

Martin Slatiar and the Red Bull Playhouse

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ABSTRACT Built circa 1605 to compete with other “Shakespearean” playhouses, the Jacobean Red Bull playhouse is noted for its longevity and for slurs against its “Reputation.” Although it became the venue for Thomas Heywood’s middle-era plays and was the first theater to stage John Webster’s *The White Devil*, it has been neglected in theater history. In this essay, Eva Griffith builds on her earlier studies to explore the physical makeup and geographic context of the theater, reproducing hitherto unpublished sketches and surveys connected with its site. She shares further discoveries about the personnel of the playhouse—including Martin Slatiar, an actor and extraordinary personality whose history is intertwined with that of the Red Bull—and examines some of the political and legal contexts they negotiated to launch the enterprise. **KEYWORDS:** patronage and financing of Jacobean theater; Queen’s Servants company; Aaron Holland; brick construction of playhouses; Seckford Estate, Clerkenwell

☞ **THE RED BULL THEATER** was erected circa 1605 as a venue for the Queen’s Servants, a company that presented plays under the patronage of James I’s queen consort, Anna of Denmark. The theater is unique in early playhouse history because of its longevity, for it clearly survived the 1642 prohibition on playing in a way unlike other playhouses of its day. An active enterprise from the beginnings of the Stuart era, it staged surreptitious performances during the Civil War and Interregnum and produced entertainments briefly into the Restoration.¹ But we still have much to learn about this, the first home of Webster’s *The White Devil* and many of Thomas Heywood’s middle-era plays—a playhouse built in competition with the Globe.²

Ten years ago, I published evidence showing that the theater was located on ex-monastic land in Clerkenwell that, at that post-Reformation time, was part of “the

1. For its surreptitious performances, see, for example, Glynne Wickham, William Ingram, and Herbert Berry, *English Professional Theatre* [henceforth *EPT*] (Cambridge, 2000), entry 457a–k, pp. 587–90.

2. The Globe was built in 1599. By 1605, the company performing at the Globe was “the King’s men” (Shakespeare’s company); those about to perform at the Red Bull, “the Queen’s men” (Heywood’s).

Seckford estate.”³ This was land given to the Tudor bureaucrat Thomas Seckford, who in his will left the rental income from the land to fund his almshouse for the poor in his hometown of Woodbridge, Suffolk. I examined records concerning this land in the archives of Seckford’s charity, now housed in the Ipswich Suffolk Record Office. We knew that the actor Martin Slatiar and Aaron Holland, the main mover in the playhouse’s building project, had sublet the property from Anne Bedingfeild, widow of Eustace Bedingfeild of Holme Hale in Norfolk, and that their work was stopped by the Privy Council, probably during 1605. The likely date of that stoppage, coming in a year when the king proclaimed that new building had to be undertaken in brick alone, raises the possibility that the building was finished in brick; in that earlier article, I presented a survey in the Seckford archives showing that the yard was completely made of brick by 1679/80.

In this essay, in advance of a book, I present further evidence of the location and context of this Clerkenwell venue for entertainment, data about the shareholding behind it, its physical structure, environment, and development, and research on the main personalities involved with it. I examine a series of questions. When did the builder, Aaron Holland, first become involved in Clerkenwell? When was the Red Bull completed? What was the playhouse like and how did it develop over time? Could it be an early brick playhouse? What were its immediate surroundings like? G. E. Bentley famously dedicated a section of his entry on this playhouse to its “Reputation,” and I hope that, with an ever-better understanding of the contexts of the Red Bull, we will start to comprehend it as a truly important part of Shakespearean theater history.⁴

☞ Martin Slatiar and His Petition: Troubled Beginnings

Past critics have taken the actor Martin Slatiar’s petition to the Privy Council concerning a stoppage in the building of a playhouse as their cue to begin discussions of this theater. In the present essay, too, it is Martin Slatiar who acts as the fulcrum around which a range of issues concerning this playhouse can be balanced. From previous histories of the Red Bull, the name of Aaron Holland has been inextricably linked with that of the actor Slatiar and with Slatiar’s petition, dated to 1605.⁵ The petition tells us the Red Bull was under construction at that time, and it raises various questions about how this playhouse began.

3. Eva Griffith, “New Material for a Jacobean Playhouse: The Red Bull Theatre on the Seckford Estate,” *Theatre Notebook* 55 (2001): 5–23.

4. G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage* [henceforth *JCS*], 7 vols. (Oxford, 1941–68), 6:238–47.

5. Cecil Papers, MS 197, fol. 91 (2), Hatfield House, Hatfield, Hertfordshire; also available on microfilm at the British Library, BL microfilm M485/52/91 (2). There are several known spellings of the petitioner’s name—“Slatier,” “Slaughtier,” and “Slater”—this last has been most popular in research to date. For the purposes of this article I have chosen to spell his name “Slatiar,” as a) this is how it is spelled in the petition discussed, and b) he spells it this way in his own hand with the extra vowel sound (as “martin Slatyar”) in a bond concerning the orphan John Nicholls of 1603 (*Journal of the Court of Common Council*, no. 26 [1602–5], COL/CC/01/01/027, microfilm X109/67, London Metropolitan Archives [henceforth LMA]). However, the same hand is undoubtedly used when, on January 17, 1580/81, he spells it “martin Slater” as he writes out and signs his apprenticeship oath in the *Ironmongers Presentment book*, CLC/L/IB/C/008 MS 16981/1, Guildhall Library, London.

The theater's beginnings, then, may be presented as intertwined with the career of Martin Slatiar, an actor whose varied history, in many ways, reflects that of the playhouse with which he is linked.⁶ There are numerous records indicating Slatiar's earlier theater contributions. Some of these represent contexts that may explain why he was chosen to appeal to the Privy Council concerning the Red Bull. They also demonstrate just how ubiquitous and busy a man he was. Married to "Suzan Wilkinson" at St. Botolph, Aldgate, on May 1, 1594, Slatiar was recorded in Henslowe's theater accounts for that year. It seems that he moved his wife to Southwark, for his residence is certainly noted, from 1597, in the token books of St. Saviour in Southwark.⁷ Slatiar, with Edward Alleyn, was paid for Admiral's Men's performances at court in 1596.⁸ It is thought that he left this company in 1597, however. At the end of that year he was clearly in trouble with the players because Thomas Downton, a Henslowe associate, sued him for stealing a playbook worth twenty marks.⁹ In 1599, a man going by Slatiar's name was performing with Lawrence Fletcher before the royal family in Scotland and, if this is our Martin, he may well have met Ulric, Duke of Holstein, when the latter visited Edinburgh the year before.¹⁰ If so, this would be significant, for the petition written by Slatiar refers to the duke. Slatiar was involved in a host of activities between his appearance in Edinburgh and the writing of his petition. Most importantly, he was a payee for the Earl of Hertford's Men at the beginning of 1603, a fact that gains in relevance as we consider the circle around Queen Anna into the next reign.¹¹ Frances Seymour, Countess of Hertford, was one of two ladies of the queen's bedchamber. Was Martin Slatiar a significant addition to the Queen's Servants in the context of the new court influences gathering around the Stuart queen—her brother and her circle? As a citizen and ironmonger, on November 29, 1603, "martin Slatyar," as he spelled it himself, was party to a bond concerning John Nicholls, the son of Robert Nicholls, deceased.¹² And then, by

6. For other Martin Slatiar/Red Bull research, see Leeds Barroll, "Defining 'Dramatic Documents,'" *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* [henceforth *MaRDiE*] 9 (1997): 112–26; William Ingram, "Playhouses Make Strange Bedfellows: The Case of Aaron and Martin," *Shakespeare Studies* 30 (2002): 118–27; and Herbert Berry, "Building Playhouses, the Accession of James I, and the Red Bull," *MaRDiE* 18 (2005): 61–74.

