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SHOEMAKERS, CLOWNS, AND SAINTS:

*THE NARRATIVE AFTERLIFE OF
THOMAS DELONEY*



AN ENGLISH HONORS THESIS BY
CHRISTOPHER JOHN KORP

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
PROFESSORS JENNIFER MILLER & KATHERINE SNYDER

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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From Loom to Quill

“Such triviall trinkets and threadbare trash, had better seemed T.D. whose braines beaten to the yarking up of Ballades, might more lawfully have glaunst at the quaint conceites of conny-catching and cross-biting.”

~Robert Green

For years, you have toiled with your dexterous and calloused hands weaving silk into vibrant fabrics worn by princes. You, your family, and almost everyone you know proudly affiliate themselves with the silk trade in some respect. The late 1580s in Norwich England is a time of great hope. More apprentices are becoming masters, and more masters are becoming merchant traders, as this is a time of fantastic upward mobility. However, the affluent landowners see the rising wealth among the artisans as a missed opportunity for their own financial gain. These landowners decide to utilize their farmland for wool production. As England’s wool production increases, the demand for silk declines. With the silk looms of Norwich now motionless, you move to London and attempt to reinvent yourself as a writer. Your writings become a source of solace and pride for England’s working class, but your new literary peers denounce your work as “trash,” and your name—along with your texts—becomes a mere footnote in this vibrant literary time. Your name is Thomas Deloney.

Economic turmoil, social mobility, and personal reinvention for survival were all hallmarks of late sixteenth-century England, but one man in particular embodied and chronicled all of these states of flux and sought to help make sense of them in the language of the working class, his native tongue. That man was Thomas Deloney. In the realm of literary criticism, the number of studies devoted to the late-Elizabethan

pamphleteer and proto-novelist Thomas Deloney (d. in or before 1600)¹ is minuscule when compared to those devoted to some of his contemporaries, such as Thomas Nashe and Robert Greene. This is most likely due to the lack of extant first-edition texts from which to study. Deloney was an incredibly popular writer during his most active period of writing, from 1590 to 1599, and this popularity ironically led to the destruction of all of his first-edition texts. Printed on inexpensive paper, these editions were not durable enough to withstand the repeated hand-to-hand redistribution of his works. In this thesis, I will explore how Deloney's popularity led to the preservation and/or destruction of his work. With regard to this problem, two of Deloney's texts—the ballad "A Maiden's Choice Twixt Age and Youth" and the proto-novel *The Gentle Craft*—live on through the business aspirations of one printer, William Jaggard, and the artistic reinventions of the playwrights Thomas Dekker and William Rowley. These three usages of Deloney's writing remain the most widely read and studied of his work—even though others attached their names in place of Deloney's. After looking at Deloney's proto-novel *The Pleasant History of John Winchcomb* for evidence of his authorial allegiance to artisans and the working class, this thesis will explore how popular early modern English culture could lead to either the preservation or destruction of a text. My thesis explores how a relatively unknown writer's work changed the tone of both the Elizabethan and Jacobean theater scenes, and how the spirit of that writer's work was preserved through the artistry of others.

To some literary critics and textual scholars, the notion of exploring the lasting legacy of an obscure Elizabethan writer whose historical mentions remain in the marginalia of literary criticism may evoke a resounding "why?" However, these objections can be silenced with the following arguments: first, this writer was banished

¹ The dating of Deloney's death to the year 1600 is not definitive, however. UC Berkeley professor Alan Nelson recently uncovered a death date of 1603 in his personal database of the parish records of St. Giles Cripplegate.

from the English literary canon due to his association with the lower artisan social class; and, second, many canonized English playwrights used this artist's narratives, characters, and themes in their theatrical productions.

One of the commonly held misunderstandings concerning Thomas Deloney relates to the discrepancy between his obscurity in modern times and his massive popularity during his life. Some may wrongly believe that students do not study Deloney today because he was not popular in his lifetime. In fact, Deloney was a wildly successful writer among his peers. His popularity stemmed from his loyal English working-class readership, as he wrote from the perspective of England's lower classes, and even from a proto-feminist point of view.² Deloney biographer Francis Oscar Mann corroborates his popularity when he writes, "How popular his novels were may be judged from the long period in which they held the public's estimation, often reprinted through the seventeenth century..."³ Deloney's main genre for his work was pamphlets. Printed on low-cost and low-quality paper, these pamphlets passed from hand-to-hand until the cheap pulp dissolved from overuse. Modern libraries do not hold any extant first editions of his work, not due to his irrelevance as a writer, but because Deloney was one of the more popular writers of his time. We could say it was his popularity that ultimately prevented Deloney's canonization.

The late Elizabethan silk weaver, balladeer, and proto-novelist Thomas Deloney entered England's community of pamphleteering street writers in an attempt to earn an income after an ebbing of trade in the silk industry silenced his loom and the looms of many others. The economics and pride of his former trade entered into his writings, which were dynamically woven accounts of tradesmen and the burgeoning middle class.

² Deloney's feminist perspective can be seen, for example, in the headnote to Chapter X of *The Gentle Craft* with, "[h]ow Sir Simon Eyre...became in the end Maior of London, through the councell of his wife..."

³ Mann, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broadsides with an Introduction and Notes*, xxxi.

