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Patrons and Travelling Companies in Warwickshire

From the fifteenth through the first half of the seventeenth century, documentary evidence from the county of Warwickshire reveals a complex web of patronage of travelling players.[1] The motives that led companies to travel through the county must have been varied, depending on the convenience of roads and the promise of rewards, particularly in prosperous towns and households. Another consideration may have been proximity to patrons' estates, regional centres of power. From groundwork laid by E.K. Chambers, John Tucker Murray, and the Records of Early English Drama, Andrew Gurr suggests that, while the focal point of dramatic activity was London, during the reign of Elizabeth I, patrons publicized their names through the touring companies.[2] Mary Blackstone, Suzanne Westfall, and Paul White point out that touring companies were a means to promulgate patrons' political power, a thesis which Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean have developed extensively in their book on Queen Elizabeth's players, who toured regularly from 1583 as part of a greater plan for promoting the queen's political and religious agendas.[3]

These connections are part of a large network of patrons and travelling companies in England prior to 1642, one that is being uncovered by editors at REED, leading to the compilation of a database of patrons and travelling companies being assembled for web publication under the direction of Sally-Beth MacLean and J.A.B. Somerset.[4] In a survey of REED collections and unpublished records as of 1994, Somerset finds 3,119 performances made by touring professional entertainers in the areas for which records survive.[5] Most followed regular touring routes that MacLean has traced extensively.[6] Touring took place all year round, with varying schedules for each company, which usually travelled independently of its patron. Some performed both in London and on tour, such as the players of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, who performed at court and in London theatres, very likely the Theatre; and the King's Men, who gave performances at the Globe and Blackfriars as well as in the provinces.[7]

Using documentary evidence being compiled and published at REED, Peter Greenfield counters assumptions about provincial touring as an unprofitable and undesirable venture for players. Not only did many companies of players tour at a profit; they also were part of a greater political mission to enhance the reputations of their patrons. Companies were rewarded according to the rank of their patron, toward whom the local rewards symbolized respect.[8] Coventry in particular stood out for welcoming companies 'right through the 1620s and 1630s, when resistance to itinerant players had become widespread.'[9] Somerset has found that for the period from 1563 to 1617, Coventry rewarded 418 travelling individuals or companies.[10]

The records for the city of Coventry, located in Warwickshire, have been edited by R.W. Ingram and were published by REED in 1981.[11] In Coventry, payments to patrons' companies are mainly listed in the Coventry Chamberlains' and Wardens' account books from 1574 through 1642, the cut-off year for the REED Project. Account books of the Coventry wardens, who were responsible for rewarding travelling companies, do not survive prior to 1574.[12] Other evidence for travelling companies in Warwickshire includes the household accounts of Henry, 7th Lord Berkeley, based at Caludon Castle, Warw, and extant only for 1593–4 and from 1600 to 1605, edited by Peter Greenfield; the Warwickshire records are being edited by J.A.B. Somerset.[13] These records show that travelling companies toured in Warwickshire from 1431, when performers of Lord Astley and the earl of Warwick were at Maxstoke Priory, until 1636/7, when rope dancers of the king, Charles I, were rewarded 2s for a performance in Warwick: 'To ye Kings serv*an*ts who shewd ye dancing of ye Ropes & other rare activities of ye Body.'[14]

Payments to companies of approximately 132 patrons are listed in the Coventry and Warwickshire records, including the household accounts of Henry, Lord Berkeley. Of these, 109 patrons' names associated with companies of various types are in the Coventry records, approximately 33 appear in the Warwickshire records, and 24 are in the Berkeley household accounts. Of the 33 patrons' names associated with companies in the Warwickshire records edited by Somerset, 18, over half, also appear in the Coventry records during the same period. If fifteenth-century accounts were available for Coventry, that number might well be higher. Of the 24 patrons mentioned in the Berkeley accounts edited by Greenfield, companies of a majority of patrons, 16, also went to Coventry, a hub of roads and rewards.

In addition to Coventry, records of payments to patrons' travelling companies in Warwickshire survive from five locations:

1) Maxstoke Priory Account Book, 1430–93

The Maxstoke Priory list of approximately thirteen patrons whose companies were rewarded there is among the only extant evidence for travelling companies in Warwickshire during the fifteenth century.[15] Several of the patrons of the companies who received rewards at Maxstoke Priory had property and family in the region or at Maxstoke Castle. Christine Carpenter points out that 'This north Warwickshire castle was close to Coleshill, where four minor roads linking the four compass points in north Warwickshire met.'[16] The castle was built *c* 1345 by Sir William Clinton, earl of Huntingdon, who also founded the Augustinian Priory at Maxstoke in 1336.[17] From 1347, the manor of Maxstoke was divided into two parts: the canons' part, or Priory Lordship, and the rest, to the north, the Castle Lordship.[18] The priory survived as a religious house until the Dissolution in 1536.[19] These records suggest that it was a popular venue for travelling companies in the fifteenth century.

