their billing, wholly unrelated, at first glance, to stage management; however, this extract invites us to consider that the prompter may have carried information directly to the theatre's printers regarding the following day's play, the cast, any benefit details, and so forth. Whilst a minor detail in itself, this extract affords a view of the eighteenth-century prompter in a supporting and liaison capacity beyond his perceived realms of rehearsal and the stage. However, in demonstrating a further aspect of his function, it also indicates the origin of what would become a major responsibility of the Victorian stage manager: the generation and carrying to the printers of publicity 'puffs' in advance of spectacular pantomimes and productions.

Evidence of a key aspect of the prompter's role during the rehearsal of a play can be drawn from the memoirs which Chetwood recorded. In confirmation of the practice introduced above, it can be discerned, reading

between the lines of Chetwood's discussion of the performers of the day
with whom he was acquainted, that responsibility for rehearsing performers
and instructing them in their moves was incorporated into his role, as
indicated by an anecdote concerning a dancer, Mademoiselle Chateauneuf,
which begins:

> When I was instructing her in the Part of *Polly*, she told me, a
> Lady that morning was surprised to hear from a Gentleman
> of her acquaintance, that she was taken for a Boy in
> Disguise . . . [29]

The very casual reference to his 'instructing' the dancer, or 'giving out the
business' as it is sometimes described, supports Stern's conclusion that this
was a feature of the prompter's role. In the following example, in which the
engagement of the actress Mrs Furnival is recounted, there are indications
that Chetwood could also in fact influence the plays offered at Drury Lane,
as well as some of the casting:

> I cannot tell when Mrs. *Furnival* first commenced Actress;
> but I know her Reputation for a Stage-performer was so
> great, that a Person of high Birth and Station, who had seen
> her act several capital Parts at the Theatre in *York*, prevail'd
> on the Manager of *Drury-Lane* to send for her in the Year
> 1737. Accordingly, I received a Commission for that
> Purpose, which she approved of. The first Part she acted, at
> her Arrival in *London*, was that of the *Scornful Lady*, in a
> Comedy of *Beaumont* and *Fletcher's* that bears the Title. I
> own it was a Character of my own choosing, and for no
> other Reason, but that the Play had slept since the Death of
> Mrs. *Oldfield* . . . [30]

Although anecdotal in style, these selections do indicate the close engagement of Chetwood with the repertory of Drury Lane. The implication that he could suggest plays and even casting choices to the management is remarkable, yet not unprecedented: Chetwood recounts a famous occasion of John Downes having allocated parts to the cast and conducted rehearsals apparently quite independently of the manager Thomas Betterton, who received the following shock when Dryden's *The Indian Emperour* opened with Thomas Griffith, a young man short in stature and becoming known as a comedian, cast in the role of Pizarro, no-one else having been available:

> Mr. *Betterton* being a little indisposed, would not venture out to Rehearsal, for fear of increasing his Indisposition [. . .] But, when he came ready, at the Entrance, his Ears were pierc'd with a Voice not familiar to him: He cast his Eyes upon the Stage, where he beheld the diminutive *Pizarro*, with a Truncheon as long as himself (his own Words). He steps up to *Downs* the Prompter, and cry'd, *Zounds,* Downs! what *sucking Scaramouch have you sent on there?* Sir, reply'd *Downs*, *He's good enough for a* Spaniard; *the part is small.* [. . .][31]

This example (which is not depicted as being unusual) of a prompter recasting a role for a public performance without the prior knowledge of the manager reminds us that the authority and experience of 'theatrical aficionados' was valued in 'the confident professional theatre', as Stern has described.[32] Prompters had generally begun their theatrical careers as performers, although there were also men such as Downes, Chetwood, and, later, Richard Cross and William Hopkins who spent most of their working

lives as prompters, and their experience and theatrecraft was clearly valued, as the convention of involving prompters in the instruction of actors in their private study demonstrates. The audience perception that the prompter had the authority to change the plays to be performed, as the diaries of David Garrick's prompters show, further reinforces the perceived authority of the role, as will be demonstrated below.

Meanwhile, it is also appropriate to consider that, in an age when audiences were not so much attracted by the characters created by the playwrights as by famous actors' interpretations of them,[33] a prompter who could bring continuity (and a memory for detail) to a company in which it was desirable for new actors to be able to mimic the performances of their predecessors was a valuable asset. Colley Cibber described the manner in which each patent company's repertory was decided upon:

> . . . they had a private Rule or Agreement, which both Houses were happily ty'd down to, which was, that no Play acted at one House, should ever be attempted at the other. All the capital Plays therefore of Shakespear, Fletcher, and Ben. Johnson, were divided between them, by the Approbation of the Court, and their own alternate Choice: So that when Hart was famous for Othello, Betterton had no less a reputation for Hamlet.[34]

The annotated promptbook was naturally an important tool in the revival of productions in the company's repertory, because it was an imperative objective to ensure that the company achieved as accurate an 'imitation' of the original performance as possible, with subsequent actors 'impersonating'

their predecessors' performances in their roles with no apparent desire for a
fresh interpretation. A further example from Chetwood illustrates this:

> Mr. Ralph Elrington, Is the younger Brother of the late
> eminent Player *Thomas Elrington*, Esq; born in *England*, and
> came early upon the Stage   [. . .] Since his elder Brother's
> Death he has undertaken many of his Parts, which he copies
> as near as possible.[35]

This comment invites us to consider the extent to which it was expected of
the prompter to keep actors' performances to 'as near as possible' copies of
previous performers' incarnations of the roles in the repertory. If the
companies placed more emphasis on accurate imitation of previous
performances than on fresh or innovative interpretations at each revival of
the plays in the canon, an impression emerges of the prompter as a re-stager,
in whom a long memory and extensive experience of previous incarnations
of roles would have been essential qualities. This, coupled with the
evidence discussed above from Hill's, Cibber's, and Chetwood's
recollections, suggests not a prompter fulfilling the modern and
anachronistic role of 'director' but a role very much of its time. Theatres
were now being managed by the leading actors of the companies, whose
personal attendance as the other actors were being prepared in their roles
was no longer a feasible expectation. The experience of their prompter,
usually a former actor himself, whose knowledge of the older styles and
mannerisms of performance enabled the re-staging of the repertory in a
theatre in which innovation in performance was not in vogue, can only have
increased in value to the managers whose responsibilities now extended
beyond the stage. The cumulative evidence of the sources drawn upon

above establishes the role of prompter as a practitioner with genuine authority, whose experience was valued, who was closely involved in preparing actors for their performances, and who co-ordinated cued aspects of each performance such as scene-changes and musical accompaniment by means of the prompt copy of the play, his bell and whistle, and an extensive complement of backstage hands.[36] In particular, as prompter for twenty years at Drury Lane as part of a career which spanned over forty years of intimate association with the stage, Chetwood's evidence offers an exciting insight into the development of stage management practice at this prominent theatre towards the middle years of the eighteenth century, which is a unique and valuable resource for scholarship.

3.3   Emergent Conventions in the Marking of Promptbooks.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the American scholar Edward Langhans undertook a comprehensive survey of all extant promptbooks which could be identified as having been prepared for or used in professional performance in Britain and Ireland in the eighteenth century. This was published in 1987 as a descriptive bibliography, in which facsimile or graphic representations of prompt annotations are provided from promptbooks marked for production. Scrutiny of this resource reveals the development of conventions of basic codification within prompt annotations, and patterns of practice begin to emerge. Of note is the symbol ☉, which can be traced back to the 1705 season at Drury Lane where it appears in a promptbook for John Dryden's 1691 play *An Evening's Love, or, The Mock Astrologer*. Langhans has noted that:

The first recorded performance of the play after 1691 was at
Drury Lane on 21 April 1705 [. . .] The play was presented
occasionally through 19 January 1706 and then not seen again
until 14 October 1713 ("Not Acted these Six Years"). The
work ran through 22 January 1714. On 30 May 1716 it was
revived again, but only for one performance. Its next
appearance, on 18 October 1717, was the last one recorded in
the eighteenth century in London. Thomas Newman was the
Drury Lane prompter by 1703 and continued through the 1713-
14 season. [. . .] [W]hile most of the notes in this copy are
probably related to the 1716 and 1717 performances, some
(especially the pencil notes and cancelled or altered notes)
belong to the revivals of 1705-6 and 1713-14 and are
Newman's.[37]

Figure 3.3.1 below shows the symbol, as drawn by Chetwood in a 1735
promptbook for a different production, Thomas Otway's *The History and
Fall of Caius Marius*, at either side of the printed title for Act II, Scene 3
marking the change of scene. The symbol is large, and written in ink; calls
can be seen in the margin.
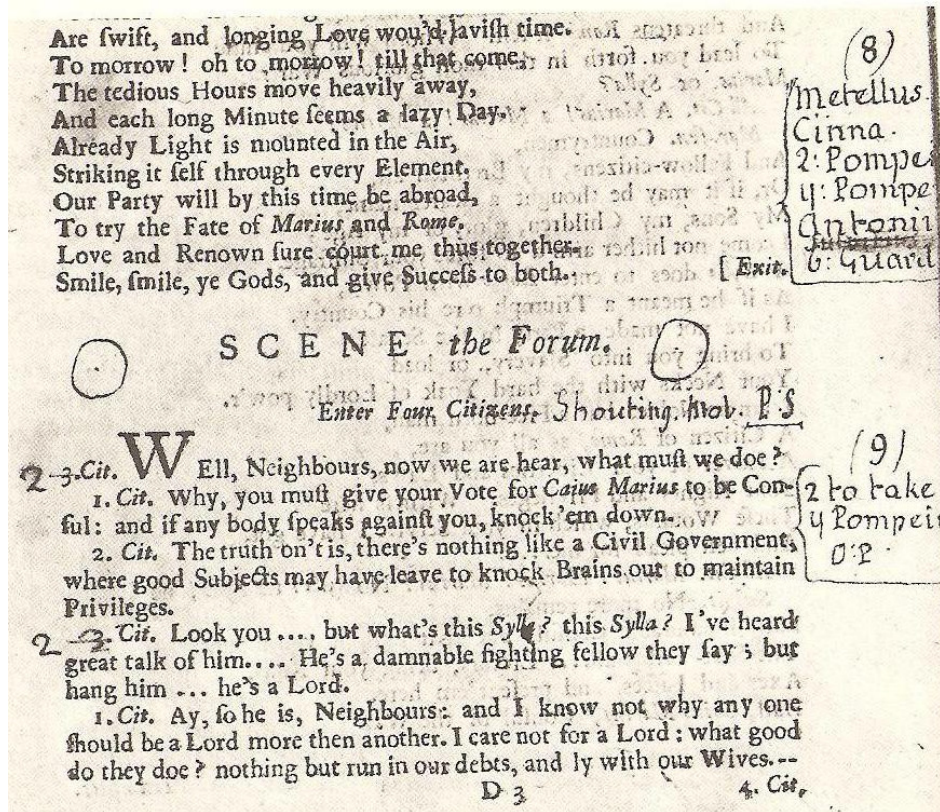
Figure 3.3.1:   Annotations by W. R. Chetwood from a 1735 Drury Lane
                performance of Thomas Otway's *The History and Fall of
                Caius Marius.*[38]

If the majority of the notes relating to scene changes in *An Evening's Love*
are original to the 1705-6 season, then they, along with the ⊙ symbol, can
be ascribed to Newman; if dating from the later, 1716-17 performances, they
are Chetwood's.   However, there are two trends, discernable from the
promptbooks surveyed by Langhans, which support the conclusion that the
codified symbol ⊙ with which the ends of scenes are marked may have
originated with Thomas Newman.   The first is the subsequent use of the
symbol in Drury Lane promptbooks by Chetwood, as illustrated above, and
by his successors throughout the eighteenth century: Richard Cross, William
Hopkins, Ralph Harwood, James Wrighten (and his under-prompter John

Stokes, who made most of his prompt annotations for him), and William Powell.

The second indicator of the symbol's provenance from Newman is its appearance in the very few sources to have survived from Covent Garden, which saw most of its stock of promptbooks destroyed by fire in 1808. Langhans' survey identifies three promptbooks[39] from performances at Lincoln's Inn Fields, all of which use the ☉ symbol at scene changes and one of which[40] uses further symbols # and ☿ to mark sound effects and the use of the house curtain respectively.   He further identifies seven promptbooks[41] from performances at Covent Garden, of which four[42] mark scene-changes with the symbol ☉, four[43] use a circled R for 'ring', three[44] use a circled W for 'whistle', two[45] mark scene-changes with a circle with no central dot, and one[46] uses a double-ringed circle with a central dot.

In questioning the relevance of such evidence from Covent Garden sources to the identification of a prompt symbol originating at Drury Lane, it is important to consider a significant link between the two patent houses which explains the emerging commonality of practice, and which introduces the 'alternative triumvirate' of three practitioners whose contribution to establishing a commonality of stage management practice is of critical significance. These are the prompters Thomas Newman, John Stede, and W. R. Chetwood, whose career trajectories are linked in such a way that annotatory practices which they established and shared can be argued to have initiated the common visual language of stage management, which

relates the annotations of practitioners from the early modern and restoration theatre to those of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries and makes them readable and recognisable for stage managers of the present age. The evidence which supports this assertion is compelling, and is of vital significance to the evolution of professional stage management.

John Stede,[47] who worked as prompter at Lincoln's Inn Fields between 1716 and 1721 and again between 1722 and 1732, before becoming prompter at Covent Garden when John Rich opened the new building later that same year (where Stede remained until 1760), is believed to have served as under-prompter to Thomas Newman at the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket during the spring of 1710.[48] He is further believed to have been engaged as prompter at Drury Lane during the 1721-22 season, the season in which Chetwood engaged as prompter at Lincoln's Inn Fields, following a six-year period as Drury Lane's prompter and before returning there for a further nineteen seasons between 1722 and 1741.[49] Stede's season at Drury Lane, with the likelihood of exposure to promptbooks annotated by both Newman and Chetwood, was therefore sandwiched between Chetwood's first engagement at Drury Lane, which lasted six years, and his second engagement there, following which Chetwood remained at Drury Lane for a further nineteen years. Chetwood, meanwhile, joined Drury Lane in the 1714-15 season, overlapping with Thomas Newman's final season as prompter there.[50] The opportunity for practice to be shared would clearly and unavoidably have arisen, with both Stede and Chetwood exposed to Newman's working methods, through directly working with him at the

Queen's Theatre, Haymarket (Stede, 1710) or at Drury Lane (Chetwood, 1714) respectively.   It can therefore emphatically be argued that the combination of Chetwood's exposure to Newman's annotatory methods during this 1714-15 season, manifested in the promptbook for Dryden's *An Evening's Love* which remained in the Drury Lane repertory until 1717 and in which both of their hands are in evidence, and Stede's exposure to Newman's annotatory methods whilst under-prompter to him at the Queen's, established the earliest and most prolific convention of a codified symbol within British professional prompt annotations: the ⊙ mark.

This identification of a key aspect of the development of professional stage management practice is supported not only by the evidence of the prompt annotations themselves, but by the known circumstances of the practitioners involved, and the contrasting evidence of prompt materials both from other theatres and from the patent theatres prior to Newman's practice.   In 1721-22, Stede (interrupting a total of forty-three years' service at Lincoln's Inn Fields / Covent Garden) spends a season at Drury Lane, the same season that Chetwood (interrupting a total of twenty-five years' service at Drury Lane) spends as prompter at Lincoln's Inn Fields.[51]   In 1739, Richard Cross becomes under-prompter to Stede at Covent Garden, before succeeding Chetwood as prompter at Drury Lane.   The combination of the 'swap season' of 1721-22, in which Chetwood left Drury Lane for a season at Lincoln's Inn Fields while Stede left Lincoln's Inn Fields for a season at Drury Lane, and the two seasons spent by Richard Cross as under-prompter to Stede at Covent Garden before succeeding Chetwood at Drury Lane,

compound the opportunities for common practice to have been consolidated at these two patent houses. Such commonality is not evident within sources from the Theatre Royal, Haymarket,[52] with which theatre neither Newman, Stede, nor Chetwood are associated, and where a clear tradition of marking the ends of scenes with the word 'Ring' written in full can be seen to be developing within Haymarket promptbooks, devoid of the use of symbols. Nor is it evident in sources from provincial performances,[53] where there is great variation in both the level of detail recorded in promptbooks and the manner in which such details are marked. Furthermore, three important facts support the initiation of the codified prompt symbol being ascribed to Thomas Newman:

- Neither a promptbook believed to have been annotated by John Downes for Thomas Betterton's troupe at Lincoln's Inn Fields from 1704, from a production of *Measure for Measure, or, Beauty the Best Advocate*, nor a promptbook from a performance of Elkanah Settle's *Pastor Fido, or, The Good Shepherd* at Dorset Garden on 30th October 1706, contain the ⊙ mark; in the 'Covent Garden tradition' (Lincoln's Inn Fields – Dorset Garden – Covent Garden), the mark originates with John Stede, who trained under Newman.

- A promptbook of Chetwood's from the 1707 season at Smock Alley, Dublin, shows no use of the ⊙ symbol, further suggesting that it originated with Newman (with whom Chetwood did not work until 1714).

- The symbol does not become evident at Drury Lane until Newman's time (1702 – 1714 intermittently); it does not appear in Chetwood's work until after 1714; and in 1714, significantly, Chetwood and Newman work together at Drury Lane.

The loss due to fire of so many of Covent Garden's promptbooks prevents an extensive comparison between materials from both patent houses, but there is strong evidence from the small number of surviving sources analysed above to demonstrate clear commonality of practice within the prompt materials from Covent Garden, and the promptbooks of Drury Lane, which reflect the Newman / Chetwood practice of using the blank circle, the circled dot, the circled R for 'ring' and the circled W for 'whistle' throughout the entire eighteenth century.

Dryden's alternative title of *The Mock Astrologer* for the play whose promptbook enables the identification of this link between practice at the two patent houses is a peculiarly pertinent one in relation to the actual symbols with which prompters began, in the eighteenth century, to codify their annotations. Langhans has stated, in his earlier work *Restoration Promptbooks*, that:

> The circle-and-dot symbol was a cue for a scene shift. Since the cue itself was a whistle, perhaps the symbol was intended to picture the end of a whistle, but the symbol may have been borrowed from astronomy, as are some eighteenth-century promptbook symbols.[54]

Langhans does not expand on this tantalising suggestion regarding the origin

of prompt annotations, but an exploration of astronomical symbols confirms

an array of marks common to mathematics and astronomy which begin to

appear with frequency and, increasingly, consistency on the pages of

promptbooks from the eighteenth century, throughout the nineteenth

century, and beyond the midpoint of the twentieth. The ☉ mark is the

astronomical symbol for the sun; the ☿ mark, used by John Stede to signify

curtain cues in 1718, is the symbol for the planet Mercury. In the same

source, ♃, which is the astronomical symbol for Jupiter, is used to mark the

start of a dance. The mark ✳, recognisable to us as an asterisk, is known by

astronomers as a sextile, and is representative of a star. Further symbols

will be addressed as they begin to appear in later promptbooks.

Before proceeding to consider the practical environment in which

eighteenth-century drama was staged, it will briefly be noted that the

abbreviations PS and OP are used throughout the *An Evening's Love, or,*

The Mock Astrologer source to indicate the prompt side and opposite prompt

side of the stage, supplemented with LDPS, MDPS, UDPS, OPLD, MDOP,

and UDOP when lower, middle, or upper doors are specified for entrances

and exits on either side of the stage. Scene-changes are marked with ☉

throughout all five acts of the play, and sound cues (music, trampling,

knocks) are marked with **X**, sometimes in a pyramid of six.[55] Dating as this

source does from the beginning of the century, and reflecting the arguably

influential practice of two identified prompters, Newman and Chetwood, as

discussed above, the marks within it provide an appropriate benchmark from

which to establish the basic annotatory conventions which will become familiar within primary stage management materials as the century progresses. Having established this, consideration will now be given to the practical environment in which the drama of the eighteenth century was staged, since this was the environment in which the prompter principally worked and in which the co-ordinatory and managerial aspects of the prompter's function developed.

3.4   The Eighteenth-Century Stage Environment.

Richard Southern's *Changeable Scenery* provides a comprehensive insight into the artistic and mechanical innovations which were developed for the eighteenth century stage, in particular the system of grooves cut into the stage floor and shutters which slid on and offstage in them, enabling a series of scenic pieces to be set prior to the commencement of the performance and rapidly drawn to reveal a different setting for each scene. The scenic conventions established by the later eighteenth century were summarised in practical terms by Langhans at the beginning of his descriptive bibliography of eighteenth-century promptbooks, which research led him to the following precise conclusions:

> The main curtain was just behind the proscenium opening, and upstage of the curtain on each side of the acting area were the first sets of grooves holding sliding flat wings on which were painted perspective settings depicting forests, palaces, chambers, seascapes, and the like. Above each pair of wings hung painted borders (horizontal canvas pieces) representing ceiling beams, clouds, overhanging branches, and so forth.

Another function of the wings and borders was masking the
backstage area from the view of the audience. When the wings
on each side were pulled off to reveal a different setting
directly behind them, the borders were pulled up to reveal a
matching scene. [. . .] Upstage of the last sets of grooves /
wings were grooves holding cross-stage shutters - - large
painted flats sliding onstage from each side and meeting at the
center line to close off the prospect. These could be drawn off
to reveal other shutters directly behind or the deeper reaches of
the scenic area. [. . .] Alternatively, painted drops could be
lowered at virtually any plane of the stage. [. . .] Multiple
cuts allowed the scenemen to preset scenic units, so that
several settings could be standing ready before a performance
began. The first locale needed would have all of its side wings
and shutters standing in the first cuts, the second in the second
cuts, and so on. When the curtain rose, the first setting would
be seen; when the second was needed, scenemen at each wing
position and at the sound of the prompter's whistle, would
draw off all units of the first, revealing the second. If the first
setting would not be needed again, all of its units could be
pulled offstage, out of the first cuts, thus freeing the cuts for a
[further] setting. The system, regardless of the number of cuts
at each position (at least two cuts would be needed), could
handle an unlimited number of settings, and the scene changes,
in full view of the spectators, were quick and magical. [. . .]
Built, three-dimensional set pieces, such as banks in a forest or
bridges, could be thrust onstage, and scenic pieces and
performers could be flown down from above the stage or
raised through trap doors. These changes in the settings and
sudden appearances or disappearances were very much a part
of the spectacle, not only in the popular pantomimes [. . .] but
in more serious works ([Garrick's] *Macbeth*, for example).[56]

First-hand evidence of the practicalities of operating within the eighteenth-century stage environment can again be found in Chetwood's *General History*, which provides a commentary on the available stage technologies of the time; his own involvement in their operation affords a particularly valuable viewpoint relevant to this study.   At the time of Chetwood's engagement at Drury Lane, which spanned almost thirty years in total with a continuous period of nineteen years' service between 1722 and 1741, trap doors were used extensively and whole scenic items could be made to rise through the stage floor with performers positioned in advance of their entrance upon them.   Smaller traps, for the appearance of single performers only, continued to develop their capability to achieve the semblance of 'magical' appearance as the century progressed.   More dangerous than the various trap mechanisms of the Restoration and eighteenth-century stage was the emergent capability to fly performers using the developing stage machinery.   After discussing nasty fatalities amongst tumblers and agility artists, Chetwood describes the following accidents which resulted from unsuccessful attempts at flying actors in crowd-pleasing effects; the first can be dated to Chetwood's engagement at Lincoln's Inn Fields during the 1721-22 season, and the second to his engagement at Smock Alley, Dublin, in the autumn of 1714:[57]

> Another Accident [. . .] fell out in *Dr. Faustus*, a Pantomime Entertainment in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields* Theatre, where a Machine in the Working broke, threw the mock *Pierrot* down headlong with such Force, that the poor Man broke a Plank on the Stage with his Fall, and expired: Another was so sorely maimed, that he did not survive many Days; and a third, one of the softer Sex, broke her Thigh.   But to prevent

such Accidents for the future, those Persons are represented by inanimate Figures, so that if they break a Neck, a Leg, or an Arm, there needs no Surgeon.

Another Accident of the same Kind happened in *Smock-alley*, which gave me much Concern, as having a Hand in the Contrivance. The late Mr. *Morgan* being to fly on the Back of a Witch, in the *Lancashire Witches*, thro' the Ignorance of the Workers in the Machinery, the Fly broke, and they both fell together, but thro' Providence they neither of them were much hurt; and such Care was taken afterwards, that no Accident of that Kind *could* happen.[58]

Chetwood's voice is critical of those among his colleagues whom he adjudged to be negligent. He was on duty for that performance at which the two 'Lancashire Witches' fell and, as described above, clearly felt responsible despite having had no direct involvement in the accident. Kalman Burnim has suggested that: 'In the production of legitimate drama [. . .] there existed a general sloppiness and indifference which resulted from the use of stock scenery and the employment of a rather uninspired technical staff.'[59] There is evidence from the diaries of Richard Cross to support this, such as the note from a performance of Henry Woodward's *Queen Mab*[60] on 16th October 1751 recording 'a blunder in ye scenes of ye entertainment & great noise as No more, off, off, &c'[61] and a further report two days afterwards:

a blunder in ye same place (the Giants) a great noise – horse beans thrown – when ye curtain was down, Mr Woodward went on & said – Gentlemen I am very sorry this accident should happen, but before this little piece is performed again, I'll take care to see it so well practis'd that no mistake can

> happen for ye future. Great applause. – The play was hiss'd
>
> again at the end.[62]

Despite this, prompt copies, worked over with detailed annotations and revised to include changes in the moves or business, and indeed the prompter's own report of the incident as cited above, indicate both a degree of care taken in the preparation of the source from which the performances were run, and a desire to achieve a consistent standard. We shall never know whether the eighteenth-century prompters in general set a diligent or a careless example to their respective stage staffs, although the evidence of surviving documentation generated by prompters, such as annotated prompt scripts, performance diaries, memoranda books, and call books, do indicate a careful attention to detail. In addition to the possibility of poor management of the performance from prompt corner, we can argue that insufficient practice, insufficient numbers of stagehands, misunderstandings by carpenters or scene-drawers inexperienced in their stage roles, and indeed equipment failure could all, separately or in combination, have been contributory factors to the accidents or mistakes of which we are aware. On 12th October 1763 Garrick's last prompter, William Hopkins, recorded that:

> The last scene in the Genie [that evening's farce] the wings
>
> did not change on account of the barrel being broke.[63]

Not only does this demonstrate an instance of a scene-change going wrong as a result of a failure in the equipment rather than negligent operation, it confirms that scene changes were being realised by mechanised means at this time. As the eighteenth century progressed, advances continued to be made in terms of the technical capabilities and staging effects which could

be achieved, culminating with De Loutherbourg's spectacular designs for Garrick at Drury Lane. The innovations in scenic design and production effected during Garrick's management, and his desire for whole-stage settings and less exaggerated performance, would arguably have required those responsible for realising Garrick's visions for his productions to develop systems and methods of organising and controlling theatre production at this time. Records kept by Garrick's prompters have survived from his management at Drury Lane, and these will now be analysed for the evidence which they provide of stage management practice at this theatre in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

3.5   Case study: the Cross-Hopkins Diaries.[64]

Richard Cross and William Hopkins were the head prompters at Drury Lane during Garrick's management; Cross following on from Chetwood, between 1741 and 1759, and Hopkins from 1760 until 1780. Both maintained detailed accounts of each performance night throughout the seasons during which they were engaged, and their records offer an illuminating insight into the nature of Drury Lane performances throughout the whole of Garrick's influential management there. In addition to these nightly diaries, a memoranda book belonging to William Hopkins has survived, the main body of which covers the period from 1767 to 1770 and which can be examined in conjunction with the Cross-Hopkins Diaries for a valuable indication of the prompter's function during the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Although the two prompters who compiled these logs did not disclose any direct information regarding what they themselves were required to do during the course of their duties on a daily basis, the Cross-Hopkins Diaries offer a wealth of covert information about the sort of responsibilities which fell under the umbrella of the prompter's function. The diaries are organised in much the same way as an accounts ledger, with columns for the date, performance number, names of the plays and farces given, and a further column for the prompter's comment; at the end of each playing season, the number of plays, number of farces and total number of performances are tallied. The very methodical manner of both Cross and Hopkins of presenting these 'diaries' allows for the suggestion that the keeping of such logs may have been a specific requirement expected of the Drury Lane prompters, since there is a daily entry with detailed comment for every day in each playing season, unlike the memoranda book belonging to William Hopkins where entries are sporadic and occur only when Hopkins has wished to record something of note.

A suggestion of the scale and complexity of the entertainments being produced at the patent theatres can be gleaned from the entries in these diaries. In his report about the 1752 Covent Garden pantomime *Harlequin Ranger*, Cross observed that:

> a new scene was introduced of Beasts in M[r] Rich's entertainments as an ostrich a Lyon, Dog, monkey, 2 small ostrichs & a figure like Maddox upon ye wire & writ up ye new Company of Comedians . . . [65]

which must have had considerable implications for those involved in supporting the Covent Garden production, not least in terms of the logistics of accommodation. Just over a month later Drury Lane's *Harlequin Ranger* was given:

> wth a new scene of Fountains a great noise when they appear'd occasion'd, I believe, by a paragraph in the Papers, saying, a piece of machinery, of Fountain will soon come out at Covent Garden ~ so it was concluded we had stole ye design from Mr Rich – but not true, for they were design'd and made by Mr Johnston Property Maker to our House . . . [66]

Whilst details are not given of how the manipulation and management of either the animals or the fountains and their attendant plumbing and drainage was achieved during these performances, we can observe that the scope of stage management responsibilities are increasing at this period to encompass the complex aspects of such ambitious entertainment engendered by the competitive relationship between the major managements.

Many entries by Cross (volumes one to three) reflect the riotous nature of the Drury Lane audiences; on 16th November 1754, he recorded that:

> We staid 'till ten minutes after six when ye audience made a great noise to begin; & when the curtain went up, pelted the actors & would not suffer 'em to go on 'till Mr Garrick told 'em, we began by the green room clock & that we had not much exceeded the time – one above call'd out it was half an hour after *six* but we proceeded without farther interruption.[67]

Meanwhile an earlier entry, from February 1748, notes:

> There was a report, that my Lord Hubbard had made a party
> this night to hiss the Foundling off the stage, that ye reason was
> it ran too long, and they wanted variety of entertainments. Mr.
> Garrick was sent for, he met 'em, and so far prevail'd that they
> promis'd peace 'till after the 9th night. however there was an
> attempt made by one catcall, and an apple thrown at Macklin &
> some other efforts made by a few but without effect – Greatly
> hiss'd w.[re] given out. I believe the main cause of this anger, in
> spite of their Excuses, was their being refus'd admittance
> behind the scenes.[68]

This entry reflects Garrick's determination to end the practice of spectators, more interested in being seen themselves than in seeing the play being performed, from taking their seats upon the actual stage itself; the resistance with which this policy was met is suggested by playbills from Drury Lane dating from several years later, many of which stipulate that 'No Persons can be admitted behind the *Scenes*, or into the *Orchestra*'.[69] In particular, the playbill for October 2nd 1761, advertising 'a play call'd King Henry the Eighth', advised patrons that:

> As there will not be Room behind the Scenes for more than the
> Performers employ'd in the Coronation, it is hoped that no
> Gentlemen will take it Ill that they cannot possibly be admitted
> at the Stage-door. Vivant Rex et Regina.[70]

Although these diaries focus on describing the activities of the company and the audience reception of the plays, there are occasional comments, casually mentioned, which afford a deeper view of the prompter's function and standing within Garrick's establishment. The following extract, which also evidences the company offering an alternative to the published play at very

short notice, records Cross himself going onstage in response to heckling
from the audience:

> Fryday 16 Provok'd Wife & a new musical entertainment
> called Don Saverio, compos'd & wrote by Mr Arne : The
> Conscious Lovers was given out & in the Bills for this night,
> but Mr Barry being ill, Mr. Garrick made an apology & ye
> audience took ye P : Wife in its stead Mr Barry over night said
> he would not play, so that his sickness was doubted – the
> Farce was ill received that in ye middle I went on & said –
> Gent : we must beg y^r Indulgence in permitting this piece to be
> performed once more, for the benefit of Mr Arne who has
> taken great pains in composing the music & it shall be play'd
> no more – applause[71]

Since there are other diary entries by both Cross and Hopkins which record
them personally addressing the audience from the stage, we can infer that it
was as incumbent upon the prompter to try and pacify the house in the event
of their dissatisfaction as it was upon the theatre managers and leading
performers.   However, the following extract, from 1752, is unusual as it
evidences the prompter being called for *by name* by the audience:

> The House was full as soon as open – before the first music,
> several speeches were made in ye pit, moving the Farce might
> be acted before the play, which was insisted on by some,
> oppos'd by others – Cross, Cross, Prompter &c was often
> call'd – The curtain went up & ye clamour increas'd, ye farce
> &c. Mr. Mossop (who did Zanga) came off – I went on, &
> spoke – Gentlemen, I perceive the farce has been desir'd
> before ye play, wch cannot be comply'd with, for ye
> performers in ye Farce, having nothing to do in ye Play, are not
> come – a great applause followed – Mr Mossop went on
> again - but ye noise renew'd, & he retir'd again, & wanted to

> undress, which I prevented; M[r]. Lacy (manager) then went out,
> & spoke to ye same effect I had done – The play was then
> call'd for, & it went on with applause – Tho' I believe the
> audience wish'd it over . . . [72]

This extract is interesting for the questions it raises in relation to the prompter's perceived authority by the audience at this performance. Are they calling for Cross because they believe he has the power to satisfy their entertainment demands, by stopping the play and giving them the desired farce? If so, this suggests the prompter to be accepted as representative of, or even part of, the theatre management, his authority recognised not only within the company but by the playgoers at large. This episode is recorded simply and factually by Cross; his involvement is not embellished to portray himself in any heroic light. His full report shows both Lacy and Garrick to have been in the theatre that night, as both addressed the audience in an effort to resolve the commotion. Why, then, was Cross the one demanded, and not the managers? Burnim has suggested that at Drury Lane, apart from Garrick's brother George,

> The other chief assistant was the prompter (Richard Cross until his death in 1759 and William Hopkins thereafter), who after Garrick himself must have been the theatre's busiest individual. The prompter's duties included the writing out of the parts, the obtaining of the licenses, the hearing of the line rehearsals, and **the complete charge of the stage during the performances**.[73]
>
> (My emphasis.)

The diary extract above can be cited in support of this assertion, since, for this performance at least, it does allow the suggestion that Cross indeed had

'complete charge' of the stage. The surviving memoranda book of Cross'

successor, William Hopkins, provides indications that the prompter's

authority extended to resolving such issues as re-casting in the event of

illness or other indisposition, as this entry from 1769 suggests:

> Monday the 14. waited on M^{rs}. Barry to know if it would be
> agreeable to her to play Lady Townly with Mr Reddish she said
> she had no cloaths fit for it. I ask'd if she had any Objection to
> Mrs Abingtons playing the part she answer'd no.[74]

Collectively these extracts can be drawn upon to argue that Garrick

devolved onto his prompters a considerable authority to manage the day-to-

day issues concerning the cast, the rehearsals, and the evening

performances. In the light of Garrick's own frenetically busy working and

personal life,[75] it is not unreasonable to infer a need to delegate the daily

management of the company and performances onto trusted and competent

auxiliaries. The example above reveals Cross's chief concern to be the

provision of a performance that evening, rather than the 'indisposition' of a

member of his cast; being unable to persuade Mrs. Barry to perform that

evening, Cross is keen to ensure that there will be no repercussions from her

if Mrs. Abington goes on in the part. Further examples, such as the

following memorandum from Hopkins, confirm that the prompter was the

chief means of communication between the company and the theatre

management:

> The Fair Penitent was advertised for Wednesday the 11 : a
> Rehearsal was call'd on Tuesday the 10. about nine o'clock in
> the morning Mr Barry sent for me & told me he was so ill that it

would be impossible for him to play for some time & that he would give up his salary till he was able to play.[76]

In commenting on the prompter's role during the latter part of the eighteenth century, Stern acknowledges the integral function of the prompter to professional performance and the scope of his role:

> Despite Garrick's marked effect on the plays in his charge, the day-to-day preparatory and partial rehearsals were still in the hands of the prompter, who also had a constant (but under-acknowledged) effect on text and production. [. . .] In fact, a dictionary definition of the time describes 'Prompt' not just as 'to help at a loss' but also 'To assist by private instruction'[77] : one of the prompter's defining tasks was now his individual teaching – showing to what extent his importance had grown. The prompter had a hand in almost every aspect of rehearsal [. . .] [he] copied and distributed the actors' parts, arranged the daily rehearsals, and supervised line run-throughs: he 'regulated' the stage. [. . .] Actors [. . .] continued to be directed on stage by the prompter, who co-ordinated both the words [. . .] and elementary blocking (with the help of a call boy). The central importance of the prompter to the staging is shown by the fact that an actor's position had come, in stage directions, to be always described in relation to that of the prompter: 'O.P.' – opposite prompt; 'P.S.' – prompt side. The co-ordinating nature of the prompter, and the very separate nature of each part, still seem to have been clear both to theatrical people and to their audience.[78]

Stern's claim that blocking, or the movements of the actors, was co-ordinated during performance by the prompter 'with the help of a call boy' appears somewhat extraordinary to the contemporary theatre practitioner,

and consideration should be given to the logistics of how such a practice could be realised. However, it is supported by primary evidence from the period. Hill's detailed description of the activity at Drury Lane's prompt corner some years earlier, drawn upon above, indicates the use of call boys (described as '*aides de camp*', 'scouts and messengers') in the cueing of performers onto the stage; his description makes it clear that Chetwood was sending call boys around the stage to instruct actors to make their entrances at the performance which Hill witnessed. This gives credibility to the suggestion that similar 'scouts and messengers' could be despatched with instructions relating to movements which would materially affect the collective performance of the play, particularly when such instructions were destined for performers positioned nearer to the opposite prompt side of the stage. Hence a picture emerges of an extensive co-ordinatory role, with music, scene-changes, the calling of actors to the stage, their cueing onto the stage, and to a certain extent their movements around it during performance, all co-ordinated at each performance on the instructions of the prompter.

When this is considered against the context of the prompter's instructive role in rehearsals, his organisation and issuing of each performer's part script, his recording of the technical elements necessary for the performance of the play in the promptbook, and the prompter both as conduit for communication between the company and the management and as the representative of the management to the public, as the diaries of Cross and Hopkins indicate, the extensive scope and essential importance of the

prompter's function to professional theatre production is persuasively demonstrated.

3.6:   Case Study: Drury Lane's 1773 *Macbeth.*

The final case study of this chapter will examine the 1773 Drury Lane promptbook of Garrick's *Macbeth* for evidence of control exercised by the prompter over the component elements of the production; it will explore the manner in which that control was recorded, and replicated at subsequent performances, towards the end of Garrick's management.   Langhans identifies this production as one in which 'changes in the settings and sudden appearances or disappearances were very much a part of the spectacle'[79] and it is drawn upon heavily by Kalman Burnim in his monograph *David Garrick, Director* as a key production from Garrick's management of Drury Lane, where it was part of the repertory throughout his tenure. Reflecting elements of the practices established by earlier Drury Lane prompters, some use of symbols is also evident within the annotations. It is therefore an appropriate subject for the final case study of this chapter.

The 1773 promptbook from Garrick's *Macbeth* is inscribed from one C. Roeder, who, in 1894, sent the promptbook to Henry Irving with a covering letter in which Roeder states his belief that 'there is no other copy in existence', this being 'the stage manager's own copy'.[80] As such, it is a key source in this analysis of the development of stage management practice: the printed edition on which the prompter (Hopkins) worked was published in 1773, so the promptbook is reflective of Drury Lane practice at the very end

of Garrick's tenure, following his own staging reforms and the introduction of De Loutherbourg's spectacular scenic presentations. The title page proclaims that the edition is 'Regulated from the prompt-book, with permission of the Managers, by Mr. Hopkins, Prompter'[81] and if, as Burnim has suggested, this promptbook 'represents a transcription made by Hopkins in 1773 or later of an earlier promptbook which had worn out with use'[82] then this source can also be said to be representative of the staging of one of the most popular of Garrick's tragic performances, having been performed in every season but four throughout his management at Drury Lane. However, it is for its indications of stage management practice at the end of Garrick's reign, and its development over the course of the eighteenth century, that this source is of value to this study, so the text and the prompter's annotations will be examined for indications of both the production's practical and technical demands, and the prompter's control of the performance.

The first annotation in this promptbook is a note concerning the lighting: Hopkins has written 'Stage Dark' which, although this does not lead us to any conclusions concerning whether or not this was under the direct control or supervision of the prompter, confirms that stage lighting is now a consideration for those responsible for the 'stage management' of a performance, since it is noted in the prompt copy. The footlights which provided frontal illumination of the stage from below were under the direct control of the prompter; the *London Stage* records them to have been:

> situated in a long metal trough, the "footlight trap," which
> was filled with oil, on which were floating a series of small

rectangular saucers, each holding two candles which were fed by the oil. The entire contrivance could be lowered by means of a system of lines and pulleys attached to a winch in the prompter's corner whenever it was necessary to give to the stage as much darkness as possible.[83]

From this apparatus, the theatrical nickname of 'the floats' for the footlights came into general use. If not operated by the prompter himself, he would certainly have been in a position to instruct the lamp-man responsible for doing so, cued and regulated according to the directions in his prompt copy.

The principal stage lighting, which consisted of oil lamps and candles fixed behind the proscenium arch and behind each of the wings at the sides of the stage grooves, could be increased or lowered using shields which obscured or revealed the light from each source, and reflectors were used to intensify the light emitted. De Loutherbourg made extensive use of 'transparencies': gauzes painted with one scene on one side and a different scene on the other, so that the audience would see a different image on the gauze dependent on whether light was shone onto the front of it or from behind it. He also developed the use of colour and texture changes in the stage lighting at Drury Lane, by stretching silk screens of different colours across frames attached to pivots positioned in front of intensive lights.[84] The capability to influence mood and vary visibility onstage during performance was a major advance pioneered by De Loutherbourg, and, if frequently employed throughout each play, could have increased the prompter's responsibility two-fold: from ringing and whistling for scene changes and music only, to a more constant activity throughout the play incorporating the co-ordination

and control of changes in the lighting, which in turn influenced which aspects of the scenic design could be seen by the audience on the transparencies.

The *Macbeth* promptbook informs us in front of which sets of the stage grooves the scenes were played, and symbols are used to indicate the position in the text at which certain effects were to be carried out. On page four of the text, we can see that Act I Scene One was played downstage of the '1st Grove'; this is accompanied by the lighting direction 'Stage Dark' and there are two small figure ones enclosed in circles, one on either side of the printed instruction 'SCENE *an open place*'. Then, eight lines in, the first sound effect is indicated: Hopkins has written 'owl within' and marked the word in the text after which the effect should be made with an '**x**'. As the scene changes to Duncan's camp at Forres, the text carries the printed instruction 'SCENE *changes to a Palace at* Foris' and Hopkins has marked a small figure two, again enclosed in circles, at each side of this with the handwritten note 'palace.' This practice, of indicating the groove numbers of scenic pieces or sets and enclosing them in circles, is common within both Hopkins' own practice and general prompt practice throughout the century; its endurance, as the eighteenth century approaches its close, indicates the relevance of such information to the management of the stage and to the prompter's function. On page five, a large, underlined figure two is written in the margin twelve lines in, representing a call following the pattern of the numeric calling system – operated in conjunction with a separate call book in which the names of the performers required at each call

were inscribed – which was already established as standard by the time of Chetwood's service at Drury Lane as illustrated in Figure 3.3.1 above.

These conventions continue as described above as the source progresses. Scene Two contains two further calls, numbered '3' and '4' with large, underlined numerals (page six), then on page seven the start of Scene Three is again marked with two small, circled figure threes and the note '1st Grove', meaning that the flats in the first (or furthest downstage) groove will close in front of the palace scene for the entrance of the witches on the heath. Cast entrances have been marked to show from which side of the stage each actor enters: this is done using the now familiar abbreviations of PS for prompt side and OP for the opposite-prompt side. Some of these are marked in ink, in the same way that the scene numbers, groove information, effects notes and calls are inked in, and these can be ascribed to Hopkins; there are other prompt annotations, marked in red crayon,[85] but these are later additions made by a subsequent stage manager. Studying this source on microfilm due to its location, as with so many other British promptbooks, in America, the texture, but not the colour, of these marks was discernible; it is therefore fortunate that Burnim has described them, so that they may be discounted from this case study.[86] The increasing use of colour in prompt annotations will emerge as an aspect of key significance in the evolution of stage management practice in the following chapters, in which the theory that the emerging use of colour within prompt annotations can be drawn upon to identify important aspects of a performance falling under the responsibility of stage management will be tested and explored through the

examination of a wide range of prompt materials. The widespread occurrence of prompt marks indicates a need to make certain annotations particularly distinguishable, thereby confirming the details so marked as significant aspects of the prompter's responsibility during performance.

Music cues also feature in this source; the first reference to music appears on page eight. As Macbeth and Banquo with their soldiers and attendants enter for the witches' prophecies, there is a note 'from the top: Scotch March' beside a note that tells us that Macbeth's party enters from 'OPS'. On the following page, the next sound effect, thunder, is marked in the text with another '**x**' and this sound effect is made from 'OP'. Setting information appears at the start of each scene where required; for example, at the start of Act I Scene Six, Hopkins has written: 'Castle Gate Open' (p.16); props information also appears, such as the note on p.21 which reads: 'Table on & Candles ready; a <u>Torch</u>' for Act II Scene One. At the top of the page on which Act I concludes (p.20), the word 'Act' has been written and underlined; in accordance with Hopkins' and others' established practice, it can be inferred that the prompter's bell was rung at this point to advise the musicians and stage staff.

This assumption is valid because it is supported by primary evidence. W.R. Chetwood's prompter's bell, as observed by Aaron Hill, has been described above; furthermore, the word 'Ring' at the end of each act in countless promptbooks also bears testimony to the ubiquitous nature of this 'instrumentum regni'[87] of the prompter. Sixty years later, at the very end of

the eighteenth century, it is clear that the prompter's bell was still a key method of giving cues.   Writing in *Theatre Notebook*, Charles Beecher Hogan discusses the manuscript notes made by William Powell, nephew of the actor William Powell and prompter at Drury Lane at the end of the eighteenth century.   On 30th April 1794, Powell noted that:

> This evening the band beginning the overture to the farce [Thomas and Sally] **without any notice by bell** or otherwise, caused a considerable delay, it being over before the stage could be got in readiness [after a performance of Macbeth] for beginning the farce.   'God Save the King' was called for, and sung.[88]   (My emphasis.)

Not only does this indicate the normal means by which the orchestra should have been cued to begin, i.e. by the ringing of the prompter's bell, it illustrates the very reason why co-ordinated cueing through one centralised source, the promptbook, by one nominated person, the prompter, is so essential for a professional performance.   In the instance described above, the musicians, self-cueing on their own initiative and with no means of knowing that the stage was far from set, comprehensively, if unwittingly, sabotaged the professional presentation of the evening's entertainment. Powell's clear indication that the self-cueing of musicians on their own initiative was not the normal course of events confirms and reminds us why co-ordinated, cued performance is such an essential element of professional theatrical presentation; if professional performance is desired, professional stage management is required.

The annotations in the 1773 *Macbeth* continue consistently in the manner described above: each new scene is numbered (in ink) with small numerals enclosed in circles; a description of the set is given (such as '2nd Chamber', 'Palace' and so forth) next to the printed text; calls continue to be numbered using larger, underlined numerals in the margins of each page, and 'OP' or 'PS' is written next to each character's entrance to indicate from which side of the stage that character appears. Sound effects continue to be marked with an '**x**' or sometimes '**+**' at the exact point in the text at which they happen, and props or items of furniture are noted at the start of the scene in which they are required. The setting information at the start of each scene continues to include notes regarding stage or lighting considerations; for example, on page 39 there is a note which reads: '⑤ palace. Throne & Chairs. Banquet on. Traps ready' for the appearance of Banquo's Ghost, and the operation of the trap is marked on page 40 with '**x x** Rise Trap OP **x x**' and page 41 with '**x x** Sink T. OP.' The scene change into Act III Scene Six carries the note: '<u>Drop the Street to take off</u>', while the start of Act IV is marked: 'Cave with Transp. Scene up. Cauldron On' indicating that a transparency lighting effect (as described above) would be used upstage in this scene as the witches cast their spell. Further use of traps in this scene is again marked with the double '**x**' and instructions to 'sink' and 'rise'.

On the basis of the indications from this source it is clear that this production was actively managed by the prompter. Alerts, in the form of crosses or underlined notes, indicate those aspects essential to the running of the production, such as the setting of furniture and the operation of sound

effects and traps, for which the prompter was in some way responsible. The
promptbook, as evidenced by this example, is emerging as a composite
document in which elements of lighting, sound and staging are recorded in a
manner which suggests the prompter's control over them, either by
operating some effects himself such as door-knocks or bell-rings, or
ensuring that other members of the stage staff carried out their respective
responsibilities on cue. With clear indications, discussed above, that the
prompters at Drury Lane and Covent Garden routinely managed at least one
under-prompter and at least one call boy, this source, along with other
evidence which remains to scholarship from these two theatres, reflects the
development of stage management during the eighteenth century into a
highly co-ordinatory function and indicates the emergence of commonality
of practice in promptbook annotations, initiated at the patent houses earlier
in the century but becoming widespread as the century draws to a close.

3.7:   Conclusion.

The prompt materials analysed for the case studies in this chapter offer an
exciting insight into the development of the prompter's role throughout the
eighteenth century; the evidence drawn upon above indicates an essential,
authoritative, and co-ordinatory function in a time of real innovation on the
British stage. The richness of primary evidence available from Drury Lane
and its prominence as arguably our most important theatre, with its pedigree
traceable back to Killigrew's original 1662 patent, has inevitably directed
the focus of much of this research onto this particular house. Despite being

a promptbook from an Edinburgh production, the *Man of Mode* source examined in the first case study is identifiable with Drury Lane because the King's Company were Killigrew's players, operating under his patent; a large body of prompt and other materials survive from Drury Lane, from which an unbroken line of prompters can be traced spanning the entire eighteenth century. Whilst this has enabled developments in practice at this one, principal theatre to be discerned, it also allows for comparisons between practice at Drury Lane and the other two houses to benefit from permission to perform the spoken drama at this period: the Theatres Royal at Covent Garden[89] and Haymarket. Further comparisons from theatres further afield are also possible, drawing on surviving promptbooks from London and provincial performances as indicated in the survey above and in the valuable body of research undertaken by Langhans.

The promptbooks themselves confirm the prompter's responsibility for the setting and handling of props and furniture, the correct dressing of the actors, the performance of offstage sounds, the changing of the scenes, the playing of music, and, later in the century, the cueing of lighting. The diaries and memoranda recorded directly by practitioners such as Chetwood, Cross, Hopkins, and Powell reveal different aspects of these practitioners' engagement with the process of making theatre, such as Chetwood's concern for the performers being flown, or Hopkins' efforts to amass a complete cast for the evening's performance. Such insights provide important and rare primary testimony from stage managers themselves, and are invaluable to the investigation of the development of stage management.

However, most significant for the investigation of the development of professional stage management practice is the clear indication which the sources analysed above have provided that, initiated by the prompters Thomas Newman, John Stede, and W.R. Chetwood, codification of prompt annotations began to emerge early in the eighteenth century, and commonality of practice was initiated through the collaboration of these practitioners at Covent Garden and Drury Lane. The ensuing chapters will continue to analyse primary evidence of stage management practice, principally through the interrogation of promptbooks, to discern the continuing evolution of the role of stage management and demonstrate its key contribution to professional performance in the nineteenth century.

Notes to Chapter Three.

1   Originally known as 'The King's Playhouse' and as the Theatre Royal, Bridges Street, before becoming known by the street which ran behind it, Drury Lane, when rebuilt after its first fire in 1672.

