

Introduction

by Grace Ioppolo

In 1619, the celebrated actor Edward Alleyn founded Dulwich College, a boys' school originally called 'God's Gift of Dulwich College', as part of his charitable foundation, which also included a chapel and twelve almshouses.¹ As part of his estate, Alleyn left thousands of pages of his personal professional papers as well as those of his father-in-law and business partner, the entrepreneur Philip Henslowe, to the College in perpetuity. Some of the papers, including the invaluable account book of theatrical expenses now known as Henslowe's Diary, suffered minor damage over the centuries. Yet these papers recording playhouse construction, theatre company management, the relationships of actors and dramatists with their employers, and the interaction of royal and local officials in theatre performance and production remained largely intact. Although Henslowe's Diary and other original volumes such as the play-text of *The Telltale* retained their original bindings, thousands of loose documents, including muniments, deeds, leases, indentures, contracts, letters, and receipts remained uncatalogued and in their original state (included folded into packets, as in the case of letters). Scholars and theatre professionals such as David Garrick, Edmond Malone, John Payne Collier and J. O. Halliwell made use of Dulwich College's library in the 18th and 19th centuries, sometimes borrowing and then not returning bound volumes and loose manuscripts to use in their research on the theatre history of Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

In the 1870s, the governors of Dulwich College accepted the offer of George F. Warner, a keeper of manuscripts at the British Museum, to conserve and catalogue this collection of the single most important archive of documents relating to 16th and 17th century performance and production. Warner worked with British Museum staff to rebind the bound

¹ On Alleyn's achievements in establishing his charitable institutions and for an excellent history of the College, see Jan Piggott, *Dulwich College: A History, 1616-2008* (London: Dulwich College, 2008).

volumes and repair manuscripts that had suffered damage. He also catalogued loose documents and muniments and bound them into volumes on particular topics, although he left large-sized muniments unbound after their conservation. Thus, for example, correspondence and documents about the theatre were bound together in the volume MSS I, and similar documents relating to Henslowe and Alleyn's activities as the joint-masters of the royal game of animal baiting were bound together in the volume MSS II. In 1881 Warner produced the still invaluable *Catalogue of Manuscripts and Muniments of Dulwich College of Alleyn's College of God's Gift at Dulwich*. When Warner and his successor Francis B. Bickley, editor of the second series of the *Catalogue* (printed in 1903), had completed their task, the 'Alleyn Papers', as they were now called, comprised 27 bound volumes of manuscripts and three series of loose muniments. About one-third of these volumes and muniments covered Henslowe's and Alleyn's theatrical businesses, with the other papers detailing the two men's non-theatrical business and personal activities, as well as the later history of the College.

In the last three centuries, scholars have made wide use of only a limited number of the Alleyn papers, notably Henslowe's Diary (MSS VII), the 1567 partnership deed between Henslowe and John Cholmley to build the Rose playhouse (Muniment 16), the 1600 contract between Henslowe and Alleyn with Peter Street to build the Fortune playhouse (Muniment 22), Alleyn's 'part' for the title role in Robert Greene's play *Orlando* (MSS I, Article 138; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-138/01r.html>), and the playhouse 'plot' of *The Second Part of the Seven Deadly Sins* (MSS XIX). Remarkably, the Diary, or more properly 'account-book', kept by Alleyn from 1617 to 1622 has received very little attention or use, even though Warner's work had encouraged William Young, one of the College's governors, to produce in 1889 the two volume work *The History of Dulwich College Down to the Passing of the Act of Parliament Dissolving the Original Corporation, 28th August 1857; with A Life of the Founder, Edward Alleyn, and An Accurate Transcript of*

his Diary, 1617-1622. Young produced a ‘diplomatic’, and thus unedited, transcript of the Diary in Volume 2 of this *History*, but he offered very little commentary and largely repeated the limited discussion of Alleyn’s life and career offered by Warner in his *Catalogue*. That Young’s two-volume work had a limited printing and had the Diary edition within it, rather than in an independent volume, seems to have contributed to scholars’ lack of knowledge of the Diary and its tremendous significance in detailing the everyday life of an eminent actor who became an important philanthropist, and, more simply, a social, political financial and cultural historian of early 17th century English life.

The Manuscript

When Alleyn’s Diary was rebound in the 1880s, along with all the other loose and previously bound manuscripts, under the supervision of George Warner, it became MSS IX of the Alleyn Papers. But as its original cover notes, the Diary’s earlier shelf-mark at Dulwich College was F.7.23, at least from 1729 when the library was first catalogued. The Diary’s 1880s binding is full morocco with cross-hinge decorative papers on the inside covers. The original make-up and binding of this volume cannot be determined now, for, as part of the rebinding process, the pages were cut apart and mounted individually onto guards, suggesting that the original binding had decayed. A recent investigation of the original binding of MSS VII, Henslowe’s Diary, a similar type of account book to Alleyn’s Diary, demonstrated that it was comprised of a pre-bound notebook rather than gatherings of individual leaves. Thus it is reasonable to assume that Alleyn also purchased a pre-bound notebook to use for his Diary. The watermark of a crowned pot typical of the early 17th century is consistent throughout the volume, so Alleyn most likely did not add many, if any, extra leaves to the volume. Warner preserved and tipped into the volume the notebook’s original cover of a limp vellum manuscript, comprising the counterpart to a lease dated 8 July

1603 by Alleyn to the wood-mongers William Penfold and William Champion for the use of a wharf in Southwark for a period of twelve years at an annual rent of £26. Alleyn Papers Muniment 161 records that this lease, or part of it, was immediately re-assigned by Penfold and Champion to the dyer James Pratt, who reassigned it on 21 Mary 1610 to the dyer William Grave for eleven years at an annual rent of £12. This vellum cover of Alleyn's Diary, recycled from a lease, would most likely have been stitched through the spine of this pre-bound notebook of blank paper.