However, we cannot tell from the records whether or not the companies were actors, musicians, or other types of entertainers. The term in the records, 'mimi', translated 'performers', appears with payments to 'lusoribus', 'citharistis', and 'ioculatoribus', translated 'players', 'harpers', and 'jesters', respectively.[20] The number of patrons is also approximate, since it is clear that some of the entries in the Maxstoke Priory accounts refer to companies associated with locations rather than patrons, such as the 'lusorib*us* coue*n*tre' [players of Coventry] who received 8d in 1435–6 and 'mimis ap*u*d Coue*n*tre' [performers of Coventry] who received 20d in 1442–3.[21] Generally, the scribe inserts a title to refer to patrons, as in 'It*em* iiij mimis Comit*is* WarWyck xx d.' [Item to four performers of the earl of Warwick 20d], documenting a reward to the company of Richard de Beauchamp, 14th earl of Warwick, in 1431–2, but this is not always certain: in the accounts for 1434–5, the entry reads 'It*e*m 2 mimis de WarWyke viij d.' [Item to two performers of Warwick 8d] referring either to the earl or city of Warwick.[22] Sometimes companies from a town travelled independently, so the listings of names without titles must be treated with caution.[23]

Likewise, the reward of 12d to '2 mimis de Asteley' [two performers of Astley] at Maxstoke Priory, 1434–5, may refer to local performers from the place Astley, Warw, rather than to a company from the household of the patron.[24] However, other entries in these records include payment of 6d to 'mimo d*om*ini de Asteley' [a performer of the Lord of Astley] in 1431–2, making it likely that all of the Astley entries are to the performers of the lord

of Astley, Reynold Grey, who succeeded as 3rd Lord Grey of Ruthin in 1388 and who married, by 7 February 1415, Joan, heiress to the lands of her father, William Astley.[25] Similarly, the entry for payment to 'sex mimis de Clyn' [six performers of Clinton] in the same account book, 1435–6, could refer to a location, but more likely, as Somerset points out in his endnote to this entry, to John, who succeeded as 5th Lord Clinton of Maxstoke Castle in 1432.[26]

Most of these patrons had local connections, several with the manor of Maxstoke. Lord Clinton owned the manors of Amington and Maxstoke, Warw, both family seats, the latter alienated in 1437.[27] Humphrey Stafford, created 1st duke of Buckingham in 1444, had seats at Stafford Castle, in the neighbouring county of Staffordshire, and at Writtle, Essex, from 1421, and at Maxstoke Castle from 1438.[28] His performers appeared at Maxstoke Priory in 1432–3, annually from 1441–3, twice in 1448–9, once in 1449–50 and again in 1457–8.

Family ties also provided connections with the area near or at Maxstoke. The Clinton family had ancestral ties with the family of another patron, Lord Odingsells, whose performer is also listed in the Maxstoke Priory records for 1434–5.[29] He is probably Edward Odingsells (*c* 1389–1466), who inherited the overlordship of Maxstoke on the death of his father in 1403, when Edward was but 14.[30] As mentioned above, Reynold Grey inherited Astley lands in Warwicskhire through his wife. Performers of Reynold Grey's son, Edward, 6th Lord Ferrers of Groby, Leic, are also listed in the Maxstoke Priory records for 1448–9.

Sometimes related patrons in an area were wrangling over properties, another possible motive for a show of power. Edward Nevill, Lord Abergavenny, whose performers appeared at Maxstoke Priory in 1434–5, married Elizabeth Beauchamp, 3rd Baroness Bergavenny by 18 Oct 1424. However, he did not receive licence to enter the Abergavenny lands until 1449. His opponents were relatives of his wife, two patrons whose performers frequented Maxstoke Priory from 1431 to 1435: Richard de Beauchamp, 13th earl of Warwick, whose seat was at Warwick Castle, and Richard's son and heir, Henry de Beauchamp, 1st duke of Warwick, based at Elmley, in the neighbouring county of Worcestershire. Henry de Beauchamp's performers appeared at Maxstoke Priory in 1442–3.

2) Stratford: Chamberlains Accounts, 1554–94, 1595–1619, and 1622–49; Borough Minutes, 1593–1628

The records from Stratford show that a total of thirteen patrons' companies of players travelled there from 1568 until 1622. Like the patrons of companies at Maxstoke Priory, one characteristic these patrons share is property in the area, though, as Carpenter points out in her study of fifteenth-century Warwickshire, many of the landed families held the greater part of their lands, including their family seats, in neighbouring counties.[31]

Of the thirteen patrons of players whose companies appear in the Stratford records, excluding the sovereigns, Elizabeth I, and James I, eleven titled patrons remain. Of these, seven had residences in Warwickshire or in neighbouring counties: 1) Henry, 7th Lord Berkeley, who lived at Caludon Castle, Warw; 2) Giles Brydges, 3rd Baron Chandos, of Sudeley Castle, Glouc; 3) the countess of Essex, Lettice Knollys, whose first husband, Walter Devereux, 18th earl of Essex (d 1576), was based at Chartley, Staff, and who later married Robert Dudley, 14th earl of Leicester, on 21 Sept 1578; 4) Robert Devereux, 19th earl of Essex, of Chartley, Staff; 5) Robert Dudley, 14th earl of Leicester, with a residence at Kenilworth, Warw; 6) Edward Stafford, 12th Baron Stafford, of Stafford Castle, Staff; and 7) Ambrose Dudley (brother of Robert Dudley, above), 21st earl of Warwick, with a seat at Warwick Castle.