2   Originally known as the Duke's Theatre when based at what had been Lisle's Tennis Court in Lincoln's Inn Fields; the tennis court was converted to become the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre in 1695, before John Rich had the first of three buildings constructed on the present Covent Garden site in 1732.

3   Allardyce Nicoll, *The Garrick Stage: Theatres and Audience in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), pp. 62 – 67.

4   Edward A. Langhans, 'An Edinburgh Promptbook from 1679-80', *Theatre Notebook* 37, No. 3 (1983), pp.101 – 2.

5   Ibid., p.103.

6   National Library of Scotland, MS 1.81 (2): Sir George Etherege, *The Man of Mode, or, Sr Fopling Flutter, A Comedy* (London: J. Macock, 1676).

7   Langhans, *An Edinburgh Promptbook*, p.103.

8   NLS *The Man of Mode*., p.40 and p.81.

9   A brief survey of registered stage staff from the patent companies is made available in Jocelyn Powell, *Restoration Theatre Production* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul,1984), pp. 149 – 50. In 1664 the Duke's Company had twelve men registered as scene-keepers who would have worked under the prompter's direction; it is reasonable to assume that the more prestigious King's Company would have had at least a similar number, although whether there would have been quite so many at the prompter's disposal in Edinburgh is less certain.

10   Further continuity with the practice of the early modern playhouses is demonstrated by John Downes, prompter to the Duke's Company from 1662 until 1706, who prefaces his own history of the stage, *Roscius Anglicanus*, by asserting that he: 'as Book-keeper and Prompter, continu'd so, till *October 1706* [. . .] Writing out all the Parts in each Play; and Attending every Morning the Actors Rehearsals, and their Performances in Afternoons . . .' demonstrating not only that the Restoration prompter was in permanent attendance on the company, but also maintaining the important function of support for the company in rehearsal and performance. John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus* (1708) ed. by Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1987), p. 2.

11   Langhans, *An Edinburgh Promptbook*, p.103.

12   Although 'two Chair-men' are listed in the Dramatis Personae for this play, names have not been inscribed against the entry so the names of the actors who undertook these roles are unknown.

13   Jocelyn Powell, *Restoration Theatre Production* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul,1984), pp.149 – 50.

14   Langhans, *An Edinburgh Promptbook*, p.103.

15   See Kalman Burnim, *David Garrick, Director* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 1961), p. 41.

16   Stern, *Shakespeare to Sheridan*, p.142.

17   Ibid., p.148.

18   Edward A. Langhans, *Eighteenth Century British and Irish Promptbooks: A Descriptive Bibliography* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1987), pp. xviii – xix.

19   Stern, pp.155-6.

20   Ibid., p.126.

21   Cibber, Colley, *An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber, Comedian, and late Patentee of the Theatre-Royal. With an Historical View of the Stage during his Own Time. Written by Himself.* (London: John Watts, 1740), pp. 56-7.

22   William W. Appleton and Kalman A. Burnim, *The Prompter, A theatrical paper (1734 – 1736) by Aaron Hill and William Popple* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1966), p.2.

23   Ibid., pp. 1 – 3.

24   W. R. Chetwood, *The British Theatre* (London: R. Baldwin jr., 1752), p.181.

25   W. R. Chetwood, *A General History of the Stage, From its Origin in Greece down to the present Time* (London: W. Owen, 1749), p.149.

26   Ibid., p.235.

27   Ibid., pp.251-2.

28   Ibid., p.59.

29   Ibid., p. 129.

30   Ibid., p. 157.

31   Ibid., pp. 163-5.

32   Stern, p.126.

33   Ibid., pp.149-51.

34   Cibber, p. 55.

35   Chetwood, *General History,* p. 138.

36   See Powell, pp.149-50.

37   Langhans, *Eighteenth Century Promptbooks* p.44. The promptbook is held at the University of California at Los Angeles.

38   Ibid., p.xl. Langhans reproduced the image by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library where the source is held.

39   These Lincoln's Inn Fields promptbooks were for *The Perfidious Brother* by Lewis Theobald, performed 21st February 1716; *The Lady's Triumph* by Elkanah Settle, performed 22nd March 1718; and *Money the Mistress* by Thomas Southerne, performed 19th February 1726. The prompter in each case was John Stede.

40   *The Lady's Triumph* by Elkanah Settle, performed 22ⁿᵈ March 1718.

41   These Covent Garden promptbooks were for *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* by Nicholas
      Rowe, performed 25ᵗʰ January 1735; *Oedipus* by John Dryden and Nathaniel Lee,
      performed 10ᵗʰ November 1725; *Richard II* by William Shakespeare, performed 6ᵗʰ
      February 1738; *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare, performed 31ˢᵗ January 1766;
      Cymbeline by William Shakespeare, believed performed prior to 1784 and possibly
      around 1774; *All's Well That Ends Well* by William Shakespeare, performed 19ᵗʰ
      September 1774; and *Measure for Measure* by William Shakespeare, performed 8ᵗʰ
      January 1777.

42   *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (25ᵗʰ January 1735: prompter John Stede); *Oedipus* (10ᵗʰ
      November 1725: prompter John Stede); *Richard II* (6ᵗʰ February 1738: marked up by
      John Roberts, who was not a prompter); and *Cymbeline* (believed 1774: prompter
      Joseph Younger, who was under-prompter to Stede and then succeeded him at
      Covent Garden).

43   *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (25ᵗʰ January 1735: prompter John Stede); *Julius Caesar*
      (31ˢᵗ January 1766: prompter Joseph Younger); *All's Well That Ends Well* (19ᵗʰ
      September 1774: prompter James Wild, who was under-prompter to Younger and
      succeeded him at Covent Garden); and *Measure for Measure* (8ᵗʰ January 1777:
      prompter James Wild).

44   *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (25ᵗʰ January 1735: prompter John Stede); *Oedipus* (10ᵗʰ
      November 1725: prompter John Stede); and *Julius Caesar* (31ˢᵗ January 1766:
      prompter Joseph Younger).

45   *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (25ᵗʰ January 1735: prompter John Stede); and *Oedipus*
      (10ᵗʰ November 1725: prompter John Stede).

46   *Cymbeline* (believed 1774: prompter Joseph Younger).

47   A diary identified as belonging to John Stede has recently been discovered by David
      Hunter, who deduced from it that:
      'The prompter in those days had a great deal more responsibility than feeding
      lines to forgetful actors. Three main areas are apparent:
      1. Control of text: copying out parts for actors; procuring licenses;
          maintaining the house's collection of texts.
      2. Production direction: directing rehearsals, both individual and group;
          maintaining the production copy, so that all the cues, property handoffs,
          scene changes, curtain lifts, and so on were marked; stage-managing each
          performance; maintaining the cast book and advising on casting.
      3. Publicity and response: writing out the publicity bills; advising the
          manager / owner on public reaction.
      In other words, he was the stage manager, personnel director, public relations
      manager, librarian, and secretary.' (p.72)

      David Hunter, 'What the Prompter Saw: The Diary of Rich's Prompter, John Stede'
      in *The Stage's Glory: John Rich (1692 – 1761)* ed. by Berta Joncus and Jeremy
      Barlow (Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 2011), pp. 70 – 74.

      Despite the anachronisms with which Hunter synthesises into modern terms the
      prompter's role as he discerns it from the diary of Stede which he has discovered, the
      source provides a highly valuable corroboration of the breadth of responsibilities of
      the prompter's function within a major management (that of John Rich at Lincoln's
      Inn Fields) of the period.

48   Langhans, *Eighteenth Century Promptbooks*, p.230.

49   Ibid., p.230 and p.223.

50   Ibid., p.223.

51   Ibid., p. 223 and 230.

52   Ibid., pp. 10, 26, 27, 28, 37.

53   Ibid., pp. 13, 17, 23, 38, 44, 49 – 51, 53, 62, 117, 151, 156, 167, 169, 185, 186.

54   Edward A. Langhans, *Restoration Promptbooks*, p.xvii.

55   Langhans, *Eighteenth Century Promptbooks*, pp. 44-5.

56   Langhans, *Eighteenth Century Promptbooks*, pp. xxiv – xxv. Christopher Baugh
      also provides a useful comparative table of practice in which the periods of c1650 to
      1800 and c1760 to 1900 are juxtaposed in order to illustrate progressive conventions
      in acting, costuming, technological, and spectating practice, in his chapter 'Baroque
      to Romantic Theatre' in *The Cambridge Companion to Theatre History* ed. by David
      Wiles and Christine Dymkowski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)
      pp. 47-8.

57   Ibid., p.223.

58   Chetwood, *General History,* p.139.

59   Kalman A. Burnim, *David Garrick, Director* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press,
      1961), p.66.

60   The *London Stage* shows this to have been the only play performed on both
      Wednesday 16th and Friday 18th October 1751; it opened as a pantomime at Drury
      Lane the previous year. Vol. IV, pp. 266-7.

61   Folger Shakespeare Library MS W.a.104 (microfilm), *The Diaries of Richard Cross
      and William Hopkins,* 13 vols: vol 1 (Cross), Wednesday 16th October 1751.

62   Ibid., Friday 18th October 1751.

63   Ibid., vol 4 (Hopkins), Wednesday 12th October 1763.

64   Although the diaries now belong to the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington,
      the availability of these sources on microfilm allowed me to study them in detail and
      analyse them for this research.

65   Ibid., vol 2 (Cross), Monday 6th November 1752.

66   Ibid., Thursday 14th December 1752.

67   Ibid., Saturday 16th November 1754.

68   Ibid., vol 1 (Cross), Monday 22nd February 1748.

69   Victoria & Albert Museum MS 78/159: Bound volume of Drury Lane Playbills from
      1761 Season.

70   Ibid. Friday 2nd October 1761.

71   Cross-Hopkins, vol 1 (Cross), Friday 16th February 1750.

72   Ibid., vol 2 (Cross), Saturday 11th January 1752.

73   Burnim, *Garrick,* p. 39.

74   British Library, MS. 11826 r.s.: William Hopkins' Memorandum Book, folio 2 recto: bound after p.260 in Volume 8 of Richard Smith, *A Collection of Material towards an History of the English Stage.*

75   As demonstrated by his surviving correspondence. See *The Letters of David Garrick* ed. by David M. Little & George M. Kahrl (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 3 volumes.

76   Hopkins, folio 2 recto.

77   William Kenrick, *A New Dictionary of the English Language* (1783) cited in Stern, p.274.

78   Stern, pp. 274-6.

79   Langhans, *Eighteenth Century Promptbooks*, pp. xxiv – xxv.

80   Folger Shakespeare Library MS Prompt Mac. 13 [Microfilm]. William Shakespeare, David Garrick and William Hopkins, *Macbeth, a Tragedy, by Shakespeare, as performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane* (London: John Bell, 1773) flyleaf.

81   Ibid., p.1.

82   Burnim, *Garrick*, p.108

83   Charles Beecher Hogan, *The London Stage 1660 – 1800 Part 5: 1776 – 1800* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968), pp. lxvi – lxvii.

84   Ibid., pp. lxv – lxvi.

85   This fact is helpfully pointed out by Burnim in his book; for this research I was able to study the source on microfilm only, due to its location, along with so many other British promptbooks, in America. Burnim also notes: 'Significant are the facts that only the hand of Hopkins – Drury Lane's prompter from 1760 – has made the entries for stage directions and scene changes, and that the text itself is Garrick's acting version.' (Burnim, *Garrick,* p. 108). Garrick's own hand can be seen on other prompt and rehearsal copies of the plays in his repertory.

86   They may be confidently discounted from this case study because coloured pencil crayon was not invented until 1840, as confirmed by the Cumberland Pencil Museum (see Note 35, Chapter 4).

87   Appleton & Burnim, p.3.

88   Charles Beecher Hogan, 'An Eighteenth-Century Prompter's Notes', *Theatre Notebook* 10, No. 2 (1956), p.38.

89   Lincoln's Inn Fields until 1732.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Language for Stage Management

The emergence of codified prompt symbols, which I have identified in the previous chapter as initiating with the practice of Newman, Stede, and Chetwood, and the incipient commonality of practice which is demonstrated by the prompters who succeeded them at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, developed significantly throughout the nineteenth century into a highly visual vocabulary which supported the stage management of increasingly technically-demanding productions. The increasing size of theatres and their proliferation at this period, and the advent of far more spectacular modes of staging than had hitherto been seen, impacted significantly on the developing role of stage management, with increasingly complex staging effects to prepare, cue, accommodate, and manage.

The key impact of these wider theatrical developments on stage management practice was the evolution of the emerging use of symbols to encode cueing instructions, which gradually became visible within eighteenth-century practice and developed into the promptbook 'language' which is clearly identifiable from nineteenth-century prompt sources. It is key because that evolving language enabled the realisation of the increasingly technically-demanding productions of the Victorian age;

arguably, the increasingly-ambitious spectacular productions demanded the evolution of the stage management 'language', and this evolved language of highly visual, commonly understood, shorthand communication within promptbooks enabled the consistent delivery of the increasingly-spectacular productions. The development of the promptbook as a manual for the stage management of a production becomes a key feature of the developing role of stage management during the nineteenth century, and alongside its development must be considered the development of the language through which prompters and stage managers communicated the requirements of realising the plays.

This will be demonstrated through a range of case studies in this chapter, in which the promptbook will be shown to be developing in importance as a manual for co-ordinating increasingly sophisticated and technically complex productions, reflecting the policies of managements with progressively rigorous standards of production which in turn catalysed the further expansion of the responsibilities of professional stage management. This chapter will consider how codified promptbooks constitute evidence for the continuing development of stage management, and how the interpretation of this codified language both provides a means to understand the evolving practice of stage management, and informs the wider 'reading' of the theatre history of the period.

The importance of stage management to major theatrical managements right from the beginning of the century is illustrated effectively by promptbooks from John Phillip Kemble's management of Covent Garden between 1803 and 1817. These are drawn upon in the first case study below to demonstrate that precision in both the staging of the drama and in the recording of it in the prompt copy was of significant importance to Kemble, a highly influential actor-manager. In common with David Garrick, who changed the nature of staging during his twenty-nine year management of Drury Lane through the establishment of a naturalistic style of acting and innovative methods of lighting and staging, Kemble oversaw productions with a rigorous attention to detail, and his highly regulated and careful staging of performances is evidenced in the promptbooks annotated in his hand. The densely-annotated promptbooks prepared by Kemble suggest three things in the context of the development of stage management:

- That the precise positioning of actors upon the stage was important to Kemble, whose careful inscription of blocking details within (*four copies* of) each promptbook invites us to consider his own standards of precision which in turn influenced performance practice, his expectations of his cast, and his expectations of his prompter.

- That the scope of information which Kemble considered it necessary to record in his promptbooks in turn necessitated the extent of the encoding which he developed, due to the limitations of space on the page and the

speed with which the prompters would have needed to recognise, interpret, and carry out the instructions.

- That the range of symbols employed and encoded by Kemble indicates the scope of technical activities regulated from the prompt corner at this major theatre during the first twenty years of the century.

It is therefore appropriate to consider in some detail Kemble's annotations in the context of an incipient visual language for stage management.

4.1:   Case Study: J.P. Kemble's Promptbooks from Covent Garden.

John Philip Kemble became the manager of Covent Garden in 1803 following success in tragic roles at Drury Lane, where he frequently performed alongside his sister Sarah Siddons; he débuted as an actor there as Hamlet in 1783, and in 1788 became manager. The American scholar Charles H. Shattuck edited the extensive Folger Facsimiles series of facsimile promptbooks of plays prepared by Kemble, and wrote of him:

> Kemble was the first actor-manager in the English-speaking theater who systematically published his own acting versions, and he kept up the flow of them indefatigably. [. . .] The principal market for his playbooks was the playgoing public, but of greater significance historically was their currency in the theatrical profession. Kemble was "the high-priest of Shakespeare" says Herschel Baker, "the official voice of the national poet – the arbiter, *par excellence,* of Shakespeare on

the stage." Theatrical managers all over the kingdom wanted to model their productions upon his, and **many a prompter brought his Kemble copy, fattened out with interleaves, to the library of Kemble's theater in order to transcribe the official markings.** [My emphasis.] Actors everywhere used his books as rehearsal copies, and many of them knew their Shakespeare or Otway or Addison in no other form. [. . .] In this manner Kemble's influence permeated the English-speaking theater of his time, and younger actors like his brother Charles, Charles Mayne Young, and William Charles Macready carried his influence into the following generation.[1]

Shattuck surmises that, having left his 'prepared' promptbooks at Drury Lane in 1802, Kemble rapidly prepared annotated copies of the printed plays which he himself had revised, in order for productions at Covent Garden to be staged in accordance with his detailed notions of how they ought to be performed. He comments that the 1808 fire taught Kemble 'a lesson in insurance';[2] having once already rewritten his blocking and staging annotations into the printed editions for the Covent Garden library upon leaving Drury Lane, only to see them burn before his eyes, he decided, upon rewriting them all again for a second time, to make *four* annotated copies of each play. Shattuck has identified these as follows: one promptbook, for use by the prompter on each occasion that the play was performed at Covent Garden; one master book – 'a control copy kept in reserve, from which, in case of loss, a new promptbook could be constructed'[3] ; one set for Kemble's younger brother Charles; and a set for Kemble himself.

It was the set identified as having been for Kemble's own use (due to Kemble's speeches being 'checked' [4] or highlighted in those plays in which he is known to have performed) that Shattuck reproduced for the Folger Facsimiles series; the Folger Shakespeare Library acquired the books through the family of the great-grandson of the actress Fanny Kemble, Kemble's niece. The set which had belonged to Charles Kemble now belongs to the library of the Garrick Club in London; the promptbooks proper were acquired, following a sale by Covent Garden in the late nineteenth century, by an actor, William Creswick, who did not keep them together; and of the master books, only three are known to have survived, which are now also held at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington. Therefore, the set now held at the Garrick Club, which had been Charles Kemble's copies, is not a set of actual promptbooks in the sense that it is not known that performances were regulated from them; they are, according to Shattuck, scripts annotated by John Philip Kemble detailing how the play was to be performed, but given that Kemble is believed to have produced four largely *identical* copies of each text, one copy of which was destined for service in prompt corner, and since comparison of the Garrick and Folger sources shows them to indeed be largely identical, it is reasonable to suggest that the prompter's own versions closely resembled the versions which survive.

I worked with a total of thirty-one promptbooks at the Garrick Club, and, in summary, they were as follows:

- Twelve actual promptbooks of Shakespeare plays from the Charles Kemble set, and eleven[5] corresponding promptbooks from J.P. Kemble's own set reproduced in the Folger Facsimiles series;

- A J.P. Kemble facsimile copy of *Pizarro* and two *Pizarro* promptbooks (which I have designated 'A' and 'B') from the Garrick Club collection, both annotated in Kemble's hand, but not further identifiable;

- A J.P. Kemble facsimile copy of *Rule A Wife And Have A Wife*, and a promptbook in the Garrick Club collection of *Rule A Wife* annotated in a hand which is not Kemble's, which I have designated 'A';

- A promptbook in the Garrick Club collection of *The Recruiting Officer* which is also clearly annotated in a hand other than Kemble's;

- Two promptbooks in the Garrick collection of *The Rivals*, both annotated in Kemble's hand, but neither of which is specifically identifiable as having belonged to any particular one of the four sets which Shattuck identifies, hence I have also designated these 'A' and 'B'.

A letter from J.P. Kemble in the Garrick Club's collection, shown in Figure 4.1.1 below, was examined to compare the handwriting in the promptbooks identified by Shattuck as having been annotated by him; the comparison

clearly showed that the writing was the same, and so the annotations in the promptbook sources ascribed to Kemble can confidently be confirmed as his.
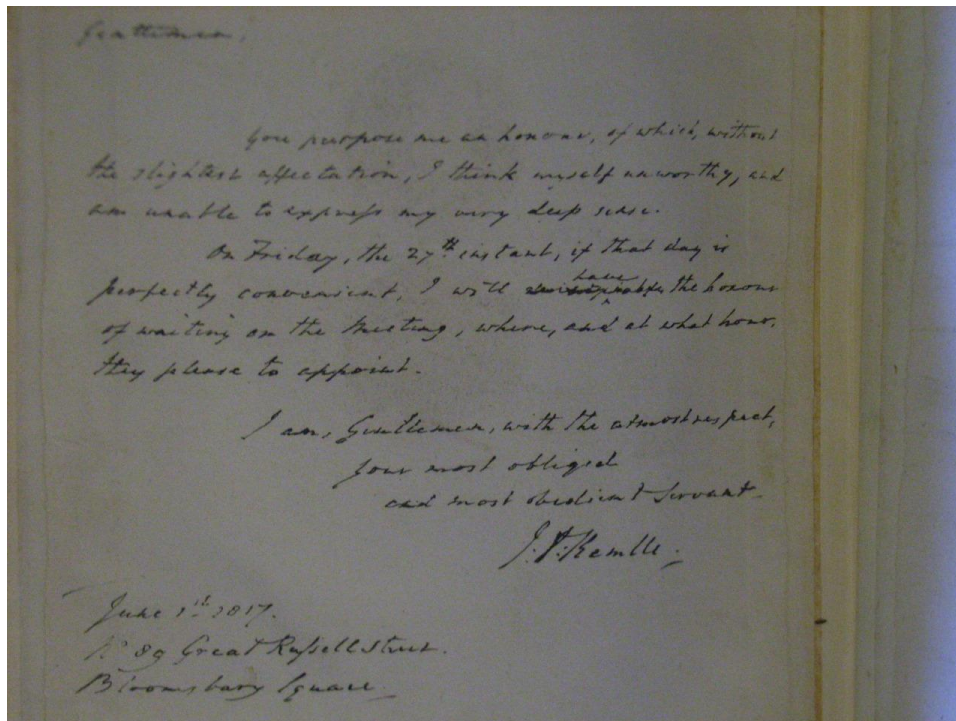
Figure 4.1.1:   Example of J.P. Kemble's handwriting in *Nixon's Dramatic Annals* (Garrick Club, London).

During my research I studied twelve[6] of the eighteen Shakespeare promptbooks there, alongside *Pizarro* and *The Rivals* by Sheridan, *The Recruiting Officer* by Farquhar, and *Rule A Wife And Have A Wife*, by Beaumont and Fletcher – four of the six non-Shakespeare plays identified by Shattuck to have best represented Kemble's 'range of interest'.[7] The originals, designed for Charles Kemble's use, and the published facsimiles

of Kemble's own copies, were studied in tandem so that both examples of Kemble's annotatory practice could be compared with each other.

Kemble uses the following range of symbols: $+$, $\overset{x\ x}{x}$, $x\,x\,x$, $=$, $\#$, $\neq$, $*$, $\hat{\underline{a}}$, $\underline{b}$, $\hat{\underline{c}}$, $\underline{d}$, $\odot$, $\varnothing$, $\oslash$, $\oplus$, $\otimes$, $\otimes$, $\wedge$, 1 , 2 , 3 , 4 . They are all encoded with either a particular meaning or a particular purpose, and they are employed consistently throughout the sources studied. The Appendix decodes them and provides an indication of the frequency and the extent of the systematisation within Kemble's use of these symbols, for each text studied; in that analysis, bold type indicates a note which is not identically marked in the Charles Kemble (original) and the John Philip Kemble (facsimile) copies, and bold red type indicates discrete cues for lighting.

It should be remarked that many more annotations adorn the pages of the Kemble promptbooks: many notes relating to the position of performers, or from which wing they were to make their entrances, are prolific, as are call numbers which, in addition to listing the characters in the call, commonly identify certain props which the performer was to require. Kemble also includes many diagrams, either indicating moves and positions for large crowd scenes, or showing the disposition of the company at the beginning of a scene.

In essence, my analysis of the sources studied reveals that Kemble consistently used certain symbols to signify certain types of cue. The most obvious amongst these is, without question, the group of three crosses $\overset{\textit{x}\ \textit{x}}{\textit{x}}$; within the twenty-nine promptbooks annotated in Kemble's hand, this symbol occurs five hundred and eighteen times. Twenty-eight of these refer specifically to music played in the orchestra, or on specific instruments such as the organ, French horns, wind instruments, or all the instruments. Eleven signify cast blocking and business, and seven signify lighting cues, despite Kemble's discernable trend for marking both blocking and lighting with other, distinctive symbols as discussed below. Four relate to props needing to be on hand (twice each in two of the three *Pizarro* sources), and two relate to 'ready' warnings for the cast ('Tell the Citizens to be ready L.U.E.' on p.17 in both versions of *Coriolanus*). On two occasions the three crosses are used to mark instructions to lock the stage doors at the very beginning of the performance (once in each of the *Measure for Measure* sources); and once (at the beginning of the J.P. Kemble *Measure for Measure*) they are used to mark the instruction to lay the green cloth that signified tragedy.

On the remaining four hundred and sixty-three occasions that this symbol is used within the Kemble sources studied, it signifies noises off such as shouts, knocks, clock strikes, hammering, etc., and the ubiquitous flourishes of drums, trumpets, or frequently both. On almost every occasion that the three crosses are used, they are accompanied by a very precise location note

such as 'left upper entrance' or 'centre door' indicating that these cues were performed not in the orchestra but from the required offstage position in the wings. This symbol is therefore very clearly a signifier for a stage cue. In one of the two promptbooks not annotated in Kemble's hand, the three crosses are represented not in a group but a line **✗✗✗**, and this is significant to future annotatory trends at Covent Garden as will be discussed below.

Other symbols which appear within these Kemble sources are used to indicate the same things with sufficient frequency to identify them as codified. These are the $=$, ※, ∧, and $\varnothing$ symbols, and letters and numbers in sequence marked with **^** .

Kemble's use of $=$ can be identified as a symbol for stage management responsibilities other than the performing or cueing of stage and noises off cues, largely relating to technical or running aspects of the performance, and predominantly for lighting: of the occasions (eighty-eight) within these sources on which the $=$ symbol is used, a third (twenty-nine) of all of these relate to lighting cues, and lighting is only marked with any other form of symbol on eight occasions: once in *Macbeth*, three times in each of the B and Kemble *Pizarro*s, and once in the Charles Kemble *Henry IV Part One* – all marked in bold red print in the data in the Appendix.

These cannot be described solely as 'technical' cues; occasionally Kemble uses $=$ to denote instructions such as blocking (on seven occasions) or noises off (twice) instead of other symbols recognisable within his promptbooks as codified for these purposes, and also because many relate to activities such as checking on costume changes and the readiness of performers, calling musicians, locking the stage doors, laying the stage cloth, and timing the running of acts. These can hardly be described as technical activities; yet they are important running activities, and noticeably they would take place in locations other than the wings: laying the tragedy cloth onstage, locking the doors at either side of the proscenium, calling musicians from the pit, checking the progress of costume changes in the dressing rooms or the readiness of performers in the green room, or timing the act in the prompt corner, for example.

All are commensurate with a supervisory role of overall responsibility, which stage management at this period can confidently be argued to be, further confirming the nature of the role at this time; and hence $=$ can be identified within Kemble's system as denoting lighting changes and 'running' stage management cues separate from the wing cues. Examples of $=$ and $\begin{smallmatrix} x & x \\ & x \end{smallmatrix}$ in use are shown in Figure 4.1.2 below, from the facsimile of the J. P. Kemble *Macbeth.*
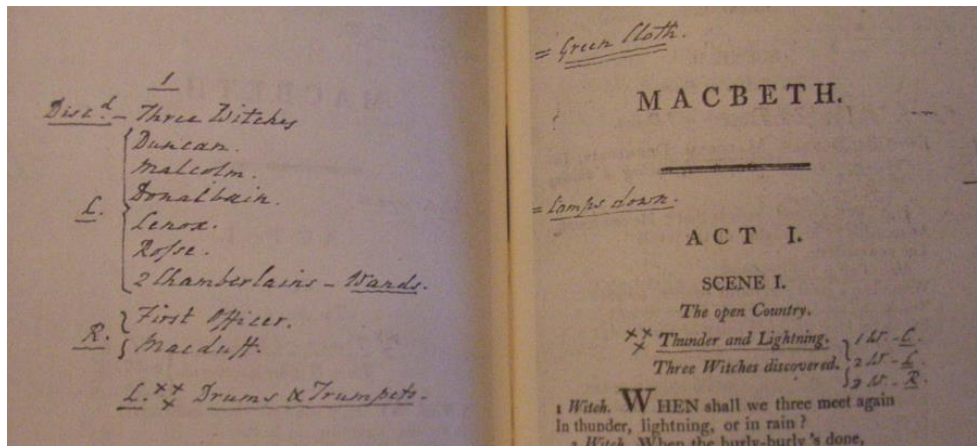
Figure 4.1.2:   Stage cues marked $=$ and sound cue marked $\begin{smallmatrix} x\ x \\ x \end{smallmatrix}$.
Macbeth annotated by J.P. Kemble (Garrick Club, London).

The symbols, ✳ , ⊘ and its variants: ◌̸ , ⊗ (with and without curled tails)

and ⊕ share a limited range of purposes for which they are all

interchangeably used, and so it is appropriate to examine them together.

Largely these symbols relate to blocking annotations; ✳   seems to be a

utility symbol for Kemble, used supplementary to other symbols whose

codification can more clearly be defined.   It occurs thirty-five times within

the sources studied; half of these instances (seventeen) relate to blocking

notes, and of these, six denote a detailed list of the order in which

performers made entrances or exits.   On seven occasions it is used to mark

additions to the text.   On eight occasions it is used to indicate a flourish; but

seven of these occur within Kemble's own edition of the *As You Like It*

promptbook, and so this can confidently be taken to be a unique substitution

for the three grouped crosses with which flourishes are overwhelmingly

marked.

This symbol is used for very little else within this body of material; on three occasions it marks the timing of an act, a further three notes relating to scenic information are marked with it, and twice it is used to indicate music cues. Of the variations on $\varnothing$, there are a total of eleven occasions on which they are variously used; nine of these relate to blocking notes, including the order of entrances, and the remaining two relate to textual insertions. No system for their use, such as variation to mark successive moves or insertions on a single page, can be discerned.

The final body of symbols used by Kemble to be considered in this case study relate to blocking and cast business. These merit consideration because a very overt systematisation can be discerned within both Kemble's employment of them and their use within the *Recruiting Officer* and *Rule A Wife* promptbooks, neither of which are annotated in Kemble's hand. Importantly, and in contrast to the lack of information in promptbooks about how actors performed their roles which Shattuck has lamented, the extent to which Kemble records highly detailed blocking instructions alongside equally detailed technical instructions (and Figure 4.1.3 below shows one which states: 'When the Drums and Trumpets sound, Cora turns away hastily to her Child – C.behind' as a typical example), demonstrates the development of the promptbook into an important central repository for information which Kemble considered to be essential for the performance of his plays.

Being himself a performer, it is logical that Kemble should give great attention to the moves and disposition of the company upon the stage throughout performance. Significant detail relating to acting is common to all of the Kemble sources studied. Despite other symbols being drawn upon to denote moves or business, as discussed above, Kemble's system for marking the point at which performers made moves, and detailing what those moves involved, was to use the letters of the alphabet, distinguished by being further marked above and beneath by means of underlining and by use of the circumflex diacritic, such as **â**. This symbol was marked in the text at the point at which it occurred, and then, on the facing blank page of the promptbook, the symbol was marked again and the detail given. Successive moves on a single page are marked with successive letters of the alphabet, beginning again from 'a' on the next page. This successive use of letters to indicate cast moves is indicated in the data in the Appendix by the use of blue print, so that the succession can easily be recognised within the promptbooks (*Pizarro* A, *Pizarro* B, Kemble's *Pizarro*, *The Rivals*, and Kemble's *Rule A Wife*) where it occurs. Letters are used to indicate blocking on sixty-six of the sixty-eight occasions on which they occur within these sources; both occasions on which other things are indicated in this way occur within the *Pizarro* B copy, once for a textual insertion, and once to show the point at which the printed text resumes. Examples of Kemble's use of successive letters to notate blocking can be seen in Figures 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 below.
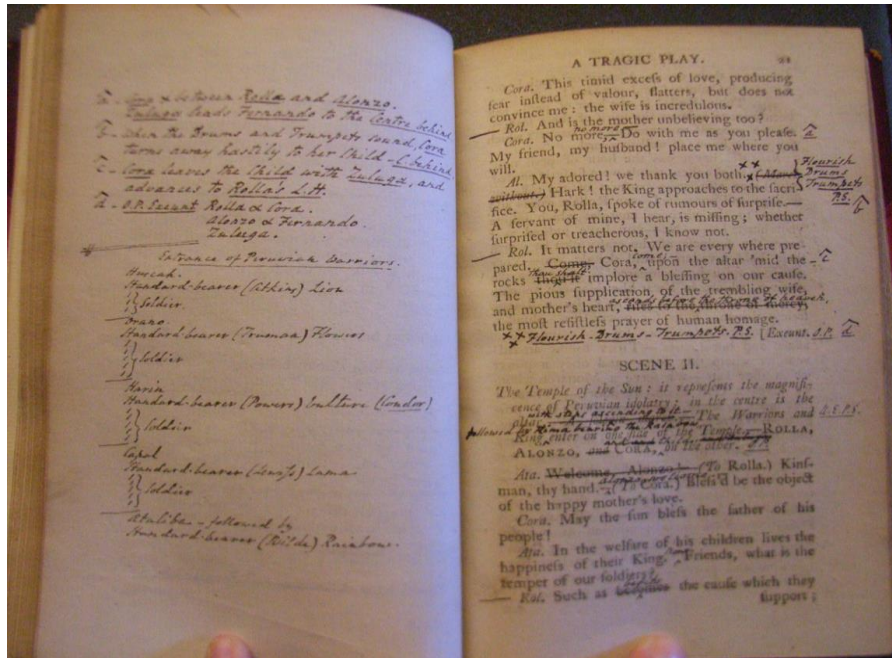
Figure 4.1.3: Successive letters used to note blocking details, *Pizarro* B annotated by J.P. Kemble (Garrick Club, London).
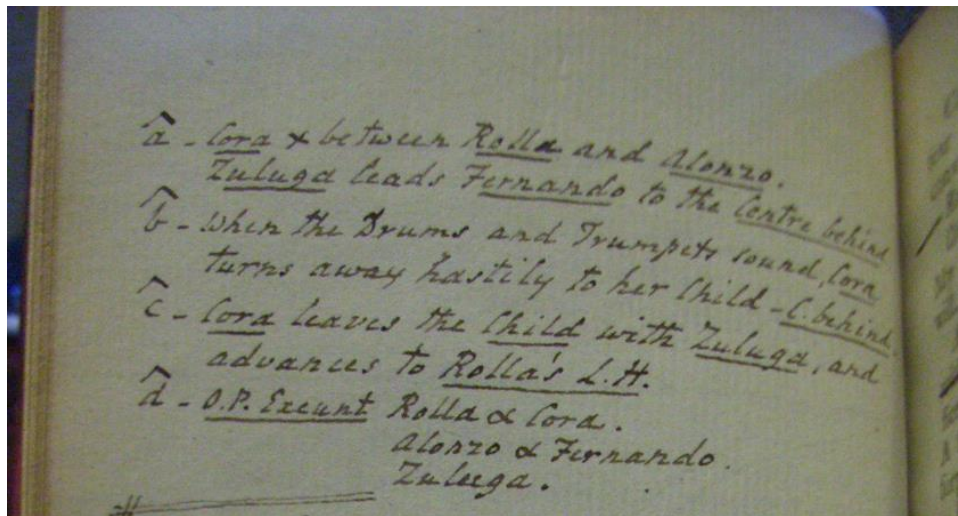
Figure 4.1.4: Successive letters used to note blocking details, *Pizarro* B annotated by J.P. Kemble (Garrick Club, London).

The extensive use of symbols within these prompt sources are listed and described in full in the Appendix because they are significant on a number of levels. Firstly, the range of activities signified by the use of a symbol is considerable, and indicates therefore a need to distinguish between the various different aspects of realising the performance. In asking why this might be so, a further indication of the consolidation of stage management practice becomes apparent.

If the promptbooks were annotated simply to create a record of the blocking, music, lighting changes, effects, and other elements of the performance, it is hard to conceive of a reason for so painstakingly crafting such a wide and consistent variety of symbols with which to individually distinguish them. So Kemble's use of symbols at all, and additionally his very deliberate distinctions between which symbols to use for which sort of annotation, indicate a reason for wishing or needing to distinguish between the types of activity being indicated. The most likely reason is arguably that there was a need to distinguish between the different activities which took place in different locations within the theatre and which were carried out by different personnel; different *responsibilities* are indicated by the use of different symbols, and someone with overall responsibility is enabled to easily track what is supposed to be happening, who is supposed to be doing it, and, where practical, initiate it, by means of this codified system. In Kemble's promptbooks, stage responsibilities are distinguishable from lighting

responsibilities, which in turn are distinguishable from additional lines inserted into the text or notes relating to the blocking and business of the cast. Hence it can be demonstrated that these sources strongly indicate the scope of stage management responsibilities under this influential management at the time of Kemble's tenure, and can legitimately be described as manuals for the accurate running and realisation of those elements of the production which Kemble considered to be important to it.

Kemble's promptbooks not only offer information of value to the history of stage management; analysis of the Kemble annotations reveals information about how certain stage effects were realised, and this further demonstrates how an appreciation of the development of stage management can inform the wider body of knowledge surrounding the development of the theatre in this country. For example, following the systematised codification that I identify above in relation to the = symbol, it can be perceived that the realisation of both thunder *and lightning* was a stage effect rather than a lighting effect. The implication of this is that we can identify them to have been cues for a carpenter or scene-drawer based in the wings, rather than a lamp-man aloft in either the auditorium or flying positions. In both *Pizarro* and *Macbeth*, where thunder and lightning occur on two (*Pizarro* A), four (*Pizarro* B), three (Kemble's *Pizarro*) and ten (*Macbeth*) occasions respectively, the group of three crosses is, with one exception, the only symbol used to denote them, despite the = symbol being used for lighting

cues in all four of these sources. In *Macbeth*, nine out of the ten thunder and lightning cues are all marked with the group of three crosses, indicating them to have been actuated from the wings rather than the lighting control position; accompanying location notes, such as 'R. & L.U.E.' confirm this. Of the fourteen lighting cues indicated by the $=$ symbol, only one, on page forty-five, refers to lightning, and indicates that its source was 'below'. The word 'below' is underlined, indicating this to be of some significance; the scene is Act IV Scene 1, featuring the famous 'Double, double, toil and trouble' spell, and the cue takes place on the same page as this text, hence the lightning may have been required from a trap below the cauldron. This would be commensurate with my identification of the purpose of this symbol as a technical / stage management cue, requiring supervision or cueing, but carried out in a location other than the wings.

These examples support the identification of a clearly systematised codification within Kemble's annotations. The latter example in particular further confirms their importance to our general knowledge regarding how certain technical elements of performances were realised. Further to this, three extant pages from another *Macbeth* promptbook annotated by Kemble (and which Shattuck also reproduces in facsimile at the end of the full J.P. Kemble copy) carries the instruction to *throw* the lightning 'full in Macbeth's face' stage right, as shown in Figure 4.1.5 below. This further

indicates that the lightning in these performances may have been a pyrotechnic effect rather than a lamp cue.
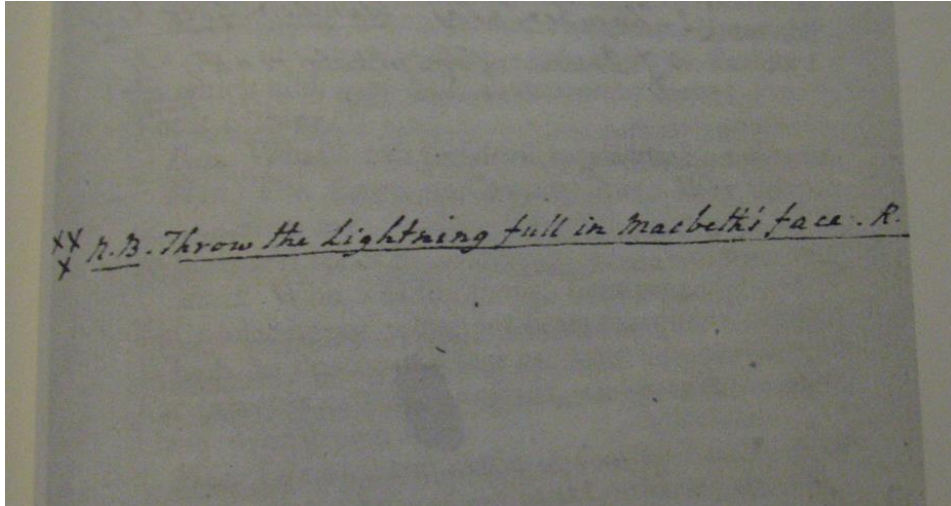
Figure 4.1.5:   Lightning cue from *Macbeth* promptbook as reproduced in the Folger Facsimiles, volume 5, unpaginated.

Kemble's promptbooks are manuals for the successful realisation of every aspect of the performance which he considered to be of importance to his productions. They are precise, detailed, and systematically codified. They arguably influenced the practice of managements and of stage management as the century unfolded; Covent Garden sources dating from post-1808, when Kemble began to make up these promptbooks, reflect a continuation and development of his annotatory trends. For example, where Kemble uses a group of three crosses, later Covent Garden sources use three crosses in a line. The *Rule A Wife* promptbook drawn upon above shows this to be in evidence during the period of Kemble's tenure, which concluded in 1817;

Figure 4.1.6 below, from an 1840 Covent Garden promptbook for a revival of *The Beaux Strategem,* shows this method of signifying offstage sound to be retained more than twenty years later.
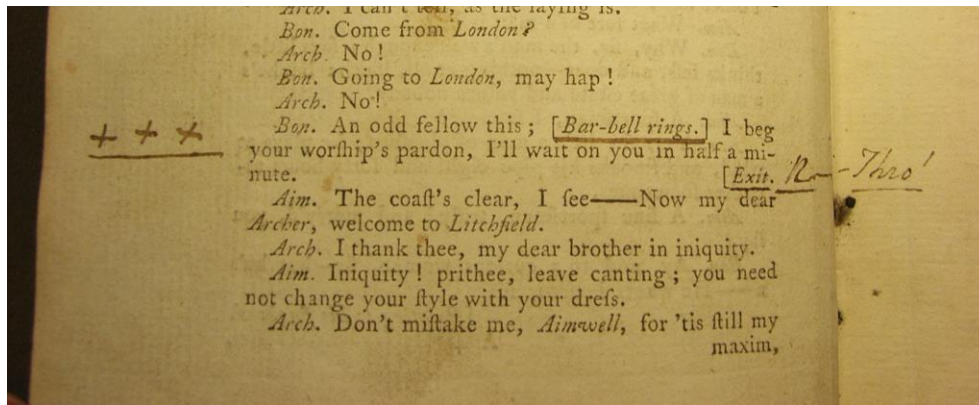
Figure 4.1.6: *The Beaux Strategem* promptbook c1840, Covent Garden, p 8.
(Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

Numerous prompt copies from Drury Lane[8] show commonly recurring symbols to be $\emptyset$, ✳ , crosses grouped in threes $^{x\ x}_{\ x}$, a triangle with one thick ruled side Δ , a triangle with a dot at its centre $\triangle$, a dotted circle $\odot$, and occasionally the symbol # , whilst at Covent Garden $, Λ , ✳, $\emptyset$, and three crosses in a line *x x x* are favoured. These marks show where on the page textual insertions, or an offstage sound effect, or sometimes a call or entrance for an actor, should take place. Analysis of a range of promptbooks[9] demonstrates these to have remained consistently in use into the 1830s.

Of note is the fact that, of the body of symbols in evidence from Drury Lane prompt scripts, those which pre-date Kemble's move to Covent Garden such as $\begin{smallmatrix} \textbf{x} & \textbf{x} \\ & \textbf{x} \end{smallmatrix}$, $\varnothing$ and ✳ both *remain* as commonly-used symbols within Drury Lane promptbooks, and *migrate* to Covent Garden, where they are used as indicated above. In particular, the three crosses, presented in a horizontal line *x x x*, are used for the same purpose as the group of three crosses $\begin{smallmatrix} \textbf{x} & \textbf{x} \\ & \textbf{x} \end{smallmatrix}$ maintained at Drury Lane; namely, for noises-off cues actuated in the wings at each side of the stage.

It is possible that Kemble may have been the medium through which these annotatory symbols came to be in widespread use at both Drury Lane and Covent Garden, particularly since the adoption, and adaptation, of the symbols used by Kemble in subsequent Covent Garden promptbooks is a logical consequence of the wholesale destruction by fire of the theatre's library. It is arguable that the increased sophistication in staging practice which arose as a result of Kemble's influence, leading to a more regulated and careful staging of performance, impacted on the function and the content of promptbooks which the above analyses have demonstrated. With the increased profile of the promptbook as key to the precise realisation of the increasingly varied aspects of each production, a growing importance of the function of stage management to the British theatre can be argued. This is reflected in the practice of one of the few nineteenth-century stage managers to be widely known to scholarship in the field of theatre history:

George Cressall Ellis, whose promptbooks concisely reflect the developing professionalisation of stage management. Examples from his body of work will therefore now be considered.

4.2:   The Stage Manager George Cressall Ellis, 1809 – 75.

A key contributor to the professional development and status of stage management was George Cressall Ellis, whose prompt annotations are distinctively large, clear, and codified. By his own account, Ellis entered the theatre in 1825;[10] in 1835 he was engaged at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket in the capacity of a general utility actor, and also opened the season at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh where he was engaged sporadically until 1838.[11] In 1841 William Charles Macready engaged him at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane at a salary of three pounds per week as assistant or under-prompter to John Wilmott, the 'Superintendent' which Shattuck has defined as 'an honorific title which seems to combine the functions of stage director and chief prompter'.[12]

This reference to the functions of 'superintendent' and 'stage director' is a significant indicator of the development of the discrete role of stage manager, separate to the function of prompter in which the focus of 'stage management' provision has hitherto been concentrated. Wilmott, at the head of the prompters, under-prompters, call boys, and possibly even stage carpenters who undertook the scene changes which became increasingly

complex as the century progressed, at the country's leading theatre, may have been Britain's first stage manager; it is a title with which both Ellis, from the 1840s and 50s, and Frederick Wilton, the stage manager at the Britannia Theatre, Hoxton from the 1840s until the 1870s, both identified, and which implies a distinct set of duties from those associated with the role of prompter as will subsequently be explored.

Following an initial career as an actor, George Cressall Ellis worked variously between 1841 and 1869 as an under-prompter, prompter, stage manager, and stage director at Drury Lane, the Princess's Theatre, the Lyceum, the St. James's, and at Windsor where he staged the royal theatricals.[13] Between 1845 and 1850 he is known to have made ten or eleven promptbook transcriptions of Macready productions for the use of Charles Kean, and during the 1860s he made a further nine promptbook transcriptions of productions of Shakespeare by Macready and Kean for Hermann Vezin.[14] From 1850 until 1859, Ellis was employed at the Princess's Theatre as stage manager for Charles Kean, and, in surviving workbooks from his time there, there are notes which indicate a similar responsibility to that of Wilton at the Britannia, in that a responsibility for all aspects of the production are indicated by his prompt annotations. Such notes range from the cueing of technical aspects of the production ('When Prosp. extends his wand rolling waters grad^{ly} subside'), to the professional state of the finish on scenic pieces ('Canvas aprons wanted to the feet of

both large working trees, to hide wheels – Act 4'), to the practical safety

aspects of supporting the performance ('Pails of water & props w firemen –

R & L – each Act').[15]   The only scholar to have engaged with Ellis' work at

a significant level, Shattuck has claimed that:

> Ellis's talents for stage management and direction were [. . .] so
> well proven that Kean turned over the Christmas pantomimes
> entirely to his care. Nine of these pantomimes (or ten, counting
> the Easter piece of 1851) were billed as "under the direction of
> Mr. George Ellis" . . . [16]

and from 1848 until 1861 Ellis staged the Royal Theatricals at Windsor, for

nine years as assistant to Kean and latterly, until the death of Prince Albert,

for William Bodham Donne, the Examiner of Plays.[17]   He subsequently

worked as stage manager at the Lyceum and St. James's theatres, and

returned to the Princess's as acting manager where he ended his career in

1869.

In the career of G. C. Ellis the emerging role of stage manager can be

discerned. Here it is explicitly indicated, for the first time, that the stage

manager undertook the function of directing the movements and business of

the cast which is today understood as the role of director. The current

director's role is authoritative and comprehensive; in the person of the

director rests the ultimate responsibility for transferring the play from page

to stage, and s/he is the sole member of the creative team upon whom its

success or failure reflects. If this responsibility reflects the expectation of

Victorian managements of their stage managers, an evolving authority and responsibility is indicated which is supported by the primary sources which they generated.   The attention to detail suggested by the promptbooks attributed to Ellis is considerable; so too is the visual vocabulary with which his promptbooks are annotated. Shattuck's 'promptbook studies' provide a comprehensive appreciation of the context in which Ellis' promptbooks have survived to scholarship, and it is therefore appropriate to explore these unique resources which Shattuck has contributed to research relating to stage management.

In 1962 Shattuck published a facsimile promptbook from William Charles Macready's 1842-43 Drury Lane production of *As You Like It*.[18] The source material was not the actual promptbook from which the play had been run in performance, but rather a written-up 'best' copy which Ellis, who was the assistant to Macready's prompter John Wilmott at Drury Lane at the time, had been asked to transcribe and prepare for the American actor Hermann Vezin. Shattuck writes:

> Sometime during the [1842-43] season, or after, [John Wilmott's] assistant prompter, George Ellis, made up a "clean" copy, which I believe represents the play as it was actually played. [. . .] It uses Macready's language to describe the scenery and the stage business, but with significant alterations, augmentations, and deletions, as if describing what *did* appear rather than what Macready had *foreseen* as appearing. **It is magnificently professional in its record of entrances, crosses, exits, groove**

> **numbers, sound effects, character and property lists, warning signals, stage maps, and timings.** [My emphasis.] [. . .] Folded into it [. . .] are the call sheets from which Ellis, or the call boy, sang out the actors' warnings at the green room doors. These too are in Ellis's hand – in ink on gray laid paper water-marked 1842; they are sewn together to make a tall, narrow twelve-page booklet.[19]

Shattuck's conclusion that the promptbook generated by Ellis for Vezin 'represents the play as it was actually played' is a logical one, given the circumstances under which he had been asked to produce it; presuming that Vezin wished to know how Macready's production was staged, we may conclude that this was why he chose to approach the stage manager over anyone else: in order to obtain the details of the production as the audience experienced it, rather than, as Shattuck has considered, 'what Macready had *foreseen* as appearing.'   In assessing the copied version, Shattuck states:

> It is this book, with its elegantly drawn symbols and superb calligraphy, which I have elected to present in facsimile. It exactly represents Macready's production as Ellis first wrote it down; it testifies, through Vezin's later use of it, to the influence Macready exerted long after his retirement.   It also memorializes an astonishing event – a scholarly and artist-like stage manager is seen here in the very act of **transmitting the thinking** [my emphasis] of a scholar-actor of one age to a scholar-actor of the next.[20]

Shattuck's comments reveal a great deal about the purpose for which scholarship has hitherto examined and used stage management documents. He has produced some of the most prominent research into prompt materials, and in particular has brought the life and work of Ellis to the attention of scholarship through his facsimile publications of prompt copies as well as through the article 'A Victorian Stage Manager: George Cressall Ellis' in *Theatre Notebook*.[21]   Yet despite his evident respect for Ellis – declaring, in his article, that 'No prompter or stage manager ever served the stage more conscientiously, and no one ever took more pains than he to record in prompt-books, which are themselves little works of art, the stage art that was passing before him'[22] – Shattuck persists in evaluating Ellis' surviving prompt materials in terms of what they can offer to scholars of drama and dramatists, actors and managers. Whilst not disputing that the 'best' copy written out by Ellis for Vezin undoubtedly testifies to the long-lasting influence of Macready, it must be acknowledged to testify first and foremost to the stage manager's intimate knowledge of the production, to his diligence in representing the exact details of the cueing and calling throughout the performance, and to the scope of the stage manager's responsibilities during Macready's tenure at Drury Lane. In describing a 'scholarly and artist-like stage manager' transmitting the thinking of Macready to Vezin, Shattuck fails to recognise him doing his job: recording accurately and communicating clearly, in a highly visual manner, the essential elements necessary for the performance to be reproduced.