7. Marriage record: LMA, P69/BOT2/A/01/MS9220; Bentley, *JCS*, 2:651; Mark Eccles, "Elizabethan Actors IV: S To End" *Notes & Queries* 238, n.s. 40 (1993): 165–76 at 169. Token books of 1597–1602: LMA, P92/SAV/246–252 (inc. 1602), LMA, [microfilm] X094/142; Bentley, *JCS*, 2:574; Eccles, "Elizabethan Actors IV," 169. In 1601, Slatiar's name is crossed out in the records for Bradshawe's Rents and replaced by that of Augustine Phillips. In 1602 Slatiar is at Norman's Rents, and in 1603 he is living in Shoreditch.

8. The National Archives [henceforth TNA], E351/543, membrane 12v; "Chamber Accounts: Payments to Players," in *Collections*, vol. 6, Malone Society Publications 115 (Oxford, 1961 [1962]): 1–89 at 29; E. K. Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage* [henceforth *ES*], 4 vols. (Oxford, 1923), 4:165; Eccles, "Elizabethan Actors IV," 169.

9. TNA, KB27/1351, membrane 83ov. Downton was awarded £10 10s in costs.

10. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable The Marquess of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House Hertfordshire*, ed. S. R. Scargill Bird et al., 24 vols. (London, 1883–1976), 8:43; Chambers, *ES*, 2:269–70; Ethel Carleton Williams, *Anne of Denmark* (Harlow, U.K., 1970), 60; Eccles, "Elizabethan Actors IV," 170.

11. TNA, E351/543, membrane 12; Chambers, *ES*, 4:167; Eccles, "Elizabethan Actors IV," 169.

12. LMA, COL/CC/01/01/027, fol. 143v; Eccles, "Elizabethan Actors IV," 170.

1604 or 1605, Slatiar became involved with Aaron Holland and his project to build the Red Bull playhouse.

Martin Slatiar's involvement with the theater leads us to one set of records that illuminate its history; the land on which the Red Bull was built offers another avenue for discovery. As noted above, the site had been part of the estate of Thomas Seckford, a Tudor master of the court of requests, who died in 1587. The income generated by renting this land funded an almshouse in Woodbridge, Suffolk, and part of this land was let to Anne Bedingfeild, née Draper—a married brewer's daughter in the City of London—who had inherited the lease from her father in 1576.¹³ That site included an inn—known “by the name of” the Red Bull—which was in turn sublet to Aaron Holland.¹⁴ According to Slatiar in his petition, it was Holland together with Slatiar who converted the yard of that inn into a theater—the Red Bull playhouse.

The petition, therefore, is the main evidence bringing Slatiar and this inn together. Mentioning Holland as partner with Slatiar in the building of an unnamed playing space, it was aimed at the Privy Council, which had ordered work on the building stopped. How do we know this playing space was the Red Bull? Although Holland had been associated with other venues for pleasure activities in the later sixteenth century, it is unlikely that the one mentioned in the petition was one of those, which were located in what we now know as the “West End” of London.¹⁵ Because of evidence in parish documents, we know that Holland concluded his activities west of the City by 1601; because of one other record, we know that he held the tenure of a Clerkenwell inn by 1602—presumably the Red Bull. This latter record is a controlment roll of that year that describes Holland as “Aron holland de Clerkenwelle in Com' Midds Inholder.”¹⁶ We also know he was attending Clerkenwell vestry meetings by June 1604.¹⁷ We learn that it was Anne Bedingfeild who had sublet the inn to Holland from a 1620s case in which a plaintiff against Holland, Thomas Woodford, described the arrangement between them.¹⁸ Because of the controlment roll, we now realize this arrangement must have been in place by 1602.

This makes the Red Bull by far the likeliest candidate for the playhouse mentioned in Slatiar's petition. The petition reads:

13. Original Seckford estate records include Thomas Seckford's will made August 1, 1587, and proved January 3, 1588 (TNA, PROB 11/72, quire 4) and the estate patent (TNA, C66/1291, membranes 37–39); and John Draper's will (TNA, PROB 11/58, quire 8).

14. See TNA, REQ2/411, box 2, 149, as transcribed by C. W. Wallace, “Three London Theatres of Shakespeare's Time,” *University of Nebraska Studies* 9 (1909): 291–397 at 303.

15. In 1594 he was described as controlling “a common Bouling Alley” in Drury Lane, where suspect persons were engaged in “dicing, Tabling and Carding”; TNA, KB 9/685/14. See also Eccles, “Elizabethan Actors IV,” 171; and LMA, MJ/SR/0355/38.

16. Holland is not recorded in the St. Mary le Strand churchwardens' accounts after Lady Day 1601. Controlment roll record, TNA, KB29/242, membrane 25 dorse (see also Eccles, “Elizabethan Actors IV,” 171).

17. St. James's Clerkenwell, Parish Vestry Minutes, 1590–1683, Islington Local History Centre, London. After this June 29, 1604, record (concerning how the preacher, Mr. Johnson, was “disadmitted”), Holland is listed present, or among those given parish roles, twelve more times.

18. TNA, REQ2/411, box 2, 149, now mostly unreadable. See Wallace, “Three London Theatres of Shakespeare's Time.”

To the right honorable the Lordes of his *Majesties* most honorable priuie counsell

The humble peticion of Martyn Slatiar one of her *Majesties* seruantes./

Most humbly shewing that whereas it pleased the right gracious the duke of Holstein to make choice of *your suppliant*, as by his Graces warrant appeareth, to selecte and gather a company of Comedians to attend his Grace here or elsewhere at his Comaundment, and hauing made choice of them beinge vnprouided of a howse to play in, as others of their profession haue: /

Your *suppliant* very willing to shew himself in the best manner he could for his Graces service, together with one Aaron Holland seruaunt to the right Honorable the Earle of devonshire, having ioyntly the lease of the howse betwixt them for Thirty yeeres hath alterd some stables and other roomes, beinge before a square Court in an Inne to turne them into galleries, first havinge in generall the parishes consent, whoe haue subscribed their names to a peticion already exhibited to *your* honors at the Counsell table with due consideracion for diuers causes, and especially towards the poore of the parish whoe hath allowed them Twenty shillings a moneth towards their maintenaunce And likewise for the amendinge and maintayninge of the pavementes and highe waies thereabouts. And *your suppliantes* haue bestowed vpon the same the summe of 500li./

Since *which* tyme, there is a *lettre* come from *your* Honorable Lordships to staie the finishinge of the same being all framed and almost sett vp to *your suppliantes* vtter vndoing foreuer without it shall please God to move *your* Honors hartes to pittie vs./

May it therefore please *your* Honors the premisses considered to graunt vnto *your* poore *suppliantes* *your* lawfull favours and allowaunces to finish the same, and to haue such priuielege as others of their qualitie haue. And the rather that many poore men are left destitute of lyveinge and are vtterly ouerthrowne foreuer./

And *your suppliantes* with the rest of the Company shall continually praie for *your* honors health and hapines long to continew./