Four patrons of companies that stopped in Stratford did not have a seat in Warwickshire or in one of the surrounding counties: Henry and Ferdinando Stanley, 13th and 14th earls of Derby, of Lathom and Knowsley, Lanc, and Knockin, Shrops, respectively; Edward de Vere, 17th earl of Oxford, who lived in London and whose family properties lay in Essex; and William Somerset, 8th earl of Worcester, of Raglan, Monm, Wales, and Hackney, Midd. However, even though the earls of Derby did not have major residences in or near the county of Warwick, they did own some minor property there: Meriden, 'situated in typical Arden country between Coventry and Birmingham', including the village of Meriden, which 'lines the London, Coventry, and Birmingham main road'; Whichford manor, which belonged to the Stanleys, earls of Derby, from 1514 until it was sold in the early seventeenth century; and Long Compton, which also descended in the Stanley family from 1514 until about 1600, when it was sold to the earl of Northampton.[32]

By the early seventeenth century, the Stratford town officials were trying to stop performances in municipal buildings. As mentioned earlier, the Stratford Chamberlains' Accounts, entry dated 17 Dec 1602, include this mandate, 'At

this halle yt ys ordered that there shalbe no plays or enterlewd*e*s playd in the Chamber the guild halle nor in any p*a*rte of the [hos] howsse or Courte from hensforward vpon payne that whosoeu*e*r of the Baylief Alderman & Burgess*e*s berenghe shall gyve leave or licence therevnto shall forfeyt for eu*e*rie offence x s.'[33]

On 2 February 1611-12, the fine was raised to £10, suggesting that the previous penalty had been ignored.[34] However, these entries are not to be taken as the end of dramatic activity altogether in Stratford. In 1618, an unidentified 'company that came with a shew to the towne' received 3s 4d and musicians received 7d.[35] The last surviving payment is a reward of 6s in 1622 to the king's players 'for not playinge in the hall'.[36] However, before attributing the decline of payments solely to the forces of the Reformation at work among the civic officials, one should be cautioned to consider that these records are not a complete set of evidence about dramatic activity in the area, but a starting point for further investigation.

3) Warwick: Burgesses' Accounts, 1540–69, Bailiffs' Accounts 1600–1, and Antiquarian Extracts from Bailiffs' Accounts, 1599–1716[37]

The list of travelling companies in Warwick is much smaller than that of Stratford, due to the lack of complete records prior to 1540, 1569–99, and after 1601. Records include payments to the players of George Hastings, 21st earl of Huntingdon, Elizabeth I, and William Somerset, 8th earl of Worcester, plus trumpeters of James I and the duke of Lennox, and rope dancers of Charles I, who were there in 1636–7. However, the scarcity of payments to travelling companies in Warwick should not be taken as a sign of their absence, as only partial evidence from Warwick survives: records from 1569–99 are missing.

4) Lord Henry Berkeley's House Steward's Book, 1593–4, and October 1600–July 1605

Henry Berkeley succeeded as 7th Lord Berkeley at birth, 26 November 1534. Based on the history of his official appointments, his local influence was primarily in Gloucestershire, where he held a variety of commissions and was appointed lord lieutenant and vice-admiral in 1603. Caludon Castle was granted to William, Lord Berkeley, in 1491 and descended with the Berkeley family until 1631. Henry rebuilt it *c* 1580, the first year that his players also appear in the Stratford records.[38]

Within the six years for which the Berkeley accounts survive, nearly 100 payments are recorded to twenty-four companies of various types who enter-

tained Lord Berkeley, including his own company.[39]These records do not indicate the place at which the performances took place, but it is very likely that many were held at Caludon Castle in Warwickshire, one of the main residences of the Lords Berkeley. According to Greenfield, they had lived there and at Yate, Glouc, for generations, as the ancestral seat, Berkeley Castle, had been in dispute since 1417; Henry Berkeley remained at Caludon, even after Berkeley Castle was restored to the family in 1609.[40] Of the twenty-four patrons named in these accounts, some of whom have more than one company type, fifteen have musicians, including trumpeters, ten have companies of players, two have fools, and one has a bearward. These totals include Lord Berkeley's players, fool, and musicians. Five of these patrons certainly have seats in or near Warwickshire: the earl of Essex, Lord Dudley, Lord Stafford, two Lords Huntingdon, and Henry Berkeley himself.[41]