The front of the original vellum cover carries two titles in two different hands. The earlier, and now quite faint, hand, probably dating from the 17th century, writes, 'The Founder's Note Book of Accounts from October 1617 to September 1622'. Immediately below it the title of 'The Founder's Book of Accounts from October 1617 to September 1622', has been written in the same early 18th century hand as the notation of the shelf-mark 'F.7.23'. Neither of these sets of notations is in the hand of Edward Alleyn. The back of the cover carries the title 'Diary of Edward Alleyn Founder of Dulwich College' written in a print hand. Above the title is a drawing of a circle within a square that may be contemporary with the manuscript, and possibly in the hand of Alleyn. Other words and marks probably scribbled over the years in pen and pencil in various hands on the back cover are no longer legible.

The manuscript measures 15cm by 39 cm and comprises 62 folios mounted on guards, giving 124 pages of text. As each page consists of columns, it has a number of vertical and horizontal rules. At the top of each page, Alleyn has carefully drawn a horizontal rule, above which he writes a running head that names the month or months covered on that page of accounts. For example, on f. 9 recto when beginning a new page, he writes 'October 1617' as the running head, as he does on f. 9 verso. However, as the accounts on f. 9 verso run through the next month, he later adds 'November' after his running head of 'October 1617'. On

occasion Alleyn either gives only the month without the year or does not provide either. But he routinely draws a number of vertical rules from the top to the bottom of the page. On the extreme left of the page, he draws two rules to create a narrow column in which he later draws the astrological symbol for the day of the week; on the left of the first rule he writes the number of the day of the month. To the extreme right of the page, he draws three vertical rules to make two columns enclosed by rules and a column on the far right with a rule on the left only. Into these three columns, which are headed ‘*li*’ (for ‘*libri*’ that is, ‘£’), ‘*s*’ (for ‘*solidus*’, that is, shilling) and ‘*d*’ (for ‘*denarius*’, that is, pence) on the line with the running head, Alleyn enters his figures on each line on the Diary. Thus he can record the amount spent for every item on each day. After each day’s notations, Alleyn usually draws a short rule to separate these notations from the notations for the following day. Occasionally he omits the rule or draws unusually long ones. Between the extreme left and right column, Alleyn lists the item for which he is recording his expense, and notations that end before the first right column are usually followed by a flush right rule. So, for example a typical line, as on 4v for November, 1617, is spaced as follows:

24	☾	Water to y ^e temple to meet S ^r E Bowyer	0 0 4
		given my barber-----	0 0 6

Here Alleyn records his entire expenses for the day: 4 shillings paid to the ferryman to take him from the south to the north bank of the Thames so that he could travel to the Inner Temple law courts; and 6 shillings for a haircut, which is followed by a rule to separate this entry from that for November 25th. This entry does not mean that these were his only activities that day. Instead, they are the only activities that required him to spend money.

Alleyn summarizes his accounts every three months in his quarterly statement, in which he itemizes every expense over the course of this period in a series of lists. Thus he

repeats in a page or two of lists all of the individual expenses that he recorded individually over the many pages of notations for those three months. Often he uses double columns of lists. Whether single or double, these lists are usually headed 'Some off the quarter is in generall' with the total figure given to the right, followed by 'whereoff in *particuler* as followeth', with the total figure repeated. Below these headings, the lists of expenses are usually divided into the following categories: 'The Colledge', 'Aparell', 'Howshowld', 'Lawe' and 'Rent', with other categories, such as 'Debts repairing or Building' added as necessary. Each category of lists has its own total sum noted, and after the final list Alleyn again presents the total sum of all the lists. These quarterly statements are usually concluded with a statement by Alleyn such as 'Blessed be y^e Lorde gode Euer Lasting The giuer of all Amen'. Occasionally Alleyn has a series of numbers at the end of the statement that show him adding up the running sets of numbers, but he seems mostly to have done his addition and subtraction on separate pieces of paper.

Alleyn occasionally makes marginal notations in the left or right margins, and when he does so they are usually of great importance. When he wishes to remind himself of a debt someone has to repay, or has already repaid, him, he draws a large pointing index finger in either margin. Although the Diary does not usually record events for which he did not have expenses, he later notes in the margin of the day of their occurrence certain significant events, such as two events in 1619: the death of Queen Anne and the burning of Whitehall Palace. His most devastating marginal notation comes in 1621 with the burning of his Fortune playhouse. Alleyn also makes personal notations within the text, as with his visit with his wife to Somerset House in London to see Queen Anne's hearse and to watch her funeral procession, but these notations are made to record the expenses involved.

Alleyn's handwriting is a standard, although sometimes sloppy, late 16th and early 17th italic with occasional use of secretary letters forms for 'e' and 'h' particularly. He uses

the conventional abbreviations of the age such as ‘M^f:’ for ‘Master’, ‘y^e’ for ‘the’ (with the ‘y’ a holdover from the Old English ‘thorn’ or þ, signifying ‘th’), ‘w^t’ or ‘wth’ for ‘with’, and ‘&’ for ‘and’ (a full list appears below in the Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations). Alleyn’s most common abbreviations relate to the payment or receipt of money: ‘R:’ for ‘Received’ and ‘dd’ for ‘delivered’. In addition, he used the standard punctuation of a colon to signify an abbreviation for a name or title, for example ‘Jo:’ for ‘John’, ‘L:’ or ‘Lo:’ for ‘Lordship’, and ‘La:’ for ‘Lady’. Most notably, he consistently uses a ‘p’ crossed on the descender, signifying ‘per’ or ‘pro’ or ‘par’; thus ‘parish’ could be abbreviated ‘pish’ and ‘part’ as ‘pte’. Alleyn also occasionally used a looped ‘e’, a common abbreviation for an ‘es’ ending on a word such as ‘tithes’ (often with the looped e as a superscript).