In the same way that the stage manager, being in possession of the prompt copy of the play, was the only person who could correctly regulate all of the elements of each evening's performance, this stage manager was the only person with the skills, knowledge, and experience to communicate (and thereby preserve) Macready's productions in a format that could endure for many years beyond the life of the production itself: a promptbook.   The clear indications offered by this source of the importance of the stage manager and the importance of the promptbook cannot be overlooked in the search for what it might reveal about Macready, or other performers in the company, or Drury Lane; whilst promptbooks can of course be valuable sources of evidence of the life and works of the great actors and managers who created some of British theatre's finest roles, they must be allowed to speak on their own terms so that stage management, and its emerging language of encoded symbols, may attain within theatre historiography its own, legitimate voice.

4.3:   Case Study: Ellis' Promptbook for Macready's *As You Like It.*

Within the promptbooks annotated by Ellis, his use of symbols is extensive; the promptbook for Macready's *As You Like It*, which Shattuck reproduced in facsimile, is representative of his work and practice. The source shows a clear working method of using a variety of symbols to mark two important kinds of information: textual insertions, and the movements of actors. Ellis also displays the typical manner of marking calls in the promptbook,

commonly evident amongst prompt copies throughout the nineteenth century, with large numerals ruled at top and bottom. As Shattuck has observed, the numerals drawn in this source are certainly elaborate – more so than those commonly found in promptbooks of the period – but in every other way their format is the same. On each occasion the names of the characters required in the call are listed beneath the numeral, accompanied by details of any props which the performers required for their entrances. This can be seen in Figure 4.3.1 below, with the number of the call drawn sufficiently largely so as not to be missed, and with the names of the characters called followed by information regarding the articles which they should have brought on with them: 'Baskets and Garlands of Flowers, Poles, etc. for Temple' for the shepherds and shepherdesses. Positions, of cast entrances, exits, or moves, are marked down the right-hand margin: C (centre), R (right), and LUC (left up [stage] centre).
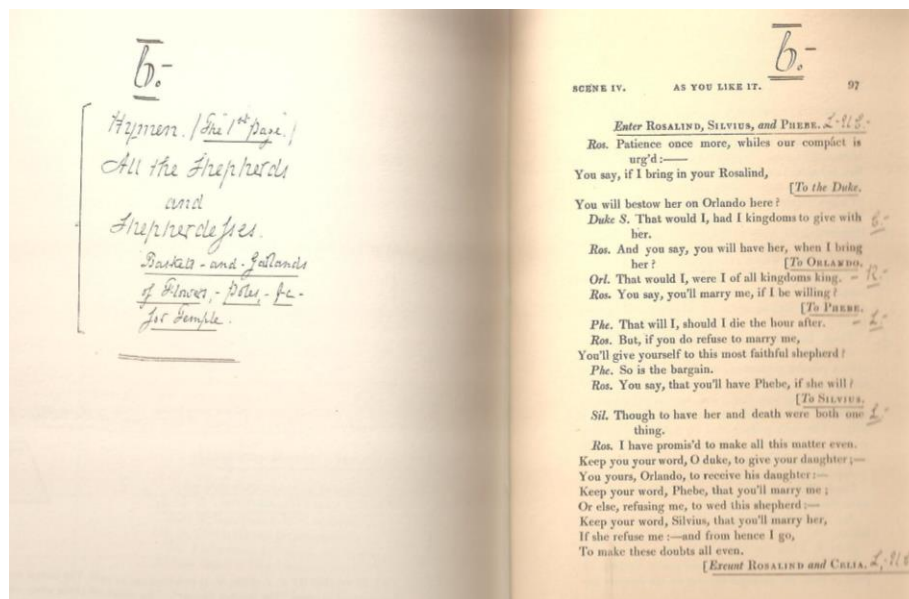
Figure 4.3.1: Ellis' promptbook for *As You Like It*, Act V, p.97.

Figures 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 below show some of the symbols which Ellis frequently uses in this source for blocking or for textual insertions. Meanwhile, Figure 4.3.4 shows a group of three # symbols marking the cuepoint for horns. This group of symbols is used consistently throughout the source for 'ready' warnings and also for the actual cues whenever horns are required, and, importantly, is visually very different from those symbols used for blocking or other notes relating to the cast or the text.
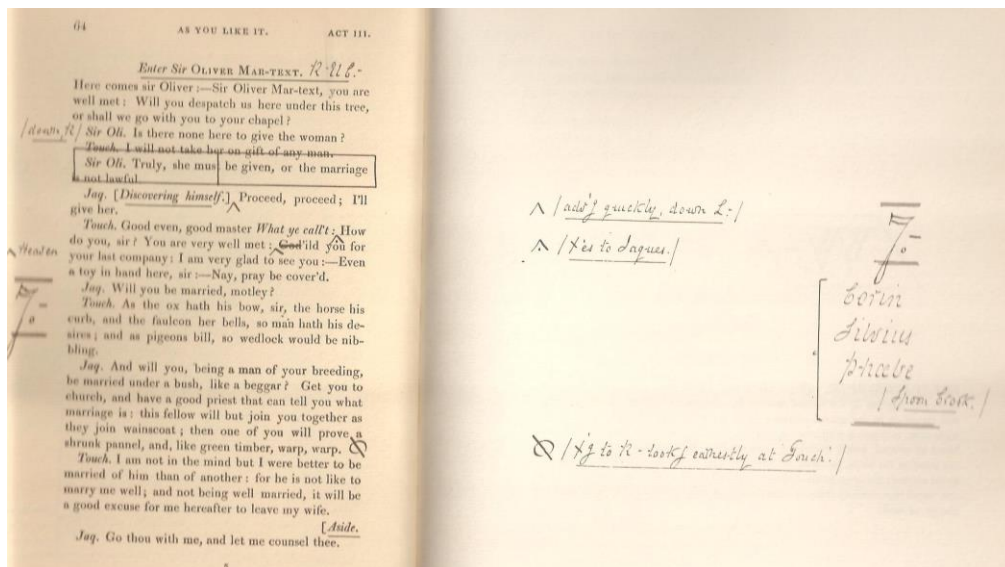
Figure 4.3.2:   *As You Like It* Act III p. 64, with symbols showing cast movements.
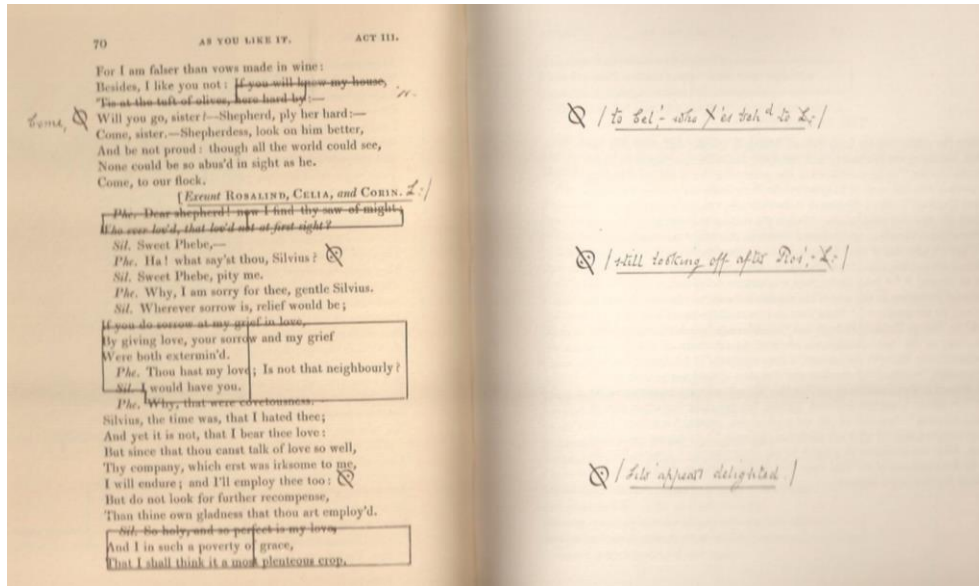
Figure 4.3.3:   *As You Like It* Act III, p.70, with symbols showing cast

movements.
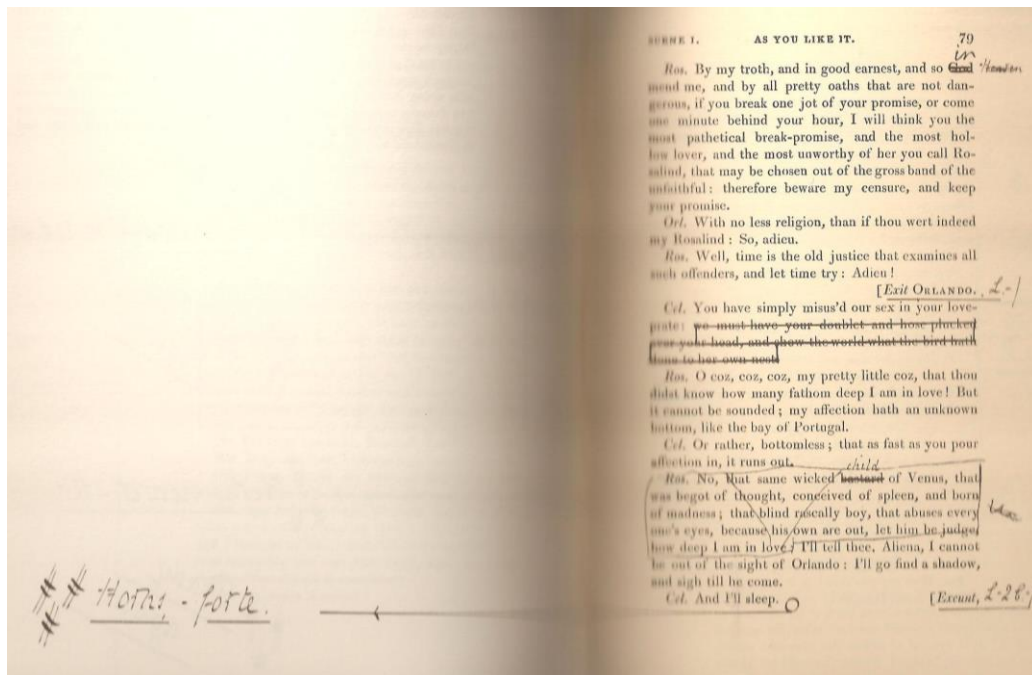
Figure 4.3.4:   *As You Like It* Act IV p79 showing cue for sound marked

with # symbols.

It is interesting to note the symbols which Ellis chose to mark this 'best' copy. Throughout this copy, whilst $\wedge$, $\wedge$, $\mathbf{O}$, $\mathbf{\Theta}$, $\mathbf{\Lambda}$, $\mathbf{\Delta}$, and variations on $\varnothing$ such as including a dot on one or both sides of the line, are used to note moves or the manner in which moves were carried out, the way in which offstage cues are marked is very different and is given much more prominence on the page. As shown above, three groups of # symbols mark the sound cue, with a circle drawn at the precise point in the text at which the cue was to happen, and with a line drawn off the page from this input point to the detail of the instruction – 'Horns, forte' – on the facing blank page. As shown in Figure 4.3.5 below, the elaborately-marked letters 'A.D.' are marked prominently on the page with the input point equally precisely marked when the act drop was required to be called in.
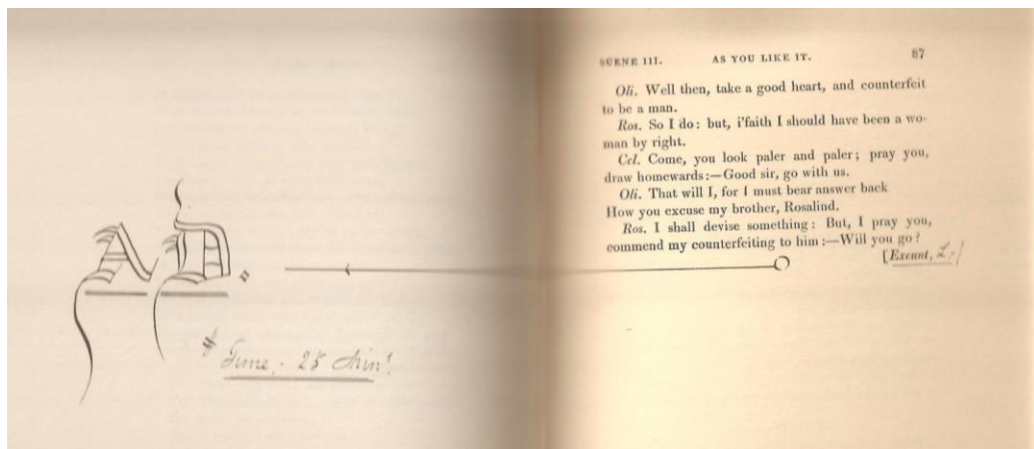
Figure 4.3.5:   *As You Like It* Act IV, p.87.

Three things are indicated by these examples of Ellis' practice: that Ellis codified his symbols; that he differentiated between the way he noted cast information such as blocking from the way he marked cueing instructions; and that he was responsible for the cueing of the offstage effects during the performance, indicated by the precision with which the input points are marked. A definite methodology of using coded signifiers to communicate certain types of information important to the running or the performing of the play can be seen, and this is also true (and abundantly consistent) within other prompt material prepared by Ellis, such as Macready's *King John* which Shattuck also makes available in facsimile.[23]

As with the earlier examples from the patent houses, this source also employs a group of three symbols together to indicate sound or music, although Ellis has chosen the mark # instead of the simple crosses evident in the sources already examined. In common with the annotations in the Drury Lane *Road to Ruin* promptbook from twelve years earlier, which is discussed below, the same symbol is never used more than once on the same page, and the symbol # is never used for anything other than music or other offstage sound such as knocking.

In recognising that Ellis was acknowledged as a practitioner of repute, it is significant to note that his practice was systematised and codified. Ellis' promptbooks have survived to scholarship more than a hundred and fifty

years after they were compiled because the purpose of producing them was to preserve the details of the staging of Macready's productions, in a near-identical manner, for another practitioner. Yet had this not been the case, and had they not survived, an important body of work would have been lost to scholarship. Interrogation of this particular aspect of the development of stage management has been made possible in this instance because the language of stage management is so closely interwoven with that of major practitioners and major managements within the history of British theatre: Macready's theatrecraft was preserved by Ellis using the highly codified language of his own theatrecraft. The importance of this must be recognised by scholarship in relation to the wider field of British theatre history.

In asking why a working practice of using symbols to annotate promptbooks, and codifying them by colour or by shape, should have developed within the nineteenth-century theatre, the suggestion of a culture of exchange of promptbooks for popular plays between practitioners coupled with the continually-developing technical demands of the Victorian theatre can both be drawn upon to argue a need for a means of communication which took little time to write, occupied little space on the page, conveyed an instantly recognisable instruction, and could be widely understood between practitioners. The developing systematisation which can be seen within prompt copies of the early and mid-nineteenth century indicates that consciously codified prompt annotations were arguably

becoming the language of stage management from the turn of the century onward. A further development in the evolution of stage management practice builds on the establishment of codified prompt annotations and is a major aspect of developing practice which endures prominently within prompt annotations to the present day, and marks a significant development in the way in which promptbooks were encoded: the use of colour.

4.4:   Case Study: Drury Lane Promptbook for *The Road To Ruin.*

The promptbook for Thomas Holcroft's *The Road to Ruin*, performed at Drury Lane c1830, is an exceptional example of a codified annotated promptbook and is the earliest source which I have found to demonstrate a clearly systematised codification of annotations by symbol and by colour. This is an interleaved promptbook, and has been chosen for analysis in this case study because of two distinctive aspects of the way in which it has been codified: firstly, a clear system of symbols, to which a specific meaning has been allocated and which has consistently been followed, and secondly, the unequivocally codified use of coloured ink.

Although originally produced at Drury Lane in 1792, Thomas Holcroft's *The Road to Ruin* remained in the repertory for just over eighty years until 1873, and the Victoria & Albert's prompt copy,[24] which has '1830' inked upon the first page of text, falls in the middle of that time-span. It was also, of the twenty promptbooks dating from the first forty years of the nineteenth

century which I analysed from this collection, the earliest to show a clearly differentiated use of colour within the annotations. This is key because the majority of the sources subsequently studied for this research demonstrate a conscious use of colour, to a greater or lesser degree. This source therefore has been chosen as an important example demonstrating a major development in practice, and will serve as the departure point for the analysis of prompt materials annotated during the mid- to late-nineteenth century.

A very conscious colour-coding can be strongly argued to be in evidence within this source: blue ink is used to record the movements of cast, their use of any props, and textual insertions; whilst purple ink is used for offstage sounds, furniture setting information, and technical instructions. This is consistent throughout the source, which indicates that it was a conscious differentiation and supports the suggestion of an increasing sophistication in the level of stage management support that was provided as the century developed. As the document in which this support was recorded and by which each production was regulated, the promptbook can therefore be expected to demonstrate an increasing sophistication and precision in the way in which such information was recorded in it. This is reflected in the evidence which this source provides.

A further feature of the prompt annotations in this source makes it worthy of note: the annotator appears to have chosen three key symbols and has ascribed specific meanings to them, using them recurrently throughout the script. The symbol ∅ , drawn in blue ink, always accompanies a blocking note or a note about props to be handled by a performer. The ✳ symbol in blue ink represents a textual alteration or addition. The same symbol ✳ drawn in purple ink marks each offstage door-knock (the only offstage sound effect required throughout the play), and, where there is more than one such cue on the same page, a triangle with a dot in the centre △ is used to mark these. Figures 4.4.1 to 4.4.4 below show a selection of annotations from this source in illustration of this practice.[25]
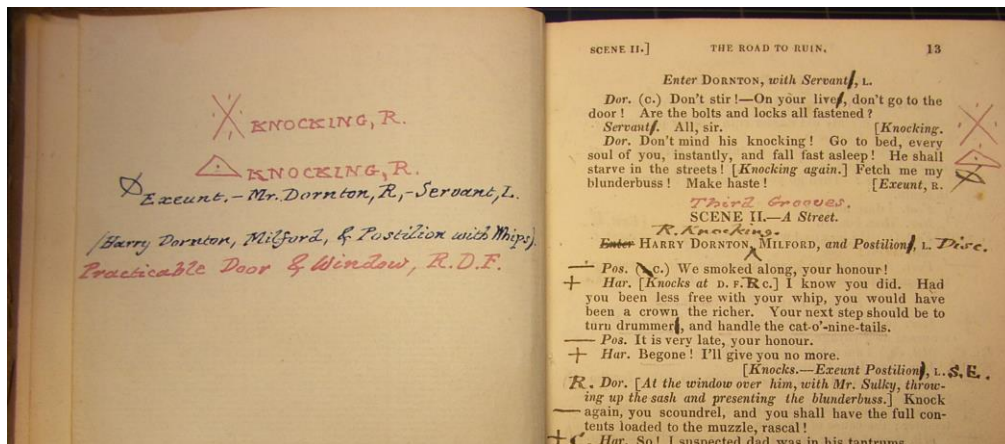
Figure 4.4.1:   *The Road to Ruin*, Act I, page 13 (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

In Figure 4.4.1 above, the symbols ✳ , △ , and ∅ can be seen. The first ✳ mark, in purple ink, is for a sound cue of 'knocking' offstage right. The point at which this occurs is marked with the same symbol ✳ in the margin of the text. A second knocking cue is then required almost immediately afterwards; this is marked on the interleaf with the dotted triangle and the same symbol is drawn in the margin of the text immediately below the symbol ✳ . These are both sound cues to be performed offstage, and as such are drawn in purple ink.

The final symbol to appear on this page is the ∅ mark; here it identifies a movement made by a character onstage, and as such is drawn in blue ink along with the detail of the blocking. The same symbol ∅ is then drawn in blue ink in the margin of the text against the point where the move took place. Other notes, relating to the scene being set in the 'Third Grooves' or the setting of a 'Practicable Door & Window' are technical rather than company notes and consequently appear in purple. Figure 4.4.2 below shows a further example of the codification of offstage knocking with the ✳ symbol and onstage blocking with the ∅ symbol, and of the consistency in the choice of purple ink for a technical note or cue and blue for notes relating to the cast.
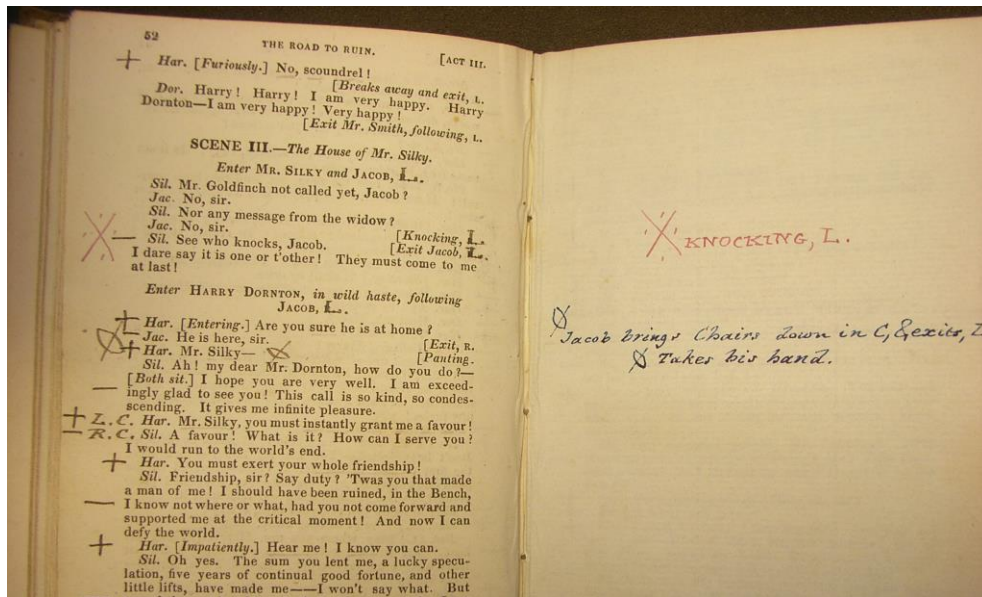
Figure 4.4.2:   *The Road to Ruin*, Act III, page 52 (Theatre Collection,

Victoria & Albert Museum).

In addition to cast movements, blue ink is also chosen to indicate props to be

carried on by performers, as shown in Figure 4.4.3 below, and Figure 4.4.4

further confirms that the colour blue and the symbol $\varnothing$ have been

consciously codified as relating to onstage cast actions by the annotator of

this source. The consistent choice of purple ink for technical cues, each of

which are marked with a different symbol on the page, is further

demonstrated in Figure 4.4.5.
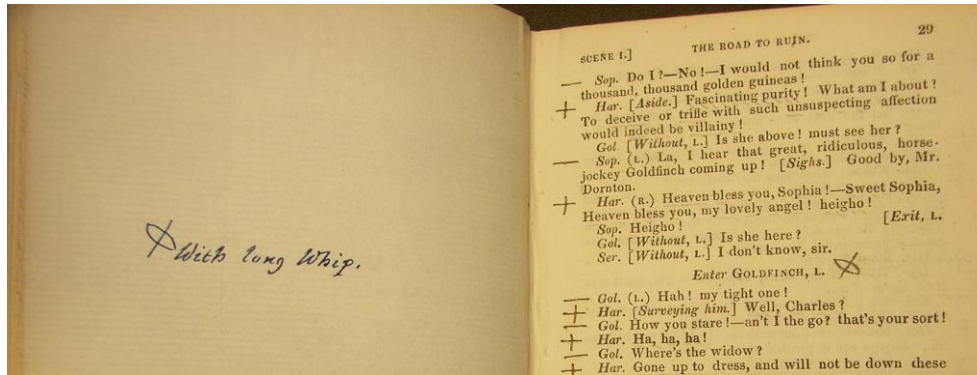
Figure 4.4.3:   *The Road to Ruin,* Act I, page 29 (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).
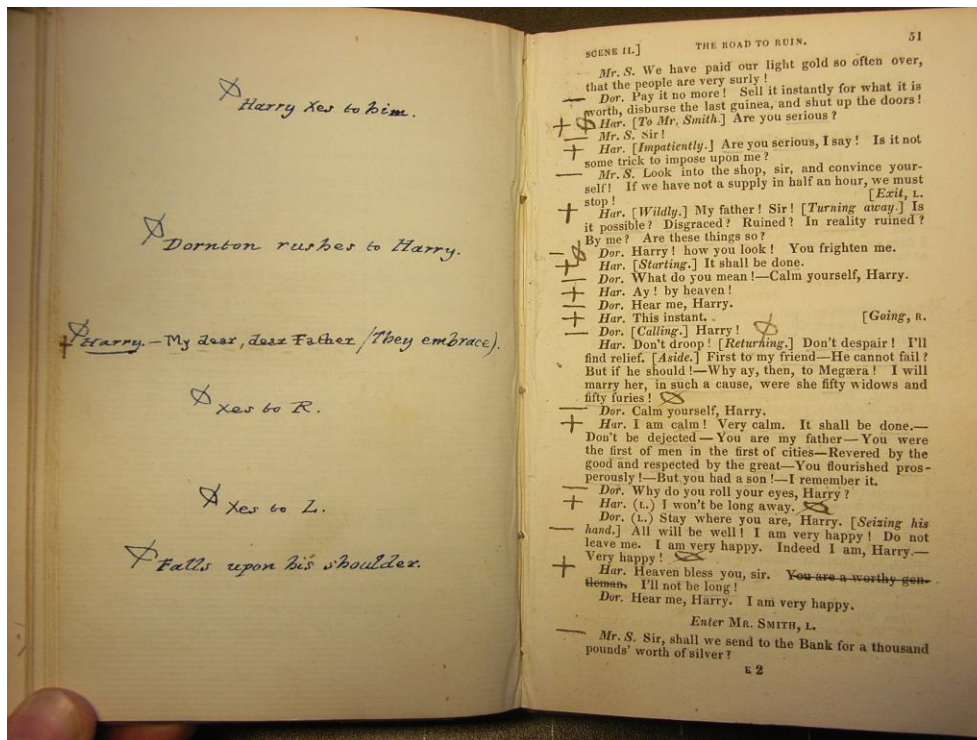
Figure 4.4.4:   *The Road to Ruin*, Act I, page 31 (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).
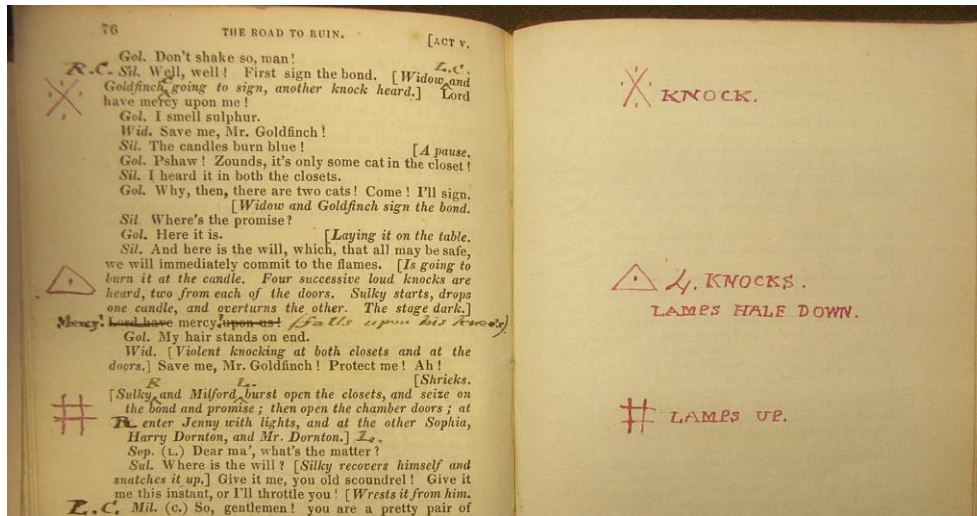
Figure 4.4.5:   *The Road to Ruin*, Act V, page 76 (Theatre Collection,
                Victoria & Albert Museum).

In summary of the trends which can be observed in the annotation of this source, it can firstly be stated with confidence, as demonstrated above, that the symbol ∅ has been reserved for the specific purpose of denoting a movement or other note, such as prop or costume information, **relating to the cast onstage.** As such, it only ever appears in this source marked in blue ink, which reinforces the deduction that these annotations are distinctly codified by colour. Examples of annotations marked in this way include:

p.8:   Mr Dornton rises, & xes to Mr Smith

p.14:   Harry goes up stage, takes his Gloves off, and sits, R.C.

p.20:   with long whip

p.52:   Jacob brings Chairs down in C, & exits, L

p.53:   <u>Harry</u>. - For myself I care not, but save, oh! save my poor father.

p.55:   /Waistcoat unbuttoned, - Cravat loosened, the ends flying/

p.58:   Rises, - stamps, - rushes up the Stage in agony, - & throws
          himself upon the Chair.

Secondly, it can be observed that three particular symbols are in use for

technical running notes: these are the ※ , △ and # symbols. They are

strictly reserved for annotations relating to offstage effects, and the

examples illustrated above in Figures 4.4.1 and 4.4.5 are typical. A pattern

is evident in which, if the effect was required twice on the same page, the

first cue is always marked with the ※ symbol and the second cue is always

marked with the △ symbol. The same symbol, without exception, is

replicated to mark the cue point on the facing page of text, as noted above.

It is comprehensively evident, as the examples selected above demonstrate,

that the prompter's use of both colour and symbols in this promptbook has

been consciously codified in a highly systematic way.

This marks a major development in stage management practice.   When

considered in conjunction with the symbols occurring most frequently in the

promptbooks of Kemble,[26] Ellis, and the Drury Lane sources from 1799 to

1840,[27] it also indicates a continuity of practice. A commonly-understood

code, intelligible amongst stage management practitioners, would arguably

support the enabling of successful productions or revivals to remain in a

theatre's repertory for considerable periods of time (*The Road to Ruin* remained in the Drury Lane repertory for eighty years), remaining faithful to a particular staging for as long as that convention was in vogue, irrespective of the comings and goings of generations of performers, prompters and stage managers if need be; and a standardised language can be argued to support the migratory nature of productions and production personnel. Whilst it cannot be conclusively demonstrated that there was widespread standardisation of practice by 1830 on the basis of the sources studied from Drury Lane and Covent Garden, it is clear that promptbooks from each house share common annotatory trends, and that some trends are in evidence at both theatres, in the form of symbols employed at great length by Kemble, who worked influentially at both theatres around the turn of the nineteenth century, and perpetuated by subsequent practitioners as the body of surviving prompt materials demonstrates.

The question of standardisation is an interesting and pertinent one. Whilst practice clearly varied from theatre to theatre, some definite similarities between theatres are evident which imply the emergence of some commonly recognised or agreed practices, whilst allowing for the idiosyncracies of individual practitioners. The case studies throughout this chapter clearly show standardisation and systematisation within the work of individual stage managers, where a body of individuals' work is extant and can be examined. This is typified by the work of Frederick Wilton, which will be

drawn upon below. Some evidence of a house style at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane can be identified, aspects of which are reflected in sources from Covent Garden. Further to this, a culture of exchange of promptbooks between practitioners is indicated from the mid-nineteenth century onward, for example by the frequent transcriptions by the stage manager George C. Ellis of the promptbooks from Macready's productions at the patent houses for Charles Kean at the Princess's. Similar practice is indicated later in the century by the Britannia stage manager Frederick Wilton, who records sending promptbooks to other managements in his diaries.[28] With such a culture, exchange of practice is inevitable, and an essential need can be argued, based upon the evidence presented and analysed above, for mutually understandable signifiers within promptbooks.

In 1843 the Theatres Regulation Act legitimised the performance of the spoken drama in theatres other than the Theatres Royal. Having looked in detail at the emerging use of codified symbols within prompt sources from Covent Garden and Drury Lane, the next case study will consider in detail the evidence relating to the stage manager Frederick Wilton, both from his diaries and from the extensive body of mid- to late-nineteenth century promptbooks annotated in his hand, from the Britannia, a major neighbourhood theatre where Wilton worked for almost thirty years.

Originally the Britannia Saloon, its proprietor Samuel Lane obtained permission to rebuild and reopen the Britannia as a theatre in 1858, and upon reopening it was considered to be one of the most modern, safe and best technically-equipped theatres in London. This might be unremarkable were it not for the fact that the Britannia was situated in the unfashionable East-End district of Hoxton; no expense had been spared in order to provide one of the poorest parts of the city with what might today be described as a 'state of the art' building in which to entertain the inhabitants of the locality. This being the case, the fare which the Britannia offered, and it was reputed for spectacular melodrama and patriotic pantomines, was complemented by lighting and staging effects which reflected the latest technical capabilities, with the resultant demanding implications for the stage management. Since a particularly rich archive of annotated prompt manuscripts and other related materials from the Britannia exist to scholarship, in the Frank Pettingell Collection of the University of Kent at Canterbury, the stage management of the Britannia will therefore be considered in the context of the materials which evidence the work of its stage manager.

4.5:   The Stage Manager Frederick Wilton, c1803 – 1889.

Frederick Charles Wilton was the stage manager of the Britannia continuously for twenty-nine years, from 1846 to 1875. He first entered the profession as a performer, in 1821, and seems to have commenced his career as a stage manager at the Theatre Royal, Devonport in 1836. The shift in his

focus from performing to stage management, and his approach to his new line of work, can be identified from the following playbill from October 17th 1836, which announces:

<div style="text-align:center">Mr F. Wilton</div>

in assuming the duties of the Stage Management, respectfully begs to state that the most unremitting energy, regularity and precision shall characterise the department over which he will have the honour to preside – The Curtain will rise every night *precisely* at the appointed hour. – The shortest possible time will be allowed to elapse between each Act, and 15 minutes only between each piece. He further promises that his time, his personal efforts, and his whole mind shall be incessantly employed in endeavouring to make the stage Arrangements worthy of the approbation of the Patrons of the Theatre Royal Devonport.[29]

Wilton subsequently worked at the Gravesend Theatre and the Victoria Theatre, Plymouth before joining the Britannia for the first time in 1843. His diaries indicate that he left the Britannia following a disagreement with the owner and manager, Samuel Lane, but Wilton returned in 1846 and remained there continuously for the next twenty-nine years until his retirement in 1875.[30]

Importantly, his diary entries indicate the routine responsibilities of a stage manager at the mid-point of the nineteenth century. Jim Davis, who has edited and published selections from Wilton's diaries spanning the last

twelve and a half years of his career at the Britannia, has described Wilton's functions as stage manager as 'many and various':[31]

> He was responsible for what happened on stage during performance; for marking up the scripts of new melodramas and pantomimes and ensuring that the carpenters, scene painters and property men created the effects required; and for rehearsing the play. He had to cut plays which were over-long; distribute roles to be played; and arrange for substitute performers in the event of absence or illness. Another task was the drawing up of the weekly playbills and newspaper advertisements, as well as correcting the proofs once the playbill was printed. Just before the Christmas pantomime commenced he also had to compose and copy out pre-performance puffs for distribution to the newspapers. He had to prepare changes of programme and mark up scripts for benefit performances. Whilst new actors and actresses were hired by the management, Wilton sometimes took responsibility for hiring speciality acts and extras, including soldiers for military spectacles. He also had to tell performers when their engagements had expired or were to be discharged [. . .] Wilton was sometimes required to act on behalf of the Britannia's management, as when the theatre's licence became due for renewal. He usually accompanied the Examiner of Plays and his colleagues from the Lord Chamberlain's Office on their annual tour of inspection of the theatre and often had to take responsibility for implementing their suggestions. If problems concerning safety or the licensing of specific plays arose, then Wilton was often sent on the theatre's behalf to sort them out with the Lord Chamberlain's Office. [. . .] From the spring of 1872 he also became responsible for assisting the

Treasury in paying out salaries to many of the 'extra' performers engaged at the theatre.[32]

Since Davis has already outlined the functions undertaken by Wilton in his capacity as stage manager, indicating the scope of responsibilities at this significant theatre, my focus will be on how the promptbooks annotated by Wilton inform us how he ran the productions and, in common with the encoded annotations identified in the promptbooks analysed from Covent Garden and Drury Lane, how they support both the identification of an increasing commonality of practice between theatres, and the identification of an encoded practice of Wilton's own at the Britannia. His annotated copies of play scripts[33] from that theatre hold a rich array of details regarding the staging of the productions and of his own responsibilities during their performance; some also carry annotations in the hand of the prompter Joseph Pitt.

In acknowledging how closely Wilton must have worked with Pitt,[34] it is important to point out that two very separate roles are identified here, of prompter and stage manager; and the sources in the archive indicate very separate responsibilities. This reflects the nineteenth-century development of the stage management function into two distinct roles, in contrast to the single and ostensibly autonomous role of prompter which alone is discernible from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources examined. The Wilton material is significant therefore because his promptbooks

provide an insight into his craft as stage manager and demonstrate the evolving sophistication of the role during the nineteenth century.

The material indicates that Wilton consistently followed a personal method of codifying the notes he made upon his copy of each script. In particular, a colour-coded system of annotation is identifiable, making it possible to distinguish notes which were key to the running of the performance, which would be highlighted in a coloured crayon, from annotations regarding the text such as cuts, insertions, or cast details, which mostly appear in black ink. The colours used, without exception throughout the Britannia material, are red and blue.[35]

The sources studied show a strong trend, although not sufficiently consistent to be a rule,[36] for using red pencil-crayon to make notes referring to props, articles of furniture, or costume to be worn or carried on by performers at their entrances, and blue pencil-crayon for notes concerning technical elements of the show such as sound cues, lighting cues, or scene-changes. Where this trend is followed, red crayon is used to draw attention to information (either printed in the text or handwritten during the rehearsal process) which was to be followed *primarily by the cast* during the performance. Any textual stage directions which were actually followed, props which performers carried on, items of costume of sufficient importance to be mentioned either in the printed text or by hand, and

furniture featured in a scene, are commonly found to be underlined in red in Wilton's promptbooks.

Again where the trend is followed, blue crayon is used for 'cues': anything which had to be carried out either by Wilton himself or by an employee under his authority is generally marked in blue, and these cues typically include music, live sound effects, changes in the stage lighting, gunfire and pyrotechnics, and instructions and information relating to scene changes.   In particular, Wilton almost without variation draws a giant 'W' for 'whistle' at the ends of scenes or acts when a scene-change is required; these 'W's are outlined in black ink and carefully coloured in with blue pencil-crayon, suggesting a conscious preference to maintain the codification of blue for stage instructions.

In addition to underlining the references to important items or actions within the text, Wilton commonly marks a cross, either next to the text if the promptbook is not interleaved, or on the facing blank page if it is, in the corresponding colour: red for information relating to the cast, blue if related to the staging, or red and blue crosses if both performers and stage staff are involved in the particular cue, reference, or requirement.   Further to this codified use of colour, certain symbols and ways of marking cues consistently appear throughout Wilton's annotations, suggesting a systematised method of using such markings to communicate information

(for example, a defined way of marking a cue to be carried out by stage staff) or to signify a particular action (such as music).

The archive reveals Wilton to have been a prolific annotator of the manuscripts from which he regulated the performances, and as such the material is significant to this research. In particular, the promptbooks drawn upon below, which are representative of Wilton's body of work, provide a vivid indication of the range of responsibilities undertaken by this Victorian stage manager. They also demonstrate the extent of the spectacular effects which Wilton and his staff were called upon to realise; Colin Hazlewood's 1863 melodrama *Faith, Hope and Charity* is of particular interest since it was the first play in which Professor Pepper's ghost effect was incorporated. It tells the story of Faith Mayton, a clergyman's widow, and her two daughters, demure Hope, played by Britannia regular Miss Sophie Miles, and headstrong Charity, played by the proprietress, Mrs. Sarah Lane. At the close of Act I, evil Sir Gilbert Northwood contrives the wrongful arrest of Hope for the theft of some money, with the result that she is imprisoned in his house which is burned down prompting a dramatic rescue (marked in the manuscript with the stage direction 'Fire Engine on when convenient').

Meanwhile, mother Faith's mysterious benefactor, who has enabled her to continue living in the family home since becoming widowed, is revealed to be a man who had accidentally shot her sister, and the shock of this causes

her to die at the end of Act II. In Act III, Hope prays to her mother's spirit to guide her children through their trials, and the spirit rises up from the centre of the stage, 'borne upward by Angels'. Sir Gilbert's deviousness is uncovered, he is imprisoned with his accomplices, and all live happily ever after.

Wilton's diary for April 6th 1863 observes that *Faith, Hope and Charity* opened that night and 'played 4 hours all but 2 minutes – 31 minutes wait between the 2nd and 3rd acts, preparing the 'Illusion' – 18 minutes between the 3rd and 4th Acts. Capital House. *1st Night of the Ghost.'* [37] This refers to the use of 'Professor Pepper's Spectral Illusion', now commonly referred to as Pepper's Ghost, to realise the spirit of Faith in the third act; his diaries reveal that this had given considerable difficulty to Wilton and his staff during their preparations for this effect to be incorporated into the play, as testified by the fact that the interval between Act II and Act III whilst the equipment for the effect was set up took thirty-one minutes, with the interval between Acts III and IV taking eighteen whilst it was taken down again – the Pepper's Ghost equipment thereby accounting for the best part of an hour of the four-hour running time on the opening night. The images below show a representative selection of cues from Wilton's prompt copy for this production.

Figure 4.5.1:   *Faith, Hope & Charity* Act III (unpaginated):

Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

In Figure 4.5.1 above, the most prominent annotations are the 'W', the scene division showing the start of Act III Scene 3, and the cue for snow. It can be seen that several cuts have been made to the text, including the 'warning' note 'Ready signal for Spirit' which was moved to an earlier point in the text following the textual cuts. The cue for snow, not affected by the textual cuts, has been heavily outlined in black ink and cross-hatched in blue crayon; it has been made much more visually prominent on the page than the cut warning for a forthcoming cue, and the reason for this is evident from the excessive amount of text which has been cut following the play's opening. The need for Wilton to be able to see, at a glance upon turning the page, that within only six lines of text spoken by Hope he was to whistle for

the scene-change and cue the snow in time for it to be falling for the start of Scene 3, then turn to the next page to keep up with the text following the cuts, can be appreciated from this extract which additionally demonstrates why the development of codified annotations relating to cueing instructions was becoming increasingly expedient during the nineteenth century.

In illustration of this, Figure 4.5.2 below shows the ghost effect being cued, on Charity's line 'Through me, through me'. A blue crayon X marks the exact point in the text that it was to happen, and there is an attendant symbol ⊙ , with which Wilton marks music cues, indicating, logically, that the apparition of the ghost was accompanied by suitably melodramatic music. In accordance with the trend which is discernable within Wilton's annotations, the cue is heavily marked, identified with a cross-hatched box, and coloured in blue because it is an instruction relating to the technical staff rather than the company of performers.
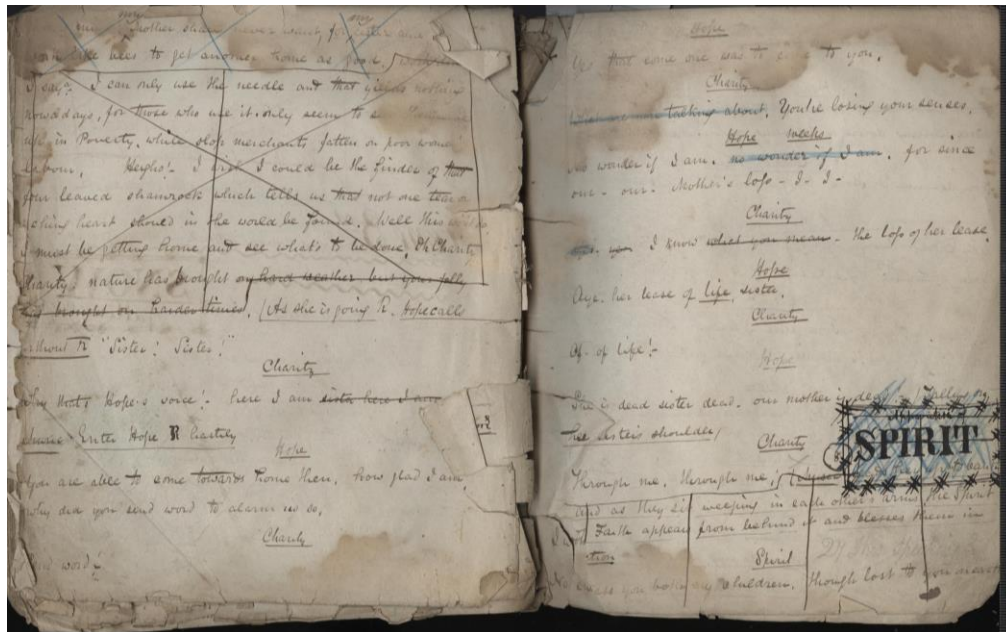
Figure 4.5.2:   *Faith, Hope & Charity* Act III (unpaginated):

Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

In Figure 4.5.3 below, the cross-hatched preparatory warning 'Ready Signal for Angels' can be seen, in the centre of the picture. Significantly, since this is not an actual cue but merely a warning that the cue would soon be due, it has not been coloured in with the blue crayon. This is also a consistent trait within Wilton's annotations, meaning that it is possible not only to identify codified cueing by colour and symbol within Wilton's work, but also to identify stand-bys which are distinguishable from cues in this manner.
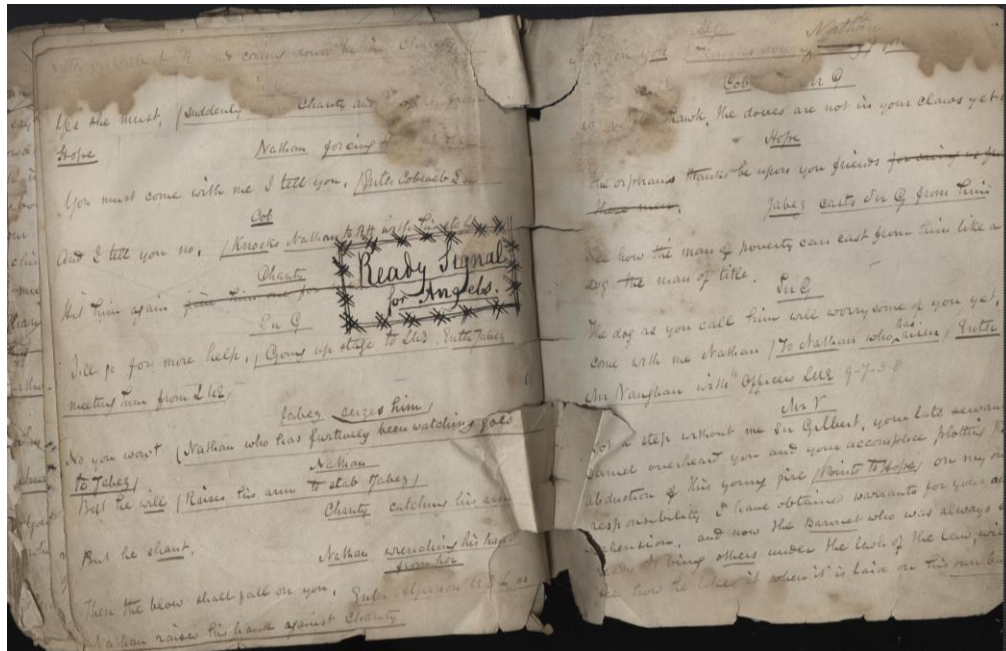
Figure 4.5.3:   *Faith, Hope & Charity* Act III (unpaginated):

Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

In addition to Wilton's responsibilities for the spectral illusion as indicated

by his prompt copy and described in his diary, the material demonstrates

that he also had responsibility for the lighting effects which augmented the

ghost effect and heightened the melodrama. In Figure 4.5.4 below, the

opening of Act IV is described with detailed notes regarding the lighting for

the opening of the act: 'Float lights and wings all out, Stage-Box

Chandeliers out, 3rd & 4th Borders ½ up, Large Chandelier & others all very

low.'   Importantly, it can be observed that this information, written in black

ink, has been carefully traced over in blue crayon, in accordance with the

conscious codification by colour with which Wilton's promptbooks are

annotated. The note 'Act 4 (when Spectral Illusion introduced by Professor

Pepper)' can also be seen written in blue at the very top of the recto page,

identifying this as a cue for the technical staff, as is the cue 'Death

Vanishes'. Consistently with Wilton's codification of blue to mark technical

cues, this has been cross-hatched in blue crayon, and above it, also written

in blue, can be seen the cue-line for this disappearance: '– cannot look upon

it'. This evidence clearly suggests Wilton's responsibility for the initiation

of these cues, and equally clearly demonstrates them to be marked in the

manuscript which he used in a consistently codified manner.
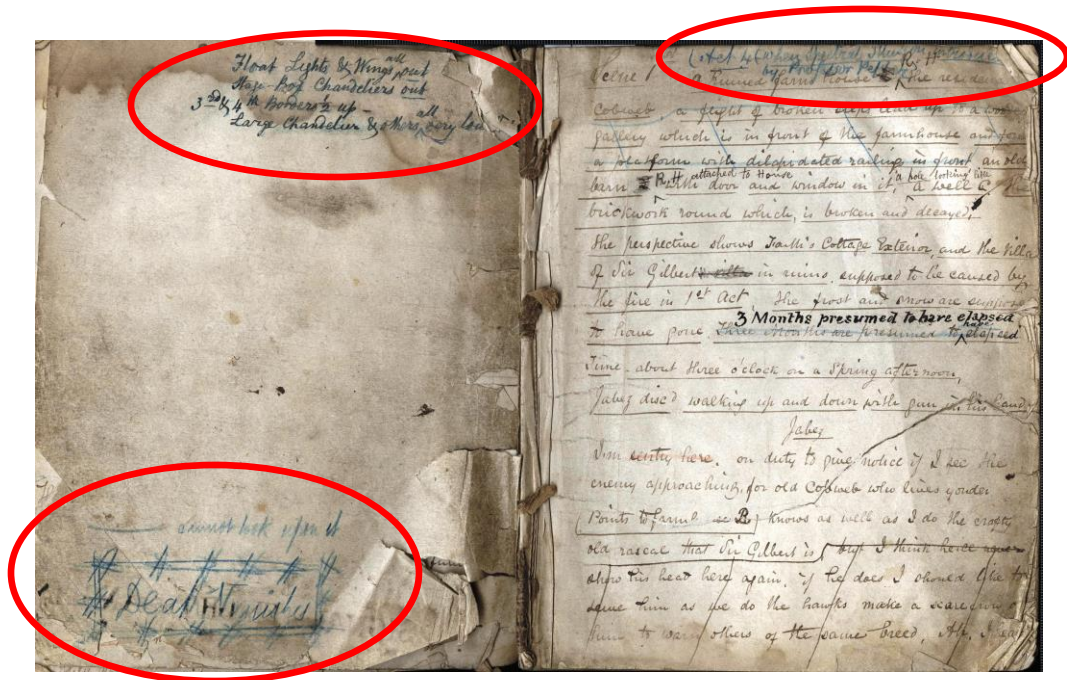
Figure 4.5.4:   *Faith, Hope & Charity* Act IV (unpaginated):

                  Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

These images illustrate, and are representative of, Wilton's annotatory style, using cross-hatched boxes to enclose key information for the running of the performance, such as the apparition of the spirit or the snow, and to mark his technical cues prominently on the pages of his promptbooks. They also demonstrate his conscious use of colour, with his consistent use of blue for technical cues and red for references affecting the cast, and his use of the ☉ symbol when music is required. Wilton's responsibility for the lighting and the setting of the stage is also demonstrated in these examples; although it is likely that gasmen employed for the purpose would have actually regulated the lighting to the required levels, Wilton clearly assumed responsibility for directing them to do so or for checking that it was done, and, whilst the terminology indicates that the reference to the 'borders ½ up' is a lighting rather than a flying instruction,[38] it is possible that he may similarly have directed or checked the work of the flymen arranging the flown masking.