Of the twenty-four patrons' companies listed in the Berkeley accounts, sixteen also went to Coventry, and of these, companies of eight patrons toured elsewhere in Warwickshire: Elizabeth I; James I; Ferdinando Stanley, 14th earl of Derby; Edward Sutton, 5th Lord Dudley; Robert Devereux, 19th earl of Essex; George Hastings, 21st earl of Huntingdon; and Edward Stafford, 12th Baron Stafford; and Henry, Lord Berkeley himself.[42] The players of Lord Berkeley, rewarded for performing in his household in January 1603, also appear regularly in the Coventry accounts from 1577 to 1584, in 1597–8, and from 1603 to 1609, and in the Stratford accounts from 1580 to 1583.[43]

5) Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Puckering, Priory Park, Warw, 1620–1

Sir Thomas Puckering came from a background of illustrious connections at court and in parliament, as illustrated by the career of Sir Thomas' father, Sir John Puckering (1544–96), who was admitted as a student at Lincoln's Inn in 1559, admitted to the bar in 1567, and from 1584 to 1587 served as speaker of the House of Commons. On 28 April 1592, he was knighted and appointed Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. Sir John Puckering was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth, whom he entertained at his home in Kew, 11 December 1591. Sir Thomas Puckering (1592–1636) knighted and created a baronet in 1612, was the companion of Henry, prince of Wales, from 1605 to 1610, and served as MP for Tamworth from 1621 to 1628, and high sheriff of Warwickshire in 1625.[44]

The companies that performed at the household of Sir Thomas Puckering in 1620–1 may well reflect his friendship with the royal family. In the one year

for which records survive, players of four patrons performed at this household: players of Lord Dudley, James I, Prince Charles, and the queen of Bohemia. The surviving Berkeley and Puckering household accounts contain fewer entries of patrons with regional ties than the Warwick and Stratford town records. It is quite possible that, at a household venue, companies were not trying to reinforce the local influence of their lords (in someone else's hall, not advisable), but instead, to affirm friendships, political alliances, and to gain the support of greater nobility and the Crown. In the households, a message of welcome and support from the host to the patrons of the companies might be conveyed via rewards. In the towns, the companies may have served to communicate the patrons' importance to the people in the region, so that regional patrons' companies were more prevalent. In turn, the towns rewarded companies according to the status of their patrons.

Writing about the early Tudor period, Suzanne Westfall observes that players and patrons mutually reinforced each other's social prestige: 'Generous treatment ... was offered in proportion to the rank of the patron. Thus, the social hierarchy of the troupes reflected in microcosm the social hierarchy of the aristocracy. The more powerful the patron, the more welcome and lucratively rewarded his players.'[45] Thus, another factor affecting rewards to companies and their tour routes may have been central patronage, that is, recognition at court. Evidence of such recognition is placement on the court entertainment calendar.[46]

Of the companies that toured in Warwickshire, those on the court calendar, the players of the countess of Essex and the earls of Leicester and Warwick, both members of the privy council, are also the ones that receive the highest rewards in Stratford. Also interesting to note is that, right around the first time that a company appears at court it also appears in the Stratford records, though due to lack of precise dates in the Stratford Chamberlains' Accounts, which comes first is not clear, the tour or the court event. The earl of Derby's players first appeared on the court calendar on 14 February 1579–80 and at Stratford in 1579–80; the earl of Oxford's players were at court on 1 January and 3 March 1583–4 and at Stratford also in 1583–4. Note that in both of these cases, the companies have a touring history elsewhere before these dates: provincial performances of the companies of the earls of Derby (as Lord Strange) took place in Bristol and Gloucester, and the company of the earl of Oxford appeared in Ludlow, Shrops, as early as 1564.[47] The countess of Essex's players are listed on the court calendar for 11 February 1577–8 and in the Stratford records for the following year, 1578–9. Her company has a more limited touring

history, as it was probably under the control of the earl of Essex prior to his death in 1576.[48]

Convenient roads may also have determined the choice of tour stops. As Carpenter points out, Maxstoke was at a crossroads. Touring routes emanated to and from Coventry: a north-south road links tour stops at Stratford, Warwick, Coventry, Caludon, and Leicester, and leads north to Doncaster and Newcastle upon Tyne and south to Gloucester and Bristol, and on into Devon toward Exeter. Another east-west road from Shrewsbury leads through Coventry and on to London.[49] Touring data compiled so far reflects the geography, but assumptions about tours must be treated with caution. Not until all of the touring dates have been compiled in the REED patrons electronic system, will we know more precisely the sequencing of performances and places.

For now, some general lines can be drawn from evidence of tour stops in published REED collections. A sampling of company touring data suggests that these routes tended to pass through counties where company patrons had family seats. For example, between 1556 and 1604, Lord Berkeley's players travelled regularly on a route which included stops in Bristol, Gloucester, and Bath. Between 1564 and 1582, players of the earl of Derby appear mainly in Gloucester, Devon, and Somerset, in addition to several visits to Newcastle. The tour route leading to Newcastle from the southwestern counties passes through Lancashire, where the seats of the earls of Derby were based at Lathom and Knowsley. The road continues on its way toward York, to intersect the road leading to Newcastle. Likewise, between 1574 and 1602, Lord Stafford's players travelled regularly through Devon, Somerset, and the city of Gloucester. While the Lords Stafford were based at Stafford Castle, they also held lands in Gloucestershire. Roads connect Coventry to both Stafford and Gloucester. Between 1600 and 1630, Lord Dudley's company concentrated its efforts northward, from Coventry to Lancashire, Cumberland, and Newcastle, taking them past Staffordshire, where the family seat at Dudley Castle was located. Between 1596 and 1604, Lord Huntingdon's players went east-west, most commonly from Coventry to Norwich, with one visit westward to Leominster. The road connecting Coventry to London intersects another road leading from Cambridge to Norwich, which passes south of the Huntingdon lands in Derbyshire and Leicestershire.