Although by modern standards Alleyn’s spelling looks uneducated or illiterate, throughout the Diary he uses many conventional spellings of his age, yet he is not consistent in spelling the same word. For example, he spells ‘buckram’, a type of cloth, as ‘buckeram’, ‘buckrem’, ‘buckrome’ and ‘buckerum’. Similarly, he spells ‘canvas’ as ‘cavas’, ‘cancase’, ‘canves’ and ‘canyans’. Although some spellings are clearly phonetic, there are very few words that are unintelligible. For example, the unusual spelling of ‘kachches’ clearly means from the context door ‘catches’ (that is, locks or hinges). On occasion he seems to be writing in haste and does not finish a word, so that when he means ‘here’, for example, he has written ‘he’ or ‘her’ without signalling that these are abbreviations. As was also typical of the age, he spells a person’s name in a variety of ways, so that he variously notes the alsmwoman Alice Lewis as ‘Aylec Lewi’, ‘Aylec Lewis’, ‘Ayles Lewi’ and ‘Ayles Lewis’. Not surprisingly, Alleyn offers alternate spellings of his surname when noting his brother, nephew and other male relatives named Alleyn. Given that the spelling of numerous now-archaic terms used by Alleyn for farming or domestic arrangements matches spellings given in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Alleyn’s writing seems fairly educated and sophisticated.

All in all, the format, style, spelling, presentation and contents of the Diary repeatedly demonstrate that Alleyn took exceptional care in being precise, consistent and legible in recording his daily affairs from 1617 to 1622. That his foundation deeds and other documents for Dulwich College insisted that all of his papers, and those inherited from Henslowe, be kept together in perpetuity at the College further suggests that he saw his Diary and the other papers as important historical documents that would be used for generations to come.

Alleyn's Life before 1617

By 1617, Alleyn had retired from a life of great fame as an actor and financial success as a theatrical entrepreneur in order to become a gentleman farmer and philanthropist.² Born on 1 September 1566 in the parish of St Botolph without Bishopsgate in the City of London, Alleyn appears to have eventually followed the professions of both his father Edward, who probably staged plays as an innkeeper and had some connections at court as a porter to the Queen, and his brother John, an actor with the Lord Admiral's Men.³ Alleyn's first recorded association with the professional theatre comes in an indenture in the papers of the council of Leicester dated 3 March 1583 in which he is named among the Earl of Worcester's Men.⁴ From 1589 to 1591, he is recorded in MSS I, Articles 2-5 (<http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-002/01r.html> and ff) as buying either alone or with his

² This discussion of Alleyn's and Henslowe's lives and careers draws primarily from George F. Warner's Introduction to *Catalogue of the Manuscripts and Muniments of Alleyn's College of God's Gift at Dulwich College* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1881), William Young's Introductions to *The History of Dulwich College*, 2 volumes (Edinburgh, Morrison & Gibb, 1889); Francis B. Bickley's Introduction to *Catalogue of the Manuscripts and Muniments of Alleyn's College of God's Gift at Dulwich*, Second Series (London: published by the Governors of Dulwich College, 1903); as well as the following works, all of which draw on the work of Warner, Bickley, and Young: E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 volumes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 2:296-299; G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 volumes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941-1968), 2:346-49; G. L. Hosking, *The Life and Times of Edward Alleyn* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1952); Piggott, *Dulwich College, A History, 1616-2008*; this last volume has the most recent and best discussion of both men's lives and careers. John Payne Collier's publications on Henslowe and Alleyn, including *The Life of Edward Alleyn* (London: The Shakespeare Society, 1853) incorporates Collier's forgeries in the Alleyn Papers and cannot be trusted.

³ Thomas Fuller in *The Worthies of England who for parts and learning have been eminent in the several counties* (London: Printed by J.G.W.L. and W.G. for Thomas Williams, 1662) pp. 223-4, claims that Alleyn 'was bred a Stage-Player' but there seems no basis for this claim.

⁴ Young, 2:3-4.

brother the plays, instruments and apparel of other actors, possibly signalling an intention to re-sell these items or to use them to form another acting company. From at least the early 1590s Alleyn appears to be part of the Lord Strange's Men and by 1594 is a leading member of the Lord Admiral's Men, formed largely from members of Strange's Men. At least by 22 October 1592, when Alleyn marries Joan Woodward, the step-daughter of Philip Henslowe, Alleyn is firmly and probably exclusively in a business partnership with Henslowe. In fact, it is possible that the two men had been working together some years earlier, especially as Henslowe paid for the construction of the Rose playhouse in 1587 and continued to manage it during the periods in which Alleyn performed in it as a member of Strange's and the Admiral's Men.