Responsibility for the cueing of lighting augmented by pyrotechnic effects is demonstrated in Wilton's annotated manuscript for *Alone in the Pirates' Lair*, a seafaring spectacle with captures and disguises and full battle-scenes to open and close, also written by Hazlewood and performed in September 1867. The hand of Jo Pitt, the prompter, who played the minor role of Lt. Middleton in this production, is also in evidence in this source; his annotations indicate the extent of Wilton's authority, such as the source below which has been pasted onto the manuscript page dating from an 1871

revival of the play. Signed by Pitt, it relates to orders given by Wilton in relation to the supernumeraries following a performance in which he was not satisfied with their appearance:

> Mr Wilton noticed that the Supers had no colour or make-up. He insisted on, Supers colouring, and burnt-cork beard, moustache or a fine. J. Pitt, 1871.
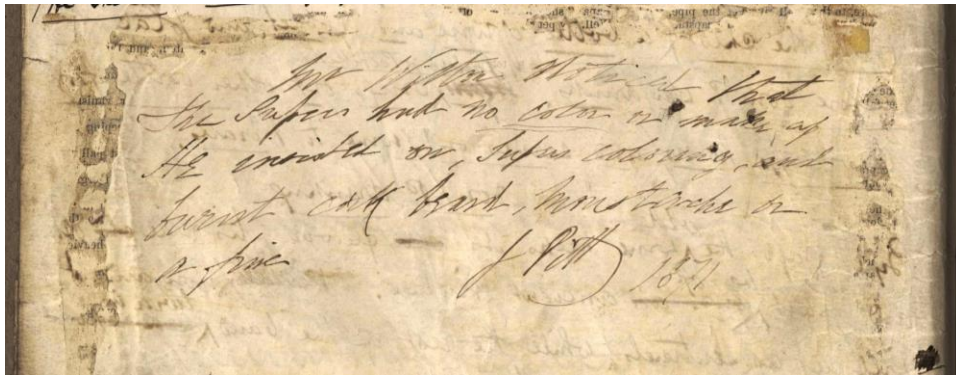
Figure 4.5.5:   *Alone in the Pirates' Lair* Act I p.10 verso: Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

Pitt's remarks reveal Wilton taking responsibility for the visual impact of the supernumeraries' appearance at that performance; they suggest the authority and autonomy which he exercised at the Britannia as well as revealing an experienced eye for detail and a professional diligence towards the production. Of even greater significance are indications from the same source that Wilton may have had total responsibility for the staging of this production, a revival of the play originally staged four years previously. A further annotation by Pitt is found on the final leaf (page thirty-one recto) of the Act I manuscript: 'The play comic and bright Mr Wilton arranged J. Pitt'

in which Pitt appears to be unambiguously stating that Wilton 'arranged' or staged this revival. This is supported by a further note on the flyleaf of the manuscript for Act II: 'Mr Wilton said he would have soft dreaming music to open this, he would give the whistle after so much had been played. J. Pitt.' This suggests Wilton as having the authority to choose what music he would like for the beginning of the Act, and to determine the appropriate point at which to take up the curtain according to his own judgment, possibly based on his prior knowledge of the play when it was first performed or equally possibly on the basis of his experience as stage manager. Whether or not this was common practice, this source strongly indicates that total responsibility for its revival was entrusted to Wilton.

The plot of this play centres on a seaman who becomes a pirate in order to take revenge upon a harsh captain who had wronged him in the past; the captain leads a second ship in pursuit and the finale is a mighty sea battle between the pirates and the Royal Navy, in which the Navy emerges victorious to 'Rule Britannia played forte, loud shouts and curtain.' The first page of Wilton's promptbook contains two references to the lighting: 'Moonlight' and 'Green Glasses'. In accordance with Wilton's codification, these notes are written in blue crayon and enclosed in double-ruled boxes, also drawn in blue. The symbol ⊙ , again in blue, is marked at the start of the action indicating a cue for music, and a vertical line drawn down from it indicates its duration against the text. This is shown in Figure 4.5.6 below.
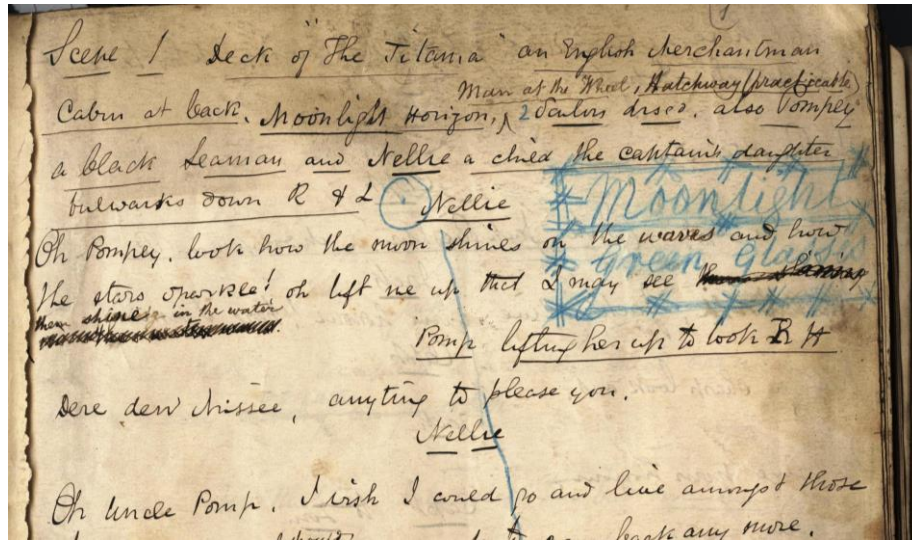
Figure 4.5.6:   *Alone in the Pirates' Lair* Act I p.1: Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

Figure 4.5.7 below shows page five of this promptbook, with the notes 'CANNON'; 'CANNON : SHOUTS'; 'SHOUTS' over the points in the text at which they were to happen.
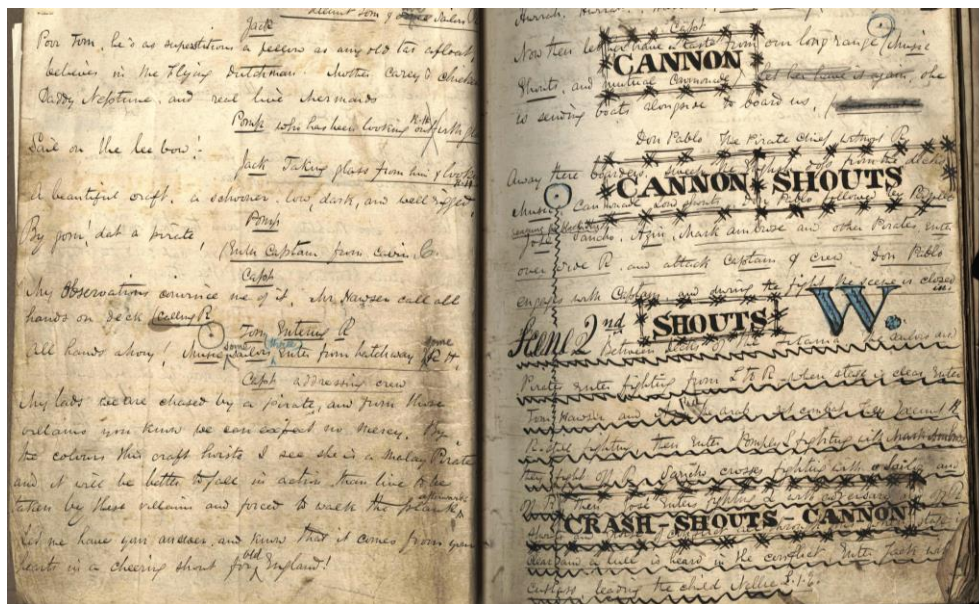
Figure 4.5.7:   *Alone in the Pirates' Lair* Act I pp.4 verso and 5 recto: Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

Although marked very prominently on the page, these cues are neither written in the blue crayon, nor highlighted with blue lines or blue cross-hatching, that indicate technical cues elsewhere in this manuscript and in the wider body of material annotated by Wilton. In contrast, the large capital 'W', drawn in ink and visible half-way down the page, has been clearly and carefully coloured in with blue in accordance with Wilton's annotatory trend; but as with the other cannon and shout cues on this page, the final cue on the page, 'CRASH – SHOUTS – CANNON' is marked only in black.

There may not have been any reason why Wilton did not follow his own trend in marking these cues with blue; however, given the consistency with which the blue-cue marking trend is evident within both this source and others within the Wilton material, it is possible that they are not marked in blue because Wilton was not responsible for cueing them. Terence Rees' research into theatre lighting draws upon the evidence of lighting plots to demonstrate working practices amongst touring companies, from which the operators themselves (particularly limelight operators) took their own cues for lighting effects,[39] and it is possible that the men from Pain's Fireworks, who frequently supplied and operated the Britannia's pyrotechnic effects, may have taken their own cues during this section. John Pain founded Britain's longest established firework manufacturers, originating in the East End of London in the fifteenth century; they supplied the pyrotechnics for the 1908 London Olympics and the Franco-British Exhibition of the same

year, and claim to have been the gunpowder manufacturers who supplied the

barrels used in the infamous 1605 plot.[40] The suggestion that Pain's staff

may have self-cued is supported by a reference on the final page of the play

to 'Pain's volley', shown below in Figure 4.5.8 which demonstrates the

cueing for the remainder of the final battle: 'Shouts, Cannonade' at the top,

then 'Shouts' accompanied by the symbol which Wilton uses to signify

music. In the centre of the page it can clearly be seen that 'Pain's Volley,

Red Fire. Burst sparks. Guns fired behind Scenes. – Crash – Shouts' were

required at this point.

Figure 4.5.8:   *Alone in the Pirates' Lair* Act II pp. 40 verso and 41 recto:
                    Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

Pasted in above the yellow diagram in the source above is another note from

the prompter Pitt, from a later performance of the play in April 1872; it

relates to the close of the play, and reads: 'Mr Wilton rang down, he said he

would have [*obscured*] for Curtain J. Pitt April 21/72.' This further reflects the extent to which Wilton could exercise his choice over aspects of the production, suggesting an authority which today would be expected to fall under the remit (and the right) of the director.

In contrast to the cannon and explosion cues which represented the scenes of battle in the two sources above, the large letter W, which is marked next to the beginning of scene two in Figure 4.5.7 above, is coloured in blue as has been noted, suggesting that whilst the cannon operators may have been self-cueing their contributions to the explosions, Wilton may have been whistling for the scene-change and supervising it. This suggestion is based on extensive analysis of promptbooks within the Pettingell Collection, which enabled a trend to be discerned within Wilton's annotatory style. Hence the means and the ability to understand encoded prompt annotations enables a wider interpretation of the component aspects of mounting a production at a given period; this affirms the impact with which a greater knowledge of the historic development of stage management can inform and contribute to the body of knowledge relating to the historic development of the British theatre, and supports the validity of such research.

The inclusion on the final page of Wilton's copy of *Alone in the Pirates' Lair*, shown in Figure 4.5.8 above, of an illustration captioned 'Destruction of the Pirates' Ship' reminds us that the paying public would have expected

to be provided with a spectacle onstage to match the engravings with which the plays were promoted. Cuttings such as the one shown above feature with some regularity within Wilton's promptbooks, suggesting that it fell under his responsibility to ensure that the scenes featured in promotional material were realised to the satisfaction of the Britannia's audience. Wilton was also, however, a prolific illustrator of his promptbooks which provide a vivid indication of how some of the more opulent or technically challenging scenes were staged.   He drew nothing which was not functional; his illustrations carry annotations pointing out important features such as practical windows or doors, and, in the case of the shield drawn below for the 1868 production of *The Abyssinian War* by William Travers, the side view details the materials to be used in its manufacture, showing, in this instance, which parts were to be of steel and which were to be of leather.

In Figure 4.5.9 below, the top sketch has been drawn by Thomas Rogers, scenic artist at the Britannia;[41] it is drawn in a finer pen, and labelled in a different hand, to Wilton's who identifies it as 'Side View of Shield by Mr. Rogers.' In Wilton's own hand, and broader, darker pen, can then be seen a drawing of King Theodore's lance and a front view of the shield, possibly with a view to their reproduction by the property department; the drawings are further annotated: 'The Star of steel. Grounds of Buffalo's hide. Boss in Centre. Gold. Buttons round boss, steel.' The group of three crosses beneath the drawing of the shield marks a memorandum, stating: 'The

Envoy's shield is exactly similar to this; In fact, there need be but one of these Shields – The Envoy can double Theodore's.'   This note indicates the level of detail with which Wilton undertook his responsibilities; he has analysed the text and realised that the same shield can double in both scenes thereby saving both time and money in the propsmaking. Another common responsibility of the stage manager, noting the running times of each performance, is illustrated by the notes on the bottom half of the page.
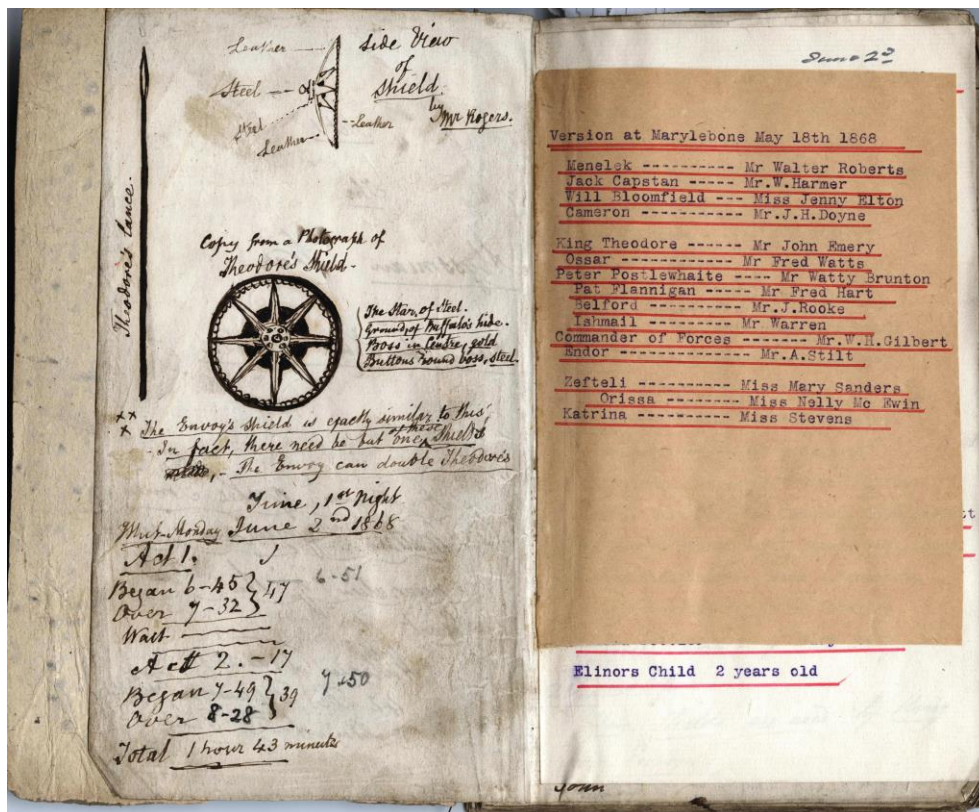
Figure 4.5.9:   *The Abyssinian War* manuscript inside front cover: Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

The Abyssinian War & Death of King Theodore is described by the author on the title page as 'A Drama of the Times Written expressly in commemoration of this Great Event by William Travers 42 De Beauvoir Square Kingsland Road'.[42] The Emperor Theodore II of Abyssinia had died in the April of 1868, and the play is a rousing military production which featured real soldiers borrowed by Wilton from the Scots Guards, as detailed in his diary:

> MAY *25 Mon*   [. . .] Went to the the Tower & got permission for Soldiers 'Scots Fusileers' (1st Battalion) to come as Supers next week from Colonel Gibbs – (Sergt Major McBlane).
>
> JUN *1 Mon*   Whit-Monday.   *Abyssinian War* (1st night). [. . .] Soldiers from the Tower. 1st Battalion Scots Fusileer Guards, Colonel Gibbs, Sergt Major McBlane. 1 Sergt, 1 Bugler, 20 Soldiers, Good House. Piece Enthusiastically received. Nightly cost of Soldiers for *Abyssinian War* 1.16.0.

In this play, the British army is marching to rescue an English girl and her sick child who are prisoners of King Theodore, 'not to extend conquest but to rescue fellow countrymen from the grasp of a savage potentate'. The promptbook is extensively annotated and indicates the logistics of staging a full-scale battle with practical guns, cannon, and troops. Figure 4.5.10 below reflects the annotatory trends with which Wilton marks his promptbooks: a prop reference, 'takes penny tin whistle', can be seen

underlined in red because it relates to a performer; stage directions are

underlined in blue, since they relate to the setting of the scenery under

Wilton's responsibility as stage manager. The large ink-lined 'W', which

signifies a scene-change at the end of Scene 3, is coloured in blue, indicating

Wilton's direct responsibility for it; and the ☉ symbol signifies music, also

coloured in blue indicating that it was cued by Wilton. The entrance of the

'real soldiers' is highlighted in thick lettering and can clearly be seen two-

thirds down the page.
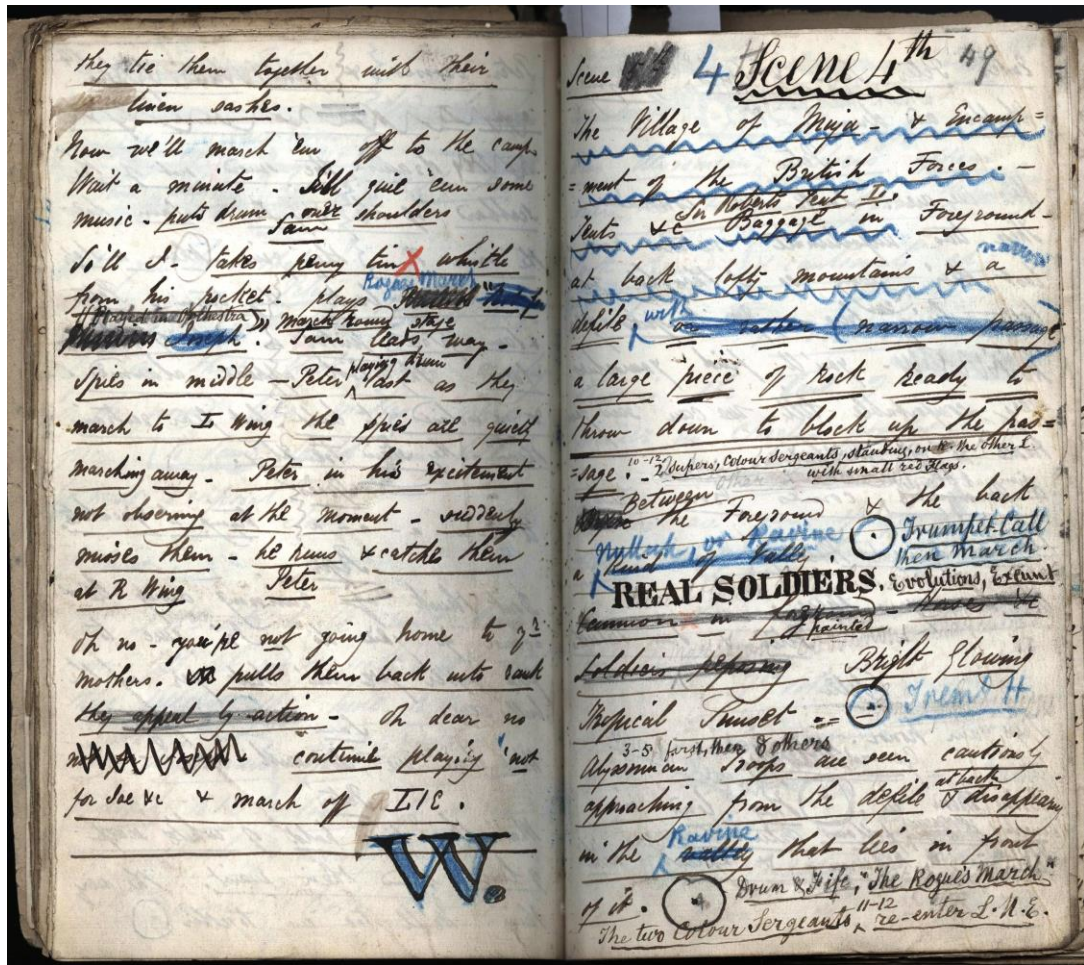
Figure 4.5.10: *The Abyssinian War* pp. 48 verso and 49 recto: Britannia
Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

Figure 4.5.11, below, which shows pages 54v and 55r of the manuscript, also shows the music symbol but two important warning notes can also be seen, reinforcing both the arguable case for evidence of a convention of stand-bys and my identification of a systematic method of marking them within Wilton's work. At the top of page 54v, in a black cross-hatched box, is the instruction 'Murmurs Under the Stage.' Further down that same page, Wilton writes: 'Ready to see that Soldiers, who fire, change their bayonetted Guns for Loaded ones while offstage R.H.' – his experience of the logistics of staging complementing the authenticity of the professional soldiers onstage. This is also in evidence in the 1873 manuscript for Hazlewood's *Napoleon, or, The Story of a Flag*: in the property plot which follows the text of the play, Wilton writes: 'All the real soldiers' guns must be prepared to fix bayonets and there must be bayonets in cases with proper belts to wear them.'

At the bottom of page 55 recto, the note 'Shots fired by Property Man L.H.' can be seen. Since this is not marked in blue, despite the presence of other blue marks on the page, it is possible that the property man took these as 'visual' cues himself, in continuity with the practice for which I have argued above.
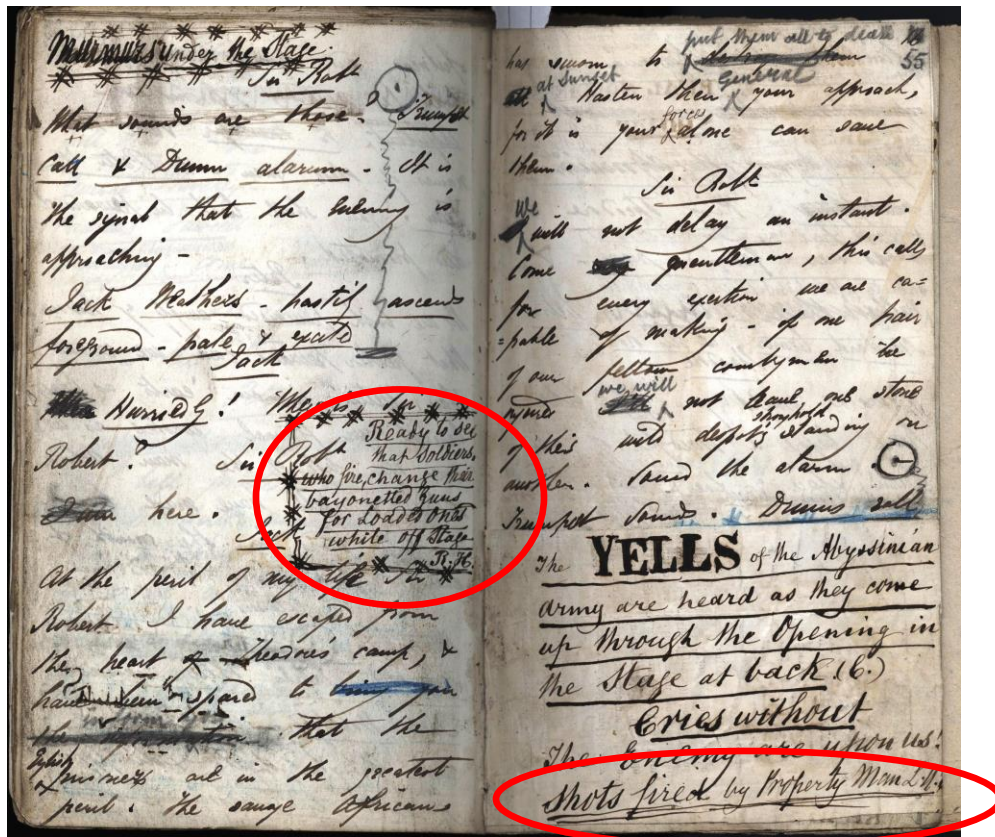
Figure 4.5.11: *The Abyssinian War* pp. 54 verso and 55 recto: Britannia Theatre, Hoxton (University of Kent, Canterbury.)

The extent to which Wilton's annotated manuscripts indicate his responsibility for such activities as the entrances of the soldiers who augmented the company during military spectacles or supervising lighting and pyrotechnic effects suggest that he may have gone in person to initiate the cueing of these himself during performance, in accordance with the detailed instructions in his copies of the play. These are unlikely to have been the copies from which Pitt would have prompted in the corner; a further note on that point is that Pitt continued to undertake minor acting

roles, as in *Alone in the Pirates' Lair* drawn upon above, and so it is not unreasonable to speculate that Wilton would have covered the corner whilst the prompter was performing his occasional roles onstage.

This immensely valuable body of evidence demonstrates the range of activities falling under Wilton's responsibility as stage manager, and reveals on his part a remarkable way of working which was comprehensive, thorough, and systematised to the extent that it is recognisable and decipherable to a professional practitioner more than a hundred and fifty years after the Britannia promptbooks were first encoded by Wilton. His methods also link the earliest encoding of prompt signifiers with later practice which had to meet the needs of the increasingly sophisticated professional theatre. This is demonstrated most profoundly by the ⊙ symbol; as discussed above, Langhans concluded that this symbol, where it appeared within eighteenth-century promptbooks, represented the whistle used to cue scene changes,[43] suggesting that it depicted the hole at the base of whistles in the style now commonly recognised as police whistles. Wilton's unequivocal designation of this symbol as a cue for music, and the evidence of successive practitioners perpetuating the use of this symbol for the cueing of music as will be discussed below, indicates a further important development in the continuing evolution of stage management practice: the appropriation of an established symbol from eighteenth-century practice to

serve a new purpose driven by the evolving needs of nineteenth-century theatre.

Wilton's highly-developed, encoded, and systematised method of annotating his working copies reveal him to have been consistent and methodical in his practice, but the examples drawn upon above also indicate a broad scope of responsibilities. Important matters relating to the business of the theatre were entrusted to him, a considerable authority over the conduct of the company and staging of the repertory is evident, and a high degree of engagement with the product of the theatre, its nightly performances and their technical realisation, is demonstrated. The Lanes' delegation to Wilton of such duties as the application for and collection of their annual licence for the theatre and the staging of revivals indicates him to have been a respected and capable member of the theatre staff, and the extensive collection of his promptbooks reveal not only thirty-two years of loyal service at the Britannia but a highly-developed and consistently-applied method of encoding and actuating the cueing of busy and technically-complex productions in a well-managed, 'state of the art' theatre during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The scope of responsibilities which the material demonstrates Wilton to have undertaken, however, demands further engagement with the designation 'stage manager' with which he identified, and so before moving on to consider further examples demonstrating the development of stage management practice towards the close of the

nineteenth century, wider consideration must given to what was understood

by the term 'stage manager' as the Victorian age progressed.

4.6   The Stage Manager as Incipient Director:

         William Schwenk Gilbert, Tom Robertson, Henry Irving.

The term 'director' is anachronistic in relation to the Victorian theatre,

having migrated to the United Kingdom from America following the Second

World War and becoming established and accepted in the British theatre

only cautiously during the 1950s and 1960s. As has been demonstrated

throughout this thesis, however, many of the characteristics of the role

which is today understood as that of the professional theatre director have

fallen under the remit of those responsible for what I have identified as the

stage management of productions since the emergence of the professional

theatre.

This projects an implicit understanding of autonomous authority which is

not associated with any member of the stage management team in the

modern context; further confusion arises with the common equation of the

actor-manager role with that of the contemporary director, yet it is important

to remember that influential actor-managers and playwrights of the period,

such as W. S. Gilbert, Tom Robertson, and Henry Irving, were recognised,

or described themselves, as 'stage managers' in the directorial sense as it

was understood in the latter half of the nineteenth century. At no point were

any of them personally involved with the provision of props or furniture or the cueing or practical running of any aspects of their productions in performance; rather, the case of esteemed practitioners such as these provides a further, valuable perspective on what was understood by 'stage management' at this period.

Gilbert was renowned for the fastidiousness with which he staged his productions, and insisted upon their reproduction and revival with exactitude. Whilst he maintained control of the London productions of his operettas himself, the touring companies throughout the country were monitored by the stage manager who was expected to maintain the direction as Gilbert had set it, either addressing deviations from the 'blueprint' himself or reporting them back to Gilbert in London.[44] A letter from Gilbert to a performer undertaking a comedy role on tour in 1889 stipulated that:

> The principle of subordination must be maintained in a theatre as in a regiment. I find on enquiry that Mr. Carte's grievance does not refer to your altering the dialogue but to the introduction of *inappropriate, exaggerated and unauthorised business* . . . no actor will ever find his way into our London Company who defies authority in this respect.[45]

In contrast to Shattuck's description as 'happy inspirations' of the ideas developed independently by the acting company during long runs of performances following the departure of the director, it is clear from this source that no unauthorised thought would be permitted to manifest itself

into deed upon Gilbert's stage; implicit in Gilbert's style of 'stage management' is a rigid discipline in relation to the moves designed and stipulated by the author and manager.

It is suggested that Gilbert may have learned his craft from another pioneering 'stage manager' of the age with whom he enjoyed a long association: the playwright Tom Robertson. A biographer of Gilbert's has commented, in relation to the ten-year period spent by Gilbert as a regular contributor and dramatic critic for a rival newspaper to *Punch* called *Fun* during his mid-twenties and early thirties, that:

> . . . important as was his development as a writer during this period of his life, he would not have taken his rightful place in the history of the English theatre had it not been for his friendship with Tom Robertson, playwright and stage manager. This came about when Gilbert formed a small club of his fellow writers on *Fun*, [. . .] and it was at the regular Saturday night meetings at his chambers at Gray's Inn that Gilbert's acquaintanceship with Robertson ripened into a lasting friendship. Most important of all was Robertson's invitation to Gilbert to attend, whenever possible, any rehearsals that he, Robertson, was holding. It so happened that Robertson was the founder of an entirely new style of stage technique and management. To use Gilbert's own words, Robertson "invented stage management". [. . .] [T]he English stage owes a debt to Robertson for teaching Gilbert to be his own stage-manager and for getting him his first commission to write a burlesque for the Christmas season at the St. James's Theatre.[46]

Emerging is the notion that the writing and staging of plays, and the techniques by which the company were directed to interpret them, was a constituent aspect of 'stage management' at this period.   Gilbert's biographer William Cox-Ife continues to describe the impact on the theatrical scene at the emergence of Gilbert's work of the influence of Robertson:

> . . . whose work marked the beginning of the revolution, not only in writing for the theatre, but in stage direction as well. He was a true man of the theatre having been, at various times of his life, author, actor, manager, prompter, scene-painter and even stage carpenter, and it was in 1865 that he opened the door upon an entirely fresh field of writing and stage management. His work for the theatre in these two fields also brought to light the fact, hitherto unthought of, that style of writing and style of direction are inseparable and must be complementary to one another. Prior to this time [. . .] the so-called interpretation of the roles remained the same and instead of true characterization all that was offered comprised a few conventional mannerisms guaranteed to have effect upon an unenlightened audience. This deplorable standard of performance was further aggravated by the star system in which the star was of paramount importance, and provided the play gave opportunities for scenes in which he or she dominated all was well. [. . .] **The function of the stage-manager was merely to conduct rehearsals and keep discipline. He "ranked as only a kind of superior foreman and had no say in the aesthetic conception or interpretation of the play."**[47]   [My emphasis.] Tom Robertson's play *Society* was the first real attempt by a playwright to offer the audience realism in place of artificiality. [. . .] At last reality came to the

theatre, in the characters of the play and in their speech, behaviour, and in their surroundings. Small as the detail may seem to modern eyes, the "practical" door, seen for the first time on the stage, was indicative of the new approach. Two years later in 1867 Robertson wrote and produced *Caste*, the most significant play of this period.[48]

The emergence of Robertson's naturalistic approach to both staging and production design can be argued to consolidate the association of directorial responsibilities with stage management. The following comment from the actor Sir John Hare in 1905 reveals the extent to which what we would understand as 'direction' was in fact perceived as 'stage management' at the mid-point of Victoria's reign:

> My opinion of Robertson as a stage manager is of the very highest order. He had a peculiar gift to himself, and which I have never seen in any other author, of conveying by some rapid and almost electrical **suggestion to the actor an insight into the character assigned to him.** As nature was the basis of his own work, so he sought to make actors understand it should be theirs. He thus **founded a school of natural acting** which completely revolutionized the then existing methods, and by so doing did incalculable good to the stage.[49] (My emphasis.)

This is highly significant for how unequivocally it indicates 'stage management' to have been understood as the direction of the play, and the associated responsibilities of 'stage management' to have included the performers' interpretation and characterisation of their roles. The

background information furnished by these sources provides valuable context: the star system, in which plays served only as vehicles for their leading performers, was dominant, and the introduction of practical elements to set design was being pioneered through Robertson's innovations. In the light of what we have seen of Ellis' and Wilton's work, however, and indeed of the eighteenth-century prompters who preceded them, the somewhat dismissive description of the stage manager's function which features above cannot unquestioningly be relied upon, even if (as is far from certain) Ellis and Wilton were exceptional practitioners in their day. It is of interest, if alarming, that the responsibility for conducting rehearsals is pejoratively dismissed as 'mere'; this would suggest that Burnim's appraisal of the rehearsal process as constituting little more than a 'theatrical muster' as discussed in the preceding chapter was still apposite some eighty years hence, whilst, in contrast, it is worthy of note that few directors of the present time would entrust complete responsibility for conducting or even supervising rehearsals to the stage management team.

In the void between these two opposing circumstances, therefore – from the 1860s, where the stage manager may have had full responsibility for rehearsals (which responsibility was considered in some quarters to be of negligible importance), to the present time, when the professional director would not dream of entrusting rehearsals to a stage manager (despite professional training for stage managers preparing them to undertake such a

function) – a process of professionalisation has been undergone by both the nature of the rehearsal process and by the stage manager. Whilst the time available for rehearsal, and the value of the rehearsal process to the present-day director, has increased and standardised to a stable three-week period for British repertory theatres of the present time, the stage manager's role ultimately developed away from the responsibilities (identifiable with 'stage management' since the eighteenth century) of instructing the cast in their moves and influencing their interpretation of their characters, which were to become emphatically the province of the director during the twentieth century.

As the nineteenth century approached its close, though, there was little indication of these future developments. In appraising (and approving) the directorial practice of Gilbert at the Savoy in 1882, George Bernard Shaw contrasted it with the fare at Covent Garden in commenting:

> I have over and over again pointed out the way in which the heroic expenditure of Sir Augustus Harris [Director of Covent Garden] gets wasted **for want of a stage manager who not only studies the stage picture** as it is studied, for instance, at the Savoy Theatre . . . **but who studies the score** as well and **orders the stage** so that the spectator's eye, ear and dramatic sense shall be appealed to simultaneously.[50] (My emphasis.)

Promptbooks from the Savoy Theatre, the home of the comic operas by Gilbert and Sullivan which were commissioned and premièred there by

Richard D'Oyley Carte between 1875 and 1896, demonstrate an acute awareness of the staging of the performances in terms of the disposition of the cast upon the stage. The Theatre Collection of the V&A has digitised five promptbooks from *The Mikado* (two sources), *Princess Ida* (one source), and *The Pirates of Penzance* (two sources); they are identified as being the original rehearsal and production promptbooks, in the hand of W. H. Seymour, the Savoy's stage manager.[51] The promptbooks are heavily annotated and symbols are extensively used, but – perhaps in reflection of Gilbert's attention to the precision of the staging of which Shaw was so approving – virtually all notes relate to blocking, with highly detailed notes and diagrams showing the disposition of the cast in large crowd scenes and elaborate sketches of the settings in both sources for *The Mikado*.

All sources include an extensive Property Plot; the *Princess Ida* source, believed to be the promptbook from the original production in 1884, features two cues, 'Bell' on page 30 and 'Crash' on page 35, neither of which are marked in any way. The *Pirates of Penzance* source which has been designated Copy E also contains two cues, for lighting; on page 29 a very large # symbol marks the note 'Floats Half Up', and on page 30 the same symbol accompanies the instruction 'Lights'. These are the only technical cues to feature within the sources, although the other *Pirates* source, annotated in a hand distinctively different from Seymour's, includes

a handwritten gas plot, calcium plot, and property plot for each act at the front of the promptbook.

As with the practice identified within the J.P. Kemble material, the range of symbols used to denote the various moves made by members of the company is very extensive within the *Pirates* source not annotated by Seymour; the symbols $\bigcirc$, $\ast$, # , ***X*** , + ,   ,   , and $\varnothing$ are used heavily, for no other purpose than to notate blocking. In the *Pirates E* source, most symbols are a variation on # although $\varnothing$, ***X*** , and $\ast$ are also used. Within the *Princess Ida* and both *Mikado* sources, the range of symbols used is very limited: ***X*** , $\ast$, and $\varnothing$ are the only symbols to feature in *Princess Ida*, with # also used in both *Mikado* promptbooks. This indicates a continuity within annotatory practice of the conventions demonstrated in the work of Kemble, during the 1800s and teens, and Ellis, throughout the 1830s and 40s.

The lack of technical cues within these sources may be indicative of a number of things: that the books themselves may have been rehearsal promptbooks rather than the copies from which the performances were regulated; that the cueing of the technical elements did not form part of the responsibilities of W. H. Seymour; that there was a separate promptbook in which the cueing was recorded, as Langhans has suggested in relation to late eighteenth-century practice; that the machinists and electricians took their

own cues from individual cue-sheets; or that the priority for the management
was the precise recording of the cast moves and business, given the
importance of timing and symmetry of movement to the nature of the Savoy
repertory. Clearly there would have been technical cues, given the existence
of the gas and calcium plots and the fact that the Savoy became, in 1888, the
first theatre to install electric lighting; but the sparsity of the detail which
they stipulate suggests that either the lighting requirements were basic in the
extreme, or that a separate plot citing the cue-points must also have existed.

Of key interest within these sources is the extensive use of symbols, and in
particular the symbol ※ which overwhelmingly emerges as Seymour's
preferred signifier for blocking or business. The application of the symbols
to moves is highly idiosyncratic, and does not follow a hierarchy of symbols
nor any specific assignation of one symbol to a particular type of note. This
argues against any widespread standardisation of practice, although it
indicates quite clearly that there was a standard set of symbols commonly
drawn upon by stage managers from which to annotate their promptbooks:
the symbols emerging from Drury Lane in the eighteenth century, and
particularly those used so extensively by Kemble at the turn of the
nineteenth century, are largely in evidence within these materials from the
Savoy with scarcely any variation.

A stronger codification of prompt symbols can be discerned from an examination of the promptbook from the 1879 production of Robertson's influential comedy *Caste* at the Prince of Wales' Theatre. The source is signed by Squire Bancroft and an engraving of his coat of arms is pasted to the inside cover; a letter from Robinson and a page of the original manuscript is also pasted into the front of the source, with annotations written and signed by Bancroft. Squire and Marie Bancroft managed the Prince of Wales' Theatre, where Robertson's comedies were first performed, until 1879 when they moved to the Haymarket; Bancroft has signed the promptbook 'S R. Bancroft, Theatre Royal, Haymarket' and inscribed the cast list from the 1889 production there, but the running times in the stage manager's hand at the back of the source identify it as dating from the 1879 Prince of Wales' revival.

This promptbook demonstrates an extensive range of symbols, and a codification of their use can be discerned. Although George Cressall Ellis had died in 1875, four years before this promptbook was created, and although he is not known to have had any association with either the Prince of Wales' Theatre or the Bancrofts, this promptbook is overwhelmingly influenced by his practice, and closely resembles it in an almost identical manner. If the examples shown below are compared with Figures 4.3.1 – 5 above, the striking similarity in annotatory practice is clearly visible.

Figure 4.6.1 below shows the opening page from this *Caste* promptbook; the first call can be seen marked by a large and elaborately-drawn figure one, and a series of props- and set-related responsibilities are stipulated at the beginning of the performance – 'See to Key in R. Door of Stage', 'Two Pipes in Fender for Eccles', 'Tin Kettle on L. Hob, Saucepan on R.', and 'See Plate on Chiffonier L. for Polly' – are each signified by the large # mark.

If these responsibilities fell to the stage manager, a broader scope of duties than conducting barely-respected rehearsals and keeping discipline is indicated, far more in keeping with the role indicated by the body of work relating to Wilton and suggesting his practice to be less exceptional than Richard Findlater's general dismissal of the stage manager (cited by Cox-Ife above) as a 'kind of superior foreman' reflects. This is in itself significant, supporting a notion of a stage manager with a wide scope of responsibilities augmented by increasing expectations of an authoritative remit over the aesthetic elements – both in terms of design and cast performance – of the play.
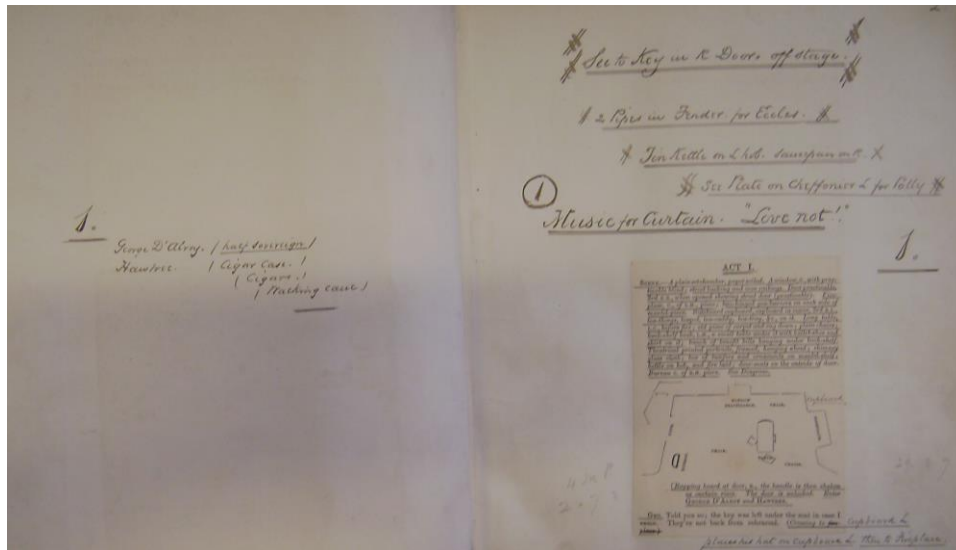
Figure 4.6.1:   1879 Promptbook for *Caste*, Haymarket Theatre, Act I, p. 2.
(Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

Throughout the source, the moves of the cast both in terms of blocking and business are annotated, and a range of symbols is used to mark them, the most prominent of which is ∅ . This preserves the convention established by Ellis as discernable within his promptbooks, in which ∅ is the most common symbol used to signify cast movement.
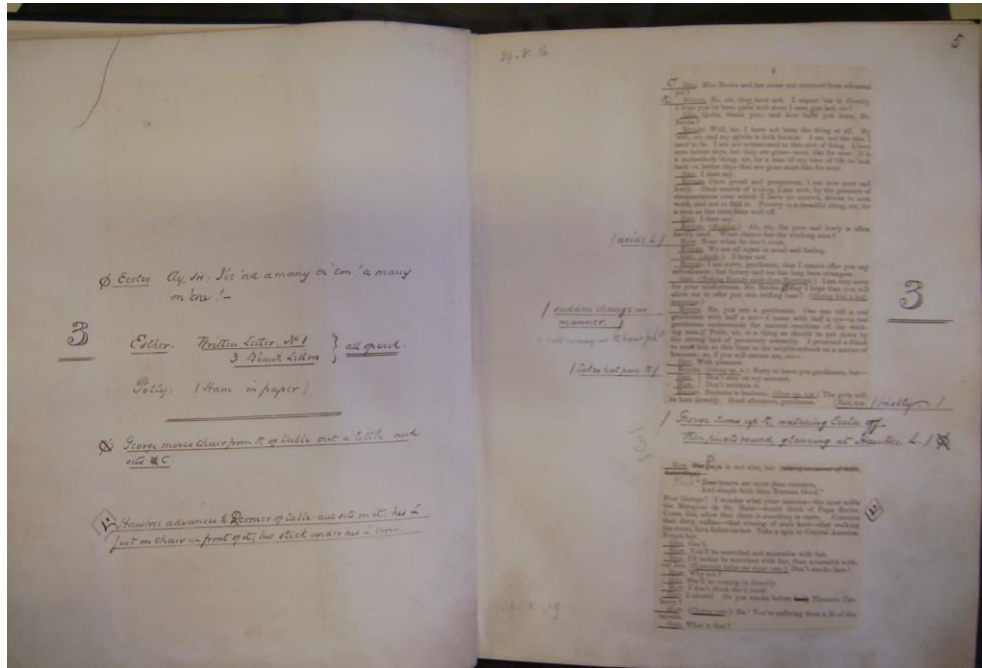
Figure 4.6.2:   Blocking symbols in *Caste*, Prince of Wales Theatre, Act I,
                 p. 5. (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

Of note within the *Caste* source is the fact that no mark is ever used more
than once on the same page, which mirrors Ellis' practice, and the # mark
is never used to signify blocking notes, being clearly reserved for notes
relating to stage management cues only. Although the ⊙ symbol is not
used, music is indicated by a number (the number of the piece in the score)
within a circle, and this is confirmed by the use of vertical wavy lines
indicating the length of the music against the text, a consistent practice
within the work of F. C. Wilton.

Consideration should be given to the implications for the stage management role of the drawing-room comedies or 'cup-and-saucer dramas' which the Bancrofts' management became known for, in terms of the precision required in the accurate setting and management of the props and furniture which featured in them. This is indicated by the extent of the annotations and details relating to the setting of props in this source, not hitherto a common feature of prompt sources, where the preparation and initiation of technical and offstage cues form the principal body of stage management annotations.

The highly detailed setting diagram shown in Figure 4.6.3 below is representative of the detail with which the setting of props and furniture is noted within this source, and indicative of an expansion in the stage management role to incorporate the accountably precise setting of props and furniture as required by the text of the play to be performed. When this is considered in tandem with the incorporation of orchestra, stage, and lighting cues and such spectacular effects as those indicated in the preceding case studies, and when the company's reliance on the setting of props and furniture essential to the stage business with absolute precision is considered, a tangible evolution in the stage management role, incorporating an increasing range of responsibilities but also reaffirming the importance of reliable support for the company, can be argued.
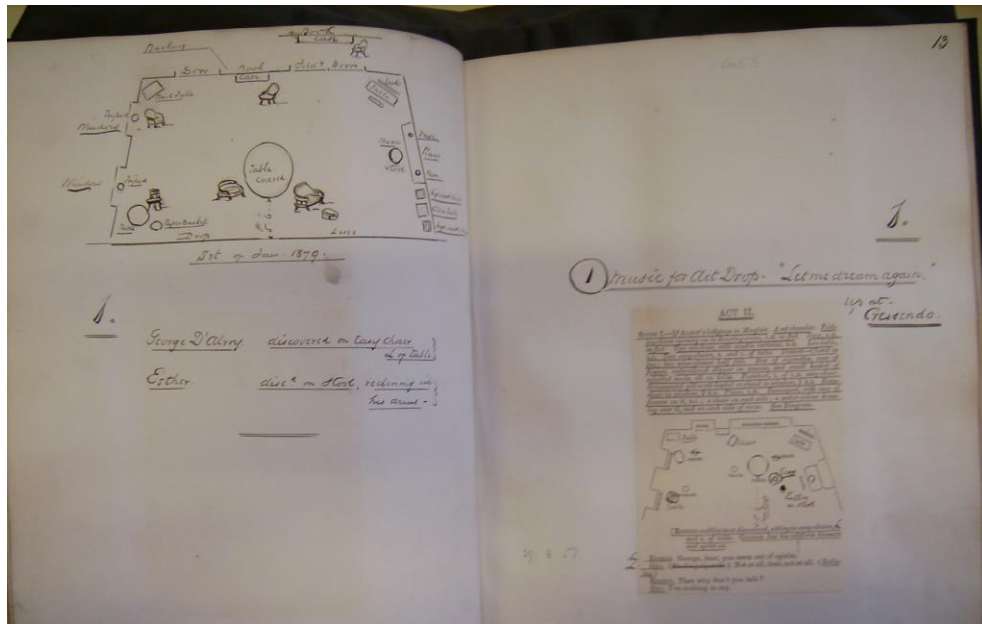
Figure 4.6.3:   Props and Furniture Setting Diagrams in *Caste* promptbook,
Act II, p. 13. (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

In illustration of this, the final image which I have selected from this source demonstrates the range of activities under the stage manager's responsibility to be carried out on this page of the text. A miniature setting diagram shows the position of two characters in relation to furniture on the set. Blocking is signified by the use of the ⊙ and ⊗ symbols, and notated in detail. A warning cue is signified by the # mark: 'Ready at Lights' at the top of the page. A further warning for offstage sound is written diagonally, to the left of the text, and marked with the same symbol: 'Ready to call 'Milk' Knock and noise of Milk pails'. The lighting cue, again marked with the # symbol, appears half-way down the page: 'Lights down colour off lamps'. A key stage direction, presumably used as a cue-point, is indicated by an ostentatiously-drawn arrow, suggesting its importance as a cue not to be

missed. Further responsibilities, such as the cueing of the orchestra to play, are suggested throughout the source by large and elaborate 'R.M.B.' notes, standing for 'Ring Music Bell'. When additional elements such as the pace of a company's delivery of comedy, and the importance of the timing of cues to the dynamic of the performance, are taken into consideration, this evidence provides important indications of the scope and the demands of the continually evolving stage management role.
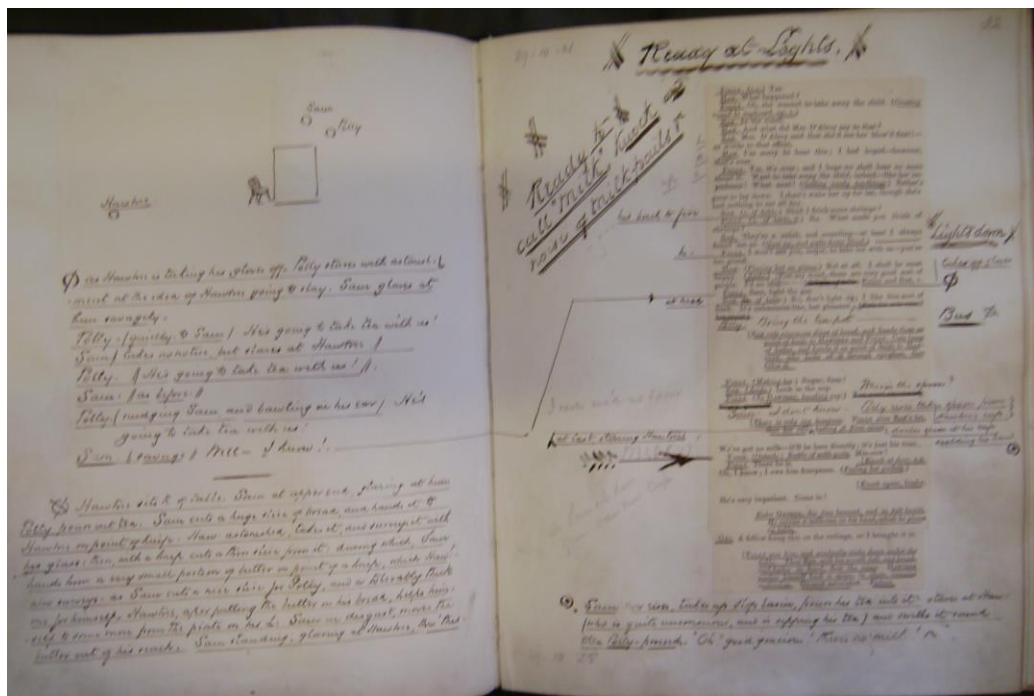
Figure 4.6.4:   Setting, Blocking, and Cueing Annotations in *Caste* promptbook, Act III, p. 27. (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

Henry Irving's management of the Lyceum, from 1878 until 1905, is similarly associated with rigorous production standards, which would have impacted upon those responsible for meeting them.   Bram Stoker, who joined Irving at the Lyceum 'to take charge of his business as Acting Manager' in December 1878,[52] provides the following description of the innovations introduced by Irving in an article entitled *Irving and Stage Lighting*, which provides a detailed insight into the technical preparations for new productions at the Lyceum during Irving's management (the emphasis is mine):

> When the reconstruction of 1878 was in hand special care was taken to bring up to date the mechanical appliances for lighting the stage. In those days gas was the only available means of theatre lighting − except, of course, 'limelights', which were movable and the appurtenances of which had to be arranged afresh for every play done. [. . .] [W]hen the mechanism was complete it was possible to **regulate from the 'Prompt'** every lamp of the many thousands used throughout the theatre. This made in itself a new era in theatrical lighting. [. . .] It was most interesting to see [Irving] setting about the lighting of a scene. [. . .] This work, especially in its earlier stages − for it was a long process, entailing many rehearsals − was done at night, when the play of the evening was over. The stage workmen, after a short interval for their supper, got the new scene set. While this was being done, Irving and I, and often the stage-manager if he could leave his work, took supper in the 'Beefsteak Room', which was one of Irving's suite of private rooms in the theatre. When the scene was ready he went down − usually sitting in the stalls, as the general effect

of the scene could be observed better from there than from the stage. The various workmen employed in the lighting 'stood by' under their respective masters – with, of course, the master machinist and *their* staffs ready in case they should be required. There were always a large number of men present, especially at the experimental stage of lighting.   The gas engineer, the limelight master, the electrician, all had their staffs ready. Of these the department the most important was that of the limelights, for these lights had to be worked by individual operators, all of whom had to be 'coached' in the special requirements of the working of the play before them; whereas **the gas and electric lighting** was arranged with slow care, and **was, when complete, under the direction of the prompter – who took his orders from the stage-manager.** [. . .] Let it be clearly understood that the lighting of the Lyceum plays was all done on Irving's initiation and under his supervision. He thought of it, invented it, arranged it, and had the entire thing worked out to his preconceived ideas under his immediate and personal supervision . . . [53]

Significantly, this provides a clear indication of a hierarchy between the prompter and stage manager, and locates the cueing and operation of the lighting at prompt corner. The installation of the lighting control at prompt corner, coupled with the evident importance with which Irving regarded stage lighting, may account for the level of detail relating to the technical elements of the productions recorded in the Lyceum promptbooks during his management. The extent to which the blocking and dispositions of the casts within major scenes are recorded also indicates the importance placed by

Irving on the precision of the staging, and, by implication, on the accuracy with which it was recorded in the promptbook.