In addition to its central location, another probable reason for the attraction of so many companies to Coventry was comparably good pay. The better the rewards, the more companies showed up, and from the records, it is clear that Coventry offered greater rewards than Stratford and Warwick. Companies

performing in Coventry received two to three times as much there compared to rewards in Stratford and Warwick. While the players of Henry Berkeley performed in both Coventry and Stratford in 1580–1 and 1582–3, they performed in Coventry in 1583–4, 1597–8, 1603–4, and from 1606 to 1609, but not in Stratford. The rewards may have had something to do with this decision. Ths company was earning double in Coventry, 6s 8d in 1580–1 and 10s in 1582–3, compared to what it earned in Stratford, 3s 2d and 5s, respectively, for the same years.[50] The earl of Essex's players received 10s in Coventry, compared to 3s in Stratford in 1583–4, and similarly, the earl of Oxford's company received 10s in Coventry, compared to 3s 4d in Stratford in the same year. Throughout the 1580s and 1590s, in Coventry, Queen Elizabeth's players received twice as much as they did in Stratford. In 1600–1, the earl of Huntingdon's players received 10s in Coventry, compared to 3s 4d in Warwick.

Another comparison worthy of note is that of rewards in the two households and in the Coventry and Warwick records (within one or two years):

TABLE I

Title of Patron	**Performance Venues**				
	Coventry	Stratford	Warwick	Berkeley	Puckering
Lord Berkeley	1603–4 10s			1603 £4	
				1603 30s	
Lord Darcy	1594–5 10s			1594 6s 8d	
Earl of Derby	1593–4 20s			1593 10s	
Lord Dudley	1600–1 6s 8d			1600 40s	
	1600–1 3s 4d				
Earl of Essex	1583–4 10s	1583–4 3s			
	1587–8 20s	1587 5s			
Earl of Huntingdon					
–George, 21st earl	1601 10s		1600–1 3s 4d	1602 40s	
–Henry, 22nd earl	1605–6 10s			1605 20s	
Earl of Pembroke	1592–3 30s			1593 60s	
Elizabeth I	1587–8 40s	1587 20s			
	1593–4 40s	1593 20s		1593 £3	
		1594 20s		1594 12s	
James I	1619–20 33s	1622 6s*			1620–1 5s
Charles I (prince)	1620–1 20s				1620–1 2s 6d

*Paid not to play

Lord Berkeley rewarded his own company of players quite well: £4 and 30s compared to 10s in Coventry, 1603–4. Likewise, other companies fared far better at Lord Berkeley's house than they did elsewhere: Queen Elizabeth's players, who received £3 in 1593, compared to 40s in Coventry and 20s in Stratford. On the other hand, in 1594, her company received 12s at the Berkeley household, compared to 20s in Stratford. The earl of Pembroke's players earned 60s at the Berkeley household in 1593, compared to 30s in Coventry in 1592–3.

The town records also show some variations awaiting explanation in the distribution of rewards. In 1574–5, the earl of Warwick's players received 17s in Stratford, compared to 6s 8d in Coventry. In 1578–9, the countess of Essex's players received more in Stratford (13s 6d) than in Coventry (6s 8d). The records offer no explanation. The entry in the 1578–9 Stratford Chamberlains' Accounts simply reads: 'Paid at the comaundement of Mr. baliffe to the countye of Essex plears xiij s. vj d.'[51] The Coventry Chamberlains' and Wardens' Account Book II, 1579, lists 'Item gyven to the Countesse of Essex players vj s. viiij d.'[52] On the other hand, in 1579–80, the earl of Derby's players were paid exactly the same amount in Stratford and in Coventry: 8s 4d.

Certain companies consistently receive higher rewards than others in a given location. Highest on the pay scale in Warwickshire are the players of Queen Elizabeth, who received top pay: 40s for Coventry and 20s for Stratford, in the 1580s and 1590s. Next are the players of the earl of Leicester, who earned 40s in Coventry, as much as the Queen's Men there in 1587–8, but averaged between 20s and 30s per year in Coventry from 1574–87. Next is the earl of Essex, whose company made as much as 20s in Coventry in 1587–8, but 10s in 1583–4, the same amount given to the players of the Lord Strange there in 1578–9, and to the players of Lord Berkeley in 1580–1 and of Lord Chandos in 1586–7. In 1582–3, Lord Berkeley's company was paid 13s 4d, a higher amount perhaps due to the inclusion of musicians, as the record notes: 'And to the Lord Barkeles players & musicions.'[53] The inclusion of musicians in the group may also explain the 13s 4d paid to the earl of Worcester's players in Coventry in 1583–4, a company which usually earned 6s 8d in Coventry as in 1575–6, 1579–80, and 1581–2. Likewise, in Coventry, the earl of Warwick's and Lord Stafford's players earned 6s 8d in 1575–6 and 1587–8, respectively. At the bottom of the scale for this group are the earl of Worcester's players, who earned 5s in 1577–8.