Alleyn's skill as an actor was evidently remarkable: Thomas Fuller repeats the praise of many of Alleyn's contemporaries in stating that Alleyn was 'the *Roscus* of our age, so acting to the life that he made any part (especially a Majestick one) to become him'.⁵ In 1597, Henslowe notes in his Diary that Alleyn has 'leaft [p]layinge',⁶ possibly so that the two men could cope with the rapid success of their various enterprises, including property development in London, Sussex, Yorkshire and elsewhere. Alleyn and his wife spent some months in 1598 at the home of Arthur Langworth in Sussex,⁷ but otherwise he appears to have remained mostly in London. On 8 January 1600 Henslowe and Alleyn contracted Peter Street, the master carpenter who had constructed the Globe playhouse in 1599 from the remains of the Theatre in Shoreditch, to build the Fortune Playhouse, also in Shoreditch. This contract, comprising Alleyn Papers Muniment 22 (<http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/Muniments-Series-1/Group-022/01r.html>), specifies the building's size, measurements and layout, particularly emphasizing how it should diverge from those of the

⁵ Fuller, p. 223.

⁶ Alleyn Papers MSS VII, f. 43 recto; see R.A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert, *Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: University Press, 1961, rpt 2002), p. 83.

⁷ See Henslowe's letter to Alleyn, sent to Langworth's home, MSS II, Article 1 and 2.

Globe.⁸ This suggests that Alleyn and Henslowe had closely examined the Globe, probably during play performances, and noted the ways in which its structural weaknesses, possibly including sightlines, should not be carried over into the Fortune. Thus the two men were not only shrewd businessmen in terms of receiving the highest return on their investment but adept at adapting existing structures into the best possible use by others, including in this case actors and audiences.

Alleyn came out of retirement for the opening of the Fortune in late 1600, apparently at the request of Queen Elizabeth whom the Lord Admiral claimed was so ‘well pleased’ with Alleyn’s acting that ‘sondrye tymes’ she signified her pleasure that Alley ‘should revive the same agayne’. She also commended the ‘acceptable service, which my saide servant and his Companie have doen and presented’ to ‘her greate lykeinge and contentment, as well at this last Christmas as att sondrie other tymes’. Elizabeth insisted on giving the Admiral’s Men ‘a speciall regarde of favor in their proceedings’ (MSS I, Article 29 and 28; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-029/01r.html> & <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-028/01r.html>).⁹ While his career on stage for Strange’s and the Admiral’s Men had included such iconic tragic roles as Doctor Faustus, Tamburlaine and Barabas (in *The Jew of Malta*), his roles at the Fortune seemed largely to come in comedies, histories and Biblical plays, judging from the Fortune’s repertory in its opening years. Whether the Admiral’s Men deliberately presented at the Fortune a repertory significantly different to that of their chief rivals, the Chamberlain’s Men at the Globe (at that time featuring the great tragedies and later the romances of Shakespeare) is not clear. But the Admiral’s Men, which came under the patronage of Prince Henry, Prince of Wales, in 1603, enjoyed a privileged position along with the Chamberlain’s Men, under

⁸ On the Fortune, see Julian Bowsher, *Shakespeare’s London Theatre: Archaeology, History and Drama* (London: Museum of London Archaeology, 2012), pp. 96-103.

⁹ These comments come a letter, dated 12 January 1599/1600 by the Lord Admiral to the Justices of Middlesex to allow the construction of the Fortune; his second letter, dated 8 April 1600 again stresses that the Queen had been ‘well pleased heeretofere at tymes of recreation with the services of Edward Alleyn and his Companie

the patronage of the King from the same year, particularly in terms of preferment in performances at court. Both Henslowe and Alleyn had held various positions at court and in London, and after many attempts beginning in the 1590s, they finally acquired in 1604 the joint Mastership of the Royal Game of Bulls, Bears and Mastiff Dogs (MSS II, Article 5; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-2/Article-005/01r.html>), giving them the sole right to stage animal baiting events for the royal family.

Alleyn's last documented performance was apparently in the role of the '*Genius Urbis*', or the Genius of the City, in *The Magnificent Entertainment Given to King James*, written by Ben Jonson and Thomas Dekker and performed on 15 March 1604 as James and his court processed through London.¹⁰ Although Alleyn may have hoped for a knighthood from James, none was ever granted him, possibly due to his connections to the theatre and animal baiting.¹¹ However, Alleyn continued to remain active in civic affairs in Southwark, serving, as Henslowe had, as a church-warden at St Saviour's Church (which later became Southwark Cathedral). Henslowe's records especially suggest that he made property deals after hearing privileged information from other St Saviour's and local Southwark officials, and Alleyn most likely did the same. At least until Henslowe's death on 6 January 1616, Alleyn assisted him with his various enterprises, including financial control over the Lady Elizabeth's Men, which resulted in the actors' drawing up articles of grievance against Henslowe.¹² After Henslowe died, Alleyn sorted out the debts owed to Henslowe in a manner that appeared to be agreeable to these actors while at the Hope.¹³ No such grievances seem to have soured Alleyn's relationships with colleagues: between 1592 and 1616, Alleyn was praised by his former colleagues Thomas Nashe, Thomas Dekker, Ben Jonson and Thomas

¹⁰ See Piggott, p. 9.

¹¹ See Hosking, p. 198-99; Piggott, p. 32.

¹² See MSS I, Articles 68-102, 104-106.

¹³ See MSS I, Article 107; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-107/01r.html>

Heywood, among others, for his generosity, kindness and accomplishments as an actor.¹⁴

Henslowe and Alleyn's joint mastership of royal animal baiting and their other enterprises, including the purchase and rental of property and buildings in various areas of London, appeared to have proved so financially lucrative that Alleyn was free to pursue one of his chief aims of establishing a 'hospital' or charitable institution. By at least 25 October 1605, Alleyn had begun to take measures to acquire property in Dulwich, negotiating the purchase for £5000 from Sir Francis Calton of the manor of Dulwich, its house 'Hall Place', and its lands, tenements and rents. The two men appeared to finalize the agreement on 8 May 1606,¹⁵ although each would continue for many years to dispute these arrangements. Alleyn also began to acquire the freehold of the manor as well as other Dulwich houses and parcels of land as they became available from others, including Sir John Bowyar and Thomas Calton, and Alleyn thereby acquired a sizable estate surrounding Dulwich manor. Alleyn and his wife Joan finally moved permanently from their house fronting the Thames in Southwark to Dulwich in 1613.