Figure 4.6.5 below is taken from the promptbook for Irving's famed 1879 Lyceum production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*.[54] The source is annotated in colour, with clear evidence of codification in the way in which colour is used, with red, blue, and black being the colours which feature; in common with the conventions evident within Wilton's material, which may have become common practice, blue ink is used for technical elements such as lighting cues, offstage sound, or the timing of scenes, with red ink marking items relating to the company such as characters who are to enter and the positions from which they do so. Each scene is timed, and the timing is underlined in blue ink. A cross-hatch mark also attends the lighting cue. This system is typified by the page shown below. Two other symbols appear frequently within this source: they are the familiar ☉ and ✳ symbols, which both denote cast blocking in this source, and music is signified by a large circle of approximate size ◯ from which a wavy line descends the page indicating the duration of the piece to be played.
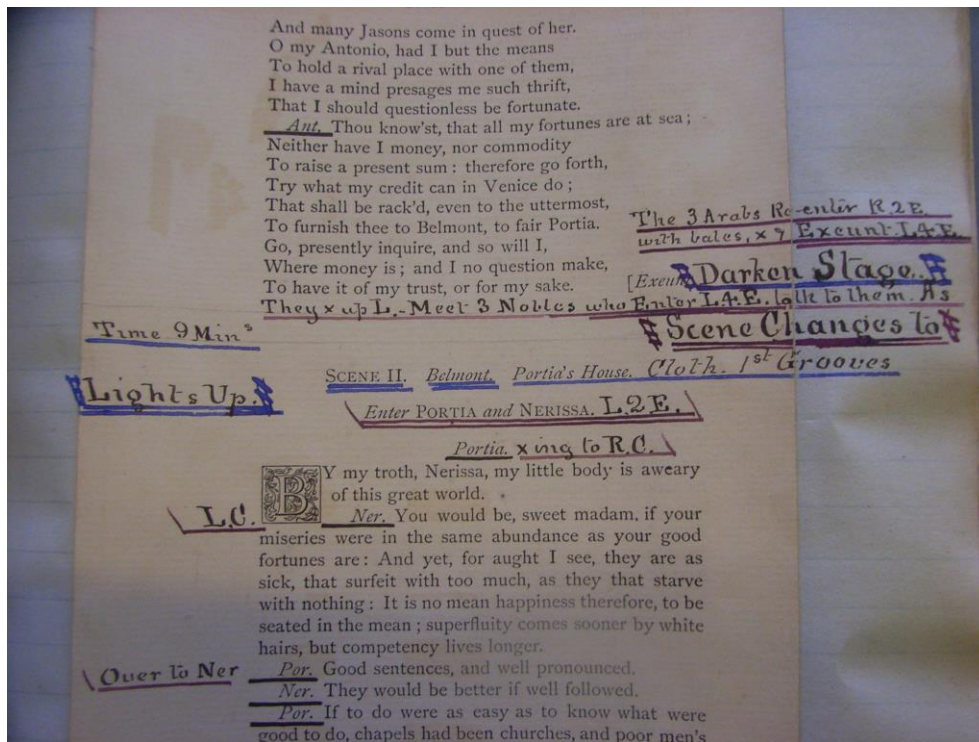
Figure 4.6.5: *The Merchant of Venice*, Lyceum, 1879 (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

In indication of the care taken over the precision of all aspects of a given production, reflecting the standards which Irving is reputed to have established, the following illustrations show the recording in the *Merchant of Venice* promptbook of the positions of the cast against representations of the set during large crowd scenes; significant moves are signified by the symbols ✳ and ☉.

Figure 4.6.6:   *The Merchant of Venice*, Lyceum, 1879 (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

Figure 4.6.7:   *The Merchant of Venice*, Lyceum, 1879 (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).
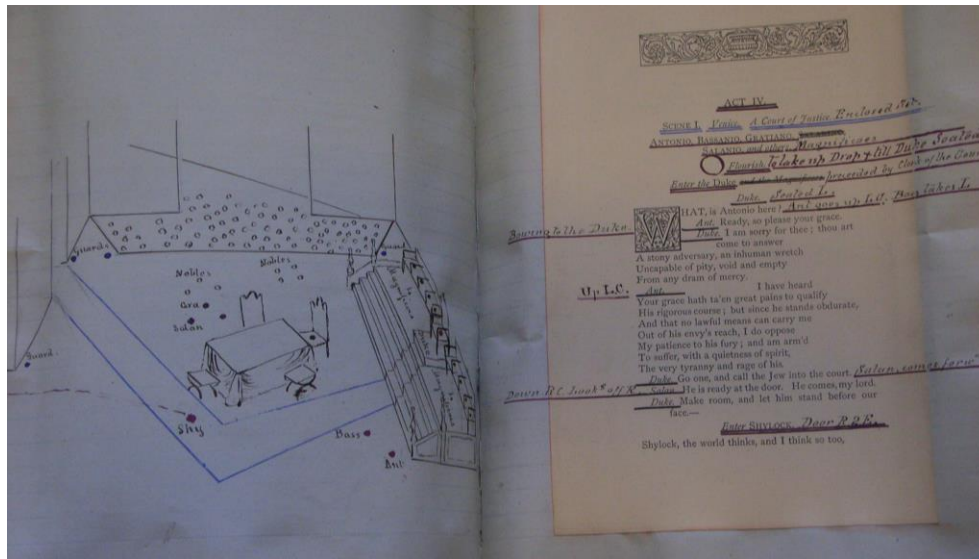
Figure 4.6.8:   *The Merchant of Venice*, Lyceum, 1879 (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).
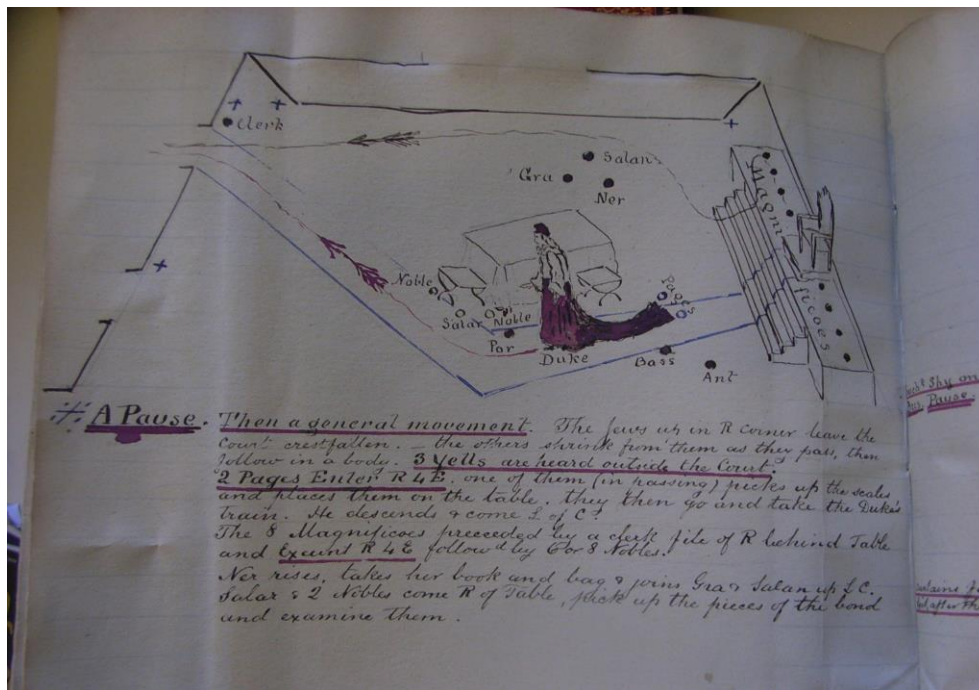
Figure 4.6.9:   *The Merchant of Venice*, Lyceum, 1879 (Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum).

The photographs above demonstrate the remarkably high level of detail with which the positions of cast members and their movements are recorded throughout this prompt copy, in addition to the careful detail with which this source has been marked in general. The promptbook from the Lyceum's 1880 revival of Dion Boucicault's *The Corsican Brothers*[55] also demonstrates a high level of detail in the annotations, although the majority relate to the lighting as can be seen in the illustrations below, which are representative of the annotations throughout the source. Given Irving's installation of the lighting control at prompt corner during the renovations of 1878, this perhaps reflects the perfection of the use of both gas and limelight to which Stoker alludes.

The source is annotated in a markedly different hand from the 1879 *Merchant of Venice* book, yet there are clear indications on the opening page that a similar methodology is to be followed in the marking of the prompt script. Again, there is a demonstrably conscious use of colour-coding for the marking of cues; red pencil crayon is used to mark all of the music cues within this source, with blue pencil crayon used for lighting and offstage sound cues. Throughout the source, offstage sound is marked with a cross-hatch symbol # , and changes in the lighting are marked with ⊗ .
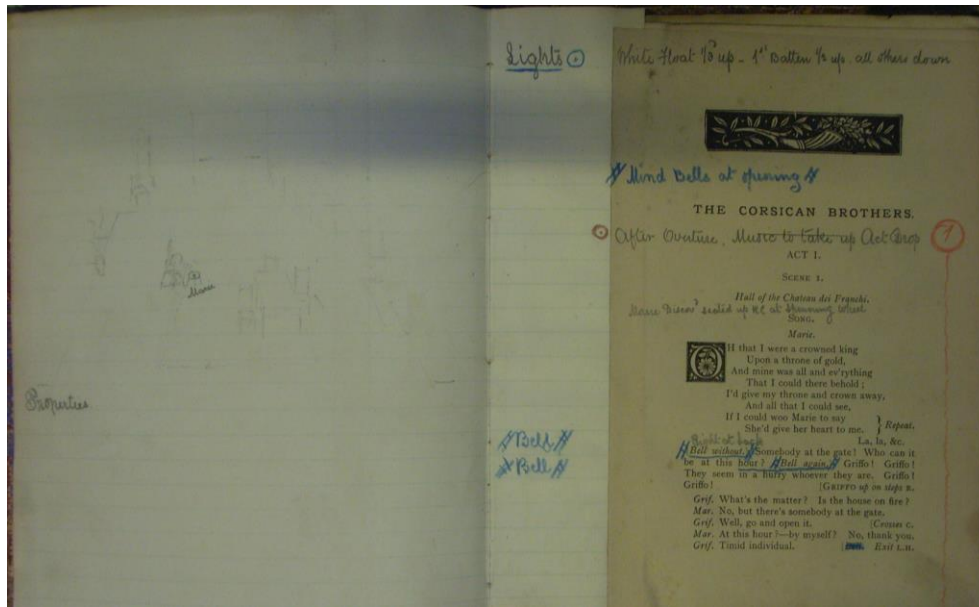
Figure 4.6.10: *The Corsican Brothers*, Lyceum, 1880 (Theatre Collection,
Victoria & Albert Museum).
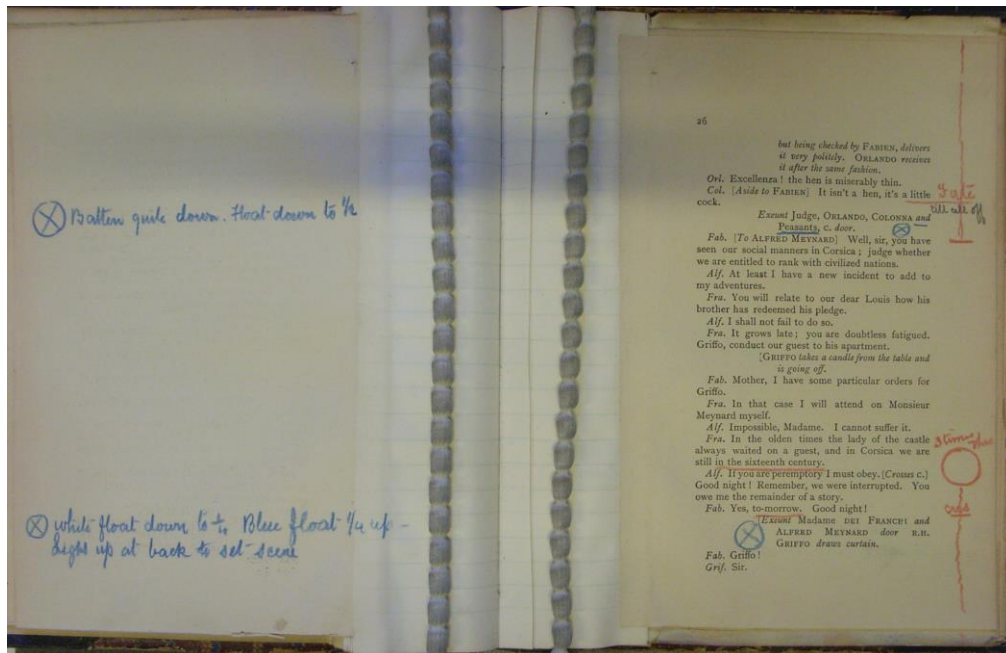
Figure 4.6.11: *The Corsican Brothers*, Lyceum, 1880 (Theatre Collection,
Victoria & Albert Museum).

4.7:   <u>Conclusion.</u>

In this chapter, stage management sources can be seen to reflect a more coherent approach to preparing texts for performance in the larger and, from 1843, deregulated theatres of the nineteenth century. Kemble's fastidious recording of the precise moves to be made within four promptbooks for each of the productions in his repertory, and his specification of the points at which they were to be made through the use of a set of rigidly encoded symbols, is mirrored throughout the century by managements who expected their productions to be carefully overseen by stage managers who, in turn, developed sophisticated and systematic methods of encoding their promptbooks in order to ensure that this regularly and reliably took place.

The evolution of the term 'stage management' to mean the arrangement of the performers upon the stage and the direction of their movements, informed by experience and engagement with the demands of the drama, however, was a major development during the nineteenth century, with the influence of key practitioners such as Gilbert, Robertson, and Irving who were referred to as 'stage managers' whilst developing directorial approaches to theatre. As early as the 1840s, the involvement of playwrights and authors with theatrical productions can be seen to be emerging, with writers such as Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins attending rehearsals to oversee productions of their works. As the playwright Tom Robertson pioneered a more careful, integrated convention

of staging, reflected later in the management of Irving as the century drew to
its close, so the need for fastidious, careful, and focused practice is implicit
in the term 'stage management' and reflected in the annotations of
promptbooks from these managements. Stage management has been seen to
imply the running *and preparing* of a play, and the high standards of
preparation expected by major managements contributed to the continuing
professionalisation of the theatrical practices and trades.

In addition to the evolving responsibilities of stage management and the
nomenclature of the role, the sources drawn upon in this chapter indicate
sophisticated developments in stage managers' annotatory practices in order
to accurately record in the promptbook (and reproduce from it) all of the
elements necessary for the realisation of the production, at the correct time,
at each performance, within the dark and occasionally frenetic environment
of a busy wing. Some promptbooks are meticulously and artistically
crafted, like the Ellis and Robertson sources; others, like those of Frederick
Wilton, are blunt, working documents which strongly support the argument
that the need to codify prompt annotations by colour and by symbol was
driven by the increasingly technical demands of the productions and the
limited windows of time in which to recognise and actuate the cues.

The consolidation of a common range of symbols with which to signify
certain cues and performers' moves, amongst which $\odot$, ※ , $\varnothing$, $\begin{smallmatrix} x & x \\ x \end{smallmatrix}$ / xxx

and # are the most prominent, across the range of theatres, is an intriguing phenomenon, and the question of how they came to be in such widespread use without any overt platform for stage managers to share practice is an interesting one. Ø is overwhelmingly predominantly used to mark textual cuts or additions; # and ※ are predominantly used to signify technical cues, and, with some variation, ⊙ is synonymous with a cue for music to a greater or lesser extent within every promptbook studied from the 1860s to the 1900s. The practices of touring and of posting promptbooks from one theatre to another about to mount its own production of a play, as Wilton describes in his diaries, indicate not only a means by which stage managers could have developed an awareness of other colleagues' practice, but arguably suggest a necessity for the myriad marks and squiggles to be commonly understood between practitioners; the convention of a 'house style' within prompt annotations, as seen at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, is also a possibility. If this indicates an emerging semantic understanding between stage managers in the latter half of the nineteenth century, which the sources analysed in this chapter support, then these promptbooks demonstrate an important new discovery for nineteenth-century theatre history: a language for stage management.

Notes to Chapter Four.

1   *John Philip Kemble Promptbooks* ed. by Charles H. Shattuck (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974), Vol. I, p.xiv.

2   Ibid., p.xvi.

3   Ibid., p.xvii.

4   Shattuck's term.

5   There was a Charles Kemble *Hamlet* in the Garrick collection, but no corresponding *Hamlet* in the facsimiles so I have not included the *Hamlet* data here.

6   I was unable to study all eighteen because the Garrick Club Library was about to close for a period of refurbishment as I attempted to arrange my research visit; I was granted access during the final two days that it was open before the period of closure which commenced in February 2013, and so worked with as many of the materials as I was able during the access that I had. The twelve Shakespeares which I studied, from the Charles Kemble set of originals and from Kemble's own set in facsimile, were *A Comedy of Errors, All's Well That Ends Well, As You Like It, Coriolanus, Cymbeline, Henry IV Part 1, Henry IV Part II, Henry V, Katherine and Petruchio, Macbeth,* and *Measure for Measure.* The plays which I did not manage to analyse were *Julius Caesar, King Henry VIII, King Lear, The Merchant of Venice, Much Ado About Nothing, Twelfth Night,* and *The Winter's Tale.* Non-Shakespeare sources which I also studied were *Pizarro* (Richard Brinsley Sheridan), *The Recruiting Officer* (George Farquhar), *The Rivals* (Richard Brinsley Sheridan) and *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher). These were selected from the sources available because of Shattuck's identification of them as principal works in which Kemble played and because facsimile editions of Kemble's own playtexts for two of them were, as with the Shakespeares, available with which to compare annotations (see below).

7   Shattuck, *Kemble Promptbooks* p. xvii. Two of these (*Pizarro* and *Rule A Wife*) are also reproduced in Shattuck's facsimile edition.

8   Brown, Charles A. *The Russian Village*   performed 1814;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays BRO Prompt
        Brown, John   *Barbarossa*   performed 1826;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays BRO Prompt
        Cibber, Colley   *She Would And She Would Not*   performed 1813;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays CIB Prompt
        Cobber, Colley   *She Would And She Would Not*   performed 1825;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays CIB Prompt
        Cowley, Hannah   *A Bold Stroke For A Husband*   performed 1815;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays COW Prompt
        Dibdin, Thomas J. *Of Age Tomorrow*   performed 1801;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays DIB Prompt
        Farquhar, George   *The Beaux Stratagem*   performed c1840;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays FAR Prompt
        Farquhar, George   *The Inconstant*   performed 1817;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays FAR Prompt
        Farquhar, George   *The Recruiting Officer*   performed 1816;
            Enthoven Collection, Plays FAR Prompt

Holcroft, Thomas	*The Road To Ruin*	performed 1830;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays HOL Prompt	
Jodrell, Richard	*Seeing Is Believing*	performed 1819;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays JOD Prompt	
Kenney, James	*Match Breaking*	performed 1821;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays KEN Prompt	
Knight, Thomas	*The Turnpike Gate*	performed 1799;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays KNI Prompt	
Lambe, George	*The Count of Anjou*	performed 1816;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays LAM Prompt	
Moore, Edward	*The Foundling*	performed 1812;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays MOO Prompt	
Murray, Arthur	*The Apprentice*	performed 1814;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays MUR Prompt	
O'Brien, William	*Cross Purposes*	performed 1817;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays OBR Prompt	
O'Keefe, John	*The Prisoner At Large*	performed 1819;
	Enthoven Collection, Plays OKE Prompt	

All from the Theatre Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

9   See Note 8 above.

10   Charles H. Shattuck, 'A Victorian Stage Manager: George Cressall Ellis', *Theatre Notebook* 22, No. 3 (1968), p.104.

11   Ibid.

12   Ibid., p.103.

13   Ibid., *A Victorian Stage Manager*, pp.102-3.

14   Ibid., p.107

15   Ibid.

16   Ibid.

17   Ibid., p.108.

18   Charles H. Shattuck, *Mr. Macready Produces* As You Like It, *A Prompt-Book Study* (Illinois: Beta Phi Mu, 1962).

19   Ibid., pp.7-8.

20   Ibid.

21   Shattuck, *A Victorian Stage Manager*, pp.102-3.

22   Ibid.

23   Charles H. Shattuck, *William Charles Macready's* King John, *A Facsimile Prompt-Book* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1962).

24   Holcroft, Thomas, *The Road to Ruin* (London: John Cumberland, undated) Theatre
         Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum, Plays HOL Prompt.

25   All photographs in this case study were taken by me for use in this thesis only, with
         the permission of the Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum who are the
         copyright holders.

26   Notwithstanding the fact that the symbol most commonly used by Kemble was the
         group of three crosses, the others, notably ✳ which occurs prominently, can be seen
         in his body of work.

27   See Note 8 above.

28   Jim Davis, *The Britannia Diaries of Frederick Wilton* (London: Society for Theatre
         Research, 1992), pp. 63-6.

29   Ibid., pp.34-5.

30   Ibid., pp.35 – 6.

31   Ibid., p.37.

32   Ibid.

33   The Britannia promptbooks studied were, in chronological order:

Glyn, Gordon	*Adam Winter*	*performed* 1848	PETT.MSS.A.12
Dibden Pitt, George	*Lady Hatton / The Suicide's Tree*	*performed* 1848	PETT.MSS.L.3
Dibden Pitt, George	*Annette Carline*	*performed* 1848	PETT.MSS.A.52
Alman, A.	*Abarbanel the Hebrew*	*performed* 1849	PETT.MSS.A.1.
Dibden Pitt, George	*Arcadia / Freaks of the Passions*	*performed* 1849	PETT.MSS.A.54
Rice, Charles	*The Banker's Daughter*	*performed* 1851	PETT.MSS.B.7
Dibden Pitt, George	*Ambition*	*performed* 1854	PETT.MSS.A.40
Somerset, C.A.	*Angel at Islington*	*performed* 1854	PETT.MSS.A.47
Hazlewood, Colin	*Auld Robin Gray*	*performed* 1856	PETT.MSS.A.67
Johnstone, J.B.	*Avarice / The Miser's Daughter*	*performed* 1858	PETT.MSS.A.70
Hazlewood, Colin	*The Bandit Queen*	*performed* 1859	PETT.MSS.B.4
Seaman, William	*Annie Monksworth*	*performed* 1859	PETT.MSS.A.53
Wood, Arthur	*The Artisan's Triumph*	*performed* 1861	PETT.MSS.A.59
Stephenson, C.H.	*The Angel of Truth*	*performed* 1862	PETT.MSS.A.50
Hazlewood, Colin	*American Slavery*	*performed* 1862	PETT.MSS.A.42
Hazlewood, Colin	*Faith, Hope and Charity*	*performed* 1863	PETT.MSS.F.11
Hazlewood, Colin	*Aurora Floyd*	*performed* 1863	PETT.MSS.A.68
Hazlewood, Colin	*The Angel of Peace & Pardon*	*performed* 1863	PETT.MSS.A.48
Haynes Bayly, J	*Abou Hassan*	*performed* 1863	PETT.MSS.A.5-6
Hazlewood, Colin	*The Left-Handed Marriage*	*performed* 1864	PETT.MSS.L.29
Hazlewood, Colin	*Abel Flint*	*performed* 1864	PETT.MSS. A.3
Hazlewood, Colin	*Wildfire Ned/The Skeleton Crew*	*performed* 1866	PETT.MSS.W.57
Hazlewood, Colin	*The Casual Ward*	*performed* 1866	PETT.MSS.C.20
Hazlewood, Colin	*Alone in the Pirates' Lair*	*performed* 1867	PETT.MSS.A.35
Hazlewood, Colin	*Balinasloe Boy*	*performed* 1867	PETT.MSS.B.3
Travers, William	*The Abyssinian War*	*performed* 1868	PETT.MSS.A.8
Travers, William	*Admiral Tom*	*performed* 1868	PETT.MSS.A.16
Charlton, Frank	*The Alchemist of Modena*	*performed* 1868	PETT.MSS.A.28
Travers, William	*All But One*	*performed* 1868	PETT.MSS.A.33
Hazlewood, Colin	*Against Tide*	*performed* 1875	PETT.MSS.A.25

Hazlewood, Colin	*The Artificial Flower Maker*	*performed* 1871	PETT.MSS.A.58
Hazlewood, Colin	*Napoleon / The Story of a Flag*	*performed* 1873	PETT.MSS.N.3
Lane, Sarah	*Albert de Rosen*	*performed* 1875	PETT.MSS.A.27
Cherry Griffiths, J.	*Banished from Home*	*performed* 1875	PETT.MSS.B.6
Manuel, E.	*Alone in the World*	*performed* 1876	PETT.MSS.A.37
Dodson, R.	*The Armourer of East Cheape*	*performed* 1876	PETT.MSS.A.55
Cherry Griffiths, J.	*All For Gold*	*performed* 1878	PETT.MSS.A.34
Ebsworth, Joseph	*The Advocate and his Daughter*	*performed* 18 ?	PETT.MSS.A.21
Dibden Pitt, George	*Agnes Soreil*	*performed* 18 ?	PETT.MSS.A26
Holloway, William	*Alvirida*	*performed* 18 ?	PETT.MSS.A.38
Dibden Pitt, George	*Ankle Jack*	*performed* 18 ?	PETT.MSS.A.51
Dibden Pitt, George	*The Barber of Shoreditch*	*performed* 18 ?	PETT.MSS.B.12
Dibden Pitt, George	*The Bottle*	*performed* 18 ?	PETT.MSS.B.77

34   Wilton's diaries also indicate him to have worked closely with other key members of what may be termed the theatre's technical staff, such as the flyman, and with the wider theatre management, such as the treasurer.

35   Following enquiries made to the Cumberland Pencil Museum, the following information (sent by electronic mail) details the development of coloured leads and reveals that red, followed by blue, was the first colour available:

> '. . . The first records of 'coloured lead' pencils are from around 1840. The pencils were made from the Borrowdale graphite and English red chalk, which was pounded and mixed with gum Arabic and put into cases of twig Elder. I believe that red was the only colour made at that time. Blue and red colours were definitely the first ones made, as they came from natural materials like chalk and lapis lazuli. The brighter coloured pigments weren't readily available for pencils until refined by chemical processes at the end of the 19th/early 20th centuries.
>
> The other fact to note is that coloured pencils were used by draughtsmen and map-makers in the 1890s. And pencils were advertised to companies with the advantage that each executive could be assigned his own colour lead so that any memo or annotation was unmistakable!'

Personal communication: Barbara Murray and Alex Farthing: Pencil Museum Manager, The Cumberland Pencil Museum, Keswick, Cumbria. CA12 5NG Tuesday 12th February 2013, 10:04am and Wednesday 13th February 2013, 14:28pm.

36   As an example, Wilton's promptbook for *Abel Flint* (PETT.MSS.A.3) has the music symbol and its attendant duration line marked in red crayon as opposed to the more normal blue crayon or black ink.

37   Davis, *Britannia Diaries*, p.60

38   Were this a flying instruction, i.e. relating to flown masking, it could instead be expected to be phrased 'borders half *out*'.

39   Terence Rees, *Theatre Lighting in the Age of Gas* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1978), p.201.

40   See Davis, *Britannia Diaries*, p.10 and URL http://www.painsfireworks.co.uk .

41   Ibid., p.40

42   Travers was both a playwright and a performer; he acted at the Britannia, wrote for the Britannia, and lived locally to it, reflecting its characteristic as a neighbourhood theatre. See Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow, *Reflecting the Audience: London Theatregoing 1840 – 1880* (Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 2001).

43   Edward A. Langhans, *Restoration Promptbooks* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981), p.xvii.

44   William Cox-Ife, *W. S. Gilbert: Stage Director* (London: Dobson Books Ltd., 1977), p. 61.

45   Letter in Gilbert's Papers (British Museum Collection) cited in Cox-Ife, p. 61. (W. S. Gilbert Collection: British Library Add. Mss. 49289-49353 (65 volumes).

46   Ibid., pp.19-20.

47   Richard Findlater, *The Unholy Trade* (London: Gollancz, 1952), p. 94 cited in Cox-Ife, p.23.

48   Cox-Ife, pp.23-4.

49   T. W. Robertson, *Society* and *Caste* (ed. T. E. Pemberton) (London, D.C. Heath & Co., 1905), p.xxxi cited in Cox-Ife, p.25.

50   *Shaw on Music* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1955), p. 124 cited in Cox-Ife, p.86.

51   Victoria & Albert Museum: URL http://www.vam.ac.uk/ __data/assets/pdf_file/ 0003/177942/53070_file.pdf

52   Bram Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving*, 2nd edn (London: William Heinemann, 1907), p.38.

53   Bram Stoker, *Irving and stage lighting* (Nineteenth Century – and After, 69, 1911) quoted in Russell Jackson, *Victorian Theatre* (London: A & C Black, 1989), pp. 186 – 93.

54   William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*. Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum, Plays SHA Prompt.

55   Dion Boucicault, *The Corsican Brothers*. Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum Plays BOU Prompt, p.9.

CHAPTER FIVE

'Viva Voce'

The twentieth century saw a range of developments in the visual language of stage management, and the consolidation of a range of promptbook annotatory trends into standardised practice. A range of sources from the beginning of the century demonstrates a consistent but idiosyncratic use of symbols, which can confidently be described as having become a staple of stage management practice by the turn of the twentieth century. In particular, three symbols, ⊙, ✳, and ∅ persist, with ⊙ overwhelmingly, although not universally, used to signify music cues in both London and provincial productions. This visual language was to remain current yet undergo radical change and development by the close of the period of study.

More significantly, however, a vocal language also emerged in the twentieth century, as technological developments in stage equipment enabled the vocal cueing of operators in distant positions from the prompt corner, such as in the fly galleries or at electric switchboards. This capacity led to a standardisation in the words used for the cueing of scene changes and stage effects, leading ultimately to the development of a formulaic etiquette which all professional cueing in the United Kingdom currently follows. The sources drawn upon in this chapter will demonstrate how the living language of stage management continued to develop, maintaining the key focus of this thesis on the cueing of performance; excitingly however, in the twentieth century, for the first time, this aspect of practice was additionally able to develop 'with living voice.'

In this final chapter of the thesis, the development of stage management up to the year 1968 will be explored, and, in addition to the developments in the practice of cueing and the recording of cueing, consideration will be given to the training, unionisation, and professionalisation of stage management as theatre practitioners. 1968 is an appropriate year at which to conclude this study, both in the context of stage management as well as within the wider field of theatre history. Whilst the Theatres Act of 1968[1] removed censorship from the British stage, the first comprehensive 'how-to' stage management handbook, aimed at a new generation of professional, career stage managers, was published that same year, offering a tantalising insight into the minutiæ of what stage managers should do, how to do it, and, uniquely, the roots from which some of their practices had sprung. Hendrik Baker's *Stage Management and Theatrecraft*[2] is the first handbook written for stage managers intentionally working in stage management, and pays no consideration to the 'acting ASM' practice, which had been prevalent in the post-war period, of aspiring performers undertaking stage management roles until opportunities to perform might present themselves.

In Baker's handbook, the role of stage management, and the importance of good stage management to professional performance, is described in detail, and reference is made throughout to the newly-established grades of stage manager, deputy stage manager, and assistant stage manager, which emerged at the beginning of the 1960s and remain current more than fifty years later. Baker further considers the implications of the new legislation abolishing censorship and the changes that it would bring, alongside

indications that, by this point in time, electronic cue-light systems were becoming industry standard, and that the introduction of tannoy and show relay systems, piping calls and the dialogue onstage into the dressing rooms, were sounding the death-knell for that theatrical staple of over two hundred years, the call boy. Published at the fulcrum point when electronic cueing practices were becoming standard and new nomenclatures had been born out of the welcoming of stage management into what had hitherto been the performers' union, Baker's handbook is in itself an important contribution to knowledge about stage management practice at a seminal moment in British theatre history, and will be drawn upon extensively as a primary source.

By the time that *Stage Management and Theatrecraft* was published, comprehensive structural changes in the organisation of stage management had already taken place. In 1954 the Stage Management Association had been established, and in 1958 specific and separate contracts for stage management were developed by the performers' union Equity, indicating a professionalisation and unionisation of stage management to have been established and in place by the time the 1968 Act passed into law and Baker's handbook saw publication. First-hand perspectives on these developments within professional stage management will be explored as case studies later in the chapter.

A wide range of promptbooks and theatrical ephemera, such as programmes and production paperwork, enable conclusions to be drawn about what the role of stage management entailed and how it was developing at the

beginning of the twentieth century. A range of prompt materials from both London and provincial theatres demonstrates that, whilst not universal practice, the annotation of promptbooks with coloured notes, principally red and blue, first identified at Drury Lane in the first half of the nineteenth century, is commonplace in both London and provincial promptbooks by the turn of the twentieth century, indicating a standardisation within this aspect of practice.

The prompt copy itself can be argued to be following a standardised format, with variations; although some were still produced in manuscript, the early twentieth-century promptbook was commonly produced by a typewriting office local to the area, with the script typewritten on a single side of half-foolscap-sized paper and bound with a brown sugar-paper cover, with stage directions underlined by the typist in red. In addition to colour, symbols continue to be in widespread evidence in promptbooks from the first quarter of the century, and were signifiers for music and lighting as well as movements by the cast. In particular, the extent of annotations relating to lighting can be seen to be increasing, confirming a consolidation of the cueing of lighting within the stage management role.

Fortunately for scholarship, many more articles of theatrical ephemera have survived from productions dating from the early twentieth century than the promptbook alone; in many cases, a 'production file' survives, with correspondence, sheet music, actors' individual part-books, auditorium seating plans, and many more such articles relating to the minutiæ of staging

a production, preserved for theatrical aficionados and scholars alike to exploit. Evidence from as early as 1905[3] reveals that, both in London and the provinces, the stage management generated rehearsal call sheets, ground plans, and lists of general props, hand props, personal props, props setting plots, and dressing room allocations. These indicate the duties and tasks for which theatre managements used their stage management, and also the scope of the organisational and administrative responsibilities undertaken by stage management in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Such information is also furnished by the first source to be interrogated in this chapter, in relation to a regional repertory theatre. The case study below is inspired by the autobiography of the character actress Maud Gill, who entered the profession around the turn of the twentieth century. Gill began her professional career as a dancer for Herbert Beerbohm Tree at His Majesty's, and was amongst the company which he toured to Berlin in 1907; she was a veteran of numerous fit-up and touring engagements around the country, before engaging for the first of many seasons at Birmingham in 1914 with her husband, E. Stuart Vinden, also an actor. The source is unusual, and important to the study of the development of stage management, because despite its primary purpose, of describing Gill's experiences as a performer, she includes extensive and detailed accounts of her impromptu period as stage manager at Birmingham as a result of the First World War. The source is valuable because of the depth of detail which it reveals about both the nature and extent of her role and the technical capability of the theatre, and also because the chief purpose of the

book is to describe an acting career; the period of her life spent in stage management was accidental in her career and is incidental in her memoirs, and is therefore free from the bias that a 'career' stage manager's memoirs might be argued to hold. The source will therefore be considered in depth, as it provides valuable information on numerous aspects of early twentieth-century stage management practice.

Maud Gill's recollections of her period as a stage manager are of interest for a further reason: she is reliably acknowledged[4] to have been Britain's first female stage manager. Whilst this may be of interest on its own merits as a theatrical female first, the inherent value to the study of stage management practice which emerges from this fact is that Gill's particular experiences as a woman offer insightful information as to what was 'normal' for (usually male) stage managers of the time against the context of what was 'abnormal' for a woman to be doing – usually because conventions, expectations, or modes of dress rendered certain activities difficult or inconvenient. For example, through Gill's account of the difficulty of climbing a 'cat ladder' (a vertical access ladder to working areas at height, such as fly galleries) in skirts to operate a cloud machine, we may learn that members of the stage management at Birmingham could be expected to climb aloft to operate lighting or sound effects. In this way Gill's particular perspective supplements the detailed descriptions of the nature of her stage management work to offer us an authoritative and unique source of information about stage management practice in a 'state of the art' regional repertory theatre within the first quarter of the twentieth century.

5.1   Case Study: Maud Gill at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

Although she enjoyed a long and varied career in fit-up, touring, and West End theatre, a large part of Gill's professional life was spent at the newly-built Birmingham Repertory Theatre, which opened in 1913 and which was, as Claire Cochrane has described, the first purpose-built repertory theatre in Great Britain.[5] It was there, as a result of the First World War, that she fell into stage management, first as assistant stage manager in 1914, and subsequently as stage manager from 1917 until 1923. Gill chronicles this period in her life in considerable detail in her autobiography, which offers an insightful summary of the scope of the responsibilities of the role at that time:

> Fortunately the theatre remained open. One by one our actors went into the army, and were replaced by men who were either over age, or unfit. When our assistant stage manager went I took his place and received an increase in salary. Assistant stage management of a repertory theatre is interesting, but it is a full-time job. I had other things to do as well, but I got through them all somehow, except during the Christmas seasons. [. . .] More and more of our men went into the army and when Frank Clewlow, the stage manager, went the whole of the stage department was placed in my hands. To be stage manager, even at the best of theatres, even when a play is put on for a run, is a responsible position, but in a repertory theatre, where play succeeds play in rapid succession, the work is indeed arduous. All rehearsals have to be watched and the positions of the players noted in every scene. Lighting and scenery, furniture and 'properties' have to be arranged. Some properties are made on the premises, some are hired. The stage manager selects and hires them, and later sees to their return. Current bills

> are checked and paid. The men's time-sheets are checked,
> their salaries distributed, their insurance cards dealt with.
> Dressing-rooms are allotted. Endless prompt-books, scenery
> plots (drawn to scale), lighting and property plots have to be
> made and filed. Checking and instructions go on all the
> time. Prompting and switch-signalling for 'curtains' and
> 'effects' form the evening's work – apart from any acting
> that happens to come one's way . . . [6]

Gill's description clearly indicates that aspects of theatre production which would today be recognised as **company management** (the administration of timesheets, the distribution of wages, the allocation of dressing rooms), **technical management** (the positioning of lighting and scenery, the composition of lighting plots and scenery plots), **production management** (engagement of stage staff, the payment of invoices) and **stage management** (the acquisition and return of props and furniture, the management of rehearsals, the cueing of performance) were all included in her role, not to mention the performance of small parts which Gill continued to undertake, as seems to have been customary, with stage managers universally appearing to come to the role from a performance background up to and beyond the Second World War. It also confirms the emergence and proliferation of the role of Assistant Stage Manager, which Gill describes above as her first responsibility. Ephemera from the Theatre Royal, Haymarket and from His Majesty's Theatre reveals members of the company credited with undertaking this role dating from 1906;[7] Gill's indication that, eight years later, the stage management responsibilities at the newly-built Birmingham theatre were such that a stage manager and an assistant were kept fully

employed in carrying them out points to the proliferation of such a team structure beyond the major London theatres to the regions. Henceforth in this study, the role of Assistant Stage Manager will be abbreviated to ASM.

Gill's suggestion that her ASM duties fully occupied her time further supports the notion of a professional approach to the work of stage management, both on the part of Gill herself, whose memoirs reveal her to have been keen to perform her duties well despite her vocation as a performer, and on the part of the theatre, indicating the overt professionalisation of stage management which was to occur within just forty years of Gill's first experiences of repertory stage management. Furthermore, it is clear from the extensive evidence of Gill's experience as stage manager that the function of prompter has now, early in the twentieth century, been assumed within the stage manager's role; the ephemera from the Beerbohm Tree Collection referred to above supports this, as do the materials from the Melville Collection drawn upon below, with no separate prompting credit alongside the references to the two stage management roles.

Of particular interest in the extract from Gill cited above are the final two items listed amongst her responsibilities: 'Checking and instructions go on all the time. Prompting and switch-signalling for 'curtains' and 'effects' form the evening's work . . .'[8] The first sentence, referring to checking and instructions, may equally relate to the preparation and checking of correctly-set props and furniture prior to each performance as to the warning and

cueing of lighting, sound, and stage effects during them. However, it is the second part, which states that cueing was carried out by 'switch-signalling', which is valuable to this research into the development of stage management practice, because it indicates the use of electric bulbs[9] to initiate cues during performance and consequently indicates a key and consolidating development in the link between stage management and cued performance. Since the principal aspect of the current professional stage management role is the cueing of each technical element of the performance, with cue-lights and over intercommunicating headsets, following industry standard protocols for both the verbal instructions given and the way that those instructions are recorded in the promptbook, this indication by Gill that cue-lights were the means by which the cues were given as early as 1913 is a highly important advance in knowledge about the developing stage management role.

5.2   A Vocal Language for Stage Management.

Although not described as such in the source, Gill's reference to 'switch-signalling' is very clearly a description of what are known today as cue-lights, and may be the very first record of cue-lights in British theatre:[10] the Birmingham Repertory Theatre (now the Old Rep) was opened in February 1913 and, as indicated above, was the first purpose-built repertory theatre in the United Kingdom, so the equipment and fittings which Gill describes would have been 'state of the art'; this being so, she would therefore have been one of the first stage managers to operate them. The earliest pictorial evidence which I have found for 'switch-signalling' or cue lights is shown

below in Figure 5.2.1; the prompt corner shown is that of the New Theatre,

London, at the 1947 première of J. B. Priestly's *Ever Since Paradise* which,

although dating some thirty years later than Gill's early twentieth-century

experiences, clearly depicts basic cue-light technology both at the prompt

corner and at an operator's working position, in this case the electrics switch

board. In his 1934 textbook *Behind the Scenes*, John Sommerfield describes

the prompt corner and the lighting control board; despite his somewhat

theatrical manner of illustrating how the cue-light system worked, the

account is valuable for the in-depth and vivid description which it provides

and complements well the pictorial evidence which can be seen in Figure

5.2.1:

> On the wall is a switchboard with telephones, bells, etc.
> This is the stage manager's board. All the switches and
> bellpushes are labelled. The switches are in pairs, one
> marked STAND BY, the other GO. They are labelled
> things like F.O.H. CURTAIN, O.P. FLIES, ORCHESTRA.
> Above each switch is a little round window of coloured
> glass. [. . .] The [lighting] board itself is most imposing
> – a big, shiny, black panel, as big as the side of a small
> room, covered with rows and rows of switches, and little
> windows of coloured glass through which lights shine.
> Along the lower part of the board are a couple of rows of
> levers, and in the middle, several various sized wheels like
> small motor-car steering-wheels. Also there are a lot of
> little black-and-white buttons, rather like the bass keys on a
> concertina [. . .] Everything has a neat black-and-white
> label underneath it, but what the letters on them denote only
> the electricians know. [. . .] On the wall, in the corner, is
> a telephone, a buzzer, and two small electric light bulbs.
> Suddenly one of the bulbs shines with a red light. The

electrician turns to the board and begins to press a lot of the little black-and-white buttons. The red light goes out, and the other bulb flashes green. The electrician begins to fiddle with some of the switches, at the same time turning one of the wheels very slowly. [. . .] The chief electrician is taking a hand now, pulling over some of the levers very slowly. Then the little red bulb in the corner shines again. Both the electricians start doing a lot of things to the board very quickly. As one of the actors on the stage says "I'll put on the lights" the red bulb goes out and the green one shines. The actor has crossed to the corner of the room. You can hear the faint click of the switch on the stage; at the same moment the electrician pulls over a big lever, and all the amber lights on the stage come up . . . [11]

Although simplistically expressed, Sommerfield's description of the electrics staff carrying out two lighting changes on cue-lights given from prompt corner affords a very clear impression of the various elements involved in a lighting change. The 'little round windows of coloured glass' described beneath the stage manager's switches in the prompt corner are the cue-light bulbs, and the 'wheels like small, motor-car steering wheels' are the dimmers: turning them anti-clockwise increases the intensity of light upon the stage, whilst turning the wheel clockwise reduces the level of light. When the electricians 'start doing a lot of things to the board very quickly', they are 'patching' or connecting the lanterns to the dimmers so that the desired lanterns will respond to the turning of the wheels. The red bulbs going out and the green bulbs illuminating indicate the stage manager's 'warning' and 'go' cues to the electricians; their lighting plots give them all

the information which they need about what states are required for each scene, and the stage manager's cue-lights tell them when to initiate them.

Figure 5.2.1:   Cue-lights in Prompt Corner, New Theatre, London, 1947. Scanned from *Theatre Outlook* by J. B. Priestley.[12]

The corresponding cue-lights, above the electrical switch board, can be seen below in Figure 5.2.2:
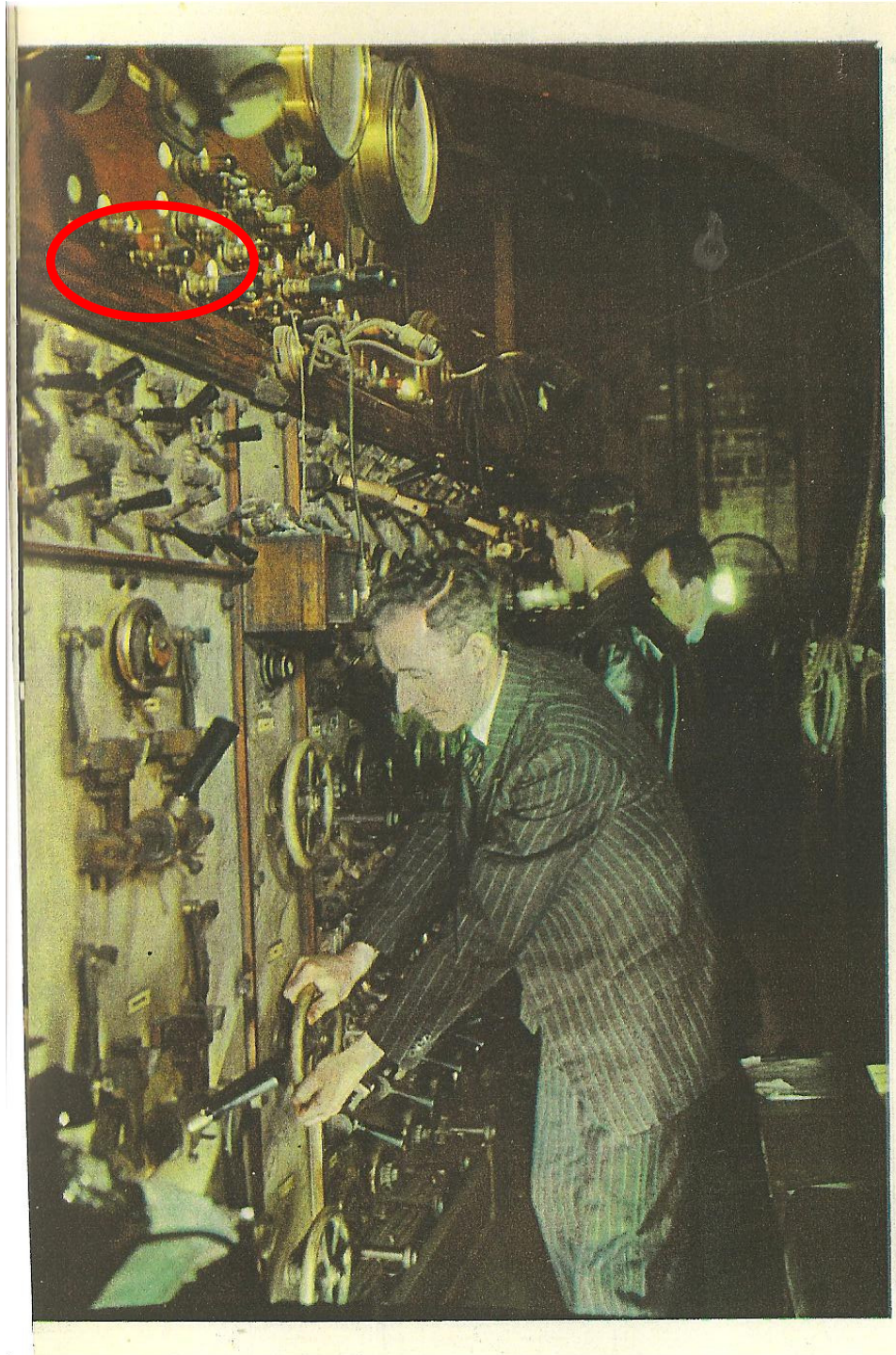
Figure 5.2.2:   Electrical Switch Board, New Theatre, London, 1947.
Scanned from *Theatre Outlook* by J. B. Priestley.[13]

In the depiction of the prompt corner shown in Figure 5.2.1 above, three sets of cue lights can be seen, with a bakelite switch beneath each one; an electric door-bell is also visible below the twin set of cue-lights immediately above the promptbook. Although such a system does not allow for two-way communication using lights, as with the facility for the stabilisation of cue-lights by operators which was developed in the late 1970s, it does facilitate the silent and instantaneous giving of instructions from the prompt corner to any part of the theatre wired with a corresponding set of cue-lights. The second illustration, Figure 5.2.2, shows an example of the operators' cue-lights, which are not accompanied by switches; the electricians cannot reply to the prompt corner with their cue-lights, and so can only respond to the instructions given by the illumination of the respective cue-lights at their position. They prepare each component aspect required for the forthcoming cue upon the illumination of the red 'warning' or 'stand-by' light, and, upon the illumination of the green 'go' light, they carry it out.