Deloney began his new career in England's literary center after he relocated to London from Norwich. Migration patterns like Deloney's were not limited to silk weavers, as many agricultural workers were also moving to the cities from the countryside after their eviction from farming land due to the enclosure movement. As Roger A. Ladd writes, this relocation meant that "Deloney was almost ideally placed to become a spokesman for his economically troubled class, as his early (prenovel) popular success as a balladeer enabled Deloney to supplement his income as a yeoman of the London Weavers' Company."⁴ While it was an ideal city for beginning a career in authorship, London's strong focus on social class would have been quite a shock to Deloney and his previous life in the country. Once in London, Deloney would have been affected by upward economic mobility for the first time, "[f]or urban society in this period presents a picture both of a clear and relatively rigid social pyramid of wealth and status and of a social hierarchy whose individual members were constantly changing."⁵ Of course, these same rigid hierarchies existed in Norwich, but never before had Deloney seen citizens travel freely between the classes as their opportunities and then fortunes expanded. Many new members in England's emerging middle class found themselves the masters of their former shop mates. It was these working relationships between the nouveau-riche merchants and the artisans that Deloney sought to inform and mend in his writings. Although many Deloney critics—such as David Margolies and Francis Oscar Mann—classify Deloney solely as a promoter of England's new middle class, I assert that economic conditions of the time steered Deloney as a steadfast supporter not only of the middle class but also of the craftsmen and manual laborers who spun silk into royal liveries.

⁴ Ladd, "Thomas Deloney and the London Weavers' Company," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 32, 981-2. ⁵ Clark and Slack, *English Towns in Transition 1500-1700*, 111.

In the enclosure movement in late sixteenth-century Tudor England, landowners hedged off arable land and converted it into pastureland to raise sheep for the wool industry. Earlier in the sixteenth century, during the reign of Henry VIII, a spike in the market price for wool had spurred landholders to fence off their lands and raise sheep. In his book *Tudor Economic Problems*, Peter Ramsey breaks down this movement into two categories: “bad enclosures,” where the tenant farmers who occupied the land were essentially evicted and forced to move to the cities; and “good enclosures,” where the owner of the land did not remove anyone in order to convert arable land into grazing pastures.⁶ In both cases, the amount of labor needed to service these lands dropped dramatically once they were enclosed. This created massive unemployment. To make matters worse, the disappearing arable land soon led to increased food prices, food shortages, and even famine. With a larger percentage of the population moving to cities and other industrial havens, “[f]armers thus had a growing incentive to produce for the market rather than for local subsistence.”⁷ Despite this rise in food prices, there is little historical evidence to explain why the landowners did not convert their fields back into arable land, even though reconversion might have been the most economically advantageous move. As demand for silk goods within the textile market slackened during this depression, Deloney could no longer practice the trade of which he was so proud, and he began to write and sell ballads on the streets for subsistence.

Deloney’s written work was a direct result of the enclosure movement, and the idling of the tradesmen and merchants prompted him to trade the loom for the quill. Nobody knows what exactly drew Deloney to writing, but if one possessed the necessary talents, writing could be a means of earning an income that did not require a large initial

⁶ Ramsey, *Tudor Economic Problems*. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. London: Victor Gollancz, 1963. I will be using the chapter titled “Agrarian Problems” from Ramsey’s book to help me frame the disparate economic factors behind the writings of Thomas Deloney.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 23.

overhead cost. Louis B. Wright argues, “[t]he broadside ballad was a form that unlearned men could soon acquire the trick of writing, and through it common folk found a means of self-expression.”⁸ While this is true, I would add that many learned men also utilized this populist medium as a means of avoiding certain licensing roadblocks set up by the Privy Council in order to quell political unrest caused by scurrilous pamphlets. However, it was not only political concerns but also economic ones that were spurring on a new age in English literature. As David Margolies writes, “the disintegration of the orderly feudal universe was reflected in the literature of the late sixteenth century. The increasing importance of the nouveaux riches and merchants and artisans in Elizabethan social life, and the consequent strain on the hierarchical view of the world, can be seen in the evolution of fiction toward the novel.”⁹ The accessibility of language in Deloney’s work also catered to the middle class, and in some cases it even deified it.¹⁰ However, as I will demonstrate below, this deification of the middle class was only a means to show the true power of the worker. This new audience craved to read these works, but lacked the financial means to purchase texts from the traditional booksellers who catered to people of high social rank. However, Deloney would soon eschew the broadside in favor of writing historical proto-novels featuring tradespeople as characters. These tradespeople did not occupy the periphery of these proto-novels, but rather served as their fulcrums.

Often referred to by contemporary critics—in my opinion unfairly—as either an apologist for the middle class or a propagandist who promoted the righteousness of England’s new merchant class, Deloney also took a didactic approach with his writing in an attempt to model ideal yeomen for the sake of bettering the lives of his brother

⁸ Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England*, 420.

⁹ Margolies, “Thomas Deloney,” in *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England*, 158.