As noted in Muniment 558 (<http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/Muniments-Series-3/Group-558/01r.html>), Alleyn entered into an agreement on 17 May, 1613 with the bricklayer John Benson to build upon 'Dulwich Greene' in the parish of Camberwell 'a Chappell, a Schole howse, and twelve Almsehowses'. These buildings would house a master, warden, four fellows, six elderly poor brothers and six elderly poor sisters, all unmarried and aged 60 or older (and who were required to take on household chores),¹⁶ and twelve poor scholars, to be aged at their entry between 6 and 8 years old and who stayed until they were no older than 18. Alleyn was particularly generous in choosing to offer education to boys and housing for elderly people nominated by the four parishes associated with his life: St Boltoph's, Bishopgate, where he was born; St Giles, Cripplegate, near the Fortune playhouse;

¹⁴ Chambers, 1:297-98.

¹⁵ See Alleyn Papers, Muniment 471.

¹⁶ See Hosking, p. 204-5.

St Saviour's in Southwark, his previous home for many years; and Camberwell, which included Dulwich.¹⁷ In fact, the clergyman responsible for nominating candidates from St Botolph's church was Stephen Gosson, the author of the infamous anti-theatrical tract of *The School of Abuse* in 1579, with whom Alleyn apparently had a cordial relationship, judging from his letters from Gosson (beginning with <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-138/01r.html>).¹⁸ The construction of Dulwich Chapel, almshouses and College was completed in 1616, with the Chapel consecrated on 1 September 1616 by George Abbott, Archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁹ Edward Young was named as the first schoolmaster and was succeeded on 30 September 1617 by John Harrison, when pensioners and students began to be selected. But as recorded in Alleyn's Diary, it would take another two years for the official opening of the College and the royal permission necessary to ensure that it would survive in perpetuity.

The Diary

In his previous account book, the 'Memorandum-book' (MSS VIII), Alleyn used 124 pages to cover the years from 1594 to 1616, but he records occasional expenses only and not those occurred daily. This book should more properly be termed a notebook, as in addition to notations of expenses, Alleyn includes several 'evidences' to be used in court cases, as well as medicinal recipes and other personal items. However, as this book is a small octavo, it could be carried by Alleyn as he travelled to conduct various businesses, unlike the large and heavy Diary which was most likely kept at Hall Place. This Memorandum book is additional to his other memorandum book (MSS I, Article 101; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-101/01r.html>), which he calls a 'building book' in the Diary, comprised of 15 folios that record building expenses in 1614 and 1615. Although this

¹⁷ Young, 1: 30.

¹⁸ See Alleyn Papers MSS 3, Articles 70, 76 and 91.

¹⁹ See Piggott, p. 30.

smaller memorandum book uses the same format as the Diary in listing expenses, it lacks columns and usually does not offer dates.

That Alleyn used a new format in the Diary after 1616 may be due to the significant events of that year. At Henslowe's death on 6 January, Alleyn inherited not only Henslowe's papers but his share of their many joint businesses, including the management of the Fortune playhouse, the freehold of which Alleyn had purchased on 30 May 1610 (as recorded in Muniment 38; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/Muniments-Series-1/Group-038/01r.html>). Their financial interests in the Rose playhouse, for which they did not hold the freehold, had lapsed and Alleyn had sold his share of the Bear Garden to Henslowe in February 1611.²⁰ Given these complicated financial deals and the fact that Henslowe's will was challenged by his nephew,²¹ it may seem surprising that Alleyn's account-keeping before 1617 was occasional. However, it may be that prior to 1616, Alleyn depended on Henslowe to track their daily joint business activities in Henslowe's Diary, which covers the period 1592-1604, and in numerous other loose documents dating from after that period. But after Henslowe's death Alleyn recognized the need to begin keeping his own daily account book, which he then started in the following year.

While Henslowe's Diary records an extraordinary professional life, Alleyn's Diary records a largely ordinary, and occasionally extraordinary, private life. Although much of the Diary necessarily records the expenses of founding and managing Dulwich College, and the already established Chapel and almshouses, these expenses are often inseparable from those of Alleyn's everyday life. He documents nearly every day from 29 September 1617 to 1 October 1622 and in the process illustrates how he lived his life on a daily basis: where he travelled, whom he knew and dealt with, what he ate (as well as how and where he ate it), what he and his wife Joan wore, and even what medicines they took. Thus the Diary reveals

²⁰ Warner, p. xxv. On the Rose, see Bowsher, pp. 68-81.

²¹ See Piggott, p. 22.

aspects of his domestic life and household, his social and political circle, his personal friends and professional contacts, and how he spent his considerable wealth.

Alleyn lists expenses for an astonishingly wide variety of goods and services, including the acquisition and maintenance of land, buildings and gardens, the care of all types of livestock (even including pigeons), and the purchase and preparation of food (especially for dinner parties), as well as the costs of everyday household items. For example, his purchase of screws ('skrwes'), binding rods, leather stirrups, herbs and seeds appear alongside those of various types of food (with a pound of sugar costing £1), as well as clothing and textiles—including whalebone for Joan's 'bodyes' (i.e., bodice). For example, on 7 May 1619 (<http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/032r.html>) he has itemised his expense of £1 17s 11d for the coats to be worn by the 'poore schollers', probably at the opening in September of Dulwich College, where Alleyn would provide them with a free education. His wife's red petticoat with expensive black velvet and his cloth jerkin and a cloak with silk basting may also have been ordered for the College's opening. Other joyous events are also recorded, for Alleyn notes annually in the text his birthday and wedding anniversary, as well as Christmas and New Year's Day dinner parties and other events such as baptisms and weddings of friends, tenants and associates. Also recorded in the text are the gifts given and received for such occasions, demonstrating in rich detail the ways in which ordinary Londoners valued material culture.