In Stratford and Warwick, the hierarchy of payments is slightly different. At the top of the scale are the queen's players, who earned 20s in Warwick in

1568–9 and in Stratford in the 1580s, which parallels the system in Coventry, though at a lower amount. Next is the earl of Warwick, whose company earned 17s in Stratford in 1574–5, more than the earl of Leicester's company, which received 15s in Stratford in 1576–7. Fourth down is the countess of Essex's players, who received 13s 6d in 1578–9; note that she married the earl of Leicester on 21 September 1578. After the visit of the company of the earl of Derby, which earned 8s 4d at Stratford in 1579–80, are company rewards in the 5s range: players of Lord Strange, Derby's son, 1578–9, of Lord Berkeley, 1582–3, of the earl of Essex, 1587, and of the earl of Worcester, 1574–5 (5s 7d) and 1581–2, all in Stratford. At the lower end of the scale, 3s range, are the companies of Lord Chandos (3s 4d in 1582–3), the earl of Oxford (3s 4d in 1583–4), and Lord Stafford (3s 4d in 1587), all for performances in Stratford.

Rewards vary from year to year for a given company in a given location within the county. Thus, in 1573–4, the earl of Leicester's players received 5s 8d, and three years later they received 15s in Stratford. The rewards to the same company in Coventry increased from 20s to 40s from 1586–7 to 1587–8. In a ten-year period, from 1574–84, the earl of Worcester's players received payments ranging from 3s 4d to 5s 7d in Stratford.

The Stratford payments, when compared with those of Coventry, also suggest the importance of local influence. There, aside from the queen's players, the largest payments went to players of the Warwickshire nobility: Ambrose Dudley, earl of Warwick (17s in 1574–5); his brother Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, with a residence at Kenilworth (15s in 1576–7 and 10s in 1587); and his wife (possibly to be, depending on the date of the record), Lettice Knollys, countess of Essex (13s 6d in 1578–9). However, one must be cautious. According to this system, the players of Lord Berkeley, of Caludon Castle, Warw, should be treated comparably, but they received less: 5s in 1582–3. However, Lord Berkeley may have been associated with Gloucestershire, where Berkeley Castle and another Berkeley residence, Yate Court, were located even though he lived mainly at Caludon Castle.[54] Influence at court, for example membership on the privy council, may also have accounted for local importance: Leicester and Warwick were members of the privy council as of 1559 and 1573, respectively, which may have accounted for preferential treatment of their companies. Derby was not appointed to the privy council until 1585, and Essex, not until 1592, both after the dates of the payments to their companies at Stratford.

However, what accounts for the pay hierarchy, the variations, and the fluctuations from year to year must include many variables, including the size of the company, the response to the performance, the regional economy, and the wealth of the household where performances took place. A century earlier, in the Maxstoke Priory accounts, where the number of 'mimi' are specified, payments can be divided evenly: 1434–5, 20d for four 'mimi' of Lord Abergavenny, or 5d each; 1ikewise 20d for four 'mimi' of the duke of Buckingham in 1448–9, or 5d each; and 2d for two 'mimi' of Lord Ferrers in 1442–3, 1d each. There the reward appears to be determined, in part at least, by the number of performers. Another factor governing differences in rewards in general could have been the prosperity and size of the location. Coventry was a much larger centre of travel and trade than Stratford. According to 1563 population data, there were *c* 500 families in Stratford, compared with *c* 1250 families in Coventry, so the income available for a travelling company would have been higher in the city.[55]

This evidence from Warwickshire suggests that touring routes were not only determined by the size of rewards, but also by the regional influence of a company's patron, often measured in terms of local landholdings, as well as importance at court.[56] Routes, profits, and proximity to patrons' lands might well have determined the smaller tour stops: companies travelling to or from their lord's manor could take advantage of opportunities close by. At the same time, the companies carrying their patrons' names served to remind citizens of their lords' command of the area, one with a rich history of dramatic activity.

Notes

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2 Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Playing Companies* (Oxford, 1996), 167–77; Edmund K. Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1923); and John

Tucker Murray, *English Dramatic Companies 1558–1642*, 2 vols (London, 1910).

3 Mary A. Blackstone, 'Patrons and Elizabethan Dramatic Companies', *The Elizabethan Theatre* X, C.E. McGee (ed), Papers given at the Tenth International Conference on Elizabethan Theatre, University of Waterloo, July 1983 (Port Credit, 1988), 112–32; Suzanne R. Westfall, *Patrons and Performance: Early Tudor Household Revels* (Oxford, 1990); Paul W. White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing in Tudor England* (Cambridge, 1993); and Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean, *The Queen's Men and their Plays* (Cambridge, 1998), 1–17.