Although the petition is undated, the reference to the Duke of Holstein makes it likely that it was written before June 1605. Slatiar claimed that he and Holland were building the playhouse for a company under the patronage of the duke. Holstein, the brother of Queen Anna, was visiting England from November 1604, but had disgraced himself at court by May 1605 so thoroughly that he felt impelled to leave the country,

and was never to return.¹⁹ We have some knowledge about what Slatiar was doing just before the duke's sojourn, which suggests the petition was probably not made before late 1604. In a memorandum dated January 10, 1603/4, concerning money for his attendance at a Newgate gaol delivery, a note is appended: "est in prisona [he is in prison]."²⁰ He is further recorded in a roll entry relating to his attendance, which concerned a crime of burglary on October 25, 1603. Slatiar was accused of harboring the criminals (who had stolen some clothes) on October 27, two days after the theft.²¹ The actor declared himself not guilty of this act, and we assume he was released sometime during the first eight months of 1604. On July 22 of that year, "martyne Slawghter" was loaned £5 by Philip Henslowe, who did not deliver it into the actor's hands, but into his wife's, suggesting that the actor might still have been under lock and key:

Lent vnto martyne Slawghter the 22 of
July 1604 the some of fyvepowndes to
be payd me a[t]gayne the next moneth
folowinge after the date w^{ch} mony was
delyuered vnto his wiffe I saye lent.²²

Henslowe's insistence that it was only a loan is revealing. According to his records, the entry was witnessed by Edward Alleyn, a previous associate of Slatiar's, who had perhaps asked for the money on Slatiar's wife's behalf. R. A. Foakes notes that the "crossed line in the left-hand margin" next to Henslowe's entry could indicate a "cancellation sign"—meaning it was possibly paid off in the next month as arranged.

In sum, certainly by 1605 Slatiar was out of jail and involved in playhouse development, but by the time of the petition he further describes himself as being "one of her Maiesties servaunts." In view of the reputation of this actor, who is found in so many different drama-related records (not all of them demonstrating his willingness to act within rules), the inference has always been that this statement was more self-promoting than true. It is certainly the case that when one looks at Slatiar's records as a whole, one can imagine him as a self-promoting person. However, we now have evidence of the veracity of this part of the petition. In a rediscovered suit of 1607, in which the clown Thomas Greene and others of the company took Slatiar to court, the players themselves admitted Slatiar's sworn membership.²³ His swearing-in must have occurred after the company's draft patent of circa 1604, in which he is not mentioned, and similarly after the royal procession of March 15, 1604, where again he is not listed.²⁴ Other

19. See Barroll, "Defining 'Dramatic Documents.'"

20. LMA, MJ/SR/0416/55.

21. LMA, MJ/SR/0416/79.

22. *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. R. A. Foakes, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 2002), 262.

23. TNA, CP 40/1789, MMCXIII dorse, found and transcribed with comparative use of C. W. Wallace's papers at the Huntington Library, box 6, file BIV 6.

24. Draft patent: TNA, SP14/2, fols. 246v–247 (old item no. 100). The patent has always been roughly dated to 1604 because of Thomas Greene's involvement in the Boar's Head from early in that

records offer further evidence of Slatiar as a prospective Queen's man. When he was tried at the Middlesex Sessions, for instance, he was living in the parish of St. Leonard's Shoreditch, near the Curtain Theatre, where Christopher Beeston, another member of the Queen's Servants, was also living. The Curtain was licensed to the company in its draft patent and is mentioned in their later records. A few years after the petition, we know Slatiar was involved in other theatrical engagements. On March 10, 1608, Slatiar signed a contract to lead a boys' company, the Children of the King's Revels, at the Whitefriars playhouse.²⁵ We could view this double activity—as both a Queen's man and children's manager—in a number of ways. First, Martin Slatiar—out of favor with the Queen's Servants in 1607 because of the Greene suit—may have simply changed his interests and role to that of a boys' company manager, uncertain how things would turn out as an adult actor with Queen Anna's men. Second, he may have served both as manager and player—for certainly, as further evidence indicates, he continued to view himself and to be viewed as one of the Queen's Servants.

With the understanding that the petition is indeed about the Red Bull and that what Slatiar said about his status was true, we can go on to derive more information from his text. First we hear that what the two men had leased between them was a "howse" with "some stables and other roomes" set around a "square Court in an Inne." Taking the evidence at face value, it would seem they set out to convert it to house the Duke of Holstein's Men, not the Queen's Servants. Moreover, according to the text, Slatiar, together with Holland—"servaunt to the right Honorable the Earle of Devonshire"—had already sought the Privy Council's approval for the conversion of the innyard for that purpose and had received it. They had "framed and . . . sett vp" the stables for theater galleries before the stoppage. This property, we are told, was "in an Inne," but we are left uncertain whether what they had leased was the entire inn complex or just one building with accompanying stables. We learn from later documents that Aaron Holland certainly held the entire inn complex or, in his words, "the said messuage or tenement nowe comonlie called or knowne by the name or signe of the Redd Bull . . . with the courts gardens Cellars wayes and libertyes thervnto belonginge." It was "to his great charge and expences" that he did "erect & sett vpp in and vpon *parte* [my italics] of the said premisses divers buildinges and Galleryes for a Play howse."²⁶ Presumably, if we are to take Slatiar's words seriously, it was half of this partial development in the inn (that is, half the "Play howse") that was Slatiar's stake.

The petition supplies us with information about not only the theater itself but also its patrons, as the players, once the Tudor servants of the Earl of Worcester, remodeled themselves as the Jacobean servants of Queen Anna of Denmark. From the

year; however, The National Archives online catalogue, from early tentative notes, has dated it to 1603. Procession list: TNA, LC2/4/5, 84.

25. See William Ingram, "The Playhouse as an Investment, 1607–1614: Thomas Woodford and Whitefriars," *MaRDiE* 2 (1985): 209–29 at 212.

26. TNA, C 3/390/47, membrane 2; Leslie Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (Cambridge, Mass., 1928), "Holland's Answer," 336.

outset of the pleading letter, Slatiar cites Ulric, Duke of Holstein, Queen Anna's younger brother, as the inspiration behind their previous permission for another playhouse in London. According to Leeds Barroll, Holstein was visiting England in order to raise ten thousand men for military service in Hungary and to woo Arabella Stuart, King James's cousin.²⁷ Barroll's account makes humorous reading. Along the way during his visit, the duke was fêted and feasted, given £1,000 by his brother-in-law, and awarded the job of organizing the Accession Day tilting in March 1605. However, he also managed to upset the king concerning the recent peace with Spain, caused alarm at a wedding reception by sitting in the Venetian ambassador's place at table, and distressed his sister by entering her rooms unannounced.²⁸

According to Barroll, before 1602 only two companies and two playhouses had been allowed, through edicts, to perform in the London area; with the Worcester/Oxford company amalgamation by that year, a third company at a playhouse was allowed—namely the Earl of Worcester's men at the Boar's Head. It is within this context and that of the 1604 renewal of the Act for Punishment of Rogues, Vagabonds, and Sturdy Beggars—which made royal patronage more important than that of the nobility—that Barroll reads the difficulties the company endured and Slatiar's approach to the Privy Council.²⁹ He reads this alongside the further context of the creation of a company by Ludovic Stuart, Duke of Lennox and son of Esmé Stuart, who had been taken into the royal family. Barroll describes Martin Slatiar as “a player who seems to have been chronically interested in trying to form new acting companies” and suggests that he was invoking Ulric in order to claim a royal connection for his company.³⁰

These contexts are important, but there are others—only some of which will be discussed here. What of, for example, Aaron Holland's link to the Earl of Devonshire, otherwise known as Charles Blount? Slatiar surely mentioned this court link, invoking further politically beneficial contacts, in order to bring about a change of heart concerning the stoppage. For some critics, however, it has implied more than the need to drop a name. William Ingram, in his own approach to Slatiar's petition, suggested that this reference could mean that the playhouse was a project at a different inn leased by Holland. This inn, mentioned in a gaol delivery record of June 6, 1598, was located nearer the Savoy, and Blount died at Savoy House on the Strand in 1606.³¹ Holland's

27. Barroll, “Defining ‘Dramatic Documents,’” 113–26.

28. *Ibid.*, 113–17.