In fact, Alleyn seemed particularly to enjoy evenings of good food, music and company at his home. Evidently proficient on the lute,²² Alleyn records that he purchases and takes special care of musical instruments, including a chapel organ and 'fifes', or flutes, belonging to the College. He also dines a number of young preachers, some of whom are friends of friends. Not surprisingly these men often went on to careers as prominent

²² See Henslowe's letter to Alleyn, MSS I, Article 13, mentioning Alleyn's lute-books.

clergymen and religious authors. In addition, neighbours and local officials whom he entertains later established careers as members of Parliament or local justices of the Peace, as well as leading figures on the royalist side during the Civil War. But of all his many guests, he appeared to enjoy most the company of his colleagues and collaborators in the theatre, dining frequently over the years with members of Prince Henry's men, including Will Bird, Francis Grace, Richard Gunnell, Edward Juby, and William Parr, now performing as Palgrave's Men, to whom he leased the Fortune playhouse in October 1618 for £200 a year. (Muniments 56-58; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/Muniments-Series-1/Group-056/01r.html> and ff.).²³

Alleyn's friendship and compassion stretched beyond his former theatrical colleagues, for he names at least one person, the scrivener 'Bowlton', who was incarcerated for debt in the Marshalsea prison and had appealed to Alleyn for relief. Alleyn eases Bowlton's 'great povertye' by sending him 10 shillings (31 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/031r.html>). Yet the Diary also makes clear that Alleyn demanded high standards from those he aided, including the alms-people and students. Drunkenness, fornication, 'uncharity', failure to attend church service, laziness and other offences, including marrying without permission, could result in the first instance in a fine or rebuke, but in further instances in being stocked and eventually expelled.²⁴ However, given the generosity shown by and to him in the Diary, Alleyn seemed to have been a very forgiving and pious man.

Alleyn apparently wielded considerable influence not only over those who broke rules and laws but those who made and enforced them. He notes on a number of occasions that he dined with Privy Councillors and their clerks before, as well as after, they ruled on his own cases in the Star Chamber, as on 31 October 1617 when he 'went to London to y^c Lord

²³ See Alleyn Papers Muniments 56-58.

²⁴ Hosking, pp. 205-6.

Treasurers, supper att youngs ordinary [pub] with ye starr chamber men' (3 verso; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/003v.html>). Alleyn also admits to manipulating the legal system in more minor ways, for example by giving 5 shillings to a bailiff on 19 December 1617 'in gratuitie for keeping me off Juries' (5 verso; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/005v.html>). Such notations should not suggest that Alleyn was corrupt but that he knew how to deal with a political and justice system that expected bribes in return for favourable judgements.

However, not all of his relationships remained cordial, for the Diary also records lawsuits for which he was compelled to issue writs to defendants, usually for the repayment of overdue loans or rents, or for which he served as defendant. Alleyn's finances seem to have been strained at times over the years of 1617 to 1622, probably due to extra expenses for the his charitable foundation, so perhaps he saw these lawsuits as necessary for his ability to aid the many people dependent on his financial support. At the very least, Alleyn's Diary shows a litigious culture in which financial rights were seriously protected and enforced. Despite such problems with former friends and business associates, his Diary shows that he went to great lengths to continue his personal and professional relationships with those among whom he had previously lived in Southwark, for many continue in his employ at Dulwich. Alleyn's sense of loyalty and leadership can further be seen in his repeated assistance of local Dulwich people whom he paid for short- or long-term work: he particularly notes that he employs as day-labourers the wives, children and other relatives of the tenants who have leased fields from his manor.

For all the richness of detail of his life at Dulwich, Alleyn's Diary shows us unique insights into life outside Dulwich. In particular, his notations particularly itemise his frequent travel to London from his home in Dulwich, including the cost of crossing the Thames by ferry from the south to the north bank. On 10 May, 1619, for example, he travelled by horse

to Gray's Inn, near Holborn, at the cost of 4*d*; an added expense is for 'horse-standing' (i.e., holding a horse), as on 15 May, when he paid Matthias 1 shilling. Throughout, Alleyn cites dinners at a number of taverns, including the Mermaid, Cardinal's Hat, Feathers, Three Tuns, and Bell, providing a virtual map of his movements in London. In addition, he continued his life as a property developer outside of Dulwich. Prior to his purchase of the manor of Dulwich, Alleyn had purchased the manors of Lewisham in 1600 and Kennington in 1604, both of which he immediately leased out.²⁵ All three purchases of manors mark Alleyn as a successful and influential member of the gentry, whose concerns and interests were carefully considered by a widening array of officials inside and outside of the City of London.