¹⁰ Thomas Deloney’s *The Pleasant Historie of John Winchcomb* and *Thomas Of Reading* both use middle-class merchants as their narratives’ respective heroes.

weavers.¹¹ Even though the major characters in Deloney's writings are almost all from the "middle class," Deloney was, I argue, demonstrating the sheer force and elegance of craft exhibited by the manual laborers that he considered the thread of England's fabric. Deloney's 1596 *The Pleasant Historie of John Winchcomb* is an excellent example of this. As the early Deloney biographer/compiler Francis Oscar Mann frames it, Deloney was "endowed with the democratic facility for the fabulizing of history."¹² In this rewriting of the history of an early sixteenth-century cloth merchant, John Wynchcombe (d. 1520), Deloney weaves a tale of a proud pillar of society who, when asked to muster troops for one of Henry VIII's many wars, gathers over 200 men whose fine livery and regalia (woven by the very men who were wearing them) put to shame the uniforms of the king's own troops. The beauty of the craft trumps the pomp of royalty. When the king travels to Winchcomb's home of Newberie to pay thanks to the yeoman merchant, Winchcomb, instead of forming a reception line with his men to welcome the king, opts to have his troops/silk weavers stand guard at an anthill with swords drawn. Deloney writes:

With that, *Iacke of Newberie* started vp, and made this answer. Harrold (quoth he) returne to the Highnesse, it is poore *Iacke of Newberie*, who being scant Marquesse of a Mole-Hill, is chosen Prince of Ants: and here I stand with my weapons and Guard about mee, to defend and keep these my

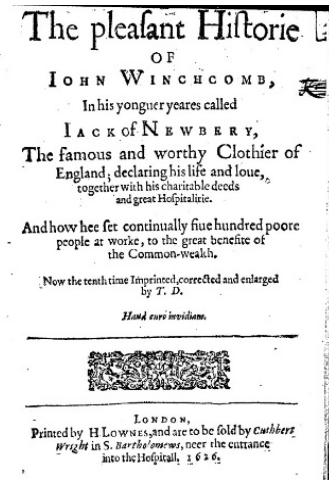


Figure 1--The title page from the 1626 edition of "The pleasant historie of Iohn VWinchcomb" Copy from: Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery

¹¹ Margolies, "Thomas Deloney," in *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England*, 158. Margolies states that "it is easy to overlook Deloney's role as a propagandist."

¹² Mann, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broad-sides with an Introduction and Notes*, xxix.

poore and painefull subjects, from the force of the idle Butterflies, their sworne enemies, lest they should disturbe this quiet Common-wealth, who this Summer season are making their Winters prouision. (3.1, 23-30)¹³

Here, Winchcombe styles himself as the “Prince of Ants,” not as a means to erode his own agency, but as a twofold method of portraying his tradesmen. First, these men are almost imperceptible to the king. They are but annoyances to be flicked off one’s knee whilst sipping tea. Second—and this is the main lesson gleaned from this passage—his men are both “poore and painefull.” In other words, they survive on meager means, but they brandish an acidic bite if someone or something—whether it be the king or economic trends—disturbs their “quiet Common-wealth.” This is a threat of revolution. Here, the merchant from Newberie is not only protecting the ants from their “sworne enemies,” but is also protecting the king from the ants/laboring classes of England, for the “idle Butterflies” represent the enclosure-minded landholders who expelled labor from their fields in order to let sheep and wool profits chew their pasture’s grass.

Presenting such an aggressive allegory—a veiled threat to a king of England, and a depiction of the economic realities of the enclosure movement that the king allowed to flourish in his land—would traditionally have resulted in the imprisonment or death of the author. In fact, “[t]he concern of the elite to maintain such distinctions is also evidenced by their enthusiasm in prosecuting attacks on their ‘reverence.’”¹⁴ Deloney was playing a dangerous game. Nevertheless, these words from the pen of Deloney resulted in the king within the story replying, “Trust mee (quoth our King) here bee pretty fellowes to fight against Butterflies: I must commend your courage, that dares withstand such mighty gyants.”¹⁵ At the time of this proto-novel, the word “pretty” was an

¹³ Deloney and Mann, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broad-sides with an Introduction and Notes*, 27.

¹⁴ Clark and Slack, *English Towns in Transition 1500-1700*, 116.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

admirable term for both soldiers and artisans. It meant “cunning, crafty, clever, skillful, and able.”¹⁶ This shows that Deloney’s ideas of didacticism worked within this textual scrimmage between the silk weavers and the royal procession. The king now sees these proud workers not as pestilent ants but as necessary contributors in a functional society, as soldiers of the loom who need the king’s protection to thwart the advances of the landholders, who are framed as “idle Butterflies.” The king also realizes, through the evidence of these men standing tall, that their pride in their craft allows them to “withstand such mighty gyants,” but the King can also envision enduring the bites of a thousand ants if the enclosure movement continued to destabilize the lower echelon of England’s economy.

Unlike many writers in the early modern era, Deloney never hunted for a patron to fund his art and leisure. Deloney wrote to feed himself, and his textual content reflects his former artisan profession. Deloney knew, loved, and longed for the manual labor of the silk loom, but the economic trends of Tudor England curtailed his professional way of life. However, through his writing, Deloney was able to create a utopian vision of an inverted world where the workers reign supreme and the ants routinely slay the idle butterflies. In this vision, England’s invention of private property would become a clarion call for capitalists worldwide: the enclosure movement lacked motion, sleeping after lugubrious bacchanalia, and after its insatiable greed consumed most of the Earth’s grassy fields and meadows. That being said, Deloney’s fellow artisans still produce their art, their looms have not been absolutely silenced, and an ant’s bite can still cause pain. Deloney uses workers in his texts as exemplars of life for the middle and ruling classes to aspire to, and in that sense Deloney’s writings remain relevant to this day.