29. *Ibid.*, 117–19.

30. For evidence of Stuart's company, Barroll (“Defining ‘Dramatic Documents,’” 120–21) quotes from *Henslowe Papers*, ed. W. W. Greg (London, 1907), 62. Barroll transcribes the petition, but mistakenly gives 500 shillings instead of 500 pounds as the cost of the playhouse. He also states that Slatiar was included in the 1604 procession lists when he was not. See TNA, LC2/4/5, 84. Barroll, “Defining ‘Dramatic Documents,’” 122–23. Slatiar was, however, included in Queen Anne's funeral list as a Queen's Servant for 1619; see TNA, LC2/5; “Dramatic Records: The Lord Chamberlain's Office,” ed. E. K. Chambers, in *Collections*, vol. 2, pt. 3, Malone Society Publications 71 (Oxford, 1931), 321–410 at 325.

31. The document Ingram refers to is LMA, MJ/SR/0355/38 (“Playhouses Make Strange Bedfellows,” 122–23). See also *Middlesex County Records*, ed. John Cordy Jeaffreson, 4 vols. (London,

connection with Blount might therefore make an inn in that parish a stronger candidate to be the one mentioned in the petition. It is not certain, however, that Blount was living in the Strand long prior to his death, nor that Holland was active in the area after 1601. As stated before, Holland last appears in the parish records in the Savoy area in that year; he then appears as a Clerkenwell innholder in the controlment roll of 1602. Moreover, Blount may have needed a servant in the Clerkenwell area at about this time. At the beginning of the new century, Penelope Rich, Blount's lover from 1590 and mother of his children (and his wife from 1605), found herself implicated in the rebellion of her brother, the Earl of Essex, and records indicate that she was incarcerated at a Seckford house during 1601. This was most likely "Seckford's Seat" on the Seckford Estate, which Henry Seckford, Thomas Seckford's brother, had acquired from a relation in 1591.³² Naturally this would have taken Blount's interests to the suburbs north of the walls for a time of uncertain duration. But it may not have been the earl who brought Holland to Clerkenwell. Anne Bedingfeild, widowed in 1599, herself lived on the Strand until 1614; she may have met Aaron Holland while both were west of the City, and come to an arrangement with him concerning the Clerkenwell lease then.³³

☞ Slatiar and the Queen's Servants: 1606–1609

In addition to his speculations about the significance of the Earl of Devonshire's connection to Aaron Holland, William Ingram raised a series of questions about the aftermath of the petition that need to be answered. How was it "that construction continued despite the stay, that the playhouse opened and made money, and that Slater, so prominent in this petition, was never again named in connection with its activity?"³⁴ Here we may suggest the answer to the last of these questions.

Because of the rediscovered 1607 suit, we can guess why Slatiar was not mentioned again in association with the Red Bull. From that case we know that by an agreement made three years before, on December 9, 1604, Slatiar was given £12 by the Queen's Servants' players in exchange for responsibly advertising plays performed by a fair representation of the acting company. If Slatiar did not meet the terms of the agreement, he owed £30 to Thomas Greene who, it seems, was responsible for this extra sum. In the documentation of the 1607 suit, the 1604 agreement was also recorded, and the tenor of it was that Slatiar should

1886–92), 1:245. Ingram also describes Holland's presence in the St. Mary le Strand churchwardens' accounts of 1600, but as noted above, Holland is not mentioned in those after Lady Day (25 March) 1601.

32. TNA, PC 2/26, fol. 84v and fol. 90v. For Henry Seckford at "Seckford's Seat," see FC25/L3/3/8, 3–4 and HD21:480, Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich branch [henceforth SROI]. This house was yards away from where the Red Bull playhouse was to be located.

33. Eustace Bedingfeild paid poor rates in St. Clement Danes' parish from 1591 until his death in 1599 and his wife, Anne, continued until 1614 with a break at 1605–6; St. Clement Danes' Parish Records, B1, Surveyors Accounts 1581–1621, Westminster City Archives. This break is intriguing as it coincides with the beginnings of the Red Bull playhouse. Anne Bedingfeild neé Draper also had a brother, Henry Draper, who was an associate of Philip Henslowe of the Rose. Eustace Bedingfeild also resided once on Blackfriars property. I will supply full details of these playhouse links in my forthcoming book on the Red Bull.

34. Ingram, "Playhouses," 124.

forbeare & be restrayned from settinge uppe any bills for playenge or playeings as in the name of her *Maiesties* Servantes in any the kinges *Maiesties* domynions unlesse he the saide Martyn had gotten into his company to play five other of her *Maiesties* saide players.³⁵

Apparently Slatiar had failed to live up to the terms of the agreement, and Greene claimed in 1607 that he had suffered losses to the value of £10 because Slatiar refused to pay back the £30 as requested.

From a record of 1606, we can also see how Slatiar may have failed in his agreement not to perform or advertise playing “in any the kinges *Maiesties* domynions” as “in the name of her *Maiesties* Servantes” with the five requisite members. The archives of the Corporation of Southampton contain a copied-out playing license dated March 7 of that year. It would appear to be a warrant issued by the queen, authorizing Robert Leigh—a licensed Queen’s player—and Martin Slatiar, along with an actor called Roger Barfield (not licensed), with others of “our Comedians” to play tragedies, histories, comedies, and pastorals in town halls or anywhere else in England.³⁶ In other words, this was a touring permission that did not necessarily involve five of the licensed Queen’s Servants.

Following on from the trouble in 1607, we can see how the conflict resolved itself from the company’s point of view. Slatiar, missing from the draft patent and the procession list of 1604, appearing as a member in a referred-to document of late 1604, and present as a company member in documents from 1605 to 1607 (both usefully so and litigiously), did not appear on the official patent of 1609.³⁷ The period between 1608 and 1609 was the time when he was involved with the King’s Revels’ children at the Whitefriars, an involvement that ended when the Children of the Queen’s Revels took over at that playhouse under Robert Keysar and Philip Rosseter.³⁸ Slatiar did, however, appear in the mourning procession lists for the queen as one of her players in 1619, demonstrating that perhaps—from the royal family’s point of view—he remained a member of the company.³⁹ Two years before the death of Queen Anna, he is recorded with Thomas Swinnerton—another Queen’s Servants’ member—as touring using challenged warrants (apparently, again, without the five requisite members).⁴⁰

Slatiar therefore, despite the danger of falling foul of the company and its clown, continued to use a slightly different status as a touring player of the queen. He was, indeed, “prominent”—to use Ingram’s term—but a need for prominence characterized

35. TNA, CP 40/1789, MMCXIII dorse.

36. For a transcription of the patent in the Southampton “Book of Remembrances,” see Chambers, *ES*, 2:234–35. A modern English transcription is printed in “The Manuscripts of the Corporations of Southampton and King’s Lynn,” in *Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission* 11 (1887), appendix, pt. 3, p. 26.

37. TNA, C66/1827, no. 29.

38. See *EPT*, 547–63; Ingram, “The Playhouse as an Investment,” 209–30.

39. TNA, LC2/5, 39.

40. Mayors’ Court Books XV, 16a, fols. 70, 81, 133, Norfolk Record Office, Norwich, transcribed in *Records of Early English Drama: Norwich, 1540–1642*, ed. David Galloway (Toronto, 1984), 146, 148, 151–52. See *EPT*, 143–44 and 253–55, respectively.

Slatiar throughout his life. The word expresses the self-promoting part of his personality very well.