In addition to the Birmingham Rep's 'switch-signalling' or cue-light facilities, Gill reveals details of further electrical and mechanical fittings which constituted the theatre's technical effects capability. Amongst these were mechanical sound effects boxes and, notably, 'speaking tubes' through which the prompt corner could communicate with staff in other working areas of the stage, both of which are described in the following anecdote concerning the cueing of a storm sequence (the emphasis is mine):

> The rain-box, suspended from the fly-rail, was being gently rocked to and fro – the wind-machine nearby was being turned like a huge mangle – one severe-looking stage-hand

dropped dried peas at regular intervals into a pail of water –
at every increase of wind another man flung handfuls of rice at
a sheet of glass – and up above, in the flies, the pride of the
theatre, our new effects-box, was at work. This was a
wonderful machine. We had obtained it cheaply from
someone who must have cherished a secret grudge against us.
You simply turned a handle, like a barrel-organ, and then by
moving a pointer on the indicator, you could produce the
sound of a railway train, a motor-car, rain, wind, waves, or
galloping horses. I stood in my corner, prompting the scene
and giving countless crescendo and diminuendo cues to my
storm controllers by means of electric signals. Then at a most
intense moment my heart stood still. Suddenly from above
came sounds of a close finish to the Grand National, or of
cavalry manœuvres! **The whistle from the flies' speaking-
tube blew in my ear,** and an agonized voice whispered:
"Miss, miss, what shall we do? The incoming tide 'as become
'orses' 'oofs!"[14]

Figure 5.2.3:   Speaking tube technology from 1903.[15]

The desk on the left has four speaking tubes attached to it; the image above shows how the mouthpiece bung incorporated a whistle which, when the tube was blown down by the person at the other end, alerted the recipient that someone wished to communicate with them.

The speaking tube, which was first installed on steamboats, was in widespread use in the maritime industry, offices, and, from the 1840s, within large houses to facilitate more efficient communication with servants, whose attention was attracted by an integral airbell or whistle.[16] It was more than seventy years old and a tried-and-tested communication device when installed at Birmingham's new theatre during its construction throughout 1912. An interesting question generated by this insight would be to query the extent to which speaking tubes may have been installed in other theatres, and at what point did this become common, if at all? Certainly the possibility is raised that the continuation of the instruction 'W' or 'Whistle' beyond the mid-nineteenth century may in itself be an indication that backstage communication might have progressed from a whistle of the police or referee type, audible to patrons front-of-house, to a whistle from a speaking tube, audible only to the flyman in the gallery, or whichever other operator was being summoned to action from the prompt corner. An in-depth investigation of the development of communications technology in the context of theatre production is beyond the scope of this present research, but important information is gleaned and a very relevant aspect of the nature of the stage management role is revealed through the insight provided in this extract.

Despite the anecdotal nature of Gill's autobiography, it remains a valuable source of information regarding stage management practice in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Gill's experiences are vividly and engagingly described, with the consequence that many details of the scope

and nature of stage management in the late nineteen-teens and early twenties supplement the episodes from her career which she recounts. Recipes for stage food and stage drink, maintenance routines for stock props and furniture during the theatre's 'dark' period each summer, the practical challenges faced when an author demanded that real fish be fried and consumed onstage, technological innovations such as electrical candles, and the frustration of not being able to use them when playwrights produced plays with scant regard for the practicalities of realising their artistic requirements ('on a certain line spoken by 'Mary', a candle 'gutters out.' I never could train a candle to gutter out on a 'word cue' . . .'[17]) appear alongside descriptions of the theatre, its stage furnishings, and its complement of staff:

> Moving clouds are a great entertainment. In one play we used a most effective cloud-machine. At a given cue, and not before, clouds had to pass slowly across the sky. The 'starting-up' of the machine was a noisy business, so it was necessary to get it going before the rise of the curtain, and then to mask the front of the lantern till the required moment. It was worked by an assistant electrician from the second perch. [. . .] One evening we were about to ring up on this play when my assistant electrician was taken suddenly ill. My chief electrician could not be spared from his switchboard, my assistant stage manager was a man whose nerves did not allow him to climb ladders in safety, so the only thing that could be done was for me to work the cloud-machine myself. The second perch was at some considerable height from the stage, and as it was neither safe nor convenient to climb a 'cat ladder' in skirts, I rushed to the wardrobe and changed into a pair of men's riding breeches and a shirt-blouse, went up the ladder and deputized

> for my assistant electrician. As soon as the clouds had
> 'rolled by', I came down again and took my usual place in
> the prompt corner.[18]

Such anecdotes furnish supplementary information about the nature of the role and the physical environment of the theatre in which she worked, which inform the investigation of the development of stage management; and whilst it is interesting to learn that the fly floor in the newly-built Birmingham Rep was accessed by a 'cat ladder' (a vertical access ladder, now commonly installed with a circular, protective metal cage – similar to the ladders fitted to the outside of buildings as fire escapes), it is very important for the study of stage management to learn, from Gill's account, that every single cue in the storm sequence described above was individually cued from the prompt corner using cue-lights to communicate with the fly floor – a valuable insight into practice.

Significant information and considerable detail relating to the composition and structure of the stage management team, the interrelationship between stage management and other backstage staff, the working theatrical environment and its equipment and technical capability, and stage management responsibilities and practice are afforded by this source, rendering it of high importance to this research. To complement these memoirs, the study of prompt materials prepared by Gill during her seven years in the role would provide further information about her period as stage manager at Birmingham and possibly about wider stage management practice. Although an extensive archive of promptbooks and other

ephemera from productions at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre does exist, most regrettably, at the time of writing they are inaccessible due to the major rebuilding project which is currently being undertaken to merge the new Birmingham Rep building with Birmingham Central Library, in the Rep's centenary year. Only one sole article could be made available to me for this research: a diagram of the Scene V setting taken from a 1918 promptbook prepared by Maud Gill for the production of John Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln*, which happened to have been displayed as part of a recent exhibition and had escaped being packed into storage, and was instead in the care of a conservator at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Believed to be drawn in Gill's own hand, the diagram is shown below in Figure 5.2.4; although it is insufficient, on its own, to allow any inferences to be drawn about Gill's stage management of the theatre, the level of detail is considerable and it is of interest to note that, on this Scene V setting diagram, not only the props to be set onstage are listed, but 'personals' (those props to be set in a performer's dressing room, to be carried on about their person) and 'addenda' – in this case two lighted candles in brass holders on the table – are also noted. If this is the case for Scene V, it may be inferred that a similar diagram, prepared to a similar level of detail, may also have been provided for the other scenes in the play, in which case it is a valuable indicator of practice at this period.
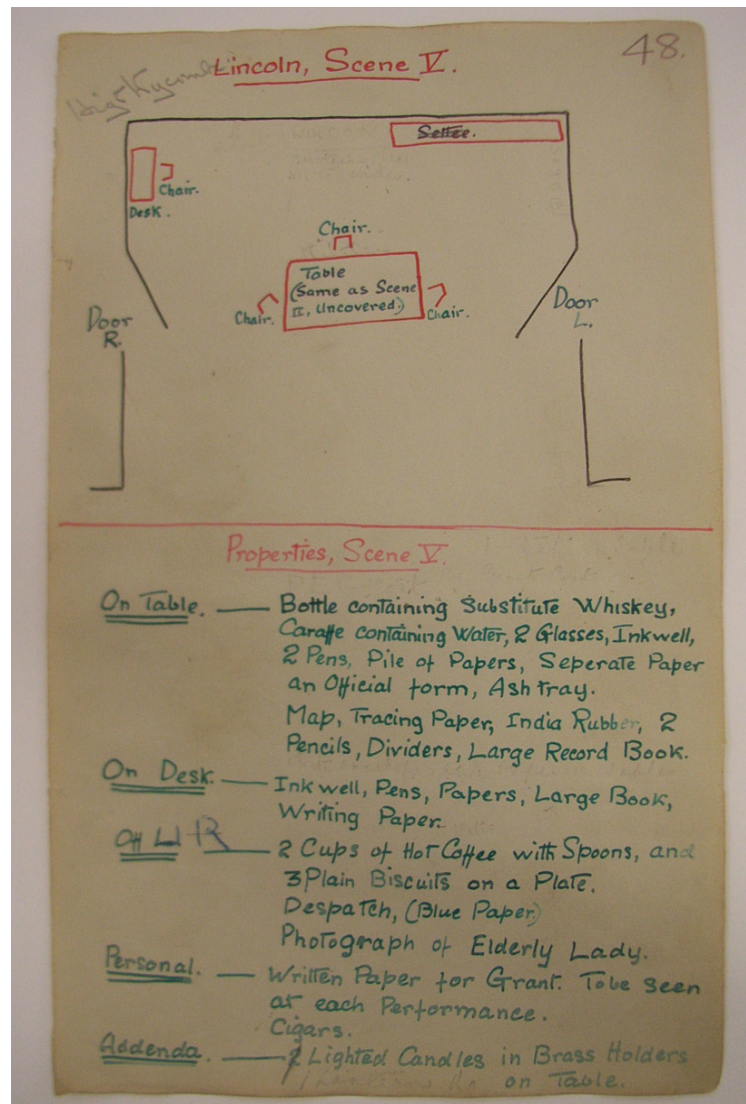
Figure 5.2.4:   Scene V Setting Diagram from *Abraham Lincoln*
                (Birmingham Repertory Theatre, 1918) (Birmingham
                Repertory Theatre MS 978 BS 264/I/52).

The memoirs of Maud Gill offer a clear indication of the scope of stage

management responsibilities up to the mid-1920s additional to keeping the

promptbook and cueing the performance from it. Attendance at rehearsal

and noting the blocking, organising the lighting, scenery, furniture, and

props, hires and returns where applicable, the payment of bills, stage staff

timesheets and the distribution of their wages, the allocation of dressing rooms, and the preparation of scale scenery plots, lighting plots, and property plots are all described and have been discussed in the case study above.

Comparison with sources contemporary to Gill's period at Birmingham indicates that the responsibilities which she undertook were commensurate with practice in other theatres of the time. The Beerbohm Tree Collection at the University of Bristol holds many sources from Tree's London managements contemporary with the beginning of Gill's stage management career, whilst the Melville Collection at the University of Kent offers a wide range of sources from regional theatres from the late twenties and early thirties, contemporary with the end of her time as stage manager at Birmingham following which she continued to pursue a successful career as a character actress. Overwhelmingly, stage management responsibility for the cueing of lighting is evident from the sources studied, with an 1896 source from the Haymarket[19] bearing the annotation '1st switch' suggesting at least some electric lighting capacity,[20] despite the many details confirming the widespread use of gas to effect the lighting cues for that production.

Significantly, sources from both collections suggest the means to verbally cue lighting, with warnings marked 'Stand by' in an 1898 promptbook from the Theatre Royal, Haymarket[21] and in a 1928 promptbook from the Grand Theatre, Brighton. This is suggested on the basis that 'Stand by' followed

by the name of the cue shortly to be initiated has been the industry-standard formula, still current, for verbally instructing those responsible for actuating cues to prepare to carry them out since electronically-equipped prompt corners began to proliferate in the 1960s, despite it remaining common to mark this in the promptbook with the traditional wording 'Warn' rather than writing the words 'Stand by' for some years afterwards. To see the words 'Stand by' inscribed in promptbooks as far back as the 1890s strongly supports the possibility that verbal cueing was enabled at those theatres where such annotations are found. Whilst promptbook evidence from the Lyceum informs us that in 1868 flags and whistles were the means by which instructions were conveyed from the prompt corner to the fly floor and lamp positions, by the final decade of the nineteenth century, when the annotation 'Stand by' appears for the first time amongst all the promptbooks analysed for this research, it is possible that speaking-tube mechanisms had been installed in some of the major theatres and were being installed when newer, regional theatres were constructed, as the information about Birmingham gleaned from Gill's memoirs demonstrates.

5.3   Additional Stage Management Responsibilities: 1920s – 30s.

The indications relating to practice which Gill's memoirs provide are supported by production ephemera which has survived from regional theatres at Birmingham, Brighton, Swansea, and Watford,[22] which will be drawn upon in summary to indicate the increasing scope of responsibilities which can be demonstrated to have fallen under the remit of stage management in the years between the two World Wars.

In cases where additional, ephemeral items relating to a production have survived along with a play's promptbook, production paperwork commonly includes a diagram of the set, not usually to scale (although sometimes with measurements); a list of characters, some with cast names ascribed; a synopsis of scenery, often indicating groove numbers in older theatres; a property plot; a lighting plot; occasionally a list of musical numbers, where appropriate; in some cases, dressing room allocation lists and company tick-in sheets for a run of performances, and, almost without fail, a list of timings per act from multiple performances.

Props lists increasingly demonstrate detail beyond the basic information of those props or items of furniture specified in the script, additionally itemising appropriate dressing too such as books, pens, ink, papers, telephone, photograph frames, wastepaper baskets, etc. – suggesting that such lists may have been the versions from which the production was set up for each performance. One production file,[23] however, additionally contained three typed show report pro-formas with performance details handwritten in, dating from Thursday 29th October, Friday 30th October, and Saturday 1st December 1928. Although quite unique amongst the sources found, the formulaic nature of the reports means that it can be suggested with confidence that this was a standard nightly requirement at the theatre from which they originated (the Grand Theatre, Brighton) and possibly at other theatres under the Melville managements, if not a feature of widespread practice within the industry. Two of the three show reports which have survived in this file are shown below in Figure 5.3.3; they

demonstrate that the play was performed twice nightly, with only half an hour between each performance, and that a timing was expected to be taken of each scene within each act; the existence of a pro-forma for this purpose, on which the timings could simply be recorded by hand during the performance, further suggests this to have been a standard practice at this theatre which may have been current for some time.[24]

Figure 5.3.1:   Show Reports, *The Streets of Brighton*
                (Grand Theatre, Brighton, 1928) (Melville Collection,
                University of Kent at Canterbury).

The emergence of surviving show reports is important to this research because they indicate the various details upon which stage management were required to report to the management, providing information about the scope of stage management responsibilities at the period and also about

what information the managements considered to be important. In some cases this can be significantly informative; reference in a show report to a particular staging effect can reveal much about the technical capability of the theatre at the time, particularly if details are given about which aspects worked well or failed to work at all. This is a further example of how research into the development of stage management can inform our wider knowledge about theatre practice. The existence of these surviving reports strongly indicates this aspect of stage management responsibility, in this format, to have emerged and perhaps standardised by the mid-1920s, which is significant to our knowledge regarding the development of stage management practice.

Similar attention to the timings for each scene is evidenced by the sheet shown in Figure 5.3.2 below, from the opening night of the Brighton Grand's production of *Palmer the Poisoner* which ran from 10th to 16th November in the winter of 1930. The purpose of this document seems simply to record the timings, as there is no heading or space left for 'Remarks' as with the sources examined above. Again it can be seen that the play was given twice nightly, with only fourteen minutes between the final curtain of the first house and curtain-up on the second. In terms of working conditions for the stage management and backstage staff, this represents a very fast reset and check of all of the properties, furniture and scenic pieces in the play, in the midst of which issuing five-minute and beginners calls to the company for the second house; and, with an interval of only nine minutes during the first house and eight minutes in the second, no

break of any sort during an evening which must have begun before six and finished around midnight. This is commensurate with the practices of the major theatres such as Drury Lane and Covent Garden, who presented similar nightly programmes. Had sources such as these not survived, such insights into the working lives of stage managers could not be drawn.

Figure 5.3.2: Show Timings, *Palmer the Poisoner* (Grand Theatre, Brighton, 1930) (Melville Collection, University of Kent at Canterbury).

In all of the prompt sources analysed, the marking of cast entrances, either by underlining or by symbol or by some other means, remains a constant feature of annotatory practice. Implicit in this extensive manifestation of the stage manager's attention to the entrances of the performers is the suggestion that there remains a strong link between the stage manager and the acting

company. The support for the company indicated by the early promptbooks

drawn upon in this thesis, from the end of the sixteenth century and also

from the Restoration, which demonstrate so clearly a stage management

responsibility for calls to the stage, cues for entrances, reminders to carry on

certain props or change certain items of costume, and of course assistance

through traps and with other complex entrances, continues to be reflected in

promptbooks of the twentieth century, where attention to the company's

entrances and activities (and thereby their needs) remains evident and

consistent. This demonstrates that, despite the increasing responsibilities for

the cueing of the technical elements of a production, the link between stage

management and the acting company was maintained into the twentieth

century, and continued to be so as the century progressed.

Other symbols continue to be in evidence, with music largely (although not

universally) signified by the symbol ⊙ , and other familiar symbols, such as

∅ , ※   and   X , persisting in prompt sources into the 1930s. The

idiosyncratic methods with which such symbols can be seen to be in use in

prompt sources from this period suggest that whilst the use and codification

of symbols within promptbooks was by this time a widespread practice,

there was not a universal codification common to all theatres, but rather a

universal convention of encoding a limited range of familiar symbols in an

individualised way. On the basis of evidence from the sources studied, I

suggest that it is not the codification of a particular symbol per se, but rather

the use of a range of symbols for stage managers to make use of

idiosyncratically, that is the practice which has standardised as the mid-point

of the twentieth century approaches; and that it was the exigencies of the stage management role, i.e. the need to instantly recognise on a page, mid-performance and in the dark, a symbol and the instruction which it signified, which was the key factor in driving this aspect of the development of stage management practice.

5.4:   Towards Professionalisation and Unionisation.

Further developments in stage management practice are revealed by the testimony of the stage manager David Ayliff, whose father, H. K. Ayliff, was a successful 'producer' or director in the early twentieth century. David Ayliff was born in 1916 and commenced his career as a stage manager in the early 1930s; he was a founding member of the Stage Management Association, and is now, in his late nineties, its Honorary Life President. Although Ayliff's career stretches back as far as the 1930s, the following case study will focus on post-war developments in the stage management role because he was instrumental in the moves which took place in the 1950s and early 1960s to raise the profile of stage management within the wider theatrical industry. As a founding member of the Stage Management Association and practising stage manager at the time of the admission of stage managers to the union Equity, Ayliff's experience is highly appropriate to this research.

The 1950s saw the first moves towards professionalisation for stage management. Ayliff recalls in an interview given to the British Library's Theatre Archive Project that:

[S]tage management changed quite a lot in the fifties [. . .] for instance, around '53 / '54, Equity were trying to negotiate the first stage management contract. Stage Managers had always been actors who did the stage management as well – or instead – because they trained along with people who were training to be actors [. . .] [I]n those days a lot of actors trained by joining a repertory company as student Stage Managers – that was if they couldn't get into a drama school. So if they were successful they went on to becoming actors, which always looked rather as though people who were Stage Managers had to be Stage Managers because they weren't clever enough to be actors [. . .] and this is why there hadn't been a separate stage management contract. Equity were trying to negotiate the first one for the West End theatre, and some of the stage managers working in the West End got wind of what they were trying to get and thought it wasn't good enough. And some of them were pretty high powered, because they had just come out of the army, or navy, or air force with fairly high ranks, you know, 'Lieutenant Colonel so and so, now a Stage Manager' and they weren't going to stand for any nonsense now. [. . .] Anyway, they formed a Stage Management Association of people working in the West End, and we got together once a month in an upstairs room in a pub and discussed what Equity was trying to do and what we thought they ought to do instead. We got one of our members elected to the Equity Council and we were able to influence Equity quite successfully as far as stage management was concerned.[25]

Equity, known as the British Actors' Equity Association since its foundation in 1930 until it changed its name to be more reflective of its membership in 2005, is the union which represents performers, variety artistes, directors, and stage managers. Until 1964, stage management were engaged on the

performers' Esher Standard Contract, first introduced in 1933,[26] due to the predominant perception that most people who were offered stage management engagements actually aspired to become performers, so that the actors' union would best represent their ultimate professional needs.   In 1958 the first Equity Agreement for stage managers in the West End was introduced; in an unpublished article written for the Stage Management Association, Ayliff, who had first-hand experience of the negotiations, states:

> A printed 'Agreement' between Equity and the managements came into use for stage management in the West End theatre in 1958. This differed from a full contract in that it did not involve the signing and exchange of copies for each engagement, and did not have the managements' commitment for re-negotiation at regular intervals. Four years later Equity started discussions about converting the Agreement into a full Contract, and the first Stage Management Contract came into use in the West End in 1964.[27]

A significant consequence of negotiating the first Equity contracts for stage management was the consolidation and definition of roles and job titles in the early 1960s into the stage management structure which remains current today. In 1957, H. D. Stewart published a backstage manual, entitled *Stage Management,* but found that it was almost out of date before it was published; even as he went to press with it, change was in the air as a result of what became the 1958 Agreement which Equity was negotiating for stage management. In a footnote to his descriptions of the stage manager's and stage director's roles, Stewart remarks:

At the time of going into press the nomenclature of members of the stage management is in a state of confusion [. . .] It seems likely that in the West End the stage director may resume his old title of 'stage manager', the present stage manager being known as deputy stage manager and the assistants still being known as ASMs.[28]

Ayliff, who was involved in the development and implementation of the restructuring, describes the transition from the pre-war structure of the stage management team to the newly-formalised structure which was introduced for contractual purposes in the late 1950s:

Prior to 1939, the two stage management titles in general use were 'Stage Manager' and 'Assistant Stage Manager' (ASM). There was always a 'Business Manager', whose job was to handle all matters like company salaries, box office liaison, publicity etc. There was no specially negotiated contract for any of these, but stage management were often engaged also to play or understudy, in which case they had an Equity actors' contract. During World War II, with so many people in the armed forces or doing other essential war work, it became necessary for the Stage Manager to take on many of the Business Manager's duties. The job was simplified to a certain extent, some of it being handled by the management's office staff. The person doing the combined job was usually called 'Stage Director', while the number two on the team, who now had extra responsibility because the number one was not always around, was called 'Stage Manager'. Other members of the team were 'ASMs'.[29]

The early 1950s saw the beginning of negotiations between Equity and the West End managements for a contract specifically for stage management.

It was at this time that the Stage Management Association came into being, with the aim of ensuring appropriate working conditions for stage management and a means for working stage managers to influence Equity who now represented them not as bit-part actors but professionally in the context of their stage management work for the first time. Ayliff continues:

> One of these conditions was that there should be three minimum salaries for the three grades (S[tage] D[irector], S[tage] M[anager] and ASM), but the managements objected to the title 'Stage Director' on the grounds that it was confusing having a 'Stage Director' as well as a 'Director'. Before this time, the person who directed the production had usually been called 'Producer' in this country and 'Director' in America, but the American practice was being increasingly adopted over here, and it was essential to have agreed titles to go with the specified minimum salaries in the contract. The equivalent to our 'Business Manager' had always been called 'Company Manager' in America and it was agreed to adopt that title here, and that the person doing the combined jobs should be known as 'Company and Stage Manager'. This had the advantage that the titles could be used separately if the jobs were done by two people. (Note that the contract does not allow for the use of 'Company/Stage Manager' as a title). The third member of the team would be called ASM as before, but it was now necessary to think of a new title for the number two. After a lot of argument 'Deputy Stage Manager' was the one finally approved by both sides . . . [30]

Far from being a deputising role, however, the function of deputy stage manager is a pivotal and distinct role within a non-hierarchical stage management team; the stage management structure does not operate like a ladder, with the assistant stage manager below the deputy stage manager

who is in turn below the stage manager at the top. Rather, it resembles a triangular structure, within which the stage manager and assistant stage manager work closely together during both the rehearsal period – when the stage manager and assistant(s) are occupied in acquiring or making the props and furniture required, supporting the needs of the rehearsals, and communicating the notes which come out of rehearsals to the other production departments – and the production period and run of performances, during which the stage manager and assistant stage manager each run a wing, setting and resetting the props and furniture and serving the needs of the performance.

In this manner it is clear that there is a close relationship between the stage manager and assistant stage manager roles; their work occupies them with broadly the same activities, both in propping the production and then running the wings, with the stage manager additionally having overall responsibility for everything and everybody going on or off the stage. Meanwhile, the deputy stage manager is the member of the team most closely involved with the acting company, prompting, noting the blocking, and providing for the company's and director's every need during the rehearsal period, then cueing the performance each night. This continues the close link with the needs of the company which has been evident since the early modern professional theatre, and is demonstrated by the diagram below.

Stage Manager
(props, furniture, runs wing)

Rehearsals ⟷ **Deputy Stage Mgr**
(company; runs show)

All
Production
Departments

Assistant Stage Mgr
(props, furniture, runs wing)
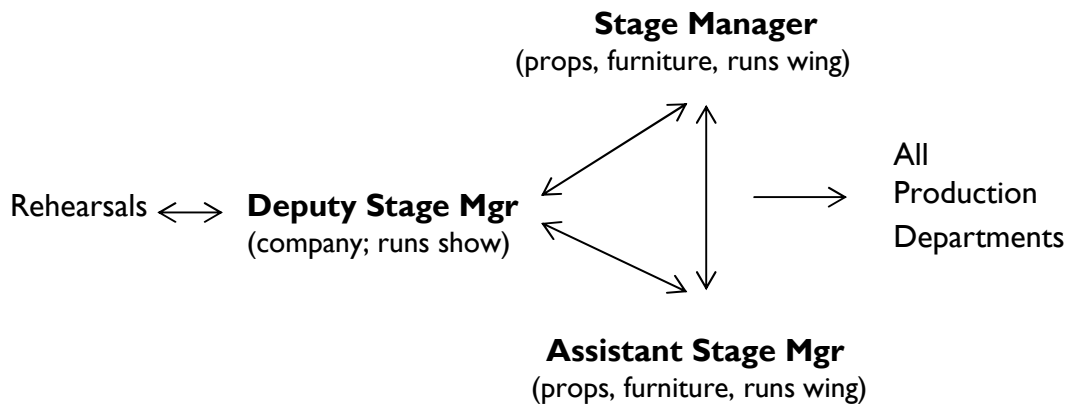
Figure 5.4.1:   Stage Management Inter-relation and Communication Model.

Hendrik Baker adopts these new terms in his comprehensive 1968 manual *Stage Management and Theatrecraft*, and describes fully the responsibilities of each role. He begins with an insight into stage management from his own personal experience, recalling his observations as an assistant stage manager 'on the book' during his first professional engagement:

> In the three weeks of rehearsals I continued prompting and marking the script; the latter task requiring some dexterity in keeping up with the rapid introduction of 'business' and 'moves'. Occasionally I caught a glimpse of the stage manager and gave him notes of requirements called for in his absence. I found that most of them he anticipated and began to wonder how he knew what would be required though apparently occupied elsewhere. Eventually we came to the day of the dress-rehearsal and I arrived at the theatre to find that overnight, scenery had been set up, furniture, wardrobe, properties and electrical equipment installed and several members of the staff whom I had briefly recognised were in discussion with the stage manager. I discovered that throughout rehearsals the stage manager had organised the

work and departments which produced this result. I learnt how the organisation of the stage was divided; how each task was allocated to personnel of different departments. How it was all co-ordinated so that when the time came for assembling the components of the production, the stage manager was confident his plans would contribute to a flawless performance.[31]

Baker's description of how he himself began to learn his craft under a clearly experienced stage manager confirms the role of stage management as one of communication, co-ordination, and support for the company in rehearsal and performance by practitioners skilled in organisation, anticipation, and empathy for the needs of their performer colleagues in the pursuit of their professional craft.

With the consolidation of the stage management structure into the present format, as a result of the need to formalise the duties of each role and their nomenclature in order for the Equity agreement and later contract to be developed, the stage management structure within the British theatre was standardised in a formal way as the engagement of stage managers under the Equity contract proliferated. Complementary to this standardisation in structure was the emergence of training opportunities, within the drama schools, in preparation for stage management as a career.

5.5:   Training for Stage Management.

In addition to professional representation through the formation of the Stage Management Association, and union protection in the form of the first Equity Agreement for stage management, the 1950s also saw the emergence of formal training in stage management and the concept that stage management could attract not only would-be performers using the position of assistant stage manager as a stepping-stone to becoming an actor, but also young people interested in the world of theatre production for whom the role of assistant stage manager was a stepping-stone to a career in stage management itself. In his Theatre Archive Project interview, drawn upon above, Ayliff continues:

> The other interesting thing that happened in the fifties was with training stage management: there was a woman called Dorothy Tennam [sic] who was Stage Manager at RADA – Royal Academy of Dramatic Art – to stage manage the public performances that the acting students put on, and it occurred to her that if it was a useful training thing to acting students it would be a wonderful training thing for stage management. So she got John Fernald, who was the principal, to take on a student ASM to help her stage manage the shows. And that was such a success that they started the first drama school stage manager training course with half a dozen students [. . .] They learnt [. . .] extra things like history of props and furniture [. . .] and worked as the stage management team on the public performances.[32]

This is corroborated by RADA's own records. In an unpublished documentary account of the development of its production course, the Royal

Academy of Dramatic Art, founded in 1904 by Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, states of Dorothy Tenham that:

> Her energetic presence was pudding-proof of the authenticity of the line in the Academy's published chronology: 1962 Stage Management Course introduced, the first formal new core Course introduction since the Academy's inception almost sixty years earlier. Yet if truth were told, the Stage Management Course had not waited to be invented. It had set about inventing itself. As far back as 1956, it was customary for a small group of hybrid "apprentice students" to join the Academy Stage Management during Term and after an interview with the Principal.[33]

Archived references provided for early students indicate the nature and extent of the course; one student 'entered the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in September 1958, as a Technical Student of Professional Stage Management in the Theatre, and in December 1959 successfully completed a full Academy Course of four terms'[34] whilst another 'successfully completed the Stage Management Course [. . .] spending the year from March 1958 to March 1959 in intensive theoretical and practical work.'[35] The document goes on to chronicle the stage management course descriptor:

> The course of study comprises a thorough education in the techniques of back-stage work, and stage-management, and when completed successfully it ensures that a student can accept a post in the professional theatre as an A.S.M. and carry out his duties satisfactorily. The course varies in length from three terms to four according to the aptitude of the individual student.[36]

The material indicates that the training received by the stage management students was reflective of the commitment which could be expected of them in the profession; a letter from the Academy to a local authority on behalf of a student who had been granted funding for their studies states:

> I understand that the grant [that this student] receives from your Authority is based on the eleven week R.A.D.A. term as published in the Academy prospectus. In fact, however, stage management students do a thirteen week term, starting a week earlier and finishing a week later. In view of this, I would be grateful if you could see your way to making an appropriate adjustment . . . [37]

Such sources indicate that a thorough training was provided for the specific purpose of producing industry-ready professionals; the two additional weeks of term are reflective of the industry practice of employing the stage management team a week ahead of the company, to mark up the rehearsal space, source rehearsal props and furniture, and prepare for the company's arrival, and to retain them for a week after the end of the run, to return all of the borrowed articles and complete the post-production paperwork.

RADA was not the only drama school to offer training in stage management. The personal notes of Bush Bailey, who lectured on the acting course at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art in the 1950s,[38] record detailed instructions given to students in the duties of stage management. These range from the bare essentials of preparation for the first day of rehearsals, to detailed information about how long after the fall of the final curtain in a

touring venue to order the haulage firm staff, and the various rates of pay which they must be offered.[39] Given that these instructions were designed for students undertaking acting training, these teaching notes indicate that the practice of drawing stage managers and assistant stage managers from the ranks of performers or would-be performers was still a practical necessity at this time. This being the case, the thoroughness of the instructions which the source reveals must be remarked; the page shown below details the get-out procedure for a production on tour, and notes:

> Arrange with local carter to be at theatre Sat[urday] even[ing]
> ½ hr after curtain comes down [. . .] <u>When</u> curtain comes
> down if [the strike is] easy.

> Arrange with local S[tage] C[arpenter] no. of men needed to
> get out. 6/- or 7/6 or 10/- or by hr (to be avoided).
> Some to go to station.
> If Pickfords – they will arrange destination cartage as well.
> If not – write in advance to R[esident] S[tage] M[anager].

On the same page, Bailey also shares the benefit of long experience with his students:

> Before prop basket [and costume basket] is fastened – S.M.
> sh[oul]d go round every d[ressing] room looking in drawers –
> behind doors & on floor (shoes) to see if anything is left
> behind . . .

Arguably, the recipients of these notes are being prepared not merely for time-serving assistant stage manager roles, but the means to competently

undertake more senior stage management roles should the need or inclination arise.
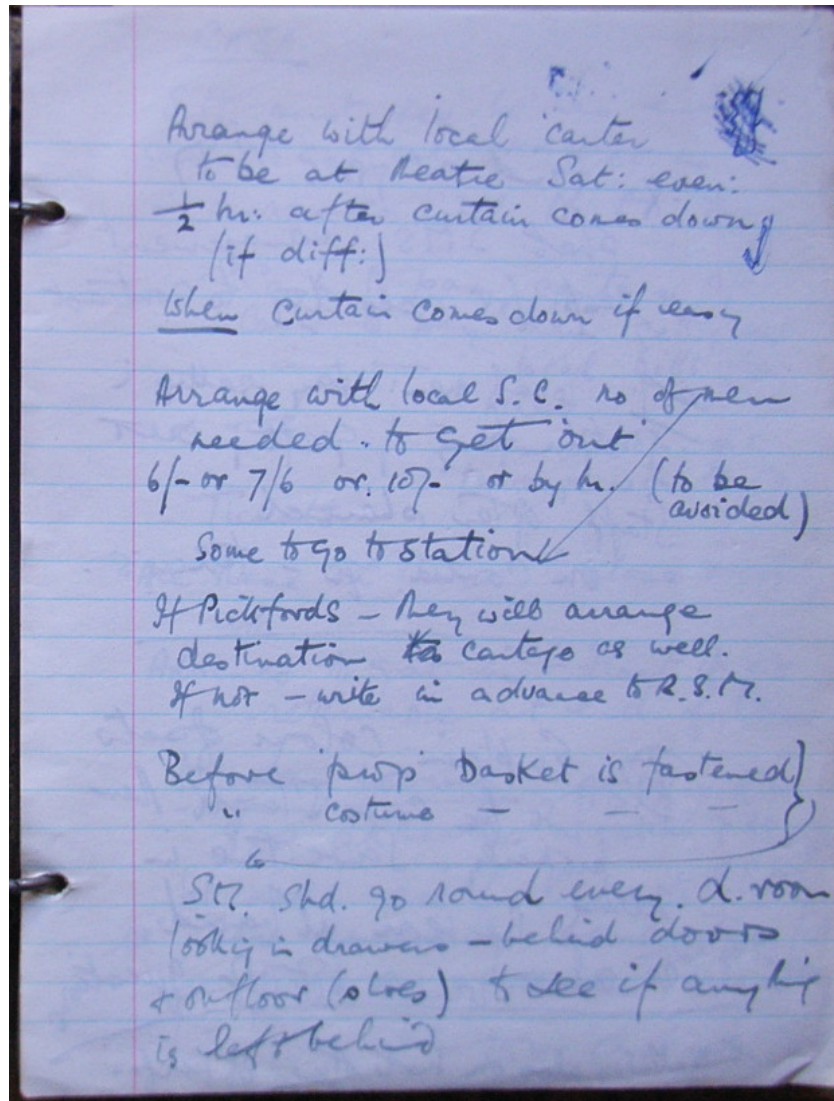
Figure 5.5.1:   Get-out instructions on tour: Bush Bailey teaching notes (unpaginated). (Personal collection of Gilli Bush-Bailey).

In the introduction to his teaching notes, Bailey states:

> S.M. must know something about lighting, stage staff, scenery, means and methods of transport, furniture – period and otherwise, props – how to make odd ones, effects, and countless odd things.   During course – [students will experience]

> something of them all individually and separately and their place
>
> in the running of S[tage] M[anagement].[40]

Bailey describes the stage manager as the 'fulcrum point around which the whole play revolves. Non theatre people accept everything – curtain up etc. and curtain down but SM person responsible for all this smooth running.'[41] He further describes the stage manager as holding a 'high position in [the] company – next to producer' and indicates the 'seriousness of [the] work' with characteristics such as 'infinite tact' – 'good temper' – 'v. strict – no favours to friends'.[42]

Important details about the established responsibilities of stage management are documented within the teaching notes. One particular aspect of the role, the calls given to the company both before and during a production, are described in detail. The pre-show, full-company calls which serve both the performers and the production team are qualified and stated in full, accompanied by memoranda informing the students that the Half Hour Call is given thirty-five minutes before curtain-up (Bailey emphatically notes: 'not 30') and, similarly, that the Quarter of an Hour Call is given twenty minutes before the scheduled rise of the curtain.

Within the section on calling appears the instruction that 'knocking at door and seeing all are in' was the stage manager's duty, and this is accompanied by the ominous note 'Story re N[orth]ampton rep' hinting that at least one stage manager of Bailey's acquaintance, if not Bailey himself, learned the

hard way that it is preferable to discover an actor missing at the Half Hour

Call rather than after the curtain has risen. Advice for giving personal calls

throughout a performance is then explained; Bailey advocates the use of a

Call Sheet, and suggests numbering each call in the script and then listing

the numbers on a sheet of paper, against which numbers the names of every

performer included in the call were to be written. Bailey advises: 'Then all

you need to do is give Call Boy the <u>number</u> of call – avoid missing a name

in a long list to remember verbally. <u>NB</u> Keep Call Boy by your side

throughout the show.'[43]   These notes are shown in Figure 6.5.2 below.
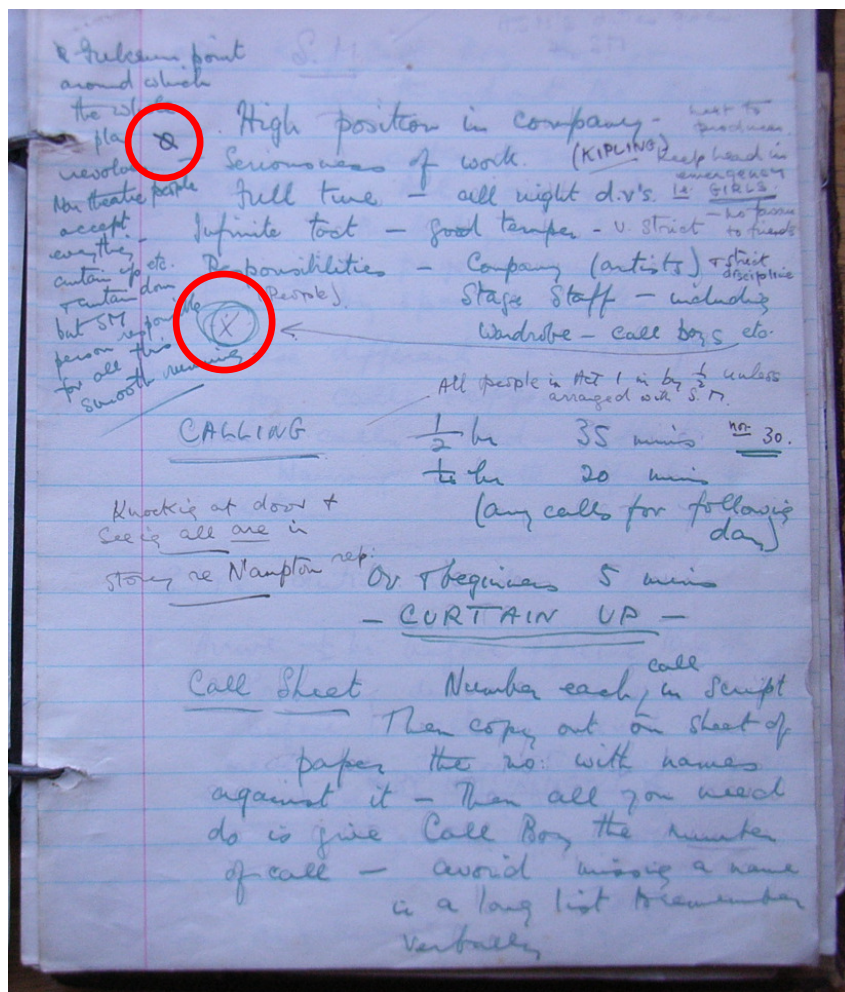
Figure 5.5.2:   Instructions on Calling: Bush Bailey teaching notes
                (unpaginated). (Personal collection of Gilli Bush-Bailey).

In Figure 5.5.2 above, attention is drawn to the way in which Bailey annotates his teaching notes, indicating additional notes, amendments to his text, or a change in the order in which he intended to lecture, using the symbols ∅ and ※ . This can be seen throughout the source. Within his notes on keeping the prompt script, Bailey instructs that additions to the script should be marked with symbols including ∅ , indicating the consolidation of this symbol as a universal signifier for textual inserts. Of further significance is the fact that, throughout his teaching notes, Bailey signifies notes and reminders to himself, including amendments to his notes, with the symbol ※ . This evidence of a stage manager employing his professional semiotic language on a non-prompt text indicates emphatically that the symbols identified and discussed within this thesis did constitute a language for stage management: a language which emerged at the beginning of the eighteenth century, endured until the 1950s – and promptly died without trace, appearing neither in promptbooks dating from beyond the fifties, nor in any published manual on stage management, nor within stage management training as a feature of historical or obsolete practice. By 1968, at which point the scope of this research concludes, this vibrant and colourful, encoded visual language was dead.

Bailey's notes include directions on the 'cueing-up' of a promptbook, i.e. how to mark and record the cueing instructions for the technical elements to be regulated from prompt corner. The method that he teaches is encoded by colour, and he writes: 'Use different coloured pencils for calls & effects Blue – calls   Red – Effects   Warnings for all effects and curtains.'[44] He

further remarks: 'Script <u>must</u> be in a condition that another person could take over & follow – in case of accident'[45] – an industry-standard stipulation still current today. These are indicated in Figure 5.5.3 below.
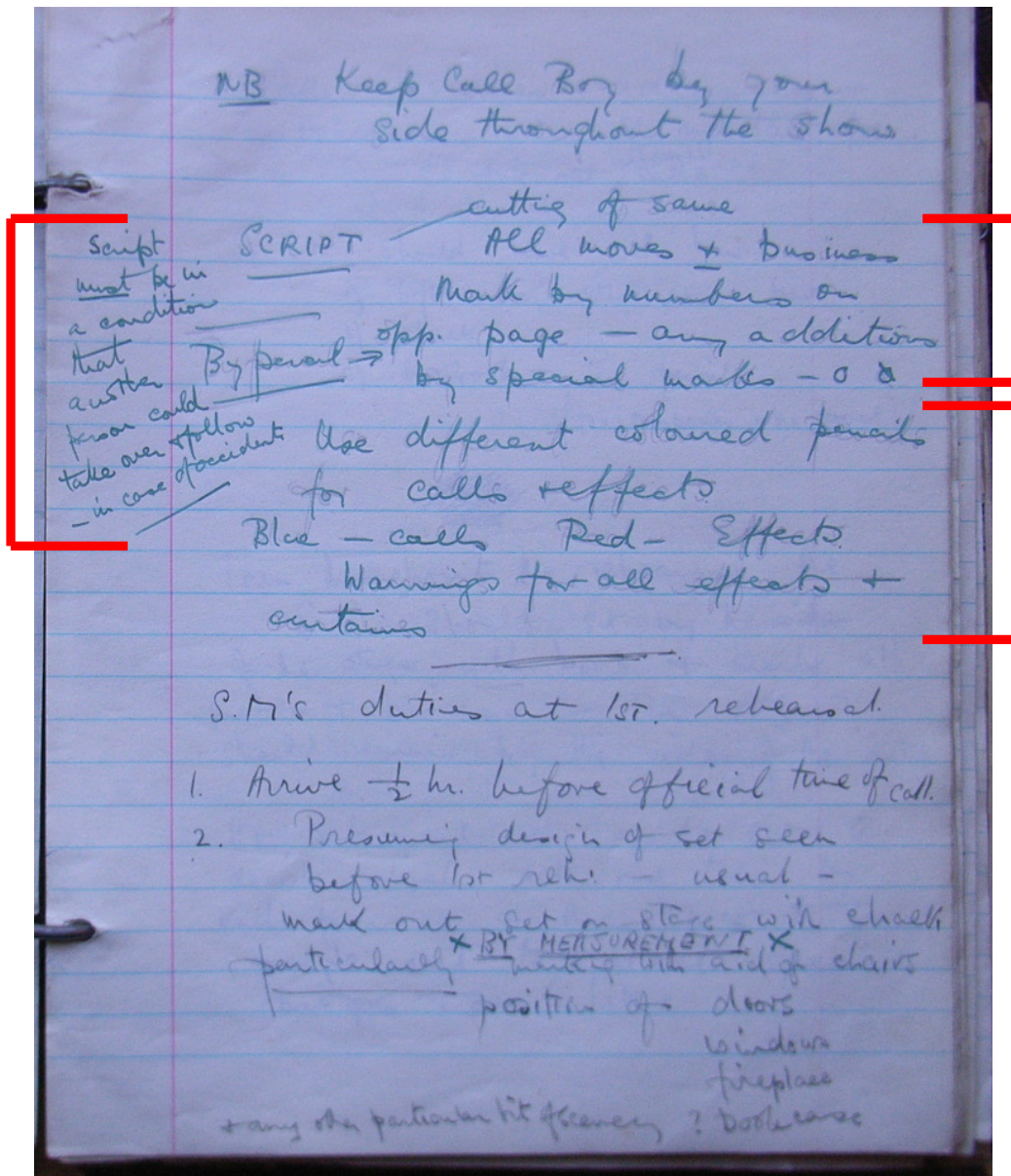
Figure 5.5.3:   Marking up a Promptbook: Bush Bailey teaching notes
(unpaginated). (Personal collection of Gilli Bush-Bailey).

This is important for three reasons: firstly, the necessity for the promptbook to be marked with sufficient clarity for another person to be able to cue from it at short notice confirms both the importance of the promptbook to the running of the performance *and* the need for a commonly-understood and therefore instantly recognisable method of marking it. Secondly, we learn from this source that the colour-coding of cueing instructions had consolidated into an industry-standard practice: Bailey is instructing future generations of stage managers to write calls for the performers in blue, and lighting and effects cues in red. This is of further interest because, still today, performer calls are written in blue, with red used for the 'warnings' (now termed 'stand-bys') as industry standard. Thirdly, however, this extract is of note for what it does *not* say in relation to a colour which has subsequently become very important to stage management practice, the colour green, which is now the colour in which all 'go' cues are written at the point in the promptbook at which each cue is to be carried out.

It would be logical to suggest that the consolidation of the use of red for marking every 'stand by' and green for every 'go' emerged with the widespread introduction of cue-lights; yet the evidence drawn upon throughout this chapter indicates that cue-lights have been in existence since the beginning of the twentieth century, with no discernable influence on the colours chosen for the marking of cues or warnings in the promptbook. Bailey himself refers to the use of cue-lights in his teaching notes, remarking that offstage effects 'can't all be done from P.[rompt] corner, so SM must arrange series of cue lights.'[46] Whilst his notes in this section

indicate the unsophisticated if highly inventive means of realising some

offstage effects in repertory theatre at the time, such as a remark that a

microphone enables the simulation of the sound of trains steaming in and

out of a station, this evidence that cue-lights were a common feature of

practice equally clearly indicates that their use had not, by the 1950s,

resulted in the non-negotiable demarcation of red for 'stand-by' and green

for 'go' which was so shortly to become standard practice.
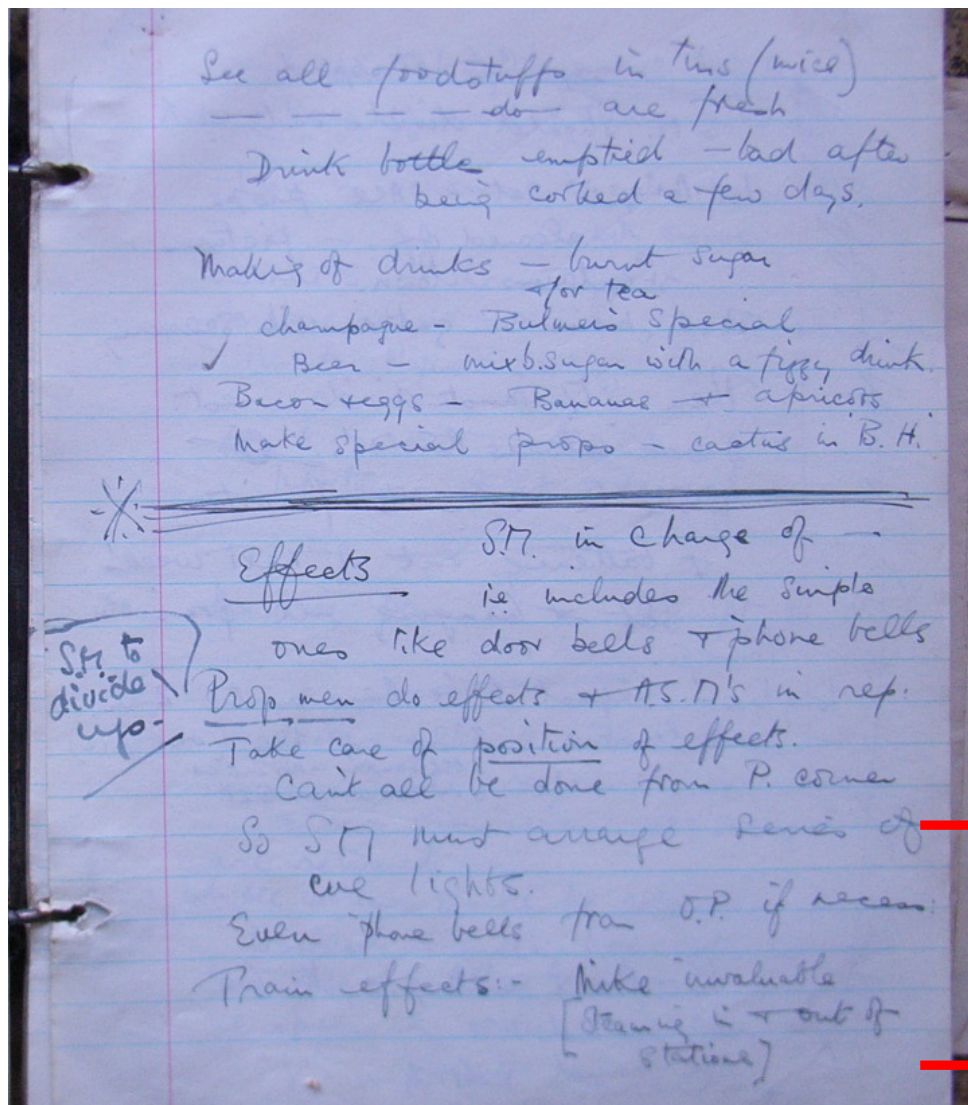
Figure 5.5.4:   Marking up a Promptbook: Bush Bailey teaching notes
                (unpaginated). (Personal collection of Gilli Bush-Bailey).