¹⁶ “pretty, adj., n., and int.” OED Online. Oxford University Press, September 2014. Web. 5 November 2014.

Deloney's work remained alive long past his death, and one unusual way this occurred was through its misattribution as the work of William Shakespeare at the hands of the printer, William Jaggard (c.1568–1623), who is known to modernity as the father of Isaac Jaggard, with whom he printed Shakespeare's first folio. We must first address the unconventional, and some would say unseemly, manner in which William Jaggard approached his printing business. It was both an exciting and frightening time to be in the book business. If you were a printer, you had to navigate the intricate publishing rules set up by Queen Elizabeth I. Her edict stated, "all books which were to be printed must first be licensed, and severe penalties were provided for the printing of 'unallowed' books or keeping a secret press."¹⁷ Regulation and licensing such as this created a small and select group of printers who were granted the right to print from a newly formed organization called the Stationers' Company; and as with any monopoly, many people were left out of this profit stream. Now shunned, writers like Thomas Deloney existed on the margins of London's publishing industry and released their work with the help of black-market printing operations. By contrast, Jaggard had none of these problems. He was one of the city's few licensed printers, and he threw his crown-endorsed weight around to his full advantage. Summing up the general opinion of Jaggard's business ethics, the English writer Algernon Charles Swinburne once referred to the printer as an "infamous pirate, liar."¹⁸ Opinions like Swinburne's stem from the controversy surrounding the publishing of *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599). Without William Shakespeare's knowledge, Jaggard acquired several examples of the bard's poetry along with works by "Bartholomew Griffin, Richard Barnfield, Christopher Marlowe, Sir Walter Raleigh,"¹⁹ as well as by Thomas Deloney, and then published all of these works

¹⁷ Willoughby, *A Printer of Shakespeare: The Books and Times of William Jaggard*, 7.

¹⁸ Swinburne, *Studies in Prose and Poetry*, 90.

¹⁹ Willoughby, *A Printer of Shakespeare: The Books and Times of William Jaggard*, 49.

together in the name of William Shakespeare.²⁰ As you will notice, Deloney's name was not included in the above quotation, as scholars have been hesitant to credit him due to the aforementioned lack of extant first-edition texts. Nevertheless, Jaggard biographer E.E. Willoughby writes that, "manuscripts were sometimes dishonestly obtained and [with] the absence of a definite copyright law, they have given the publisher of Shakespeare's day an unmerited bad reputation."²¹ It would be unjust to label Jaggard's printing of *The Passionate Pilgrim* as theft or plagiarism in the modern sense. Rather, it is an example of an English miscellany. Like Richard Tottel's eponymous miscellany,²² William Jaggard curated these works to highlight and promote not only the texts themselves but also his printing business. Willoughby adds that Jaggard's venture "stole from several authors, but from each so lightly that evidently none of them felt sufficiently aggrieved to make trouble."²³ If this was true for the established talents of London's literary scene, it was doubly so for Thomas Deloney, who was in no position to mount a legal protest given that he was living, at the time, with an arrest warrant hanging over his head—as he had been for years.

As the enclosure movement wrought havoc with the economy, and in particular the economy of food distribution, famine began to spread among the working class people in London. In response to the myopic economic policies that led to this lack of food, Deloney, in an early act of defiant journalism, wrote *The Ballad for the Want of Corn*. We cannot parse the words contained in this ballad, for all published editions have been lost, but the legal backlash from this economic critique is well established. English

²⁰ William Shakespeare did not abet Jaggard with the publication of this book, nor did he appear to have any knowledge of the printer's intentions.

²¹ Willoughby, *A Printer of Shakespeare: The Books and Times of William Jaggard*, 15.

²² *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557) featured the work of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and of Thomas Wyatt, but a host of other poets were also published sans credit of authorship. Those unnamed authors include Nicholas Grimald, Thomas Norton, Thomas Vaux, John Heywood. Coincidentally, it was Richard Tottel who introduced the Jaggard family to the printing trade, as William's brother Jon worked as an apprentice in Tottel's print shop.

²³ Willoughby, *A Printer of Shakespeare: The Books and Times of William Jaggard*, 51.

historian John Stow captured Deloney's protest in his 1598 *Survey of London* when he wrote:

In the next Year [1596] Sir Stephen Slany, Maior, in the Month of July was brought to his Hands a certain Ballad, containing a Complaint of great Want and Scarcity of Corn within the Realm. And forasmuch as it contained in it certain vain and presumptuous matters, bringing in the Queen speaking with her People Dialogue wise in very fond and undecent sort (as the said Maior in this letter, wrote also to the Lord Treasurer shewed) and prescribing order for the remedying of this Dearth of Corn; which was extracted, as it seemed, out of a Book, published by the Lords the last Year, but done in that Vain and indiscreet manner, as that thereby the Poor might aggravate their Grief, and take occasion of some Discontentment: therefore he thought fit to acquaint the said Lord, that he called before him both Printer and the Party by whom it was put to print; who pretended a License for it. But that finding it to be untrue; he committed him to one of the Counters, and took Sureties of the printer himself for appearance.