Construction of the Red Bull and Its Environs

Having traced the entanglement of Martin Slatiar and Queen Anna's company to its conclusion, we can move on to examine questions concerning the construction of the theater and—therefore—its economic promise. Before broaching these subjects, I will consider a possibly related puzzle left us by Slatiar's petition: Why did the stoppage at the Slatiar/Holland Red Bull happen at all? The 1605-dated petition outlined an early history of the playhouse site where a theater, ostensibly meant for a company formed for the disgraced Duke of Holstein, was "all framed and almost sett vp" when the stoppage occurred. Of course, the disgrace of the duke may have been reason enough to withdraw support from his company. Other possibilities, however, need to be considered. The phrase concerning frames, for instance, could indicate the erection of a timber structure. I suggested in my earlier article that a further excuse to stop the building of the Red Bull could have been a new edict forbidding further building in wood. From early 1605 on, structures could only be built of brick and stone—much safer with regard to fire than wood, which could then be saved for building ships. With reference to the building scholarship in particular, if the "framed" theater Slatiar described was "set vp" to be made of wood, King James's edict of March 1, 1605, requiring building in brick was specifically intended to stop this kind of development. Perhaps the intended material for the playhouse had to be changed. The thought of a brick Red Bull makes sense in terms of its repertoire—so full of dangerous fireworks and effects requiring heavy machinery. George Fulmer Reynolds stated, in a book on the Red Bull's staging capabilities, that there "are more uses of fireworks than one would expect in a theater lighted by daylight and made of wood."⁴¹ My speculations on the theater's materials were inspired by the discovery of a survey of the land attached to an indenture of lease dated 1679/80.⁴² The survey indicated that the Red Bull yard buildings were built of brick by this much later date and suggested the possibility that the playhouse was built of—or converted to—brick sometime between 1605 and 1679/80, possibly in response to the building laws.⁴³ In my article of 2001, I suggested various occasions when this might have happened.

Such later illustrations may help us with what the original playhouse was like. One small, rough, yet important sketch, dated to the 1620s, for example, confirms its location and informs our understanding of it.⁴⁴ It shows a group of buildings labeled "Red Bull play house" exactly where it should be according to, for example, Ogilby and Morgan's 1677 map showing the yard.⁴⁵ Consulting the records both of the Seckford

41. George F. Reynolds, *The Staging of Elizabethan Plays at the Red Bull Theater, 1605–1625* (New York, 1940), 171. See also Griffith, "New Material for a Jacobean Playhouse," 16–17.

42. SROI, HB10/427/214.

43. Griffith, "New Material for a Jacobean Playhouse," 18.

44. Gloucestershire Archives, D1799/P12, Gloucestershire Record Office, Gloucester.

45. See Griffith, "New Material for a Jacobean Playhouse," 7.

Estate and Woodbridge Parish over a period of years, I have been unnerved never to have seen mention of a playhouse on the charity's property. This sketch, however, drawn for reasons completely unrelated to the charity, confirms the location precisely: on St. John Street (the named location of the playhouse on title pages to its plays) with the range of buildings that include the playhouse, situated opposite a site labeled the "Earle of Alisburyses house." This is across a small road, which is today known as Aylesbury Street (figure 1). The sketch was made by a surveyor who outlined a property belonging to the Blathwaite family, a house on the east side of St. John Street. To identify it, the surveyor showed a significant local landmark across the street—the "Red Bull play house." Although the main object of the exercise was to locate another property, it is pleasing to see the theater clearly labeled as such under five buildings that appear to be part of a larger group of seven. The central building of the seven is drawn with an elevation showing what could be an unfinished pointed gable, but appears more like a turret or tower. If the Red Bull theater had a turret or tower, this would represent a significant addition to our understanding of this playhouse.

We do have a record of a much earlier yard playhouse possessing a "turret" and, indeed, various representations of tiring houses or roofed features, where the "heavens" of playhouses were located. This earlier yard playhouse was the Red Lion in Stepney, built in 1567, and it is known to theater history as the earliest example of purpose-built playhouse construction. In a King's Bench record concerning a complaint about the carpenter's work on the Red Lion's stage, John Brayne the builder described an agreement between them, which included a request for a "turret of timber and boards." This request itemized "thirty foot of assize, with a convenient floor of timber and boards within the same turret seven foot under the top of the same turret." At the top of the turret there were to be "four sufficient compass braces of good and well-seasoned timber." Such a construction could have been useful to the Red Bull for a range of repertoire needs. If the turret were sufficiently sturdy, machinery could be installed to lift or lower devices to achieve particular dramatic effects.

By the mid-1650s, we have still better documentation of the environment in which the Holland/Slatiar playhouse found itself. For instance, we have another sketch showing the whole of the estate as it was during the Interregnum.⁴⁶ A relative of the Seckford family, John Gibbon Seckford, is said to have seized estate lands in Clerkenwell, claiming that he was the true heir; the sketch is found among the papers relating to his claims. The sketch does not depict a playhouse (during the 1650s the Red Bull should not have been operating, although there is evidence that it was), and again it is rough (figure 2). It shows not only the Bedingfeild portion of land but also that still held by the Seckford family—or so John Gibbon Seckford claimed. The southern half of the drawing, where the Red Bull stood, was marked "This part for the Charity"; the road south of that is marked, familiarly, as "The Lane that goes from

46. SROI, HD21:480. To the west of the estate is marked "Duke of Newcastles Wall," which locates the main London-area residence of William and Margaret Cavendish.

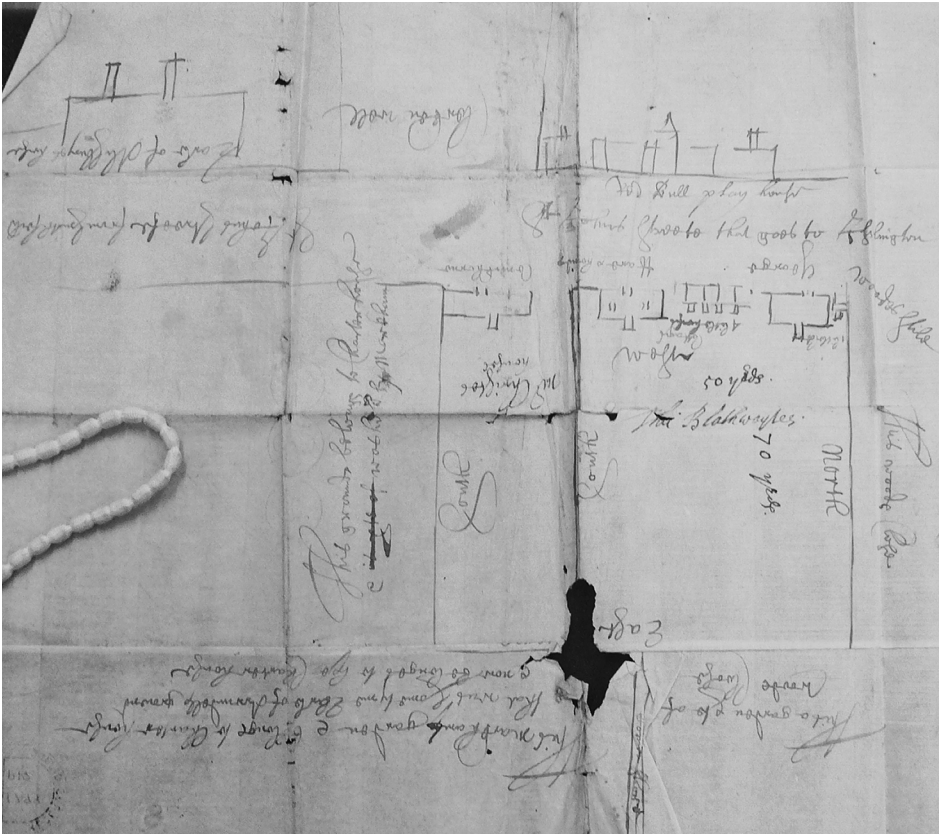
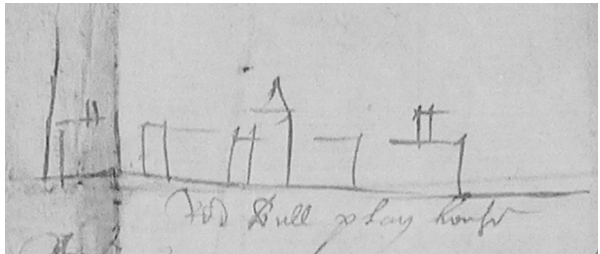


FIGURE 1. Above: sketch survey of Blathwaite family property, showing the Red Bull at top, 1620s. Below: detail of the playhouse. Gloucestershire Archives, D1799/P12.