In fact, the Diary suggests that Alleyn possessed the sort of prestige and stature that ambassadors, and clerics, and government officials recognised, and perhaps sought to share. At the very least, he was a popular companion or guest, whether of the Mayor of London or of the notorious Spanish Ambassador, Count Gondomar, whom Alleyn's friend Thomas Middleton would recklessly satirize in *A Game at Chess* in 1624. Alleyn records his acquisition of books on theology, witchcraft and languages, for example, and paintings, of Plantagenet kings, as well as his visits to the collections of others, including Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, who on 17 April 1618 showed Alleyn 'all His statues & picktures that came from Italy' (13 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/013r.html>). Alleyn would later record his visit to see the imprisoned Arundel at the Tower of London. Alleyn's other invitations, either in his official capacity as the master of blood sports or as a private individual, were to even more prestigious places, ranging from the Bishop of Westminster's palace in the Clink to Greenwich and Whitehall Palaces and other residences of King James I, particularly to overturn the objections of Sir Francis Bacon, the Lord Chancellor, to the foundation of Dulwich College. Bacon had explained to Sir George Villiers, the Marquess of

²⁵ Piggott, p. 29.

Buckingham, of Alleyn's proposed Dulwich 'hospital': 'I like well that Alleyn playeth the last act of his life so well' but Bacon professed to concerns about mortmain, a legal statute which allowed lands and properties to be seized and thereby decay after the owner's death.²⁶ As the Diary shows, Alleyn used his connections at court, riding on 13 July 1618 'to waned wher ye markques off buckinghame [George Villiers, the King's favourite] vnderooke ye Kings hand' for him on the letters patent for Dulwich College (18 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/018r.html>). Alleyn personally visited Bacon on 29 August 1618 and on 14 January 1619, finally noting on 27 May 1619 that he 'rode to grenewich & gott ye King's Hand' (32 verso; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/032v.html>). Bacon's signature as a Dulwich College Governor on the Foundation Deed (Muniment 584; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/Muniments-Series-3/Group-584/01r.html>) and his frequent presence in the Diary on less formal occasions testify to Alleyn's ability to maintain personal friendships with some of the King's most trusted officials.

As the Diary also shows, Alleyn visited a number of schools, including Winchester, Eton, and Hatton, and apparently studied the statutes of other schools, including Harrow, Repton, and St Paul's,²⁷ which he used as models for Dulwich College. But his greatest influence were the drawings of the *Orphanocomium* and *Gerontocomium*, the 'hospital' for orphans and elderly people in Amsterdam, Holland.²⁸ The consecration of Dulwich College on 13 September 1619 was celebrated, as Alleyn notes in his Diary (38 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/038r.html>), with a party and feast attended by the College's governors and supporters: Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam and Lord Chancellor; Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel; Edward, Lord Colonel Cecil; Sir John Howland, High Sheriff of Surrey, Sir Edmund Bowyer, Justice of the Peace for Surrey; Sir

²⁶ Cited in Warner, p. 172, note 4.

²⁷ See Hosking, p. 200.

²⁸ See Piggott, p. 33.

Thomas Grimes, Justice of the Peace for Surrey; Sir John Bodley, Justice of the Peace for Surrey; Sir John Tunstall, Justice of the Peace for Surrey; Inigo Jones, the King's surveyor (or architect); John Finch, afterwards Lord Keeper; Richard Talyeboys of the Inner Temple, Richard Jones, secretary to the Lord Chancellor, and John Anthony. All in all, Alleyn had as powerful friends and allies among the most important politicians in the realm, and he was shrewd enough to secure these men to support the school to which he had devoted his efforts.

Although retired from acting, Alleyn's Diary records that he still took an active interest in his theatrical investments. He not only leased the Fortune playhouse, for which he was the freeholder, to a company of actors, but he was an investor in the Palsgrave's men and Prince Charles' Men. After the Fortune burned down on 9 December 1621 (56 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/056r.html>), he put together a group of investors to rebuild the formerly square theatre made of timber as round and brick²⁹ and detailed the re-construction in the Diary from April to September 1622. He had also taken over Henslowe's interest in converting the Bear Garden into the Hope Theatre.³⁰ Yet other entries record his receipt of rent or shares in the Fortune Theatre and other leased properties, as well as visits to theatres such as the Red Bull, where on 3 October 1617, he received the sum of £3 6s 4d as his share in the play *The Younger Brother* (2 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/002r.html>). He also attended tilting at Whitehall, and the annual Lord Mayor's Show.³¹ Alleyn continued his fondness for theatre at Dulwich College, where the boys performed on Twelfth Night in 1621 and 1622.

In addition to noting his efforts on behalf of Dulwich College, as noted above, the Diary was also a place for Alleyn to record those remarkable historical events to which he had a personal, and familiar, connection, as on 12 January 1619 when Whitehall Palace burned down (27 verso; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/027v.html>); he

²⁹ See Hosking, pp. 181-82.

³⁰ On the Hope, see Bowsher, pp. 109-113.

³¹ See Warner's discussion of Alleyn's civic life in *Catalogue*, p. xxx.

had often performed in its Banqueting Hall. On 1 March 1619, he tersely writes in the margin, ‘4 in ye morning Ann died’ (29 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/029r.html>); on 6 April, he explains: ‘[I went] with my wife to somersett Howse to see ye Hearse of Queen Anne’ (31 verso; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/031v.html>). He carefully states on 13 May: ‘*memorandum*; the quens funeral was this day, after diner my wife & I went to see itt’ (32 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/032r.html>). Given Alleyn’s role as actor-manager of Prince Henry’s Men, and his frequent performances at court over the years in front of Anne, this would have been a poignant day for him. But also apparent here is Alleyn’s sense that his Diary was a witness to history that would be read by future generations, not just by the boys currently enrolled at Dulwich College.