4 Samples of these materials are now available at http://www.utoronto.ca/patrons.

5 J.A.B. Somerset, "How chances it they travel?": Provincial Touring, Playing Places, and the King's Men', *Shakespeare Survey* 47 (1994), 50.

6 Sally-Beth MacLean, 'Tour Routes: "Provincial Wanderings" or Traditional Circuits?' *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England* 6 (1993), 1–14. For a map of post–1550 tour stops, see McMillin and MacLean, *The Queen's Men*, map 2, 40.

7 Somerset, "How chances it they travel?" 52–3. For a map showing the touring routes and venues of Leicester's Men 1574–82, see McMillin and MacLean, *The Queen's Men*, map 1, 19.

8 Peter Greenfield, 'Touring,' *A New History of Early English Drama*, John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (eds) (New York, 1997), 256–61. Sally-Beth MacLean suggests that the importance of a patron's influence at court was a probable cause of increased rewards on tour. See 'The Politics of Patronage: Dramatic Records in Robert Dudley's Household Books', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 44.2 (1993), 179. MacLean is editing the Dudley household records, forthcoming in the REED series.

9 Greenfield, 'Touring', 262.

10 Somerset, "How Chances it they travel?" 49, 51.

11 Reginald W. Ingram (ed), *Coventry*, REED (Toronto, 1981). All references to records from Coventry in this paper are based on Ingram's edition. For biographies of patrons and dates of payments to their companies in Coventry, see Elza C. Tiner, 'Patrons and Travelling Companies in Coventry', *REEDN* 21.1 (1996), 1–37, indexed to Ingram's edition.

12 With the exception of Henry VI and Catherine of Valois, whose minstrels and trumpeters were rewarded at Coventry in 1429–30, according to the Coventry *Leet Book I*, no fifteenth-century records of payments to travelling companies survive for that city. See Ingram (ed), *Coventry*, xxxiii and 10.

13 Peter Greenfield, 'Entertainments of Henry, Lord Berkeley, 1593–4 and 1600–5', *REEDN* 8.1 (1983), 12–24. All references to Berkeley accounts in this paper are based on Greenfield's edition. Records of dramatic activity at Maxstoke Priory 1430–93; in Stratford Chamberlains' Accounts, 1554–94, 1585–1619, and 1622–49, and Borough Minutes, 1593–1628; in Warwick Burgesses' Accounts, 1540–69, Bailiffs' Accounts 1600–1, and Antiquarian Extracts from Bailiffs' Accounts, 1599–1716; and in the household accounts of Sir Thomas Puckering, Priory Park, 1620–1, are forthcoming in the Warwickshire collection edited by J.A.B. Somerset in the REED series. Dating for Maxstoke Priory accounts and all references to Warwickshire records in this paper, other than those of Coventry or Lord Berkeley, are based on Somerset's edition, in progress. I am currently preparing biographies of the patrons named in the Warwickshire documents for the 'Patrons and Travelling Companies' section of Somerset's Warwickshire collection.
These documents represent the surviving Warwickshire records currently published or in preparation for publication by REED, which always includes surviving household accounts in its collections. As the project research continues, relevant material from household accounts for patrons who lived at least part of the year in Warwickshire, but whose primary residence was elsewhere, may be added to this list. Such accounts will be included in REED collections for the county of the primary family seat, or in special collections, if the patron travelled among several residences, as in the case of the household accounts of Robert Dudley, 14th earl of Leicester, edited by Sally-Beth MacLean, forthcoming in the REED series.

14 Antiquarian Extracts from Bailiffs' Accounts, 1636–7, f[6].

15 See note 12 above.

16 Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401–1499* (Cambridge, 1992), 30.

17 Victoria History of the Counties of England, *Warwick,* vol 4, L.F. Salzman (ed) (London, 1947; rpt Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1965), 133, 136.

18 *VCH: Warwick*, vol 4, 138.

19 *VCH: Warwick*, vol 4, 140.

20 For a discussion of the various terms for performers in the records, see Abigail Ann Young, 'Plays and Players: The Latin Terms for Performance', *REEDN* 9.2 (1984), 56–62 and *REEDN* 10.1 (1985), 9–16.