St. John Street to Clarkenwell” (now Aylesbury Street). Within this southern section is the Bedingfeild part of the estate, an unexpectedly sparse-seeming piece of land in comparison to the later indenture survey of 1679/80. There are two areas itemized specifically as built-up in this 1650s sketch: one is described as “Two Old Houses” and to the right of this again is written the simple phrase “New buildings.” We know the playhouse existed at this time, but where, and in what relation to the two terms given—that is, “Two Old Houses” and “New buildings”?

Answers to some of these puzzles may be teased out from a document of 1663 together with the already known 1679/80 plot and its accompanying indenture. The 1663 document, issued just before the Red Bull closed its doors forever, is a royal patent that permitted the later Bedingfeild family to change the leasehold land quite radically.⁴⁷ At first sight this may seem to settle when the erection of the brick buildings occurred, as the patent gives free rein to the owners to change what they liked from wood to brick, regardless of previous edicts. To assume this, however, would be to forget or ignore a number of factors, and to do true justice to data both old and new, we are required to carefully assess all four documents together—the 1663 patent, the indenture of 1679/80, the John Gibbon Seckford sketch of the 1650s, and the Blathwaite sketch of the 1620s.

The patent of 1663 hearkens back to the family involved in the original arrangements with Aaron Holland sometime before or in 1602, as it is directed at one “Anne Bedingfield.” This is not the Anne Bedingfeild who had the original arrangement with Aaron Holland, however—she died in 1641—but her spinster daughter of the same name.⁴⁸ The patent claims that the timber buildings Anne Bedingfield owned were dangerous:

for as much as all or most of those buildings Were made of Wood and manie of them are become ruinous and decayed and very dangerous upon anie accident of fire and that it wonts very much redound aswell to the publicke damage and hazard as to that of the said Anne Bedingfield if such of the said tenements edifices and buildings as are ruinous and decayed should not bee taken downe and rebuilt.

The patent describes “most” of the buildings as made of wood—but not, in certainty, all, and then goes on to say that anything that is “ruinous and decayed” should be taken down and rebuilt. It then describes areas of the land that were *not* built upon at all, namely

from East to West one hundred and eightie foot of Assize and from North to South one hundred sixtie five foot of Assize together with a peece of ground on the West side thereof percell of the premisses conteineing from East to West ninety three feet of Assize and from North to South seaventie six feet of Assize.

With the permission granted in the patent, these portions of open areas of land could now be developed. Once full figures for these areas are taken into account the result is

47. TNA, C66 3040, no. 10. I would like to thank Tim Wales for directing me to this important record. We know Samuel Pepys visited the playhouse in 1664 to see a prizefight, and our last record of its use in this capacity is on May 30, 1664.

48. Henceforward I distinguish the identities of mother and daughter and their related sets of references by spelling the mother’s name “Bedingfeild” and the daughter’s “Bedingfield.”

the center of the southern quadrant of the parcel, where the nine brick buildings along the “Road from Clarckenwell to S^t Johnstreet” were developed by 1679/80 (figure 3). We know these buildings were erected before 1679/80 because two rows of buildings like these are described in the indenture of lease, and at least one of them was along what is now known as Aylesbury Street.⁴⁹ These buildings measure a little over 180 feet in length, including the wide passage into the estate. This larger piece of undeveloped land described in 1663 could not have been located farther to the east, as on the 1679/80 indenture drawing there are still “Old Timber” buildings here, yet to be re-developed. From the south, the area would then have encompassed the sixteen smaller brick buildings to the north of Aylesbury Street, as the Bedingfeild portion measures approximately 165 feet in its entirety. This area, together with associated yards and gardens, approximately matches the undeveloped plot, and I believe it would also have included the two brick buildings that jut into the area nominated the “Red Bull yard” on Ogilby and Morgan’s map. The smaller patch of undeveloped land described on the patent (93 by 76 feet) may well have been in the northwest corner, where four brick buildings together with their gardens appear on the indenture survey, although the tiny cloud-like drawing in this corner, above two short parallel lines denoting a passageway into the estate (see figure 2), could represent “minums.” If so, these are buildings, according to the rough key at the bottom of the page. The patent says this area is to the west, but it could not be, for example, to the southwest, where there was another old timber building.

In the John Gibbon Seckford drawing from the 1650s, the “New buildings” he refers to cannot be those on the southeast on the survey, for those are more “Old Timber” buildings. I would argue that “New buildings” must refer to the buildings in the northeast, indicated as “brick buildings” on the survey of 1679/80, surrounding the area marked “the Red Bull yard” on the Ogilby and Morgan map. We know from the Gloucestershire Archives sketch that the 1620s Red Bull fronted the Seckford Estate on St. John Street. This would then be the area where five brick buildings line the yard on the east in the survey indenture. The “Two Old Houses” on the 1650s sketch, aligning themselves with the two buildings next to the five labeled “Red bull play house” along St. John’s Street on the 1620s sketch, may refer to the timber buildings in the southeast corner of the 1679/80 survey. It is only a guess, but I would imagine that these timber buildings, together with their large gardens and yards, would represent Aaron Holland’s Red Bull inn (as opposed to the playhouse yard), together with its “courts gardens Cellars wayes and libertyes thervnto belonging.”

By comparing the three drawings, we can see that the “New buildings” indicated on the John Gibbon Seckford drawing of the 1650s could be the “brick buildings” to the northeast on the 1679/80 survey. It is at least possible, then, that some of these

49. A grandson of Anne Bedingfeild, Francis Naylor, had become responsible for building on the Bedingfeild portion by 1651. The indenture mentions two areas that Naylor had built up on this land since 1669, according to the desires of the estate. One was 100 feet in length and the other was 40 feet in length. See Griffith, “New Material for a Jacobean Playhouse,” 16.