In his manual *Stage Management and Theatrecraft*, published in 1968 and therefore reflective of practice up until that point, Hendrik Baker describes the cueing conventions as they had developed between the date of Bailey's teaching notes and the publication of his own:

> The cues for lighting, effects and anything concerning the stage management are written on the blank left hand page opposite the text with a mark indicating the point in the script where they occur. When the cues are confirmed, they are marked with coloured pencil; different colours being used for *Curtain (Red), Lighting (Green)* and *Effects (Blue)*. The cue is described on the left hand page and underlined. With a ruler, a horizontal line in the appropriate colour is drawn across the page and continued on the opposite page under the text ending in an arrow at the point where the cue is required. [. . .] The calls for the artists, giving them time to get from their dressing rooms to the stage, will be marked on the left hand page with the lighting and other cues and it is a good idea to indicate these cues in block capitals. As they are important, the warning cues i.e. the cue advising the stage manager that the actual cue is approaching, should allow sufficient time before they become operative. In order to remind the stage manager that a cue is arriving in the script, a vertical line in the appropriate colour is drawn from the warning cue down the page and continued on the following page to the exact point where the direction occurs.[47]

This demonstrates that, as recently as the 1960s, the codification of promptbook annotations by colour remained orientated around the *technical departments to be cued* – red for a curtain cue, green for a lighting cue, blue for a sound cue – and not the *species* of the annotation itself as is current practice. Yet change came rapidly and influenced practice

extensively: red for a 'stand-by', green for a 'go', and blue for a call had become comprehensively standardised as national practice well before I commenced my own training in 1996.

In speculating on a possible catalyst for such radical change within such a short space of time, I suggest that the major development in stage management practice to emerge around this time, the manufacture of the electronic prompt desk, could have had a sufficiently significant impact on the working lives of practitioners to have influenced this seismic change in practice. In describing early tannoy installations, which allowed for the performers to actually acknowledge that they had heard their call, Baker draws upon the unreliability of the initial electric systems to bemoan the impending extinction of the call boy, whose activities Aaron Hill in *The Prompter*[48] had remarked upon more than two hundred years previously, and whom Baker clearly considers to have been a vital member of the production staff:

> In many theatres a 'cue call' system is installed in the prompt corner. It consists of a microphone connected with a loudspeaker in each dressing room and usually another microphone situated near the footlights enables artists to hear the performance. The stage manager can speak to a particular dressing room and with some instruments the artist is able to acknowledge the call by using a switch in the dressing room. A bulb lights up in the prompt corner advising the stage management that the call is heard. The system dispenses with the call boy but adds to the responsibility of the stage manager. Like all electrical equipment it can be erratic; fuses and bulbs are known to fail and sometimes the volume control

in the dressing room is turned down and the artist has difficulty in hearing the call. Although there is a saving in expense, it is never a substitute for a good call boy whose assistance is invaluable to artists and staff.[49]

Substitute him it did, however; the backstage and front-of-house tannoy, show relay, stabilisable cue-lights which flash at both the prompt corner and operator's outstation when activated by the deputy stage manager until the operator stabilises it, communicating that he or she is standing by to send the cue, and intercommunicating headsets by means of which all of the technical staff operating the performance can speak with one another, were to be the not-too-distant future of stage management practice as Baker's handbook reached publication. The electronic prompt desk incorporates all of these capabilities: an 'instrument of control' from which to regulate the performance from the ultimate 'document of control',[50] the promptbook.

Figure 5.5.5:   Early electronic prompt desk, manufacturer unknown, c1960.
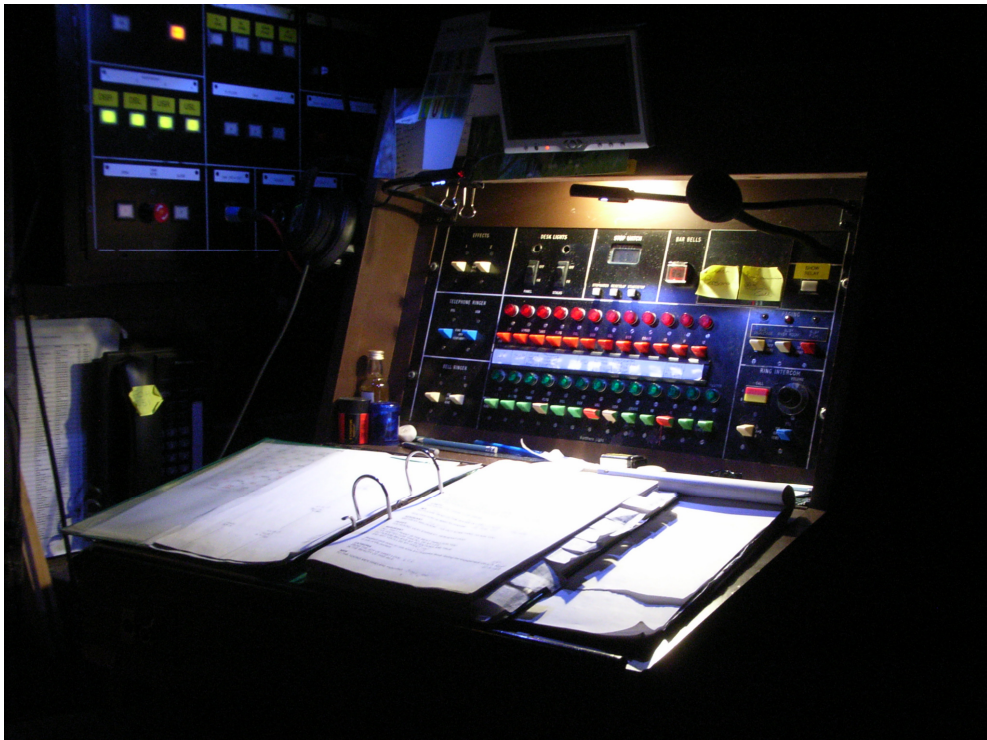
Figure 5.5.6:   Northern Light Prompt Desk in Prompt Corner,

Pitlochry Festival Theatre, installed 1980.

Figure 5.5.7:   Detail of Northern Light Prompt Desk Control Panel,

Pitlochry Festival Theatre.

Figure 5.5.8:   Detail of Prompt Desk Panel, King's Theatre, Glasgow.

Both of the prompt desks above date from the very early 1980s; they were manufactured by Northern Light, an Edinburgh-based lighting and sound installation company at which the first such prompt desks were developed in 1978. The company became the predominant supplier of prompt desks in Scotland, and provides a bespoke prompt desk for every theatre placing an order; this is demonstrated by the photographs of the actual panels, above, which show that, whilst the central sections containing the cue-lights are identical, every other section of the panel is different, with the layout of the controls for every other element controlled by the prompt desk designed in accordance with the demands of the individual theatre. Again in the early 1980s, Scotland's two conservatoire training schools, Edinburgh's Queen Margaret College[51] and Glasgow's Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama,[52] equipped themselves with such desks on which to train aspiring stage managers; Edinburgh's Royal Lyceum Theatre, Scotland's largest producing theatre, commissioned a desk with twenty cue-lights during their

refurbishment in 1991. The desk shown below, with eleven cue-lights, was commissioned by Perth Repertory Theatre in 2000.

Figure 5.5.9:   Northern Light Prompt Desk, Perth Repertory Theatre.

Prompt desks produced by other manufacturers, such as the Royal Shakespeare Company's prompt desk manufactured by Stage Electrics (Figure 5.5.10) and the GDS prompt desks produced for the Old Rep in Birmingham (the original Birmingham Repertory Theatre) in Figure 5.5.11 and the Leicester Curve (Figure 5.5.12), follow a broadly similar design as shown below, but with the addition of amber lights to signify to the Deputy Stage Manager that the operator is standing by instead of the conventional flashing then stabilising red, and the replacement of the tactile GPO rocker-switches with digital buttons, to the general profound dissatisfaction of practitioners against whose resistance these changes have been implemented by manufacturers.
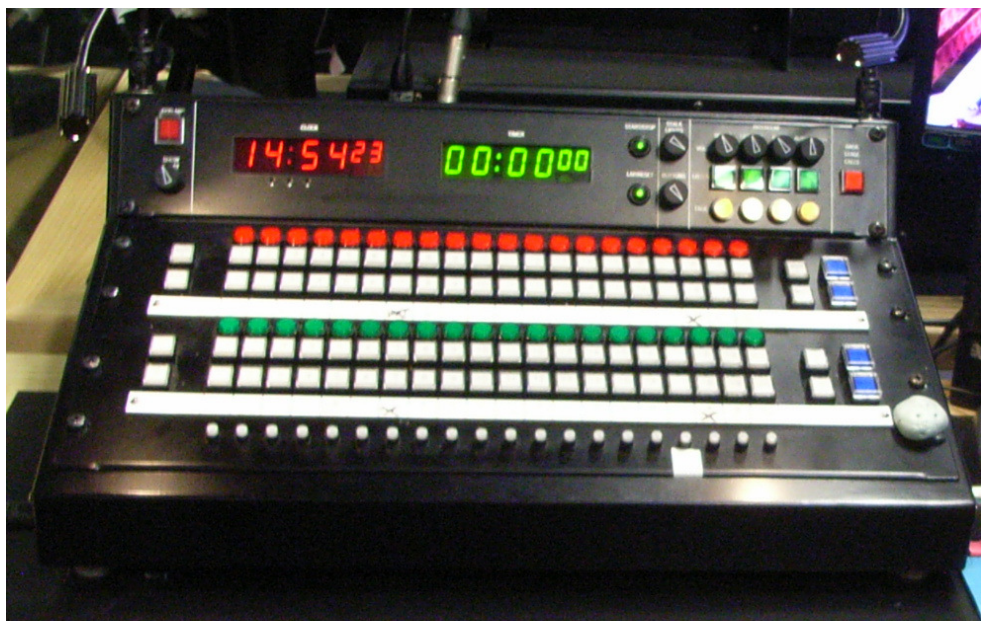
Figure 5.5.10: Stage Electrics Prompt Desk at the Royal Shakespeare

Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Figure 5.5.11: GDS Prompt Desk, Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham.

Figure 5.5.12: GDS Prompt Desk, Curve Theatre, Leicester.

As demonstrated by the photographs above, with the cue-light panels the predominant focus of the electronic prompt desk, the likelihood that its development influenced the change in annotatory practice from a colour-coding centred around the departments being cued, as has been evident since the early nineteenth century, to the current method of marking stand-by and go cues in colours corresponding to the cue-lights as discussed above, is considerable.

Since the establishment of the red-green convention of colour coding the cueing in promptbooks remains current, this is the final development in practice to be explored in this research.

5.6:   Conclusion.

This chapter began with an exploration of promptbook annotatory practice at the turn of the twentieth century, and sources studied from a range of London and provincial theatres from the first three decades of the century indicated that the widely idiosyncratic use of symbols in the prompt annotations analysed suggest that the practice of codifying annotations *by* symbol, rather than any particular encoding *per* symbol, was a practice that was standardising by the early twentieth century.   The primary materials analysed support the argument that it was the need of the practitioners, as a result of the increasing complexity of the technical demands of productions and the practical necessity to be able to instantly recognise the cueing instructions in the promptbook, in the darkened environment of the prompt corner and within very short windows of time, that drove the developments in annotatory practice which have been discussed above.

In considering the stage management career of Maud Gill, the emergence of cueing technology such as cue-lights and the ability to communicate with operators located at some distance from the prompt corner via speaking tubes has been drawn upon to indicate the commencement of a consolidation of the stage management role as one in which communication and the co-ordinated control of a variety of technical elements of a production are core characteristics. The status of the stage manager's role as an authoritative one commanding considerable respect, in continuity with the indications of primary materials drawn upon in the preceding chapters, is supported by this case study.

A selection of production paperwork, from major London theatres and from provincial productions, has illustrated the range of responsibilities incorporated within the stage management role as the twentieth century progressed. Following the Second World War, the emergent professionalisation and unionisation of stage management, initiated by the establishment of the Stage Management Association and resulting in the representation of stage management by the union Equity, led to the materialisation of the three principal stage management roles – stage manager, deputy stage manager, assistant stage manager – as they exist today, a major development in the evolution of stage management.

The emergence, in the 1950s and 60s, of stage management training and the technological advances which led to the development of electronic prompt systems, such as intercommunicating headsets, show relay, tannoy paging, and stabilisable cue-lights, together marked the progression of stage management into the modern age. The training notes of both Bush Bailey and Hendrik Baker confirm the continuity of support to the company in performance as a central characteristic of stage management, and emphasise the diligence with which the stage management team serves the needs of the production. Meanwhile, the final major change in annotatory practice to date was arguably initiated by the proliferation of the electronic prompt desk to become an industry-standard feature of stage management, driving the change in annotatory practice to a codification by colour centred around the increasingly prominent use of cue-lights in the regulation of performances from prompt corner. With the identification of these key developments in

stage management practice over the course of the twentieth century up until

the British theatre experienced its own radical change with the passing of the

Theatres Act of 1968, this research concludes.
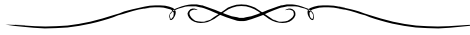
Notes to Chapter Five:

1   An Act to Abolish Censorship of the Theatre and to Amend the Law in respect of Theatres and Theatrical Performances, HMSO 1968.

2   Hendrik Baker, *Stage Management and Theatrecraft* (London: J. Garnet Miller, 1968).

3   As demonstrated by the production files from *Siberia* at the Metropole Theatre, Birmingham (Melville Collection, University of Kent at Canterbury, MS Mel 9), and *Hamlet* at His Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket (Beerbohm Tree Collection, University of Bristol Theatre Collection MS HBT/000012).

4   Further to the Guardian obituary for Peggy Dear which was published in April 2001, David Ayliff, a founding member of the Stage Management Association, wrote this letter:

> Peggy Dear (obituary April 20) was, indeed, a pioneer of women in stage management. However, the first woman stage manager in this country was Maud Gill, who took over the post at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre in 1917. She left a fascinating and entertaining account of her experiences in her autobiography *See the Players*. She was told that a woman ought not to be put in charge of stagehands because "working men" would not take orders from her, but she decided that, since mothers had been keeping order in the home since the beginning of time, the way to go about it was to treat them as a mother would treat her family. It worked.

URL http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2001/may/07/guardianobituaries
accessed 2:55pm Saturday 27th October 2012.

Ayliff is likely to have been acquainted with Maud Gill or at least familiar with her work, having grown up in the theatre in the 1920s and commenced in stage management in the 1930s. Gill was known to still have been acting when her autobiography was published in 1938. Ayliff's father, HK Ayliff, was a producer (director) for many years at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre where Gill and her husband, E. Stuart Vinden, were also engaged for several years. HK Ayliff produced (directed) Eden Philpotts' play *The Farmer's Wife* there, in which Gill played Thirza Tapper which was to become her signature role on stage and on screen: she reprised the role in Alfred Hitchcock's film version in 1928. David Ayliff can therefore be credited as speaking with some authority in this instance.

5   Claire Cochrane, *Shakespeare and the Birmingham Repertory Theatre 1913 – 1929* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1993), pp. 5 – 6.

6   Maud Gill, *See the Players* (Birmingham: George Ronald, 1938), pp.170 – 71 and 180.

7   A souvenir edition programme from Herbert Beerbohm Tree's 1906 festival production of *Hamlet* (Beerbohm Tree Collection, University of Bristol Theatre Collection, MS HBT000012/38 and MS HBT000012/39), which was originally seen at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket in 1893 and revived there in 1896 prior to subsequent productions at His Majesty's in 1905, 1906, 1908, and 1910, lists both a stage manager and an assistant stage manager beneath the cast list.

8   Gill, p.180.

9   At the time of writing, in 2013 – exactly one hundred years after the Birmingham Repertory Theatre opened, installed with the latest stage technology – 'switch-signalling' with electric bulbs (i.e. the cueing of operators with cue-lights) *remains*

the industry standard in British theatre, hence the relevance of Gill's insight to the body of knowledge relating to the development of stage management practice.

10   Whilst this may, as I suggest, be the first record of cue-lights in a British theatre, the likelihood is, Birmingham being merely a provincial rep, that the system was pioneered in one of the London houses. The words 'stand by' as the warning instruction for a technical cue appear in an 1898 promptbook for a production of *Julius Cæsar* at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, indicating the possibility that this terminology was emerging at the turn of the twentieth century, even though no indication is given within the source that cue-lights were in use at this production.

11   John Sommerfield, *Behind the Scenes* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1934), pp.7 – 10.

12   J. B. Priestley, *Theatre Outlook* (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1947).

13   Ibid.

14   Gill, pp.186-7.

15   Source: URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speaking_tube accessed 3:14pm Thursday 1st August 2013.

16   Siân Evans, *Life below Stairs in the Victorian and Edwardian Country House* (London: National Trust Books, 2011), p.15.

17   Gill, p.190.

18   Ibid., p.188.

19   *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare, performed Theatre Royal, Haymarket, 1893. Beerbohm Tree Collection, University of Bristol Theatre Collection.

20   Electric lighting in theatres was pioneered at the Savoy under the management of Richard D'Oyley Carte, who had it installed throughout the theatre in 1888.

21   *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare, performed Theatre Royal, Haymarket, 1898. Beerbohm Tree Collection, University of Bristol Theatre Collection.

22   The documents selected are from production files held in the Melville Collection at the University of Kent at Canterbury. The Melvilles were a theatrical family, four generations of whom successfully owned and managed theatres as well as writing, producing, and appearing in their own plays. They were prolific in the London suburbs as well as in the provinces, counting the New Standard, Lyceum, and Prince's theatres in London, the Palace Theatre, Watford, the Grand and Pavillion theatres in Brighton, and the Metropole in Birmingham among their managements, from the 1870s until the retirement of the last Melville to be associated with the theatre (Andrew III) in 1950. The plays for which the documentation was generated were the 1928 production of *The Streets of Brighton*, [22] a 1929 production of *Too Late!*, and productions of *Jack the Ripper* and *Palmer the Poisoner*, both from 1930 and all from the Grand Theatre, Brighton. All were written by Andrew Melville II (1882 – 1938), who often wrote under the pseudonym of Andrew Emm.

23   *The Streets of Brighton*, Grand Theatre, Brighton, 1928. Melville Collection, Templeman Library, University of Kent at Canterbury.

24   A printed pro-forma also exists within the *Hamlet* production file from the Bristol Theatre Collection, this time, a Rehearsal Call sheet; at the top, the space to write in the date is presented '190…...' indicating that such standardised, printed forms may

have been in use at either or both of Tree's theatres, the Theatre Royal, Haymarket and Her/His Majesty's, from the turn of the century.

25   David Ayliff and Matthew Comras, *The Theatre Archive Project* (London: British Library, 2007), p.2.   URL <u>http://www.bl.uk/projects/theatrearchive/ayliff2.html</u> accessed 4:07pm, 7th September 2008.

26   Theatrical Management Association, URL <u>http://www.tmauk.org/About/history.aspx</u> accessed 11:37pm, Thursday 18th October 2012.

27   David Ayliff, *A Short History of the Origins of the Stage Management Contract and Stage Management Titles*, (London: Stage Management Association, 2005), p.2.

28   H. D. Stewart, *Stage Management* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1957), p.4.

29   Ayliff, *Contract and Titles* pp.1 - 2.

30   Ibid.

31   Baker, p.45.

32   Ayliff & Comras, p.2.

33   Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, unpublished history of the production course compiled by Shirley Matthews (Administrator to the Technical Courses), c2002, p.1 (personal collection of Paul Pyant).   I am grateful to the Stage Management Association for assistance in tracing and making contact with Jan Moles (personal communication by e-mail between September 2008 and October 2010), partner of the late Dot Tenham, who in turn enabled me to contact Paul Pyant (personal communication by e-mail between November 2010 and March 2014) who provided me with access to the RADA documentation compiled by Shirley Matthews.

34   Ibid.

35   Ibid.

36   Ibid., p.2.

37   Ibid., p.3.

38   Personal communication by e-mail, Gilli Bush-Bailey, 09:31a.m. 2nd September 2012.   I am grateful to Gilli Bush-Bailey (personal communication by e-mail between February and November 2012) for access to this private family collection of prompt materials, particularly the teaching notes compiled by Bush Bailey when lecturing at the Webber Douglas Academy of Speech and Drama.

39   Bush Bailey, unpublished teaching notes from Webber Douglas Academy of Music and Drama, c1950, unpaginated but p.1 of MS.

40   Ibid., unpaginated but p.2 of MS.

41   Ibid., unpaginated but p.3 of MS.

42   Ibid.

43   Ibid., unpaginated but pp.3 – 4 of MS.

44   Ibid., unpaginated but p.4 of MS.

45   Ibid.

46   Ibid., unpaginated but p.27 of MS.

47   Baker, p.56.

48   As described in Chapter Two.

49   Baker, p.238.

50   As coined by Wickham and discussed in Chapter Two.

51   Now Queen Margaret University.

52   Now the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has demonstrated a strong and traceable continuity in the role and responsibilities of those undertaking the function of stage management since the emergence of the early modern playhouses. Even before the professional companies established themselves in the London playhouses of the Elizabethan age, the analyses in Chapter One of touring practices and the non-professional roles of Ordinary / Conveyour demonstrate that the administrative duties of a company, such as keeping the licence to perform or obtaining permission to perform in the towns visited, the provision and management of props and furniture, and, above all, support for the company in performance, are evident in this country from the sixteenth century, and indicate recognisable stage management. Therefore, one of the most significant conclusions to be drawn from this study is that – whilst functions, responsibilities, and nomenclatures have changed and stage management has developed into a highly professional role – there is historical evidence that there has been concomitantly professsional stage management since the emergence of the professional London playhouses in the reign of Elizabeth I.

In Chapter Two, close analysis of the surviving Elizabethan and Jacobean promptbooks has unequivocally shown the extent to which the book keeper and stage keepers provided and co-ordinated support for the company in performance. The manner in which those promptbooks are annotated has additionally provided evidence of the technical capabilities of the

playhouses, the supporting role which the book keeper and his staff provided, and the words with which the players were readied and actions such as scene changes or trap entrances were cued. This indicates that, ever since there has been professional performance, there has been a need for a professional approach to staging, and suggests that, in order for performance to *be* professional, such a systematic approach – i.e., professional stage management – is required, due to the co-ordination and management of the technical elements which constitute the production, and the support provided to the performers, which professional stage management brings to the professional company.

Through the sources analysed in Chapters Three and Four, it has been demonstrated that the function of stage management continued to incorporate the preparation and setting out of props and furniture and the readying of performers for their entrances, with the 'bee redy' of the playhouses standardising into the word 'Ready' which anticipates most entrances and offstage cues in the majority of promptbooks studied from the seventeenth century to the beginning of the twentieth. The promptbook annotations with which such information and instructions are conveyed vary little throughout this time; effectively, the language of stage management – both the nature of the role and the words used to represent it – has been constant since the earliest identification of stage management practice.

I have shown that this has been supported by the development of a visual
language, initially using symbols originating in astronomy, emerging in the
eighteenth century and proliferating and standardising in the nineteenth
century, to forge what would become an encoded symbolic language
universally understood by stage managers of different generations working
in different theatres. The ability to understand and interpret this language
supports the originality of the contribution of this thesis to the body of
knowledge; through its provision to scholarship of the means to understand
and interpret this language, the thesis also contributes to the wider field of
investigation into the development of theatre production, because of the
peripheral information which can be perceived once the encoded language,
which in passing refers to many aspects of the working environment, is
understood.

As demonstrated in the final chapters, the nature of the role, and the
migratory way in which practitioners frequently move between a wide range
of theatres, both demands and drives this homogenous, common language.
Communications technology has supported its further development into a
vocal language, from which developed an etiquette which is in turn encoded
by colour and written into promptbooks in a tightly prescribed way, thereby
supporting the establishment of its own traditions for the (recently-
professionalised) profession of stage management. Hendrik Baker's
comprehensive manual *Stage Management and Theatrecraft*, which provides
an important record of 'the state of the art' at the close of the period of this
study, indicates the influence which the electronic prompt desk and two-way

communication using cue-lights, whose stabilisation at the point of operation communicates to the prompt corner that the actor or technician is ready for the cue to be initiated, was to have on the visual and vocal language of stage management; and indeed, it has continued to evolve. Figure C.1 below is taken from the promptbook for the Royal Court Theatre's production of John Osborne's influential play *Look Back In Anger*; it demonstrates a vertical, linear cueing convention which was standard practice throughout the 1950s and 60s, and was the source in which I first identified the post-war convention of allocating a different colour to the cues for each technical department: lighting, sound, stage, or the entrances of actors. The illustration below shows the use of red crayon allocated to lighting cues and blue crayon allocated to sound; the vertical lines indicate the length of time for which the operators were 'on stand-by' for the series of cues in the sequence.
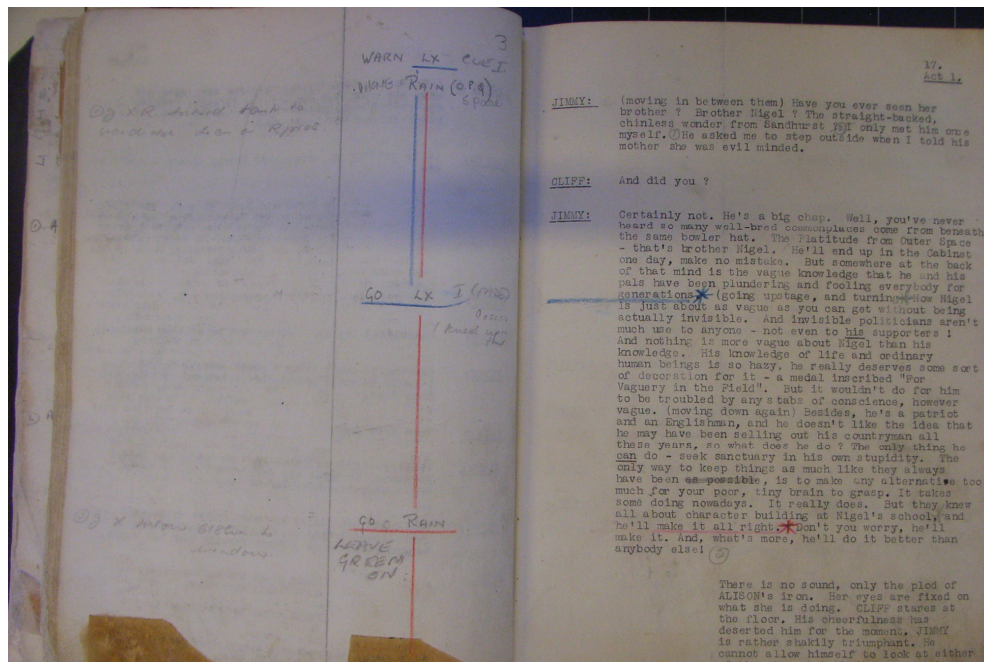
Figure C.1:   Promptbook from *Look Back in Anger*, Royal Court Theatre, 1956 (Theatre Collection, V&A Museum).

In order to establish whether this practice was unique to this particular theatre or more widespread, I undertook a study of the promptbooks at Pitlochry Festival Theatre in Perthshire, where a season of six plays in daily repertoire has been operated since 1951. As a theatre in which I had worked, I benefitted from open access to the complete archive, and I studied every promptbook that was preserved there spanning the sixty years of the theatre's operation. Whilst it was not evident in promptbooks from the 1950s, the illustration below, which is representative of the promptbooks from this theatre in the 1960s, shows that the vertical, linear method of colour-coded cueing had become established there. This source was unique, however, in the choice of the colours selected for each department, although the linear convention was widely established.
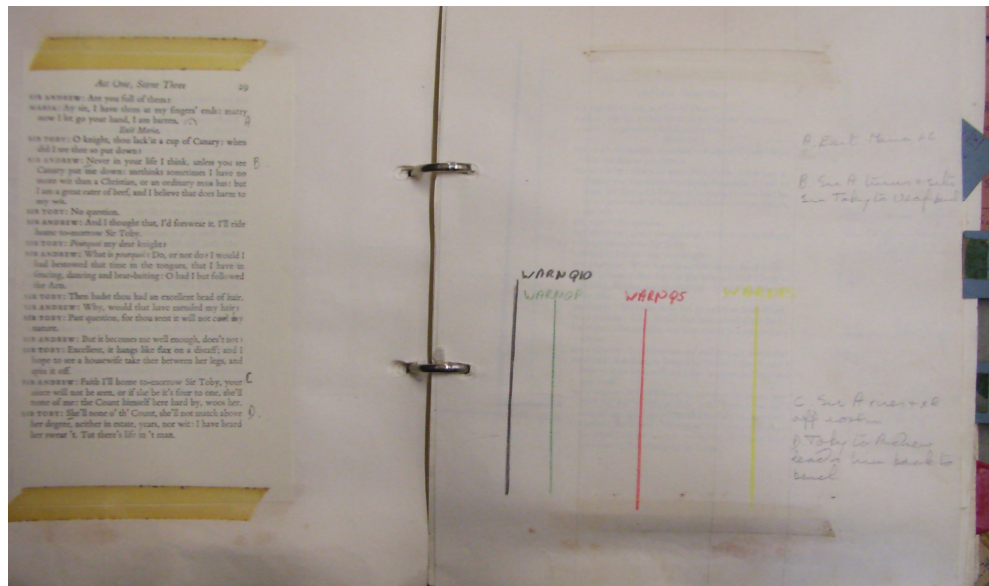
Figure C.2:   Promptbook from *Twelfth Night*, Pitlochry Festival Theatre, 1964.

By the 1970s, a change in the method of marking up promptbooks is discernible from the sources at this theatre. The columns across the page, in order of lighting, sound, and stage, are still in practice as with the source shown above, but now it can be seen that the lines drawn come horizontally from the cue input-points, with the lighting and sound cues which go together drawn onto the same horizontal line coming off the text. The column-headings can be seen at the top of the page (below).
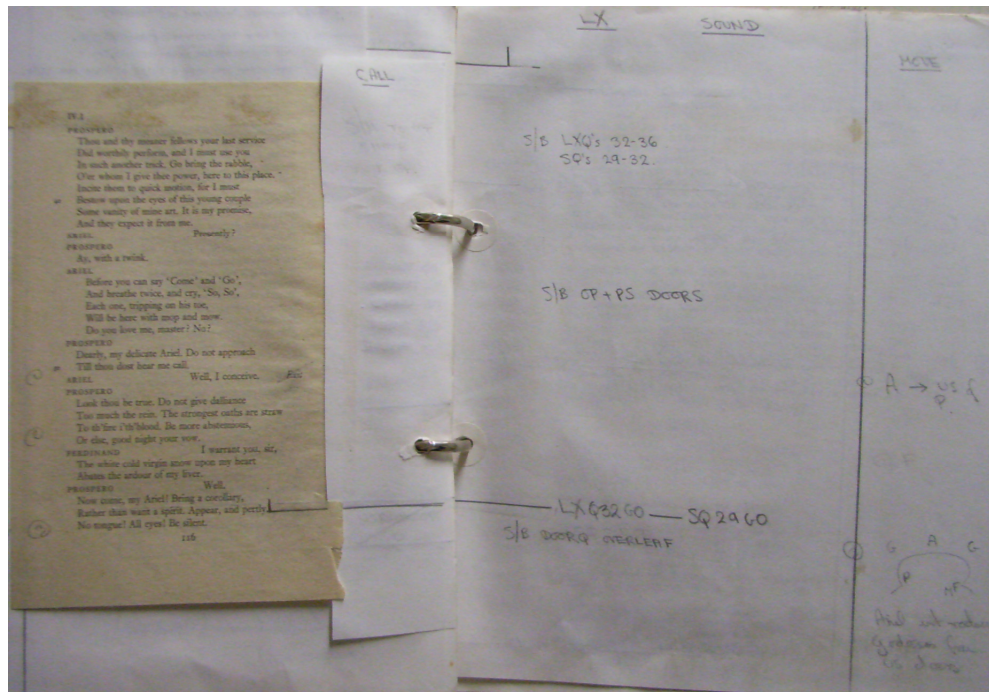
Figure C.3:   Promptbook from *The Tempest*, Pitlochry Festival Theatre, 1978.

Two unfortunate circumstances made it difficult to draw any conclusions regarding the use of colour in prompt annotations in this theatre in the 1970s: the existence of only four promptbooks dating from the 1970s in the archive, and the fact that none of them featured any colour markings whether in crayon or in pen. By the 1980s, however, it was clear that the current

annotatory practice of marking all stand-bys in red and all 'Go's in green had established at this theatre, with a typical example shown in the source below.
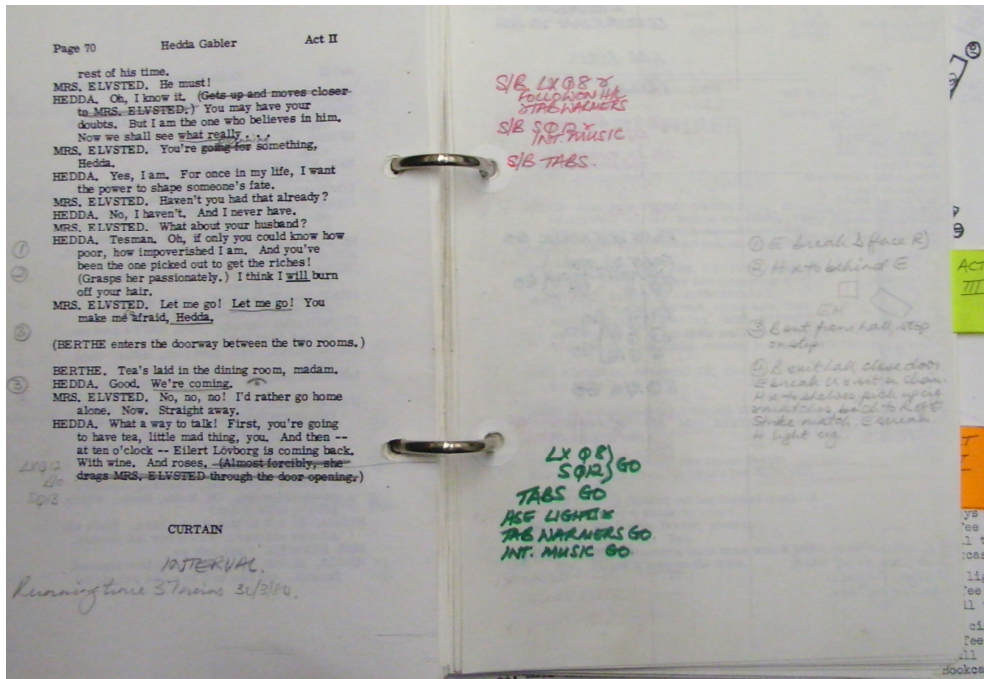
Figure C.4:   Promptbook from *Hedda Gabler*, Pitlochry Festival Theatre, 1984.

Current annotatory practice ~ at this theatre, in general across the standard subsidised repertory model of British theatre, and in the training colleges ~ is reflected by the source shown below, dating from twenty years after the production which was cued from the promptbook shown above.   This remains the industry standard at the present time: all stand-bys marked in red, all 'Go's marked in green, and calls written in blue. The use of symbols still persists, but supports the notation of blocking, with shorthand symbols for common moves such as 'enters', 'exits', 'crosses', 'goes around in a circle', 'goes upstairs', 'goes downstairs', 'pauses', and the marking on

blocking diagrams of common articles such as chairs, sofas, tables, and trucks. The symbol ⊗ , a common feature of nineteenth and early-twentieth century promptbooks, is now a signifier for an electrical item, such as a standard lamp which is required to work during the performance.
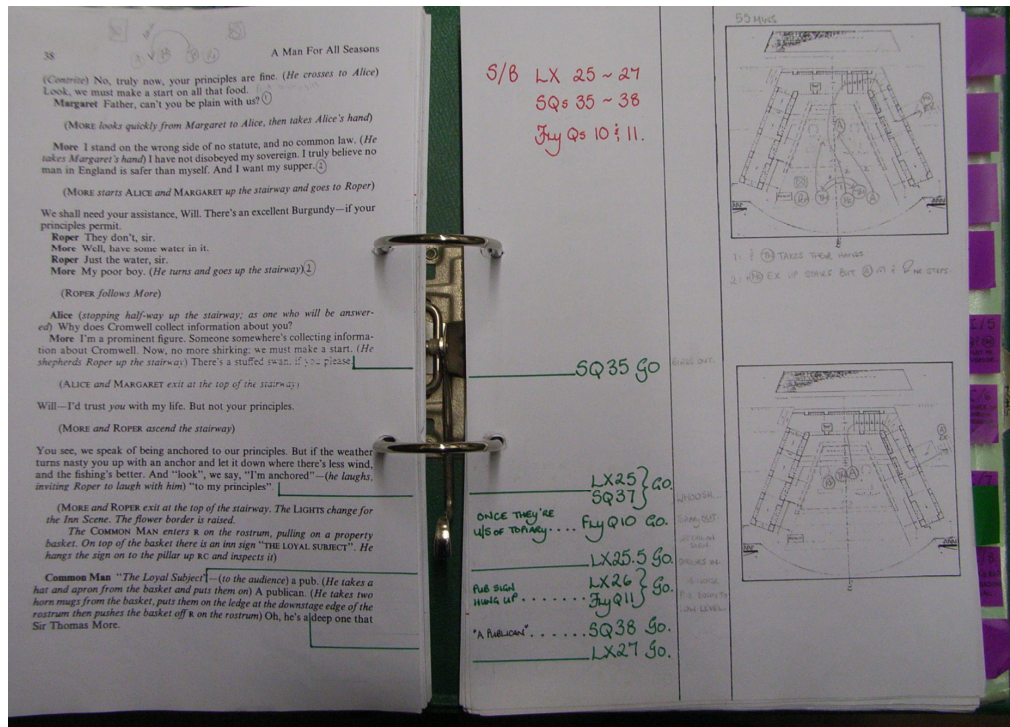
Figure C.5:   Promptbook from *A Man For All Seasons*, Pitlochry Festival
                Theatre, 2005

Consideration must briefly be given at this point to the formalised standardisation of practice through training, which began to flourish around the point at which this study concluded. Early vocational training such as that established by Dot Tenham at RADA continued to develop, with more drama schools recognising that it was possible to aspire to work professionally in the theatre without a vocation to perform, leading to the

proliferation of vocational training for the technical arts. Diploma courses were developed in many London and regional institutions, with the London Academy for Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) course becoming the first to be accredited to the National Council for Drama Training in 1972.

Whilst the more traditional routes to a career in the theatre, such as close acquaintance or family relationship with members of the profession, are still current, by the turn of the twenty-first century conservatoire training to degree level had become the normal means of entry to a professional career in stage management. Such courses provide highly vocational training with direct links to the theatre industry, and produce practitioners proud of their skills and their heritage, who distinguish themselves from technicians and consider stage management to be a profession. A keen appreciation of the traditional is inculcated; in every theatre of my professional experience, from the 'high arts' of opera and ballet to small-scale repertory, the language of stage management – what is done and how it is done – is regarded as sacrosanct, highly valued and fiercely protected by the stage management teams of today's theatres, who are committed to its preservation and proliferation amongst young practitioners and professionals-in-training. As the sources above demonstrate, practice has standardised with a comprehensive totality, and annotatory practice is tightly prescribed. The words to be used, whether spoken aloud or written in the promptbook, the precise time at which they are spoken, and the colour of ink in which they are written, are taught in every drama school, expected by every production manager, and non-negotiable throughout the professional British theatre.

Since these courses are predominantly delivered by stage and production managers who have left or reduced their practice and taken up lecturing appointments in the drama schools and conservatoires, and since the leading handbooks and how-to guides on the recommended reading lists of these courses constitute the professional experience and teaching notes of leading practitioners who have followed this exact route (Francis Reid being an early and respected proponent of this, with Daniel Bond, Peter Maccoy, and Gail Pallin publishing in more recent years), this can confidently be predicted to continue.

The professional practice of stage management will continue to evolve; like a language, it will develop, and its own (visual and vocal) language will likewise develop, as the 'languages' alongside which it operates – dramatic styles and conventions; lighting, sound, and staging technologies – in their turn develop and evolve. The development of new technologies which support and enable theatre production is changing both the vocal and visual language of stage management. The incorporation of new technologies has expanded the vocal language of twenty-first century practice, which has had to devise and standardise the words with which automated staging, automated flying, and audio-visual features are cued. Sharon Hobden, currently the DSM of choice when a new musical is developed for London's West End, allowed me access to the promptbook for *Ghost – The Musical* during its final stage of technical rehearsals prior to its opening in the spring of 2012; an extract is shown below in Figure C.6. Immediately noticeable are the differently-coloured boxes containing the cues; whilst retaining the

use of green for the writing of the word 'Go', in order to effectively

distinguish between the technical departments being cued Hobden has

colour-coded the boxes in which she frames each cue: lighting cues in

yellow, video cues in pink, automation cues in red, and stage cues in blue.

Figure C.6:   Promptbook from *Ghost – The Musical*, London Palladium,
               2012.

Of interest is the following aspect of her personal practice which Hobden

discussed with me: due to the extreme density and speed of cueing which the

West End productions require, Hobden has developed a vertically-linear

method of cueing from text-only pages in which she allocates a different

colour to each technical department, as described above. She was not aware

that this had been a widespread practice in Britain for approximately thirty

years, dying out just as she and I were being born. Whilst not wishing to

abandon the standard red-green practice, it is her intention to pursue this

annotatory method for cueing sequences of extreme complexity. As a highly influential practitioner at the present time, who is routinely the first DSM on new commercial productions and who therefore constructs their promptbooks, it is highly likely that this practice will spread amongst the DSMs who follow her within British commercial companies.

Whilst the wider responsibilities of the role, the scope of authority historically invested in the stage manager, and the evolution of the nomenclature of the role have emerged from the sources analysed, the predominant focus of this study has been the interrogation of prompt materials as the most tangible means of understanding the craft of stage management and the document which embodies its most important responsibility: the cueing of performance. This thesis has engaged with over four hundred years' worth of prompt materials and documents directly related to stage management, on their own terms and from a professional perspective. As such, it is an entirely original contribution to scholarship and has provided a fresh interpretation of the rich and exciting evidence held within them. In doing so, for the first time, such materials are given their own voice; a voice for the language of stage management.

APPENDIX

This appendix contains the full analysis of the use of all symbols in the Kemble promptbooks – the set which had belonged to Charles Kemble, and the Shattuck facsimiles of J. P. Kemble's own copies – which I studied at the Garrick Club, London, in February 2013.

KEY.

Bold type indicates a note which is <u>not</u> identically marked in the Charles Kemble (original) and the John Philip Kemble (facsimile) copies.

Bold red type indicates separate lighting cues.

Blue type indicates the successive use of lower-case letters, underlined and marked with the circumflex diacritic, to indicate cast moves within a promptbook as distinct from any technical cue.

Superscript ^{text} indicates the page number on which the symbols appear in the other copy, where both copies are marked on different editions of the play.

+

All's Well (CK):	p.41	Used to mark the exact input point of printed stage directions
	p.41	Handwritten blocking note: **'R. Enter Paroles ~~and two Officers.~~'**
All's Well (JPK):	p.41	Used to mark the exact input point of printed stage directions.
	p.41	Handwritten blocking note: **'R. Enter Paroles and two Officers.'**
Coriolanus (CK):	**p15**	**'Scene 4th. Open country.'** [marked ≠ in JPK]
	p.28	Used to mark input point of offstage cue: 'L. Noise of Citizens without'
Coriolanus (JPK):	**p.28**	**[used to mark input point of offstage cue] 'L. Noise of Citizens without'** [not indicated at all in CK]
Henry V (CK):	p.58	'Pistol **swaggers** without.' And line drawn to mark the input point.
Henry V (CK):	p.58	Handwritten blocking note: 'Pistol **swaggering** without.' And line drawn to mark the input point.
	p.62	Handwritten blocking note: 'They whom the King has named, retire with the King of France, Burgundy, and Constable. <u>R</u>.'
Macbeth (JPK):	**p.23**	**'Raise Lamps a little more.'**
The Rivals (A):	p.26	Textual insert.
The Rivals (B):	p.25	Textual insert.

✗ ✗ ✗	*All's Well:* (CK)	p.14	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
		p.14	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
		p.15	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
		p.24	'Flourish of Trumpets' R
		p.24	'Flourish of Trumpets' R
		p.27	'Flourish of Trumpets' R
		p.39	'Distant March' R
		p.40	'A March' R
		p.41	'Flourish of Trumpets' R
		p.48	'Drum beats without' R
		p.49	'Drum beats without' L
		p.64	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
		p.64	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
	All's Well (JPK):	p.14	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
		p.14	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
		p.15	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
		p.24	'Flourish of Trumpets' R
		p.24	'Flourish of Trumpets' R
		p.27	'Flourish of Trumpets' R
		p.39	'Distant March' R
		p.40	'A March' R
		p.41	'Flourish of Trumpets' R
		p.48	'Drum beats without' R
		p.49	'Drum beats without' L
		p.64	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
		p.64	'Flourish of Trumpets' L
	As You Like It (CK):	p.12	'L. Drums & Trumpets'
		p.13	**'L. A Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [marked with �֎ in JPK]
		p.15	**'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [marked with ✖ in JPK]

x x
 x
cont'd.

p.15 **'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'**
[marked with ✳ in JPK]

p.17 'L. Drums & Trumpets'

p.18 **'L. Flourish of Drums & Trumpets'**
[marked with ✳ in JPK]

p.20 **'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'**
[marked with ✳ in JPK]

p.25 'R. Drums and Trumpets'

p.26 **'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'**
[marked with ✳ in JPK]

p.30 'R. French Horns'

p.31 'R. Musick of Horns [Let the
Horns play a strain before the
Scene opens]'

p.36 'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets.'

p.36 'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

+*blank* 'R & L Drums and Trumpets'

As You Like It (JPK):

p.12 'L. Drums & Trumpets'

p.17 'L. Drums & Trumpets'

p.25 'R. Drums and Trumpets'

p.30 'R. French-Horns'

p.31 'R. Musick of Horns [Let the
Horns play a strain before the
Scene opens]'

p.36 'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets.'

p.36 'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

+*blank* 'R & L Drums and Trumpets'

Coriolanus (CK):

p.5 'L. All the Soldiers to shout.'
[marked with ＝ in JPK]

p.6 'L. Shouts without'

p.6 'L. Shouts again'

p.10 'R. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.10 'R. Wind instruments from Orch.'

x x
x
cont'd.

p.12   Handwritten note additional to SDs:
        'R. Shouts and Charge, then –'
        'Trumpets sound a Retreat' (as text)

p.14   'R. Trumpets – Soldiers shout thrice,
        and wave their swords'

p.15   'R. A loud Flourish – a Battle . . .

p.15   'R. A Flourish of Trumpets, &c. Wind
        instruments.' **[no symbol in JPK]**

p.16   'R. Flourish again'

p.16   'R. Flourish of Trumpets – Shouts - &c.'

p.17   'A March in Orchestra. Drums and
        Trumpets.'

p.17   'Tell the Citizens to be ready L.U.E.'

p.20   'L. Flourish of Trumpets – Shouts – &c.'

p.21   'L. Flourish of Trumpets – Shouts – &c.'

p.21   'R. Flourish of Trumpets – Shouts – &c.'

p.22   Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Let the
        Musick continue some time after the Scene
        closes on the Ovation – then three
        Shouts with all the Drums and Trumpets.'

p.24   'R. Flourish of Trumpets'

p.26   'R. Flourish of Trumpets'

p.42   'R. Drums & Trumpets with
        Wind Instruments'

p.48.   'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.49   'Trumpet sounds a parley'
        [marked only with location, R.U.E.]

p.49   'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.51   'L. Trumpet sounds'

p.55   'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
        duplicated on facing blank. [CK only]

**p.63   'Muffled Drums & Trumpets roll &
        blow.'** [marked with input arrows]

p.63   'Again' [all one cue in JPK]

Coriolanus (JPK)   p.5   Stage direction: 'A tumultuous noise
                               without' marked with symbol and
                               additional note: 'Three Shouts by
                               Citizens R.U.E.'

x x
x
cont'd.

p.6   'L. Shouts without'

p.6   'L. Shouts again'

p.10   'R. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.10   'R. Wind instruments from Orchestra.'

p.12   'R. Trumpets sound a Retreat.'

p.14   'R. Trumpets – Soldiers shout thrice,
        and wave their swords'

p.15   'R. A loud Flourish – a Battle . . .'

p.15   'R. A Flourish of Trumpets, &c. Wind
        instruments.' **[no symbol]**

p.16   'R. Flourish again'

p.16   'R. Flourish of Trumpets – Shouts - &c.'

p.17   'A March in Orchestra. Drums and
        Trumpets.'

p.17   'Tell the Citizens to be ready L.U.E.'

p.20   'L. Flourish of Trumpets – Shouts – &c.'

p.21   'L. Flourish of Trumpets – Shouts – &c.'

p.21   'R. Flourish of Trumpets – Shouts – &c.'

p.22   Handwritten cueing instruction: **'Let the
        Musick continue some time after the
        Scene closes on the Ovation – then
        three Shouts with all the Drums and
        Trumpets.'**
        [marked with **â** in CK]

p.24   'R. Flourish of Trumpets'

p.26   'R. Flourish of Trumpets'

p.42   'R. Drums & Trumpets with
        Wind Instruments'

p.48.   'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.49   'L. Trumpet sounds a parley'
        [location only, no symbol, marked in CK]

p.49   'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.51   'L. Trumpet sounds'

p.55   'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

**p.63   'Trump.ts & Muffled Drums roll. 3 –
        Roll again. 3.** [marked with input arrow]

x x
  x
cont'd.

      Cymbeline (CK):

p.13   **Blocking note.**
[marked 1 with circumflex in JPK]

p.14   **'L. Musick' and note on facing blank:**
     'The Musick plays till the Characters
     come forward.'
[not marked at all in JPK]

p.29   **'L. Clock strikes.'**
[not marked at all in JPK]

p.39   'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.43   Handwritten stand-by or warning cue:
    'R. Bugle-horn ready.' on facing blank ~
    the three crosses duplicated at the side of
    the text indicating the input point.

p.44   Handwritten note on facing blank:
    'L. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.45   'R. A Horn sounds at a distance.'

p.45   'R. The Horn sounds again.'

p.45   'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets.'

p.54   **Blocking note.**
[not marked at all in JPK]

p.55   Handwritten note on facing blank:
    'Musick from the Orchestra.'

p.56   Blocking note.

p.62   'L. Solemn Musick in the cave'

p.62   'L. Again'

p.66   'R. A March. At a distance.'

p.68   'L. A March.'

p.68   Blocking note.

p.68   'R & L. Drums and Trumpets heard at
    a distance.'

p.68   'R & L. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.68   'Every body for the battle.'

p.69   'R & L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.70   'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.70   'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.70   'R & L. Alarums'

x x
x
cont'd.

	p.70	'R & L. Alarums'
	p.71	'L. Alarums'
	p.71	'R & L. Alarums'
	p.71	'R & L. Alarums and Shouts'
	p.71	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.72	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.73	**Handwritten cue: 'L. Flourish'** [not marked in JPK]
	p.73	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.73	**~~'L. A Retreat sounded'~~** [not crossed through in JPK]
	p.73	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.74	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.78	Blocking note.
	p.79	Blocking note.
	p.80	Blocking note.
	p.81	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.82	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
Cymbeline (JPK):	**p.12**	**'L. Musick from Orchestra'** [marked = in CK]
	p.39	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.40	**'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [not marked at all in CK]
	p.43	Handwritten stand-by or warning cue: 'R. Bugle-horn ready.' on facing blank – the three crosses duplicated at the side of the text indicating the input point.
	p.44	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'L. Drums & Trumpets.'
	p.45	'R. A Horn sounds at a distance.'
	p.45	'R. The Horn sounds again.'
	p.45	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets.'
	p.55	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'Musick from the Orchestra.'
	p.56	Blocking note.

x x
 x
cont'd.

p.62	'L. Solemn Musick in the cave'
p.62	'L. Again'
p.63	**'L. Musick again'** [not marked at all in CK]
p.66	'R. A March. At a distance.'
p.68	'L. A March.'
p.68	Blocking note.
p.68	'R & L. Drums and Trumpets heard at a distance.'
p.68	'R & L. Drums & Trumpets.'
p.68	'Every body for the battle.'
p.69	'R & L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.70	'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.70	'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.70	'R & L. Alarums'
p.70	'R & L. Alarums'
p.71	'L. Alarums'
p.71	'R & L. Alarums'
p.71	'R & L. Alarums and Shouts'
p.71	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.72	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.73	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.73	'L. A Retreat sounded'
p.73	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.74	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.78	Blocking note.
p.79	Blocking note.
p.80	Blocking note.
p.81	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
p.82	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

Note: With the *Henry IV Part One* promptbooks, the Charles Kemble and J.P. Kemble copies were made on different editions of the text; as a consequence, the page numbering in the J.P. Kemble

copy is four pages ahead of the numbering in the Charles Kemble copy. The numbers in superscript next to each page number indicates the corresponding page number in the other copy, so that the similarities and differences in the annotations can be compared and verified.

x x
  x
cont'd.