The Maker of the scurrilous Ballad was one Delonie, an idle Fellow, and one noted with the Spirit, in printing a Book for the Silk Weavers: Wherein was found some such like foolish and disorderly matter. Him the Maior also was in search for, but could not yet find him; as he signified also the said Lord, and sent him a Copy of the foresaid Ballad.²⁴

After waging this protest concerning the London food shortages, Deloney went on the run, and somehow remained free for the rest of his life. Whereas in some of Deloney's writings one labor group or another can be determined to be the beneficiary, *The Ballad for the Want of Corn* was a protest coming from the collective voices of London's laboring

²⁴ Stow, *A Survey of London*. Reprinted From the Text of 1603, Book V, 333.

class, and amplified by Deloney's pen. Living in secret with an arrest warrant hanging over his head forced Deloney to print and publish his writings through illegal and unlicensed printers. Deloney may not have cared about enshrining his name next to the greats of English literature, but it still seems odd that such small numbers of scholars in modernity know his name and work. Why is that? While the silk-weaving chapter of his life had ended, Deloney's allegiance to his guild and all working people remained a central tenet of his life as a writer. He was not writing on behalf of the guild per se; he was simply a guildsman writer. Thomas Deloney was now not only feeding himself and his family through his writings; a large portion of England's working class depended on his confrontational honesty.

Stealing Deloney

However, one businessman, the printer William Jaggard, may have taken advantage of Deloney's compromised legal status and used one of his ballads without his approval. That ballad was "A Maiden's Choice Twixt Age and Youth," and Jaggard would soon publish Deloney's work under the name William Shakespeare. First, we will look at the Deloney original:

Crabbid Age and Youth
 cannot liue together:
 Youth is full of pleasure,
 Age is full of care.
 Youth like Summers morn,
 Age like Winters weather:
 Youth is full of sport,
 Ages breath is short:
 Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
 Youth is hot and bold,
 Age is weak and cold:
 Youth is wild, and Age is tame:
 Age I do abhor thee;
 Youth I do adore thee,
 O my loue, my loue is young,
 Age I do defie thee:
 O sweet Shepherd hie thee,

for me thinks thou stay'st too long,²⁵

Deloney's ballad "A Maiden's Choice Twixt Age and Youth" appears in his much-debated *The Garland of Good-Will* (1597). The controversy surrounding this text stems from the fact that no extant first-edition print survives, and that William Jaggard published Deloney's ballad in his *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599) under the name William Shakespeare. Even though we cannot compare Deloney's first edition text to the Jaggard print, we can still determine the publishing date of Deloney's work through the Stationers' Registers, where it states, "Entered for his copie. Vnder the hand of the bishop of London and a master warden Styrrup; a book intituled *The garden of goodwill*."²⁶ A clerk at the Stationers' Register erred by entering "garden" instead of "garland" as to



Figure 2 "The Garland Good-Will" 1631, Bodleian Library

the title of Deloney's book. Because this ledger entry is located in the 1592-3 section, we can establish the writing date of Deloney's book of ballads as no later than 1593—a full six years before Jaggard's spurious book.

However, we can look to later reprints of *Garland* in order to note the changes made by either Jaggard or his editor. In the first stanza of Deloney's "A Maiden's Choice Twixt Age and Youth" from a 1688 reprint (see Figure 2), we can see the loose style of this balladeer. Here, Deloney alternates between "Youth" and "Age" at the start of almost every line, making *Maiden's Choice* appear to be an actual dialogue that attempts to uncover a truth. However, this poem's voice comes from one's opinion of the other, and not a self-assessment. "Youth" posits its estimation concerning the characteristics of "Age," and

²⁵ Deloney, *The Garland of Good-will*, 60.

²⁶ Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640 A.D.*, 1592-3.

“Age” does the same of “Youth.” There is no omniscient view in Deloney’s work. There is a simple generational gap in honest communication. More importantly, however, the voice in this ballad is feminine. In addition, it is the maiden who is carefully weighing her options, not the grizzled and male “Age.” This maiden is the one force in control of her destiny. Deloney’s work embodies the dishonesty that can exist in a relationship between an older man and a younger woman. Using a ballad or hymn meter, Deloney’s version is a complete five-stanza story concerning the possibilities of a romance between two people of vastly different ages.

The musicality of this ballad is apparent, but its rhyme scheme is far from conventional. Deloney’s ballad is reminiscent of discourse-laden works such as the *Everyman* plays from the fifteenth century, which convey life lessons through fruitful dialogue. However, what Jaggard did to Deloney’s ballad, even though not a crime at the time of its publishing, could still be condemned as artistically reprehensible:

Crabbed age and youth cannot live together,
 Youth is full of pleasance, Age is full of care,
 Youth like summer morne, Age like winter weather,
 Youth like summer braue, Age like winter bare.
 Youth is full of sport, Ages breath is short;
 Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
 Youth is hot and bold, Age is weak and cold;
 Youth is wild, and Age is tame.
 Age, I do abhor thee, Youth, I doe adore thee;
 O, my loue, my loue is young!
 Age, I do defy thee. O, sweet Shepherd, hie thee,
 For methinks thou staies too long.²⁷

²⁷ Shakespeare et al., *The Passionate Pilgrim*, XII.

Musicality was not a concern to Jaggard, as his goal was to morph Deloney's work into a Shakespearean-sounding sonnet, discombobulating the original work. He shoehorned the original eighteen-line stanza into twelve lines.

As compared to the character interplay in Deloney's original, the Jaggard version takes an omniscient view that would not have been welcome in the discourse-heavy Deloney universe.