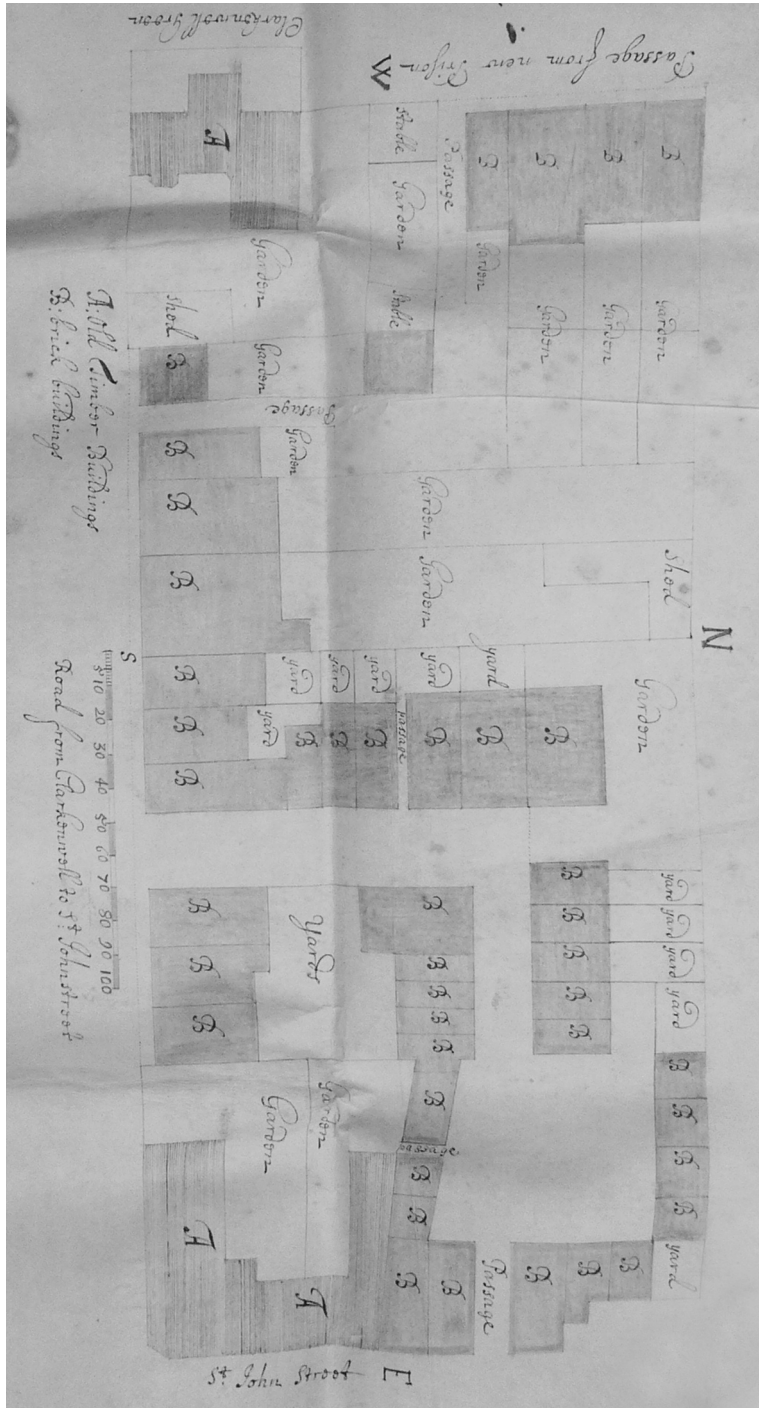


FIGURE 3. Survey appended to indenture of lease, 1679/80. HB10/427/214, Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich. Published with the kind permission of the Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich branch.

brick buildings were in place by the 1650s; that which was identified as “New” in the 1650s could surely not be alluded to as “ruinous and decayed” in the 1660s.

The patent roll shows how the Bedingfields circumvented the inflexibility of the building laws through royal allowance. In tandem with the John Gibbon Seckford drawing, however, it tells us only that at some point before 1663, the Red Bull yard may have been built up, converted, developed, or partly developed into brick on old foundations. *If* such change happened, it could have been at any time prior to this, and to rebuild in brick required no special permission; a change away from wood was encouraged and would have suited the playhouse well. It should, however, be stressed that the possibility that the Red Bull theater was brick from the beginning—or at any time during its life—is highly speculative until further evidence is found. On current evidence I suggest the jury remains out as to when Martin Slatiar’s 1605 “framed” playhouse became the brick buildings of 1679/80.

☞ The Financial Structure of the Red Bull Playhouse

Lastly, as Ingram rightly queries, how did the Red Bull make money? Here we discuss the concern of playhouse shares meted out (mainly) to the actors of the Queen’s Servants company, and what we learn yields further clues about dating. The late Herbert Berry was the last critic to publish on the Red Bull, writing twice about it, the second time in an article using the evidence of Slatiar’s involvement with the company.⁵⁰ The first time he wrote about the playhouse was in *English Professional Theatre* (2000), a highly useful book of documents in which he looked at the dating of the Red Bull with particular reference to the company’s possible use of the Boar’s Head in the winter of 1606–7. He extrapolated from this that the Clerkenwell playhouse may have opened in 1605 or 1606 but stated that it was “not demonstrably in use until about the autumn of 1607.”⁵¹ He based these claims on references in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (London, 1613) to the Red Bull/Curtain play *The Travails of the Three English Brothers* (London, 1607). Berry, however, was also drawing on the evidence he published in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* showing that Thomas Greene was resident at the Boar’s Head until 1607, which he thought precluded any Queen’s Servants performance at the Red Bull before this time. In fact, Greene’s residency at the Boar’s Head at that time does not exclude performances at the Red Bull by his company. The draft patent demonstrates a form of permission for the Queen’s Servants to act at the Boar’s Head as well as two other theaters, one yet to be “elected, or . . . hereafter to be builte,” and the other the Curtain. The one to be chosen or built in the future turned out to be the Red Bull.

Any effort to pinpoint the first performances at the new playhouse must look to the period between late March 1605 and late March 1606. This is because we know,

50. Berry, “Building Playhouses, the Accession of James I”; Eva Griffith, “Sewers, Brewers, Clowns and Houses: Worcester’s Men at the Rose and the Queen’s Servants at the Red Bull,” paper presented at the theater history seminar at the Shakespeare Association of America meeting, Victoria, B.C., on 11 April 2003.

51. *EPT*, 564, 568 (entry 438).

from later records, that during that year-long period, a share in the building was sold to the Queen's Servants actor Thomas Swinnerton (a Slatiar associate already discussed). This entitled him to an "eighteenth part" of profits from the galleries and stage, for which Swinnerton paid £25.⁵² Crucially, in the *Woodford v. Holland* court case where this information appears, Holland said (and Woodford agreed) that Swinnerton purchased his share *after* "having erected and made" the "buildinges and galleryes" that formed the Red Bull playhouse, and, as we have established, there is no evidence given that the theater did not open after it was finished.⁵³ We do not know when in 1605–6 Swinnerton's share began, nor do we know its duration. However, we do know the intended duration of the same share when it was sold by Swinnerton to one Philip Stone in February 1609: the somewhat awkward period of twenty-five years and three-quarters from Christmas 1608.⁵⁴ This would have taken him up to Michaelmas 1634. This dating is intriguing, because from the 1679/80 indenture of lease we learn that Anne Bedingfeild's interests in the estate were rearranged in 1635, with sixteen years of her lease from the charity still to run. Similarly, from another document recently uncovered, we know that Thomas Greene's half-lease of the yard and tiring-house, which began on December 23, 1606, ended at Christmas 1633.⁵⁵ Lacking this evidence of scattered share-giving and rights, Berry suggested that all the shares had started late in 1605, so that actors were in possession of twenty-nine-year leases from Michaelmas of that year.⁵⁶ This may be correct in some cases—perhaps for Swinnerton—as this could have been after building was complete, after the stoppage. But Berry also assumed that Holland acquired the lease around Michaelmas 1604. Since we now know that Holland possessed rights at an inn in Clerkenwell—likely to be the Red Bull—much earlier, *by* 1602, we are free to rethink when the whole plan could have been conceived.⁵⁷

My own—tentative—conclusions concerning the dating of the Red Bull are these. We must properly take into consideration the controlment roll describing

52. A summary of the share selling situation may be found in *EPT*, 565.

53. TNA, C 3/390/47. See Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 327, where in Woodford's bill of 1623 it is clear that once Holland "having made & erected [the] buildings & galleries" he then "Indented" the agreement with Swinnerton; see also Holland's agreement with this description in his answer (336).

54. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 328.

55. TNA, REQ 2/709, found and transcribed with the comparative use of the Wallace papers, Huntington Library, box 9, file BV11a. Record first reported in Griffith, "Playhouse, Company, Repertoire" (PhD diss., University of London, 2003); see also *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Baskerville, Susan (bap. 1573, d. 1649)."

56. See Berry's "Appendix: Woodford's lawsuits against Holland," *EPT*, 592–94.

57. In his 2005 article, Berry reorganized his thinking, writing that the innholder planned the building of the playhouse "toward the end" of 1604, securing a lease on the innyard "probably at Christmas" ("Building Playhouses," 66), a lease that ended thirty years later at Christmas 1634. He also now thought that the original share belonging to Thomas Swinnerton began earlier, at "Lady Day 1605"—not Michaelmas (67)—and that the petition would have been written in the fourth week of May (69). However, this timeline cannot be right, as we know Swinnerton gained his share *after* the playhouse was finished, which would have been after the Privy Council stoppage, Slatiar's petition, the resumption of building, and the theater's completion.

Holland's involvement as a Clerkenwell innholder *by* 1602. This is far in advance of any period considered before in relation to the building of the Red Bull playhouse. The last records of Holland on the Strand are from 1601; he moved to Clerkenwell soon after. How he came there involves much speculation. Was it to do with his relationship with Charles Blount? Was it to do with his possible acquaintance with Anne Bedingfeild? Did he just need a change of air? Perhaps we will never know. The year 1599 was significant for Anne Bedingfeild because she was made a widow. This may have represented a turning point for her. Also in that year, an interesting event occurred in the context of Clerkenwell entertainment venues. On August 23, John Chamberlain wrote to Dudley Carleton that the week before, "at a puppet play in St. John Street, the house fell, six persons were killed, and 30 or 40 hurt."⁵⁸ Quite what Chamberlain meant by a "house" in St. John Street is certainly not made clear, although the term is often used for "playhouse" in theater contexts. Since it fell, the structure may have been impermanent in feel, like the scaffolding for drama built at the Red Lion in 1567 and the one that fell down in Paris Garden in 1583, causing fatalities.⁵⁹ Could it be that this incident, possibly at the Red Bull inn itself, inspired the idea of a permanent and safe theater in the minds of local inn-owners? Perhaps.

What could all this tell us about the building of the Red Bull? I suggest that Holland's scheme for selling shares in the galleries and stage of the Red Bull playhouse began in 1604—possibly before—as we know he had been a Clerkenwell innholder for at least two years by this time. The only thing we are told from textual evidence concerning when the Red Bull *playhouse* began (as opposed to Holland's ownership of the inn) is from Martin Slatiar's petition, which claims that he and Holland had already secured the "lease of the howse betwixt them" for thirty years from some time before June 1605. What has been established so far could place the beginning of the Holland/Slatiar dual lease arrangement earlier than this. We know Philip Stone's share ended in September 1634, and we know that Greene's share in the tiring-house and yard ended at Christmas 1633. We can also say that many of the share- or lease-holding schemes for the playhouse and land ended in the mid-1630s, which would accord with what we know. If Holland began selling shares in the playhouse at Michaelmas 1604, for instance, he would have divided the project then (not Lady Day the following year, nor Michaelmas 1605). They could have been thirty-year shares (or other terms, depending on when they started) ending at Michaelmas 1634, and Holland may not have been in any particular hurry to sell all of them at once. He built and regained his outlay when the actors could raise funds to pay for the shares. In 1604, the one-time Earl of Worcester's company was in possession of some kind of permission to play in the Boar's Head and the Curtain and another house "elected" by Thomas Greene "or by hym hereafter

58. TNA, SP12/272, fol. 112; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series, 1598–1601*, ed. Mrs. Everett Greene (London, 1870), 306, no. 68.

59. For the Red Lion's scaffolding, see Janet Loengard, "An Elizabethan Lawsuit: John Brayne, his Carpenter, and the Building of the Red Lion Theater," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 34 (1983): 298–310; for the Paris Garden disaster, see LMA, COL, Remembrancia I, 520; *EPT*, 87 and note.

to be builte”—for we have this wording in the draft patent. It was this third, unnamed, house that Holland—whether he knew it or not—was building: the Red Bull playhouse.

In some way or form involving his becoming a Queen’s Servant, Slatiar became a party to the event, perhaps simply because he had a relationship with the Danish royal family from his work in Scotland, perhaps as someone “chronically interested in trying to form new acting companies” (as Barroll suggested). We should pause before making any hard and fast conclusions about Slatiar. He was, after all, an indefatigable man with complex ways of approaching life, as has been demonstrated by this article. He was busy and could be helpful, but was also distrusted. Even though we now know that he was a sworn member of the Queen’s Servants, before trying to understand his contribution to theater history we should bear in mind the accusations of theft leveled against him, his spell in jail, his having to promise good behavior to the company, his use of questionable touring warrants. That said, the Red Bull playhouse *was* eventually completed. Slatiar’s petition rhetoric worked.

Between March and mid-1605, the building was nearly finished, but the work had been stopped by government order. Slatiar composed his petition, citing the Duke of Holstein as the one for whom they were building the playhouse. We do not really know why Holstein was cited in this way. Perhaps a company under his patronage was being put together; perhaps—if the playhouse was originally planned for the Queen’s Servants—people speaking on behalf of the queen had pointed out that a third theater was unnecessary, and the company turned rhetorically to the duke in an hour of need. Thomas Greene may have been living at the Boar’s Head until 1607, and the company—or another one—may have been performing there until then as well, as one of its three allowed venues. But as soon as Greene could, he tied up his domestic affairs there and moved to the new up-and-running venue in Clerkenwell with his wife, Susan. Christopher Beeston acted similarly with the other venue where the company was allowed to play, not provably leaving the Curtain and the Shoreditch area for Clerkenwell until 1611, some years after the Red Bull was built.⁶⁰ Perhaps the half-house stake that Greene gained had once been Slatiar’s, which would make good sense in the context of Slatiar’s busy theater activity elsewhere. The company was allowed to perform in three playhouses according to the draft license, which did not change much in 1609. In terms of playhouse history, the text of the 1609 license just swapped the Red Bull for the Boar’s Head—for the Red Bull turned out to be the third house “elected” by Thomas Greene. They were still permitted to play at the Curtain in 1609 and therefore, it would seem, a multi-venue company was always in the cards for the Queen’s Servants.

60. Robert Beeston was baptized at St. Leonard’s Shoreditch in April 1609 (LMA, X094/030); Anne Beeston was baptized in Clerkenwell on September 15, 1611. See *A True Register of all the Christenings, Mariages, and Burialles in the Parishe of St. James, Clerkenwell, from the Yeare of Our Lorde God 1551*, ed. Robert Hovenden, 6 vols. (London, 1884–94), 1:131.

As for Martin Slatiar, he pursued further adventures yet to be described. He is one Queen's Servant, however, who never settled in the Clerkenwell area. But then, it would seem, Martin Slatiar was not the settling type. In many ways, Slatiar sets the tone for a proper study of the Red Bull playhouse, a complex, colorful, and intriguing story. To date, some of its "Reputation"—like that of Slatiar—may be correctly perceived, and some of it, likewise, incorrectly assumed.

I would like to thank Dave Kathman, Andrew Gurr, and Barbara Ravelhofer for reading this article at early stages of its development; and Sara Austin and Jessica Freeman for their advice at later stages.

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