Henry IV Part I (CK):	p.1[5]	'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
	p.1[5]	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L. Drums & Trumpets.'
	p.3[7]	'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
	p.7[11]	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L. Drums & Trumpets.'
	p.9[13]	'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
	p.17[21]	Handwritten on facing blank: 'R. Ready to whistle – Bardolf' *(sic)*
	p.19	**'They whistle. R.'** [not marked at all in JPK]
	p.21	**Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Raise lamps.'** [marked **=** in JPK]
	p.33	**Handwritten on facing blank: ~~'R.2.E. Papers ready'~~** [not marked at all in JPK]
	p.46[50]	'R. Flourish of Trumpet and Drums'
	p.46[50]	Handwritten on facing blank: 'R. Drums & Trumpets.'
	p.46[50]	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'L. Trumpet.'
	p.47[51]	'L. A Trumpet sounds'
	p.50[54]	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'R. Drums & Trumpets.
	p.50[54]	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'L. Trumpet.'
	p.51[55]	'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
	p.52[56]	'L. Trumpet sounds a Parley'

x x
  x
cont'd.

p.54[58] 'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.55[59] 'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.55[59] Handwritten on facing blank:
     'L. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.55[59] 'L. Trumpet sounds a Parley'

p.58[62] Handwritten on facing blank:
     'R & L Drums & Trumpets'

p.61   **'L. The drums, trumpets &c. sound . . .'**
     [not marked at all in JPK]

p.61[65] 'R & L. Trumpets, drums, &c.'

p.61[65] 'R & L. Alarums'

p.62[66] 'R & L. Alarums – they fight – Blunt is slain'

p.62[66] 'R & L. Alarums'

p.62[66] 'R & L. Other Alarums'

p.63[67] 'R & L. Alarums'

p.63[67] 'R & L. Alarums. Excursions'

p.64[68] Handwritten on facing blank:
     'L. Trumpets & Drums'

p.65   **Handwritten on facing blank:**
     'R. & L. Drums & Trumpets.'
     [not marked at all in JPK]

p.67[71] 'R & L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.68[72] 'R & L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

Henry IV Part I (JPK):   p.5[1] 'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.5[1] Handwritten on facing blank:
     'L. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.7[3] 'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.11[7] Handwritten on facing blank:
     'L. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.13[9] 'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.21[17] Handwritten on facing blank:
     'R. Bardolf *(sic)* ready to whistle'

p.50[46] 'R. Flourish of Trumpet and Drums'

p.50[46] Handwritten on facing blank:
     'R. Drums & Trumpet.'

x x
  x
cont'd.

p.50[46] Handwritten on facing blank:
        'L. Trumpet'

p.51[47] 'L. A Trumpet sounds'

p.54[50] Handwritten on facing blank:
        'R. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.54[50] Handwritten note on facing blank:
        'L. Trumpet.'

p.55   **Handwritten note on facing blank:**
        'L. Trumpet.'
        [not marked at all in CK]

p.55[51] 'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.56[52] 'L. Trumpet sounds a Parley'

p.58[54] 'R. Flourish of Trumpet and Drums'

p.59[55] 'L. Flourish of Trumpet and Drums'

p.59[55] Handwritten on facing blank:
        'L. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.59[55] 'L. A Trumpet sounds a Parley'

p.61   **'R & L. Drums & Trumpets.'**
        [not marked at all in CK]

p.61   **'L. Wind instruments in Orchestra.'**
        [marked with ╫ in CK]

p.62[58] Handwritten on facing blank:
        'R & L. Drums & Trumpets.'
        'L. Wind instruments from Orch.[a]'

p.65[61] 'R & L. Trumpets, Drums &c.'

p.65[61] 'R & L. Alarums'

p.66[62] 'R & L. Alarums – they fight – Blunt is slain'

p.66[62] 'R & L. Alarums'

p.66[62] 'R & L. Alarums'

p.67[63] 'R & L. Alarums'

p.67[63] 'R & L. Alarums'

p.68[64] Handwritten on facing blank:
        'L. Trumpets.'

p.70   **'L. Trumpets sound a Retreat'**
        [not marked at all in CK]

p.71   **'L. Trumpets sound a Retreat'**
        [not marked at all in CK]

x x
  x
cont'd.

p.71[67] 'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.72[68] 'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

Henry IV Part II (CK):   **p.21   'One ready to knock' on facing blank, but not marked by any symbol.**

p.23   'L. A loud knocking without'

p.23   'L. More knocking at the door without'

p.31   Handwritten on facing blank:
'R. Drums & Trumpets'

p.31   Handwritten on facing blank:
'L. Drums & Trumpets'

p.32   'R. A march – then – a Parley. L.'

p.34   'L. Trumpets sound'

p.35   'L. Trumpets sound a Parley'

p.36   'R & L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.36   'R & L. Trumpets sound a Parley'

p.37   'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.38   'R & L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.39   'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.45   ('Musick without') 'The Organ.'

p.51   ('Musick without') 'The Organ.'

p.59   Handwritten on facing blank:
'L. Drums & Trumpets'

p.60   'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.63   'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

Note: the location for these last three flourishes has changed from OP in the J.P. Kemble source to PS in this.

Henry IV Part II (JPK):   **p.21   'One ready to knock' on facing blank, but not marked by any symbol.**

p.23   'L. A loud knocking without'

p.23   'L. More knocking at the door without'

p.31   Handwritten on facing blank:
'Trumpets – Drums – R'

p.31   Handwritten on facing blank:
'Trumpets – Drums – L'

x x
 x
cont'd.

p.32 'R. A march – then – a Parley. L.'

p.34 'Trumpets sound'

p.35 'Trumpets sound a Parley. L'

p.36 'R & L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.36 'Trumpets sound a Parley R & L'

p.37 'Flourish of Trumpets and Drums. R'

p.38 'Flourish of Trumpets and Drums. R & L'

p.39 'Flourish of Drums and Trumpets R'

p.45 ('Musick without') 'The Organ.'

p.51 ('Musick without') 'The Organ.'
 Not marked with any symbol in this copy.

p.59 Handwritten on facing blank:
 'R. Trumpets &Drums'

p.60 'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.63 'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

Note: the location for these last three flourishes has changed from PS in the Charles Kemble source to OP in this.

Henry V (CK):

p.7. 'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.11 'L. Flourish' – 'of Trumpets.'

p.12 'Flourish' – and line drawn to input point.

p.16 'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.43 'R. [Trumpets Sound] '**Shrill** & short.'

p.43 'R. Flourish of Trumpets'

p.44 Handwritten note above printed text:
 'R. A March. Very long.' *followed by*
 ≠ 'Take time to change.'

p.44 'L. [A March.] Very long.'

p.46 'R. [Tucket sounds] Very long.'

p.47 'R & L. Charge, – Shouts, – Cannon, – &c.'

p.47 'L. Alarums'

p.47 'R & L. Alarums, – Cannon, – Shouts, &c.'

p.48 'R & L. Alarums, – Shouts, – Cannon, &c.'

p.49 'R. Charge – Cannon'

x x **x** *cont'd.*	p.49	'R. Charge, &c.' **No symbol in this copy.**
	p.49	'R & L. Alarums continued'
	p.50	'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.51	'R. Flourish'
	p.54	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.58	'R. March' '2. Orchestra?' **No symbol.**
	p.61	'L. Flourish of all the Instruments'
	p.66	'L. Flourish of all the Instruments'
Henry V (JPK):	p.7.	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.11	'L. Flourish' – 'of Trumpets.'
	p.12	'Flourish' – and line drawn to input point.
	p.16	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.20	'R. Flourish'
	p.23	'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.27	'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.27	'L. Shouts – Alarum – Cannon'
	p.27	'L. Shouts – Charge – Cannon'
	p.28	'L. A Parley sounded' – 'from the Town.'
	p.28	'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.30	'R. Flourish of Drums & Trumpets'
	p.31	'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'
	p.33	'L. A distant March' 'Fifes. Drums'
	p.33	'L. A March' 'Fifes. Drums'
	p.43	'R. [Trumpets Sound' '**High** & short.'
	p.43	'R. Flourish of Trumpets'
	p.44	Handwritten note above printed text: 'R. A March. Very long.' *followed by* ≠ 'Take time to change.'
	p.44	'L. [A March.] Very long.'
	p.46	'R. [Tucket sounds] Very long.'
	p.47	'R & L. Charge, – Shouts, – Cannon, – &c.'
	p.47	'L. Alarums'
	p.47	'R & L. Alarums, – Cannon, – Shouts, &c.'

x x
  x
cont'd.

p.48   'R & L. Alarums, – Shouts, – Cannon, &c.'

p.49   'R. Charge – Cannon'

p.49   'R. Charge, &c.'

p.49   'R & L. Alarums continued'

p.50   'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.51   'R. Flourish'

p.54   'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'

p.58   'R. March' '2. Orchestra?'

p.61   'L. Flourish of all the Instruments'

p.66   'L. Flourish of all the Instruments'

Kath. & Petruchio (CK):   p.18   'R. Musick without.'

p.18   'R. Musick.'

Kath. & Petruchio (JPK):   p.18   'R. Musick without.'

p.18   'R. Musick.'

Macbeth (CK):   p.6   'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.8   'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.8   'Thunder and Lightning'

p.9   Handwritten note on facing blank:
       'R. Trumpet.'

p.10   'Thunder & Lightning' 'R'

p.10   Handwritten note below text:
       'R. Trumpet sounds' and arrow to input.

p.11   Handwritten note on facing blank:
       'L. Drums & Trumpets.'

p.12   'R. March'

p.13   'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.14   'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.17   'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.18   'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

p.21   Handwritten note on facing blank:
       'Thunder & Lightning. Bell.'

x x
 x
cont'd.

p.23	'L. A Clock strikes two'
p.23	'Thunder and Lightning'
p.24	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'C.D. One ready to knock.'
p.25	'C.D. Knocking within'
p.25	'Knock'
p.25	'Knock'
p.26	'Knock'
p.26	'Knock C.D.'
p.29	'Thunder and Lightning'
p.30	'Thunder' and line drawn under all text.
p.30	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'Drums & Trumpets.'
p.32	'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
p.35	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'Musick in Orchestra.'
p.37	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'Musick in the Orchestra.'
p.40	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'Musick in Orchestra.'
p.41	'Thunder and Lightning'
p.46	'Thunder'
p.47	'Thunder'
p.47	'Thunder'
p.55	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'L. Drums & Trumpets.'
p.56	'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
p.58	'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
p.58	'L. A March'
p.59	'L. March'
p.59	'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
p.59	'L. A cry within, of women'
p.60	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'L. Drums & Trumpets.'
p.61	'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
p.61	'L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'

x x *x* *cont'd.*	p.61	'L. Alarums'
	p.62	'R. Alarums' – 'and Shouts.'
	p.62	'L. Alarums'
	p.62	'R & L. Alarums' – 'and Shouts.'
	p.62	'R & L. Alarums' – 'and Shouts.'
	p.63	'L. Alarums – they fight – Macbeth falls'
	p.64	'R & L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
	p.64	'R & L. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
Measure for Measure (CK):	p.5	'Lock the Stage-doors.'
	p.41	**'L. Ready to knock.'** [no symbol in JPK]
	p.50	'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
Measure for Measure (JPK):	p.5	'Lock the Stage-doors.'
	p.5	'Green-Cloth.'
	p.41	'Ready to Knock' **No symbol.**
	p.50	'R. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
Pizarro (A):	p.2	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L.U.E. Trumpets & Drums.'
	p.3	'Trumpets without'
	p.5	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L.U.E. Trumpets & Drums.'
	p.6	'Trumpets without'
	p.7	Handwritten within text: 'L.U.E. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums'
	p.7	'Trumpets & Drums'
	p.15	Handwritten within text: 'R.U.E. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums till they are all gone.' **[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]**
	p.18	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L. Trumpets & Drums.'
	p.19	Handwritten within text: 'Trumpets & Drums L.'

x x
x
cont'd.

p.19 Handwritten within text:
'L. Drums & Trumpets sound'

p.21 Handwritten within text:
'Drums & Trumpets L'

p.23 Handwritten within text:
'L. Trumpets & Drums.'

p.24 Handwritten on facing blank:
'R. Cannon – Drums – Trumpets.'

p.24 Handwritten within text:
'Flourish of Drums & Trumpets
continued till Rolla and Alonso re-enter.'

p.26 Handwritten within text:
'Cannon. Distant Drums &c.'

p.26 'Discharge of cannon heard R'

p.27 Handwritten within text:
'R. Drums and Trumpets'

p.30 Handwritten within text:
'Trumpets. Drums. R'

p.30 Handwritten within text:
'Cannon. R'

p.31 'Shouts of victory, flourish of
trumpets, &c.'

p.31 'Shouts, flourish & c.'

p.35 'March and procession. Exeunt omnes'

p.65 Handwritten on facing blank:
'Thunder & Lighting.'

p.66 'Thunder & Lightning.'

p.68 Handwritten on facing blank:
'L. Drums & Trumpets.'
[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]

p.68 Handwritten on facing blank:
'R. Drums & Trumpets.'
[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]

p.68 Handwritten on facing blank:
'L. Pistols ready.'
[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]

p.68 Handwritten on facing blank:
'L. Blood &c. ready.'
[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]

p.69 'L. Trumpets sound without'

x x *x* *cont'd.*	p.72	Handwritten within text: 'L. Flourish.'
	p.72	Handwritten within text: 'L. Pistols twice.'
	p.72	Handwritten within text: 'L. Drums and Trumpets. – <u>Long</u>.'
	p.73	Handwritten within text: 'R & L. Long Flourish of Drums & Trumpets.'
	p.74	Handwritten within text: 'Dead March.'
	p.74	'Alarms'
	p.75	'Charge'
	p.76	'R. Flourish of Trumpets & Drums.'
Pizarro (B):	p.3	'Trumpets without, P.S.U.E.'
	p.6	'Trumpets without, P.S.U.E.'
	p.7	'Flourish of Trumpets, P.S.U.E.'
	p.7	'Trumpets and Drums without' – 'sound till the Characters are in their places.'
	p.11	'Trumpet without' – 'O.P.'
	p.14	'Trumpets sound O.P.U.E.'
	p.15	'Flourish of Drums & Trumpets O.P'
	p.19	'Flourish. Drums. Trumpets.'
	p.21	Handwritten within text: 'Flourish – Drums – Trumpets – P.S.'
	p.21	Handwritten within text: 'Flourish – Drums – Trumpets – P.S.'
	p.23	Handwritten within text: 'Flourish – Drums – Trumpets.'
	p.24	Handwritten within text: 'Drums & Trumpets – P.S.'
	p.25	Handwritten within text: 'Shouts. Alarms without. O.P. Cannon'
	p.26	Handwritten within text: 'Distant Drums & Trumpets. Cannon.'

x x
  x
cont'd.

p.26	'Discharge of cannon heard'
p.26	'Shouts at a distance'
p.27	Blocking.
p.27	Handwritten within text: 'Drums – Trumpets – &c.'
p.29	Handwritten within text: 'Drums. Trumpets. Shouts. Cannon.'
p.30	'Trumpets &Drums'
p.31	'O.P. Report of cannon heard'
p.31	'Shouts of victory, flourish of trumpets, &c. O.P.U.E.'
p.31	'Three' 'Shouts, Flourish, &c.' 'Drums & Trumpets.'

p.49 **Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Raise Lamps *gradually*.'** [JPK has 'a little']

p.65 **Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Lamps down.' [marked } in JPK]**

p.65	'A dreadful Storm, with Thunder and Lightning. O.P'
p.65	'Thunder and Lightning'
p.66	'Thunder and Lightning'
p.66	Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Thunder & Lightning.'

p.69 **Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Lamps up.'**

p.69	'Trumpets sound without'
p.71	Handwritten within text: 'Charge. Trumpets. Drums. Short. P.S.'
p.71	Handwritten within text: 'Drums & Trumpets.'
p.72	Handwritten within text: 'Long Flourish of Drums & Trumpets.'
p.74	Handwritten within text: 'Flourish. Drums & Trumpets.'
p.75	'Charge' 'Drums. Trumpets.'
p.75	'Loud shouts from the Peruvians'

x x
 x
cont'd.

	p.75	Handwritten within text: 'Flourish. Drums. Trumpets.'
	p.76	'Flourish of Trumpets.' 'Drums.'
Pizarro (JPK):	p.6	'Trumpets without'
	p.7	Handwritten within text: 'Flourish of Trumpets L.U.E.'
	p.11	'Trumpets without R.U.E.'
	p.12	Handwritten within text: 'Trumpet sounds L.U.E.'
	p.15	Handwritten within text: 'R.U.E. Flourish of Trumpets and Drums till they are all gone.' **[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]**
	p.18	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L. Drums & Trumpets.'
	p.19	'Drums and trumpets sound L.'
	p.21	Handwritten within text: 'Drums – Trumpets – L.'
	p.23	'Trumpets sound'
	p.24	Handwritten within text: 'Flourish of Drums & Trumpets – L.'
	p.26	'Alarms continue'
	p.26	Handwritten within text: 'Distant Drums & Trumpets. Cannon.'
	p.26	'Discharge of cannon heard'
	p.26	'Shouts at a distance'
	p.30	'Trumpets' 'Drums &c.'
	p.31	'Shouts of victory, flourish of trumpets, &c. O.P.U.E.'
	p.31	'Three' 'Shouts, Flourish, &c.' 'Drums & Trumpets.'
	p.35	'Musick and Procession'
	p.49	**Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Raise Lamps *a little*.' [Promptbook B has 'gradually']**
	p.55	**Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Raise Lamps quite up.'**

x x	p.65	'A dreadful Storm, with Thunder and Lightning. O.P'
x		
cont'd.	p.66	'Thunder and Lightning'
	p.66	Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Thunder & Lightning.'
	p.68	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L. Drums & Trumpets.' **[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]**
	p.68	Handwritten on facing blank: 'R. Drums & Trumpets' **[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]**
	p.68	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L. Pistols ready.' **[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]**
	p.68	Handwritten on facing blank: 'L. Blood &c. ready.' **[in A and JPK but not in Promptbook B]**
	p.69	**Handwritten cueing instruction: 'Lamps up.'**
	p.72	'Drums and Trumpets L'
	p.73	Handwritten within text: 'Very Long Flourish of Drums & Trumpets.'
	p.74	'Alarms'
	p.75	'Charge' 'Drums &Trumpets R.U.E.'
	p.75	Handwritten within text: 'Flourish. Drums. Trumpets. R.U.E.'
	p.76	'Flourish of Trumpets' '& Drums.'
Rule A Wife (JPK):	p.25	'A Knocking at the Door'
	p.25	'A Knocking at the Door'
	p.25	'A Knocking at the Door'
	p.39	'Musick' – 'From Orchestra.'
	p.40	'Musick' – 'From Orchestra.'
	p.55	'L. Hammering without'
	p.56	'L. Hammering without'
	p.57	'L. Hammering without'

x x x

Rule A Wife	p.25	'A Knocking at the Door'
* Not Kemble's hand *	p.25	'A Knocking at the Door'
	p.25	'A Knocking at the Door'
	p.40	'Musick R.U.E.'
	p.55	'L. Hammering without'
	p.56	'L. Hammering without'
	p.57	'L. Hammering without'

＝ *All's Well* (CK):	**p.23**	**'See the King ready'**
	p.37	**'Helena dresses'**
	p.38	**'Helena ready'**
	p.46	**'Lamps down'**
	p.49	**'Lamps up'**
	p.52	**'Lamps down'**
	p.56	**'Lamps up'**

All's Well (JPK):   Does not appear.

As You Like It (CK):	**p.5**	**'Lock Stage Doors'**
	p.10	'State chair, &c.'
	p.27	*(handwritten)* **[Call the French-Horns from Orchestra]** [marked with ✖ in JPK]
	p.30	**'Take time'** [marked with ✖ in JPK]
	p.31	**'Take time'** [marked with ✖ in JPK]
	p.31	**'Take time'** [marked with ✖ in JPK]
	p.52	**'The same as Scene 2ᵈ Act 3ᵈ'**
	p.66	**'The same as Scene 7ᵗʰ Act 2ᵈ'**

$=$ *cont'd*

As You Like It (JPK):	p.10	'State chair, &c.'
Coriolanus (CK):	p.5	'Lock Stage-doors'
	p.5	'Stage-cloth'
	p.8	Handwritten blocking note.
	p.55	'Soft Musick – at first distant – **louder** by degrees'
Coriolanus (JPK):	p.5	'Stage-cloth'
	p.5	'Lock Stage-doors'
	p.5	**'All the Soldiers to shout – L'** [marked with three crosses in CK]
	p.17	**'No more calls this act.'** [marked with ⧕ in CK]
	p.55	**'Every body for last Act.'** [marked as Call 1 in CK]
	p.55	'Soft Musick. R. at first distant – **nearer** by degrees'
Cymbeline (CK):	p.5	'Green cloth.'
	p.10	'Musick from the Orchestra'
	p.12	**'Musick from the Orchestra'** [on facing blank interleaf] [marked with three crosses in JPK]
	p.52	**'Imogen dresses'; 'See Imogen ready'** [not marked at all in JPK]
	p.68	'Then the drop-scene closes them in.'
	p.72	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'All the Prisoners in chains, except Imogen.'
Cymbeline (JPK):	p.5	'Green cloth.'
	p.68	'Then the drop-scene closes them in.'
	p.72	Handwritten note on facing blank: 'All the Prisoners in chains, except Imogen.'

═ *cont'd*

Henry IV Part I (CK):	p.5	'Green cloth.'
	p.5	'Lock Stage doors.'
	p.37	'Chair. Table.' *NB the double line is horizontal, not vertical, in this text.*
Henry IV Part I (JPK):	p.5	'Green-cloth.'
	p.5	'Lock Stage-doors.'
	p.21	**'Lamps down'** [not marked at all in CK]
	p.26	'Raise lamps.' [marked with three crosses in CK]
	p.41	'See the Prince of Wales dressed.'
	p.72	'2 hours – 44 minutes.'
Henry IV Part 2 (CK):	p.1	'Green-cloth.'
	p.41	**'Organ plays & Curtain rises slowly.'** [marked with ╫ in JPK]
Henry IV Part 2 (JPK):	p.1	'Green-cloth.'
	p.41	'Organ plays & Curtain rises slowly.'
	p.54	'Mouldy, Bullcalf and Davy bring a Table, covered with Fruit, Wine &c, and three Chairs, out of the Arbour, and place them in front a little to the R. of Centre.'
	p.54	'Fang and Snare bring on a small Table &c. and two Chairs, which they place L. a little back.'
Henry V (CK):	p.5	'Lock the Stage-doors'

= *cont'd*

Henry V (JPK):	p.5	'Lock the Stage-doors'
	p.36	[March] 'Orchestra. Britons strike home.'
	p.37	'Lamps down.'
	p.43	'Lamps up.'
Macbeth (JPK):	p.5	'Green Cloth.'
	p.5	'Lamps down.'
	p.6	'Lamps up.'
	p.8	'Lamps down – to be gradually raised before Macbeth enters.'
	p.18	'Change the Scene & close them in.'
	p.21	'Bell ready.'
	p.21	'Lamps down.'
	p.23	'Raise Lamps a little.'

         NB: *p.23*   *'Raise Lamps a little more'*
                           marked with +]

	p.28	'Lamps quite up'
	p.29	'Lamps down'
	p.36	'Lamps down'
	p.37	'Lamps up'
	p.42	'Lamps down'
	p.44	'Lamps down'
	p.45	'Lightning – below.'
	p.45	'Thunder – ready.'
	p.49	'Lamps up.'
Measure for Measure (CK):	p.5	'Green Cloth.'
Measure for Measure (JPK):	p.8	'The Duke dresses.'
	p.63	Blocking.
Pizarro (A):	p.1	'Green Cloth.'
	p.1	'Lock Stage-doors.'

= *cont'd*

	p.31	Blocking.
	p.49	'Raise Lamps a little, or Turn on Lights'
	p.65	'Lamps down.'
	p.69	**'Lamps up.'** [marked with three crosses in Copy B]

Pizarro (JPK):	p.1	'Green Cloth.'
	p.1	'Lock Stage-doors.'
	p.31	Blocking.
	p.49	'Lamps down.'
	p.49	'Raise Lamps a little, or Turn on Lights'
	p.65	'Lamps down.'
	p.69	**'Lamps up.'** [marked with three crosses in Copy B]

╫ *All's Well* (CK): p.27 Blocking: 'Paroles**, who is following them,** passes **by** Lefeu conceitedly'

All's Well (JPK): p.27 Blocking: 'Paroles passes Lefeu conceitedly'

Coriolanus (CK): **p.17 'No more calls this Act'** [marked **=** in JPK]

Coriolanus (JPK): **p.15 'Scene IV. Cut wood.'** [marked **+** in CK]

Henry IV Part 1 (CK): **p.58 'Wind instruments in Orchestra'** [marked with three crosses in JPK]

╫

cont'd

Macbeth (JPK):		p.17	Blocking: 'Malcolm, Donalbain & Macduff pass over to L.'
Measure for Measure (CK):		**p.68**	**Timing: '2 hours and 56 minutes.'** [no symbol in JPK]
Measure for Measure (JPK):		**p.50**	**'The Duke dresses.'** [not marked at all in CK]

≠	*Henry V* (CK)		**p.43**	**'Take a good deal of time before change.'** [marked ※ in JPK]
			p.44	'Take time to change'
	Henry V (JPK):		p.44	'Take time to change'

※	*As You Like It* (CK):		p.11	Blocking (pencil)
			p.15	'Flourish, L'
			p.24	**Blocking (pencil)**
			p.29	**'Song for Touchstone' and song written in, on facing blank page, in pencil.**
			p.30	**'Trio' and song written in, on facing blank page, in pencil.**
			p.49	**'Song Silvius' and song written in, on facing blank, in pencil.**
			p.51	**'Song Rosalind' and song written in, on facing blank, in pencil.**

※ *cont'd*

	p.69	'Jacques du Bois X to Orl. & then X to Oli. congratulating them on their meeting - <u>he remains between Orl. and Oli.</u>

[unmarked with any symbol here]

p.70a   Blocking.

As You Like It (JPK):	**p.13**	**'A Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [marked with three crosses in CK]
	p.15	**'Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [marked with three crosses in CK]
	p.15	'Flourish, L'
	p.15	**'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [marked with three crosses in CK]
	p.18	**'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [marked with three crosses in CK]
	p.20	**'L. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [marked with three crosses in CK]
	p.26	**'R. Flourish of Drums and Trumpets'** [marked with three crosses in CK]
	p.27	*(handwritten)* **[Call the French-Horns from Orchestra]** [marked with ＝ in CK]
	p.30	**'Take time'** [marked with ＝ in CK]
	p.31	**'Take time'** [marked with ＝ in CK]
	p.31	**'Take time'** [marked with ＝ in CK]
	p.69	'Jacques du Bois X to Orl. & then X to Oli. congratulating them on their meeting - <u>he remains between Orl. and Oli.</u> **[unmarked with any symbol in CK]**

✻ *cont'd*

Coriolanus (CK):	**p.44**	**'Begin Act IV'** [not indicated in JPK]
Henry V (JPK):	**p.43**	**'Take a good time to change [scene].'** [marked ≠ in CK]
Measure for Measure (JPK):	**p.21**	**Blocking.** [marked with **â** in CK]
	p.66	**Blocking.** [marked with **â** in CK]
Pizarro (A):	p.22	'March' and exeunt order.
	p.24	Blocking and scene-change info: The Troops appear to be forming into a line of march, and the Scene closes in on them.'
	p.31	Blocking: order of entrances. **[marked with ⊕ in Copy B]**
	p.74	Blocking: Order of exits and 'N.B. Cover the Banners.'
Pizarro (JPK):	p.12	Blocking.
	p.23	'Musick of the Procession.'
	p.24	Blocking and scene-change info: The Troops appear to be forming into a line of march, and the Scene closes in on them.'
	p.31	Blocking: order of entrances. **[marked with ⊕ in Copy B]**
	p.35	Blocking: order of exits.
	p.74	Blocking: order of exits.

✻ *cont'd*

✻ *cont'd*

	The Recruiting Officer:	p.46	'Song'
	The Rivals (B):	p.19	Blocking.
		p.24	Textual insert.
â	*As You Like It* (JPK):	p.70	Blocking.
	Coriolanus (CK):	p.8	Blocking.
		p.14	Blocking.
		p.15	**Blocking.**
		p.22	Handwritten cueing instruction: **'Let the Musick continue some time after the Scene closes on the Ovation – then three Shouts with all the Drums and Trumpets.'** [marked with three crosses in JPK]
	Coriolanus (JPK):	p.12	Blocking, with detailed diagram.
		p.14	Blocking.
	Katherine & Petruchio (CK):	p.22	Blocking.
		p.23	Blocking.
	Kath. & Petruchio (JPK):	p.22	Blocking.
		p.23	Blocking.
	Henry IV Part II (CK):	**p.54**	**Blocking relating to actors moving and setting furniture for meal scene.** **Described as two separate movements and marked with = in JPK; see above.**

â *cont'd*

Henry V (CK):	p.19	Blocking.
	p.25	Blocking.
	p.26	Blocking.
	p.34	Blocking.
	p.39	Blocking.
	p.44	Blocking.
	p.56	Blocking.

Henry V (JPK):	p.19	Blocking.
	p.25	Blocking.
	p.26	Blocking.
	p.34	Blocking.
	p.39	Blocking.
	p.44	Blocking.
	p.56	Blocking.

Measure for Measure (CK):	**p.21**	**Blocking.** [marked with ✳ in JPK]
	p.44	Blocking.
	p.52	**Blocking.** [no symbol in JPK]
	p.58	**Blocking.** [no symbol in JPK]
	p.62	**Blocking.** [no symbol in JPK]
	p.63	**Blocking.** [marked with = in JPK]
	p.66	**Blocking.** [marked with ✳ in JPK]
	p.67	**Blocking.** [no symbol in JPK]

â *cont'd*

	p.68	**Blocking.** [no symbol in JPK]

Measure for Measure (JPK):	p.44	Blocking.
	p.45	Blocking.

Pizarro (A):	p.21	Blocking.
	p.22	Blocking.
	p.70	Blocking.

Pizarro (B):	p.13	Blocking.
	p.14	Blocking.
	p.15	Blocking.
	p.20	Blocking.
	p.21	Blocking.
	p.22	Blocking.
	p.61	Textual insert; point at which printed text resumed is marked b.
	p.70	Blocking.
	p.73	Blocking.
	p.74	Blocking: order of exits.

Pizarro (JPK):	p.21	Blocking.
	p.70	Blocking.

The Rivals (A):	p.66	Blocking.

<u>â</u> *cont'd*

Rule A Wife (JPK):	p.7	Blocking.
<u>b</u> *As You Like It* (JPK):	p.30	Blocking
	p.70	Blocking.
Kath. & Petruchio (CK):	p.20	Blocking.
Kath. & Petruchio (JPK):	p.20	Blocking.
Pizarro (A):	p.21	Blocking.
Pizarro (B):	p.14	Blocking.
	p.21	Blocking.
	p.61	Marks end of inserted lines.
Pizarro (JPK):	p.21	Blocking.
The Rivals (A):	p.66	Blocking.
Rule A Wife (JPK):	p.7	Blocking.
<u>ĉ</u> *Pizarro* (A):	p.21	Blocking.
Pizarro (B):	p.21	Blocking.
Pizarro (JPK):	p.21	Blocking.

d	*Pizarro* (B):	p.21	Blocking.

☉	*Coriolanus* (CK):	p.20	*No indication as to what this signifies.*
		p.20	*No indication as to what this signifies.*
	Coriolanus (JPK):	p.20	*No indication as to what this signifies.*
		p.20	*No indication as to what this signifies.*
	The Recruiting Officer:	p.16	Textual insert: ʻTis true Sylvia and I might have been man and wifeʼ
	*Pizarro (*A):	**p.76**	**ʻTemple of the Sun.ʼ** [not marked at all in Copy B] [marked ʻChange Sceneʼ in JPK]

∅	*The Rivals* (A):	p.26	Textual insert.
	The Rivals (B):	p.19	Blocking.
		p.42	Blocking.

⃠	*As You Like It* (CK):	p.70	Blocking.
		p.70a	Blocking
	The Rivals (B):	p.87	Textual insert.

⊕	*Pizarro* (A):	p.21	Blocking: order of entrances.
	Pizarro (B):	**p.31**	**Blocking: order of entrances.** [marked with ✳ in Copy A]
	Pizarro (JPK):	p.21	Blocking: order of entrances.
⊗	*Pizarro* (A):	**p.14**	**Blocking.** [marked **â**, **b**, **ĉ** in Copy B] [marked with ✳ in JPK]
⊗	*Pizarro* (B):	p.23	Blocking: order of exits.
A	*The Recruiting Officer*:	p.14	Textual insert: 'her'
	* Not Kemble's hand *	p.14	Textual insert: 'nor'
		p.16	Textual insert: 'make love to'
		p.17	Textual insert: 'Suppose I were to marry a woman who wanted a leg – Oh if people would but try out one another before they engaged &c'
		p.19	Textual insert: 'Of Shrewsbury'
		p.25	Textual insert: 'our late Battle'
		p.25	Textual insert: '~~my friends might suffer~~'
	Rule A Wife (A):	p.7	Blocking.
	* Not Kemble's hand *	p.13	Setting: 'A Sideboard richly decorated with Plates.'
		p.20	Blocking.

cont'd

		p.26	Stage instruction: 'L.D. opens'
		p.32	'Leon dresses.'
		p.40	Blocking.
		p.42	Blocking.

1	*Cymbeline* (JPK):	**p13**	**Blocking.** [marked with three crosses in CK]
	Rule A Wife (A):	p.58	Blocking.
	* Not Kemble's hand *	p.59	Blocking.
		p.65	Blocking.
	Rule A Wife (JPK):	p.65	Blocking.

2	*Rule A Wife* (A):	p.7	Blocking.
	* Not Kemble's hand *	p.40	Blocking.
		p.58	Blocking.

| 3 | *Rule A Wife* (A): | p.7 | Blocking. |
| | *** Not Kemble's hand *** | p.58 | Blocking. |

| 4 | *Rule A Wife* (A): | p.58 | Blocking |
| | *** Not Kemble's hand *** | | |

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(Anonymous Promptbook) *Jonah*
Sellar, R. J. B., *The Master of Ballantrae*

1955: Granville-Barker, Helen and Harley, *A Hundred Years Old*
Shaw, George Bernard, *Arms and the Man*

1956: Drinkwater, John, *Bird in Hand*
King, Philip, *See How They Run*
Goldsmith, Oliver, *She Stoops to Conquer*
Paterson, A. B., *The Open*

1957: Travers, Ben, *Rookery Nook*
Priestly, J. B., *The Scandalous Affair of Mr. Kettle and Mrs. Moon*

1958: Anthony, C. L., *Autumn Crocus*

1959: Maugham, W. Somerset, *The Constant Wife*
Lockhart, Howard M., *The Story of Madeleine Smith*
Centlivre, Susannah, *The Wonder*

1960: (Anonymous Promptbook) *Between the Tides*
Coward, Noel, *Private Lives*
Hawtrey, Charles, *The Private Secretary*

1961: Zorzi, Guglielmo transl. Frederick May, *I Am Married*
Rattigan, Terence, *The Deep Blue Sea*
Molière, Jean-Baptiste, *The Slave of Truth*

1962:   Pirandello, Luigi, *Henry IV*

Shaw, George Bernard, *Pygmalion*

1963:   Daviot, Gordon, *Cornelia*

Ibsen, Henrik, *Hedda Gabler*

Bridie, James, *Meeting at Night*

Delderfield, R. F., *My Dearest Angel*

1964:   Coward, Noel, *Present Laughter*

Anouilh, Jean, adapted Christopher Fry, *Ring Round the Moon*

Shakespeare, William, *Twelfth Night*

1965:   Ionesco, Eugene, *Bedlam Galore, For Two or More*

Kimmins, Anthony, *The Amorous Prawn*

1966:   Congreve, William, *The Way of the World*

1967:   Milner, Roger, *How's the World Treating You?*

Shaw, George Bernard, *On the Rocks*

Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, *The School for Scandal*

1968:   Wilder, Thornton, *Our Town*

Ramage, A. E., *The Constant Couple*

Barrie, J. M., *The Professor's Love Story*

1969:   Obaldia, René de, transl. Joseph Foster, *The Wind in the Sassafras Trees*

1970:   Ibsen, Henrik, *A Doll's House*

King, Philip, *Pools Paradise*

1972:   Feydeau, Georges, transl. Christopher Denys, *A Tailor for Ladies*

1978:   Travers, Ben, *A Cup of Kindness*

Brecht, Bertold, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*

MacDonald, Eric, *The Shooting Range*

Shakespeare, William, *The Tempest*

1979:   Sapsford, Ann, *Meet Me By Moonlight*

Coward, Noel, *Private Lives*

1980:   Hutchison, David, *Deadline*

Bridie, James, *Tobias and the Angel*

1981:   Bridie, James, *Storm in a Teacup*

1982:   Brandane, John, adapted Tom Galllacher, *The Treasure Ship*

1983:   Travers, Ben, *Rookery Nook*

Barrie, J. M., *The Admirable Crichton*

Friel, Brian, *Translations*

1984:   Frow, Gerard, Alan Strachan and Wendy Toye, *Cowardy Custard*

Ibsen, Henrik, *Hedda Gabler*

Stoppard, Tom, *On The Razzle*

1985:   Allen, Jay Presson, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*

1986:   Sheridan, R. B., *The School for Scandal*

1987: Coward, Noel, *Blithe Spirit*
England, Barry, *Conduct Unbecoming*
Frayn, Michael, *Noises Off*
Goldsmith, Oliver, *She Stoops to Conquer*
Bolt, Robert, *Vivat, Vivat Regina!*

1988: Shaw, George Bernard, *Pygmalion*
King, Philip, *See How They Run*
Mackenzie, Compton, *Whisky Galore!*

1989: Barrie, J. M., *Dear Brutus*
Coward, Noel, *Private Lives*

1990: Mackenzie, Compton, *Whisky Galore!*

1991: Kesselring, Joseph, *Arsenic and Old Lace*

1994: Wilde, Oscar, *An Ideal Husband*

1995: Roper, Tony, *The Steamie*

1998: Wilde, Oscar, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

2001: Barrie, J. M., *The Admirable Crichton*
Rose, William, *The Ladykillers*
Brady, Terence and Charlotte Bingham, *The Shellseekers*
Kemp, Robert, *Let Wives Tak Tent*
Rattigan, Terence, *The Winslow Boy*
Hare, David, *Amy's View*

2002: Shaffer, Peter, *Amadeus*
Kesselring, Joseph, *Arsenic and Old Lace*
Ayckbourn, Alan, *Absurd Person Singular*
Christie, Agatha, *The Hollow*
Clifford, John, *The Queen of Spades*
Clifford, John, *Charles Dickens: The Haunted Man*

2003: Wilder, Thornton, *The Matchmaker*
Harris, Richard, *Stepping Out*
Cain, James M. adapted David Joss Buckley, *Double Indemnity*
Roper, Tony, *The Steamie*
Shaw, George Bernard, *Man and Superman*
Clifford, John, *Charles Dickens: The Haunted Man*

2004: Gilbert, W. S., *Engaged*
Percy, Edward, *The Shop at Sly Corner*
Ayckbourn, Alan, *A Small Family Business*
Ludwig, Ken, *Lend Me A Tenor*
Gogol, Nicolai adapted John Byrne, *The Government Inspector*
McPherson, Conor, *The Weir*

2005: Bolt, Robert, *A Man For All Seasons*

Ayckbourn, Alan, *The Things We Do For Love*

Croft, Giles, *Kind Hearts and Coronets*

Lee, Harper, adapted Christopher Sergel, *To Kill A Mockingbird*

Stevenson, R. L. adapted Grace Barnes, *Treasure Island*

McGuinness, Frank, *Dolly West's Kitchen*

2006: Wilde, Oscar, *A Woman of No Importance*

Wodehouse, P. G. adapted Giles Havergal, *Summer Lightning*

Ayckbourn, Alan, *Man of the Moment*

Christie, Agatha, *Chimneys*

Steinbeck, John, adapted Frank Galati, *The Grapes of Wrath*

Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet: The Actor's Cut*

2007: McLellan, Robert, *The Flouers o' Edinburgh*

Ayckbourn, Alan, *Snake in the Grass*

Pinero, Arthur Wing, *The Magistrate*

Barry, Philip, *The Philadelphia Story*

Greenhorn, Stephen, *Passing Places*

Harwood, Ronald, *Taking Sides*

2008: Chekhov, Anton, adapted Michael Frayn, *Wild Honey*

Goldsmith, Oliver, *She Stoops to Conquer*

Bennett, Alan, *Habeus Corpus*

Stoppard, Tom, *Arcadia*

Shaw, George Bernard, *Heartbreak House*

Grieg, David, *Outlying Islands*

2009: Mackenzie, Compton, adapted Shona McKee McNeil and Ian Hammond Brown, *Whisky Galore! – A Musical*

Barrie, J. M., *What Every Woman Knows*

Lochead, Liz, *Good Things*

Allen, Jay Presson, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*

Victor Carin, *The Servant O' Twa Maisters*

Donald, Simon, *The Life of Stuff*

2010: Porter, Cole, *Kiss Me, Kate*

Frayn, Michael, *Noises Off*

Stoppard, Tom, *Rough Crossing*

Inge, William, *Bus Stop*

Wilde, Oscar, *An Ideal Husband*

Zola, Emile, adapted Olwen Wymark, *Nana*

2011: Lerner, Alan Jay and Frederick Loewe, *My Fair Lady*

Ayckbourn, Alan, *Henceforward*

King, Philip, *See How They Run*

Pinero, Arthur Wing, *Trelawney of the 'Wells'*

Nichols, Peter, *Privates on Parade*

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Ayliff, David, *A Short History of the Origins of the Stage Management Contract and Stage Management Titles*, 2005

Theatre Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum:

The Enthoven Collection, Blythe House, Cromwell Road, Olympia.

MS 78/159: Bound volume of Drury Lane Playbills from 1761 Season.

Plays BOU Prompt: Boucicault, Dion, *The Corsican Brothers*

Plays BOU Prompt: Boucicault, Dion, *Arragh-na-Pogue*

Plays BRO Prompt: Brown, Charles A., *The Russian Village*

Plays BRO Prompt: Brown, John, *Barbarossa*

Plays CIB Prompt: Cibber, Colley, *She Would And She Would Not* (p.1813);

Plays CIB Prompt: Cobber, Colley, *She Would And She Would Not* (p.1825);

Plays CIN Pamphlet: Blanchard, E. L., *Cinderella*

Plays COW Prompt: Cowley, Hannah, *A Bold Stroke For A Husband*

Plays DIB Prompt: Dibdin, Thomas J., *Of Age Tomorrow*

Plays DIC Pamphlet, Blanchard, E. L., *Dick Whittington and his Cat*

Plays FAR Prompt: Farquhar, George, *The Beaux Stratagem*

Plays FAR Prompt: Farquhar, George, *The Inconstant*

Plays FAR Prompt: Farquhar, George, *The Recruiting Officer*

Plays GAR Prompt: Garrick, David, *The Flitch of Bacon*

Plays HOL Prompt: Holcroft, Thomas, *The Road To Ruin*

Plays JOD Prompt: Jodrell, Richard, *Seeing Is Believing*

Plays KEN Prompt: Kenney, James, *Match Breaking*

Plays KNI Prompt: Knight, Thomas, *The Turnpike Gate*

Plays LAM Prompt: Lambe, George, *The Count of Anjou*

Plays MOO Prompt: Moore, Edward, *The Foundling*

Plays MUR Prompt: Murray, Arthur, *The Apprentice*

Plays OBR Prompt: O'Brien, William, *Cross Purposes*

Plays OKE Prompt: O'Keefe, John, *The Prisoner At Large*

Plays OSB Prompt: Osborne, John, *Look Back in Anger*

Plays ROB Prompt: Robertson, Tom, *Caste*

Plays SHA Prompt: Shakespeare, William, *The Merchant of Venice*

and five promptbooks: *The Mikado* (two sources), *Princess Ida*, and *The Pirates of Penzance* (two sources), accessed online at URL http://www.vam.ac.uk/ __data/assets/pdf_file/0003/177942/53070_file.pdf

University of Bristol Theatre Collection:

The Beerbohm Tree Collection

HBT000001 Shakespeare, William, *Julius Caesar*

HBT000002 Buchanan, Robert, *A Man's Shadow*

HBT000003 Jones, Henry Arthur, *The Dancing Girl*

HBT000005 Parker, Louis N., *The Ragged Robin*

HBT000007 Shakespeare, William, *Katherine and Petrucchio*

HBT000008 Allen, Grant & Fred W. Sidney, *An African Millionaire*

HBT000009 Du Maurier, George, adapted Paul Potter & H. B. Tree, *Trilby*

HBT000010 Scott, Clement, *Peril*

HBT000011 Grundy, Sydney, *The Duke's Triumph*

HBT000013 Shakespeare, William, *Henry IV*

HBT000014 Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet*

HBT000018 Wilde, Oscar, *A Woman of No Importance*

TC/WC/000165/011	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/013	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/014	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/015	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/017	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/019	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/020	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/022	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/023	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/024	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/026	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/027	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/039	Correspondence
TC/WC/000165/125	Correspondence

The Glynne Wickham Collection:

GW / AC / 663 and GW / AC / 664:
correspondence between Glynne Wickham and Fabia Drake

University of Kent at Canterbury Special Collections:

The Melville Collection (Templeman Library)

MEL.MSS. 1A and 1B:	Anonymous, *Driven From Home*
MEL.MSS. 2A to 2D:	Emm, Andrew, *For England, Home and Beauty*
MEL.MSS. 3A:	Emm, Andrew, *The Streets of Brighton*
MEL.MSS. 4A to 4C:	Anonymous, *The Scales of Justice*
MEL.MSS. 5A to 5C:	Emm, Andrew, *Jack the Ripper*
MEL.MSS. 6A to 6C:	Emm, Andrew, *Rip Van Winkle*

MEL.MSS. 7:   Barrett, Wilson, *The Manxman*
MEL.MSS. 8:   Melville, Andrew & Mansfield Bradford, *Too Late!*
MEL.MSS. 9:   Anonymous, *Siberia*
MEL.MSS. 13 and 13A:Emm, Andrew, *Palmer the Poisoner*
MEL.MSS. 14:   Anonymous, *The Curse of Drink*
MEL.MSS. 22:   Anonymous, *Robin Hood*
MEL.MSS. 122:   Taylor, Tom, *The Ticket of Leave Man*

The Pettingell Collection (Templeman Library)

PETT.MSS.A.1:   Alman, A., *Abarbanel the Hebrew*
PETT.MSS. A.3:   Hazlewood, Colin, *Abel Flint*
PETT.MSS.A.5-6: Haynes Bayly, J., *Abou Hassan*
PETT.MSS.A.8:   Travers, William, *The Abyssinian War*
PETT.MSS.A.12: Glyn, Gordon, *Adam Winter*
PETT.MSS.A.16: Travers, William, *Admiral Tom*
PETT.MSS.A.21: Ebsworth, Joseph, *The Advocate and his Daughter*
PETT.MSS.A.25: Hazlewood, Colin, *Against Tide*
PETT.MSS.A26:   Dibden Pitt, George, *Agnes Soreil*
PETT.MSS.A.27: Lane, Sarah, *Albert de Rosen*
PETT.MSS.A.28: Charlton, Frank, *The Alchemist of Modena*
PETT.MSS.A.33: Travers, William, *All But One*
PETT.MSS.A.34: Cherry Griffiths, J., *All For Gold*
PETT.MSS.A.35: Hazlewood, Colin, *Alone in the Pirates' Lair*
PETT.MSS.A.37: Manuel, E., *Alone in the World*
PETT.MSS.A.38: Holloway, William, *Alvirida*
PETT.MSS.A.40: Dibden Pitt, George, *Ambition*
PETT.MSS.A.42: Hazlewood, Colin, *American Slavery*
PETT.MSS.A.47: Somerset, C.A., *Angel at Islington*
PETT.MSS.A.48: Hazlewood, Colin, *The Angel of Peace & Pardon*
PETT.MSS.A.50: Stephenson, C.H., *The Angel of Truth*
PETT.MSS.A.51: Dibden Pitt, George, *Ankle Jack*
PETT.MSS.A.52: Dibden Pitt, George, *Annette Carline*
PETT.MSS.A.53: Seaman, William, *Annie Monksworth*
PETT.MSS.A.54: Dibden Pitt, George, *Arcadia, or, Freaks of the Passions*
PETT.MSS.A.55: Dodson, R., *The Armourer of East Cheape*
PETT.MSS.A.58: Hazlewood, Colin, *The Artificial Flower Maker*
PETT.MSS.A.59: Wood, Arthur, *The Artisan's Triumph*
PETT.MSS.A.67: Hazlewood, Colin, *Auld Robin Gray*
PETT.MSS.A.68: Hazlewood, Colin, *Aurora Floyd*
PETT.MSS.A.70: Johnstone, J.B., *Avarice, or, The Miser's Daughter*
PETT.MSS.B.3:   Hazlewood, Colin, *Balinasloe Boy*
PETT.MSS.B.4:   Hazlewood, Colin, *The Bandit Queen*

PETT.MSS.B.6:   Cherry Griffiths, J., *Banished from Home*
PETT.MSS.B.7:   Rice, Charles, *The Banker's Daughter*
PETT.MSS.B.12: Dibden Pitt, George, *The Barber of Shoreditch*
PETT.MSS.B.77: Dibden Pitt, George, *The Bottle*
PETT.MSS.C.20: Hazlewood, Colin, *The Casual Ward*
PETT.MSS.F.11:   Hazlewood, Colin, *Faith, Hope and Charity*
PETT.MSS.L.3:   Dibden Pitt, George, *Lady Hatton, or, The Suicide's Tree*
PETT.MSS.L.29: Hazlewood, Colin, *The Left-Handed Marriage*
PETT.MSS.N.3:   Hazlewood, Colin, *Napoleon, or, The Story of a Flag*
PETT.MSS.W.57: Hazlewood, Colin, *Wildfire Ned/The Skeleton Crew*

Personal Collection of Paul Pyant,
   c/o Stage Management Association:

Private recordings of interviews with Dot Tenham (founder of Stage Management training at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art)

Unpublished history of the production course, Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, compiled by Shirley Matthews, Administrator for the technical courses at RADA, c2002.

I am grateful to the Stage Management Association for assistance in tracing Jan Moles, partner of the late Dot Tenham, who in turn enabled me to contact Paul Pyant who had made the recordings and provided me with access to the tapes and the RADA documentation compiled by Shirley Matthews.

Personal Collection of Gilli Bush-Bailey,
   c/o Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London:

Bailey, Bush, unpublished teaching notes, from the
Webber Douglas Academy of Music and Drama, London, c1950.

Belloc, Hilaire, *The Four Men* (1951)

Long, Reginald, *Said The Spider* (c1950)

Novello, Ivor, *Full House* (c1950)

Sharp, Margery, *The Foolish Gentlewoman* (c1950)

Valency, Maurice, *The Madwoman of Chaillot* (1951)

Williams, Emlyn, *Night Must Fall* (c1950)

I am grateful to Gilli Bush-Bailey for access to this private family collection of prompt scripts from London productions on which Bush Bailey was Stage Director, and particularly the teaching notes compiled by him when lecturing at the Webber Douglas Academy of Speech and Drama.

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