In "Crabbed Age and Youth," the voice is simply playing with the dichotomy between "Age" and "Youth," but within the mind of one speaker. For example, the second line states, "Youth like a summer morne, Age like winter weather,"²⁸ which gives the impression of an aged person more

concerned about the ravages of time upon his/her body than about others outside of their own mind. Jaggard's voice is self-absorbed, where Deloney's voice was at least attempting to communicate to others. While these editorial choices reflect the dubious business practices of Jaggard, what is more interesting is how readers remember this poem. Specifically, who does the reader believe wrote this poem? As can be seen from the caption under Figure 3, William Shakespeare remained the listed author of this work until as late as 1883. However, the Deloney/Shakespeare relationship listed above is not the most significant instance of shared work between these two writers. The Arden edition of Shakespeare's *Henry V* lists Deloney as Shakespeare's influence for adding the saints, Crispine and Crispianus to his revered St. Crispin's speech.²⁹ It is important to note this credit given to Deloney relegates him only to a footnote and there he remains. I

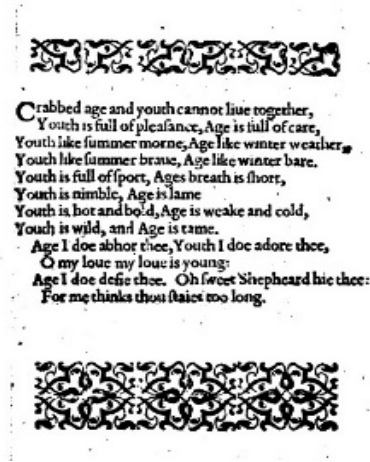


Figure 3, William Shakespeare et al., *The Passionate Pilgrim* (London: Griggs, 1883), XII.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Shakespeare and T. W. Craik, *King Henry V*, III (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2009), 289, N 40.

am not alone in thinking that this work stems from Deloney's hand, but others seem hesitant to call this Deloney's work outright. Edward Dowden argues, "there is nothing either to prove or disprove Shakespeare's authorship."³⁰ Although this is technically true, I do not fully accept Dowden's assertion that it is absolutely impossible to attribute this work to Deloney. I believe this hesitancy to make bold claims regarding Deloney's authorship, even in the nineteenth-century world of Edward Dowden, reflects the modern concept of authorship intermixing with the historical facts concerning the definition of authorship in early modern England. If there are no extant first-edition texts, there is little chance of entering the English literary canon.

Based on the foundations of past narratives, characters, and themes, English Renaissance authors relied on earlier writers to create new texts, in much the same way that the scientific world builds on earlier discoveries to forge new areas of study. In fact, this practice of assembling literature atop the sturdy frame of literature's textual past was essential for inspiring the creation of new writers. Much as in modern times, reading turns readers into writers. Subsequently, these "writers who borrowed from and appropriated other writers' works set a precedent for their own readers to become writers and, in turn, use the writers' works for their own purposes."³¹ Intertextuality such as this is necessary for the creation of new literature. While the above statement tends to mitigate the charges against Jaggard, we can also use this same mindset to strengthen Thomas Deloney's place among England's literary greats. If placing Shakespeare's name atop a Deloney ballad exposed more readers, then and now, to Deloney's work, this profit-seeking act by Jaggard actually served to sustain Deloney's literary legacy, even though Deloney's name has vanished from the text in question.

³⁰ Dowden, *The Passionate Pilgrim*, xiii.

³¹ Dobranski, *Readers and Authorship in Early Modern England*, 42.

However, a new question arises from examples like the one above. What power resides in an author's name? While I have just argued for the power of the legacy of work over that of the legacy of name, some argue that an author's name is a legitimizing factor that has the power to alter our perception of meaning in a text. As Michel Foucault ponders, "if we proved that Shakespeare did not write those sonnets which pass for his, that would constitute a significant change and affect the manner in which the author's name functions."³² His point is that an author's name works as a pointing device or, "author-function," that instructs the reader in how to perceive a text. While Foucault's assessment would be true in the modern sense of authorship, it fails to appreciate the collectivist approach to artistic creation during the English Renaissance—where the work trumps the name attached to its title. It also fails to realize the art of selection, where a writer picks and chooses which characters and themes from past works he or she wishes to build upon—just as I made a choice of which Foucault quote would best suit this thesis. As we will see later in this thesis, Deloney also made selections from English and religious history and altered them to serve his narrative purpose—that purpose being the opening of communication channels between his tradesman class and the middle-class yeomen who governed their business.

³² Foucault, "What Is an Author?," in *The Foucault Reader*, 106.

Thomas Dekker: Making Deloney Fit for a Queen

Thomas Dekker (c. 1572-1632) arrived on the London theater scene a fully-formed post-chrysalis playwright. In Dekker's case, there seems to have been little or no development stage to his work, whereas others spent years slogging it out in London's fetid literary trenches. For Dekker, there are no accounts or records of any work history, family, or legal records prior to his placement beside his peers, Ben Jonson (1572–1637) and John Marston (bap. 1576, d. 1634). Most other playwrights during this time left a trail of poetry, pamphlets, and plays before any theatergoers, courts, and playhouses embraced their work. As mentioned above, many early modern playwrights began their artistic development by writing pamphlets. Printed on inexpensive paper and sold on the streets and in churchyards, these pamphlets could contain anything from heartfelt ballads to salacious gossip. In this sense, Dekker led an inverted life where he wrote his plays at the beginning of his career, but created and published pamphlets long after he was an established name. Interestingly, we can answer the question of how Dekker began his career by once again looking to the pamphleteer Thomas Deloney. Deloney's career was more traditional in the sense that he began with the writing of pamphlets and ended his career with the creation of more substantial proto-novels. Although no records exist indicating Dekker and Deloney ever worked together or exchanged ideas face-to-face, I argue that Dekker and Deloney did still have a symbiotic artistic and professional relationship: Dekker used Deloney's work as a template for creating realistic working-class characters, and Deloney received the unintentional benefit of textual preservation through Dekker's Deloney-inspired play, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*.