Numerous other notable figures come to life in the pages of Alleyn’s Diary, including Sir Julius Caesar, the Master of the Rolls, Sir Edward Sackville, John Taylor the Water Poet, Sir Robert Sidney, brother of Sir Philip Sidney, as well as the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, Lancelot Andrews, who was the Bishop of Winchester, and John Donne, whose preaching in Camberwell Alleyn records on three occasions (27 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/027r.html> Alleyn also notes that he went to dinner on 4 September 1622 with a group of friends including Donne’s ‘dafter’, that is, his daughter Constance (61 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/061r.html>; 47 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/047r.html> and 60 recto; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-9/060r.html>). About a year later, and five months after the death of Joan, Alleyn married Constance, who was nearly forty years his junior. Donne’s apparent refusal to pay Constance’s dowry, called by Alleyn in a draft letter to Donne an ‘vnkind vnexspeckted and vnderdeserved denial of y^t common curtesie afforded to a frend’ (MSS3, Article 102; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article->

[138/01r.html](#)), caused a breach between Alleyn and Donne. Even such breaches allow us to connect the world of the early modern theatre with the world outside it, bringing both of them into vivid focus. With its minutiae and richness of detail, Alleyn's Diary is a remarkable bridge between and testament to those worlds. Even his quite ordinary expenditures on the costs of paper and scribal copying offer us records not available elsewhere. For example he pays from 8 to 12 pence per page for copies, and more than 4s for a ream of coarse paper, with a ream of fine paper costing slightly more. Alleyn also refers to the 'fayer copies' that he is having made, adding yet one more example of the contemporary use of the term, as distinct from 'foul papers'. So, from hiring cooks, gardeners, blacksmiths and scribes to dining with the Earl of Arundel and meeting with the Marquess of Buckingham and the Lord Chancellor, Alleyn's Diary is unique in this age for stretching from encounters with some of the most ordinary to the most powerful and sometimes notorious people in Jacobean England.

If Alleyn continued to keep a Diary after October 1622, it does not survive, and it is possible that with the rebuilding of the Fortune nearly complete in September 1622, he felt no need to continue to record his daily expenses. But the last three years of his remarkable life as a philanthropist can be documented through other records. As Fuller noted, 'as he out-acted others in his life, out did himself before his death'.³² On 2 June 1623, he was still famous and respected enough to ride with the Duke of Richmond, the Earls of Arundel, Pembroke, Montgomery, and Carlisle, and Inigo Jones and Sir Francis Bacon 'towards Winchester and Southampton, to take order for his majesty's entertainment with the prince and Lady Mary, whither it is said, the king intends to go and meet them'.³³ His beloved wife Joan died a few weeks later on 28 June 1623 and was buried in Dulwich Chapel on 1 July.³⁴ Alleyn married Constance Donne less than six months later on 3 December 1623, and seemed to have had three happy years with her before he died on 25 November 1626. In his will, he stated, 'My

³² Fuller, p. 233.

³³ Bentley, 2:349.

³⁴ Alleyn Papers, Volume 10, f. 19.

desire is without any vain funeral pomp or show to be interred in the quire of that chapel which God of his goodness hath caused me to erect and dedicate to the honor of my Saviour by the name of Christ's Chappell in God's Gift College'.³⁵ He left £1500 to Constance and made provision for the construction of almshouses in St Botolph's parish in Bishopsgate and in St Saviour's in Southwark, having already built almshouses in Cripplegate.³⁶ But because he died without any children from either of his marriages, Alleyn's wealth, and his remarkable archives, remained in the possession of Dulwich College. In the draft of a 1625 letter to his new father-in-law John Donne, Alleyn had stated, 'You called me a playn man; I desire allways so to be. . . My Heart & tong must goe to gether' (MSS 3, Article 102; <http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-3/Article-102/01r.html>). Surely in this Diary we see a man who was not plain at all but very rich indeed in language, heart and tongue.


Editorial Conventions

This edition takes as its model R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert's edition of *Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge University Press, 1961; rpt 2002), and thus it has been very conservative in making changes to the original text of this early modern account book. This edition is a 'diplomatic reprint' that represents the text exactly as it appears, except when not possible or convenient to do so in modern print (for example, in terms of spacing and font size). The edition preserves Alleyn's original, characteristic, and often inconsistent spelling. Rules between dated entries have been standardised, except when they are much longer than normal, in which case they are drawn to scale. Certain abbreviations, which appear repeatedly, such as 'p:' for 'pair', 'pd' for 'paid', 'w^t' for 'with', 'w^{ch}' for 'which', 'md:' for 'memorandum', and all words with macrons, as in 'dd' for 'delivered' and 'gent', have been

³⁵ Young, 2:40.

³⁶ Young, 2:40.

spelled out for ease of reading, with missing letters rendered in italics, as is conventional in modern manuscript transcription. Square brackets that mark missing letters have been used sparingly, and only to prevent confusion, as in ‘Tom dined he[re]’. Alleyn’s rounded brackets in the text and his occasional notations in the margin have been reproduced as closely as possible to their original location. Alleyn’s drawings of the astrological symbols for the days of the week and his occasional use of pointed index fingers for emphasis are also reproduced as closely as possibly in terms of their original position and size. They are as follows:

 [Sunday]

 [Monday]

 [Tuesday]

 [Wednesday]

 [Thursday]

 [Friday]

 [Saturday]

Footnotes are largely used to note alterations to the text, as, for example, when Alleyn scored out, corrected or added letters, words or passages. John Payne Collier’s occasional insertions in the 1830s or 1840s to the text, which were first identified by Warner, are also noted in the footnotes.

As digital images of the entire manuscript, as well as all of the theatrical papers in the Alleyn Papers at Dulwich College, are currently available on this website, this edition gives

the folio numbers of each page of the original manuscript so that readers can compare the transcription with the manuscript.