21 Maxstoke Priory Account Book, 1435–6, xxxix; 1442–3, cxl.

22 Maxstoke Priory Account Book, 1431–2, ix; 1434–5, xxxii.

23 For examples of travelling companies named by location in the Coventry records, see 'Companies Named by Location' in Tiner, 'Patrons and Travelling Companies in Coventry', 35–7.
24 Maxstoke Priory Account Book, 1434–5, xxxii.
25 Maxstoke Priory Account Book, 1431–2, ix. For information about Reynold Grey, see G[eorge] E[dward] C[okayne], *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, extant, extinct and dormant*, vol 6, (Stroud, 1982), under Grey, 155. William Astley died *c* 1417 (Carpenter, *Locality and Policy*, 314).
26 Maxstoke Priory Account Book, 1435–6, xxxix.
27 *VCH: Warwick*, vol 4, 139, and *The Complete Peerage*, vol 3, under Clinton, 315.
28 Carole Rawcliffe, *The Staffords: Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham, 1394–1521* (Cambridge, 1978), xiii, 66, 192–3.
29 John de Clinton, 1st Lord Clinton, married *c* 1290 Ida, sister and coheir of Edmund d'Odingsells, and eldest daughter of William d'Odingsells of Maxstoke, with whom he, John de Clinton, acquired the castle and lordship of Maxstoke. See *The Complete Peerage*, vol 3, under Clinton, 313.
30 *VCH: Warwick*, vol 4, 138.
31 Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, 33.
32 *VCH: Warwick*, vol 1, 147, vol 5, 54, 205.
33 Stratford Borough Minutes 1593–1628, 95.
34 Stratford Borough Minutes 1593–1628, 220.
35 Stratford Chamberlains' Accounts 1585–1619, 311, based on transcription by J.A.B. Somerset, edition in progress.
36 Stratford Chamberlains' Accounts 1622–49, f 1.
37 On the bailiff's accounts for the year ending 1 November 43 Elizabeth (1601), see David George and Monica Ory, 'Six Payments to Players and Entertainers in Seventeenth-Century Warwick', *REEDN* 8.1 (1983), 8–12.
38 A brief biography of Henry Berkeley is available in Audrey Douglas and Peter Greenfield (eds), *Cumberland/Westmorland/Gloucestershire*, Records of Early English Drama (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 436. See also Peter Greenfield's introduction to the Gloucestershire records in this volume for information about the Berkeley, Stafford, and Brydges households in Gloucestershire, 258–60. Additional biographical information about Henry Berkeley is available from *The Complete Peerage*; and John Smyth, *The Berkeley Manuscripts: The Lives of the Berkeleys, Lords of the Honour, Castle and Manor of Berkeley in the County of Gloucester, from 1066 to 1618, with a Description of*

the Hundred of Berkeley and of its Inhabitants, John Maclean (ed), vol 2, Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (Gloucester, 1883), 285, 370, 372.

39 Greenfield, 'Entertainments of Henry, Lord Berkeley, 1593–4 and 1600–5', 12.

40 'Entertainments of Henry, Lord Berkeley, 1593–4 and 1600–5', 23 n3.

41 Another possibility to add to this list is Mr. Cavendish, who may be the same person whose players performed in Coventry in 1585, possibly Henry Cavendish, who lived at Tutbury, Staff.

42 Succession numbers and titles for all peers listed in this paper follow the numbering sequence and form given in *The Complete Peerage*.

43 Berkeley's company, while richly rewarded at home (Berkeley's players received £4 in January 1603), earned 10s in Coventry in 1603–4. See Greenfield, 'Entertainments of Henry, Lord Berkeley, 1593–4 and 1600–5', 19, and Ingram (ed), *Coventry*, 364.

44 Biographical information about Sir John and Sir Thomas Puckering is available from the *DNB*. Sir John Puckering's widow, Jane, married William Combe (1551–1610), who sold land in Old Stratford to William Shakespeare in 1602. See Mark Eccles, *Shakespeare in Warwickshire* (Madison, 1961), 101.

45 Westfall, *Patrons and Performance*, 135.

46 The court calendar for Elizabeth I has been compiled by E.K. Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, vol 4, Appendix A, 75–130, and by John H. Astington, *English Court Theatre 1558–1642* (Cambridge, 1999), Appendix, 221–67. References to court performances mentioned in this paper follow Astington's dating.

47 Greenfield (ed), *Gloucestershire*, 300; Mark Pilkinton (ed), *Bristol*, REED (Toronto, 1997), 71; J.A.B. Somerset (ed), *Shropshire*, REED (Toronto, 1994), 82.

48 Her company also appeared in Gloucester in 1578–9. See Greenfield (ed), *Gloucestershire*, 306. However, so far, no other REED collections contain a reference to her company.

49 Routes can be determined from the 1583 map of tour stops in McMillin and MacLean, *The Queen's Men*, 40.

50 Ingram (ed), *Coventry*, 294, 298 and Stratford Chamberlains' Accounts, 101 and 111.

51 Stratford Chamberlains' Accounts 1554–94, 84, based on transcription by Somerset, edition in progress.

52 Ingram (ed), *Coventry*, 290.

53 Ingram (ed), *Coventry*, 300.

54 This suggestion was made to me by Peter Greenfield at the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, July 1999.

55 For the relative sizes of Coventry, Stratford, and Warwick in 1563, based on number of families resident in each, see Charles Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a City: Coventry and the Urban Crisis of the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1979), map 2, 23.

56 Though beyond the scope of the present work, a comparative study of REED collections of household accounts will reveal more about the way patronage of players and other performers was managed and the extent to which it was supported. For examples of household accounts, see David Klausner (ed), *Herefordshire/Worcestershire*, REED (Toronto, 1990); David George (ed), *Lancashire*, REED (Toronto, 1991); J.A.B. Somerset (ed) *Shropshire*.