Little is known of the early life of Thomas Dekker. What we do know is merely guesswork. In fact, “it has been written that ‘Of Thomas Dekker we know no date, no fact, no anecdote, nothing at all, except that by his own statement in 1637 he was threescore or thereabouts.’”³³ This means that there is not even an accurate account of Dekker’s age, heritage, or social class. This makes Dekker akin to a blank slate that historians and literary critics have been attempting to sketch on for centuries. Most of the playwrights from the late Elizabethan era came from working-class stock. Thomas Heywood was an actor before picking up the quill, and Ben Jonson was a former bricklayer. These lower-class professions not only enabled Heywood and Jonson to write outstanding satires involving characters of the underclasses, but also allowed these dramatists to write believable working-class concerns into their scripts. This gave their works a dual market of both high and low societies. However, there is no indication that Dekker shared the same employment heritage as his dramatist brethren—indeed, there is no record at all of Dekker’s employment history before he began writing. However, Dekker did find a way to acquire a plebeian perspective through his dramatic reinterpretation of Thomas Deloney’s *The Gentle Craft* in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*. I will dedicate more time later to comparing these two works, but first I wish to establish a possible linkage between the lives of Deloney and Dekker, before the former went missing from all records. There is one central intersection in the lives of Dekker and Deloney, and that is a print shop in Cripplegate, London.

The printing and distribution of both writers’ works could have put these two men into artistic communication with each other. One of these connections lies with the printer, Edward Allde (1555x63–1627). Allde was a trade printer who was one of five men in London tasked with the printing of ballads.³⁴ Allde’s close relationship with the

³³ Wilson, “Three Notes on Thomas Dekker,” 1.

³⁴ Rivington and Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London*, 436.

balladeers put him in contact with Deloney. Allde printed one of Deloney's earliest works after the latter moved from Norwich to London.³⁵ The title of that work was *A Proper New Ballad, Breefely Declaring the Death and Execution of 14. Most Wicked Traitors* (1586).³⁶ This ballad connection between Allde and Deloney is quite evident, but what is the connection to Dekker? The first connection is a geographic one: it appears that Dekker resided in the same neighborhood as Allde's printing shop in Cripplegate.³⁷ For it is in this parish's records, "in the "unpublished Parish Registers of St. Giles, Cripplegate, now on deposit in the London Guildhall Library, add to the small store of biographical data available concerning some by 16th- and 17th-ce Century poets. These poets, in some instances, were also playwrights, and information about them is of interest to students of the period."³⁸ However, this was a tumultuous economic time to be living in London, as "such economic anxieties, if not realities, influenced both London-dwelling authors—Dekker, who notoriously languished in a debtors' prison, and Deloney, 'the Balleting Silke-weaver' who 'dyed poorely.'"³⁹ There was famine, and few employment opportunities were available to tradesmen during this period. "Economic historians have found that the years 1594-97 witnessed the most sustained and severe inflation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, culminating in 1597 in the lowest real wages in English history."⁴⁰ This connection to the Cripplegate neighborhood would soon tie Dekker and Deloney through Allde, as you can see in the following table indicating the printing Allde undertook for both writers.

³⁵ Francis Oscar Mann suggests Deloney was living in St. Giles, Cripplegate in 1586 as baptismal records for his son read, "Richard the son of Thomas Deloney. Weaver. Bap. Oct. 16th 1586."

³⁶ Deloney, *A Proper New Ballad, Breefely Declaring the Death and Execution of 14. Most Wicked Traitors*, 2.

³⁷ The National Archives of the United Kingdom show a child of a "Thomas Dycker" as having been baptized in St. Giles Cripplegate in 1594.

³⁸ Mcmanaway, *Poets in the Parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate*, 561.

³⁹ Christensen, "Being Mistress Eyre in Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*," 454.

⁴⁰ Mihoko Suzuki, "The London Apprentice Riots of the 1590s and the Fiction of Thomas Deloney," 181.

The Printing of Deloney and Dekker's Work by Edward Allde.	
Thomas Deloney⁴¹	Thomas Dekker
<i>A Proper New Ballad, Breefely Declaring the Death and Execution of 14</i> (1586)	<i>Satiro-Mastix</i> (1602)
The second part of <i>The Gentle Craft</i> (1600)	<i>Blurt Master-Constable</i> (1602)
<i>Thomas of Reading</i> (1632)	<i>Patient Grissel</i> (1603)
	<i>The Magnificent Entertainment Giuen to King Iames</i> (1604)
	<i>The Seuen Deadly Sinnes of London</i> (1606)
	<i>The Belman of London</i> (1608)
	<i>Lanthorne and Candle-Light</i> (1609)

The first listing on Dekker's side of the above table, *Satiro-Mastix*, is an interesting play to appear on this list for two reasons.⁴² First, the play is unique in that it was part of a real or possibly contrived feud among the playwrights Ben Jonson, John Marston, and Thomas Dekker. Called either The Stage Quarrel or the War of the Theaters, this rivalry began with Marston's writing of the play *Histriomastix* (1599), which was a satire intended to poke fun at his fellow playwright Ben Jonson's writing style. Jonson's retort came in the form of writing a satire of Marston titled *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599). Marston replied to this with his own satire, *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (1599-1600), and in return, Jonson countered with *Cynthia's Revels* (1600). This back and forth was a boon for the theater industry, but just how Dekker found himself writing among these two giants of

⁴¹ Please note that this is a list of extant works—the majority of Thomas Deloney's work did not survive their own popularity or the Bishops' Ban of 1599. Also, only texts printed by Allde are listed in this table.

⁴² This play premiered on the stage in either 1600 or 1601, a year before Allde printed *Satiro-Mastix*.

Elizabethan theater is interesting on two accounts. First, there is the question of how Dekker, who had just embarked on his career of writing for the stage, suddenly found himself at the center of a well-publicized feud between two established drama powerhouses (Jonson and Marston). Second, if you reference the above chart, you will notice that Edward Allde printed this play. What circumstance led the Stationers' Company to suddenly grant Allde the printing rights for such a high-profile play as *Satiro-Mastix* when all of his previous work had consisted of non-glamorous pamphlets? This stems from a notorious act of government censorship that may have propelled Dekker to the top while simultaneously helping Deloney's work reach a new audience after his death.

In 1599, the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, along with the Bishop of London, passed the Bishops' Ban on satires. This ban focused on printed satires, and the Archbishops of Canterbury and London explained to the public this was a means of mitigating obscenity. This ban "presents the most sweeping and stringent instance of early modern English censorship. No other official document outlawed a whole category of literary production."⁴³ This ban would put pamphleteers like Deloney out of business, and that was precisely its intent. The ban was not actually about obscenity, nor was the Anglican Church entirely responsible for its passage. "In the first place the idea that the bishops acted to some extent independently of the government is contrary to what we know of Tudor policy and law. Bans such as these needed the approval and consent of either the Privy Council or the High Commission, and in this case the clauses concerning 'historyes' certainly seem to indicate Council involvement."⁴⁴ It forced the pamphleteers to go underground, reinvent themselves, or die poor—and in some cases to do all three.

⁴³ Post, *Censorship and Silencing*, 89.

⁴⁴ McCabe, *Elizabethan Satire and the Bishops' Ban of 1599*, 189.

The “historyes” the Council and Church were trying to prevent from reaching the masses accounted for most of Deloney’s back catalogue. Prior to the ban, in 1583, Deloney made overt appeals to appease the Bishop of London in order to avoid the eventuality of a ban which he seems to have predicted. Just three years later, in 1586, Queen Elizabeth would begin the process that would eventually lead to the Bishops’ Ban on prose satire, which “was the most comprehensive regulation of the press of the entire Tudor period, continuing in effect until 1637.”⁴⁵ This is the appeal that Deloney wrote in 1583 to Bishop John Aylmer of London, which he published in the forward to a translation of a German-language document from Pope Gregory VIII:

... I thought non more meete for the patron of such a specialty, then your Lordship, vnto whome I owe all duty & reuerence, who for the good will borne to your Lordshippe, hath dedicated vnto you this simple translation, faithfully and iustlie done according to the cobby. Trusting you will accept the same according to the worthines therof, and be a defence against all that shall seeme to mislike of the matter: and in so doing, you shall binde me for euer at your command, vnto whome I wish continual prosperity in this present life, & in the world to come ioyes euerlasting.⁴⁶

It is important to note that Bishop Aylmer is not the same man who would later ban prose satire, but this was Deloney’s attempt to fertilize a seed of reason within the archbishopric. It is a bold anti-censorship request with lines riddled with the lexicon of print: words like “translation,” “cobby,” and “binde” are woven throughout this text. After the ban was passed, however, there was only one way to produce satires in England, and that was on the stage. Deloney’s printer, Alde, needed a dramatist to get his work to the masses. The reason Deloney’s work could still be published in a different form under such an extreme censorship law is due to a common misconception

⁴⁵ Siebert, *Freedom of the Press in England, 1476-1776: The Rise and Decline of Government Controls*, 61.

⁴⁶ Gebhard, and Thomas Deloney, *A Declaration Made by the Archbishop of Colen, Vpon the Deede of His Mariage, Sent to the States of His Archbishoprike. VVith the Letter of Pope Gregorie The. 13 against the Celebration of the Same Mariage, and the Bishops Aunswer Therevnto. According to the Coppie Imprinted at Colen*, 2.

concerning the power of a government to suppress artistic or political thought. Some believe that a firm ban on the publication of certain lines of thought might cause the “removal” or “replacement” of the offending text, to borrow from Richard Burt’s contribution to the book *Censorship and Silencing*.⁴⁷ However, in reality, censorship actually causes the thought and ideas of a text to undergo a “dispersal and displacement” wherein an artist’s thoughts never die or dissipate, but rather are transformed, much like the transfer of nutritional energy in nature’s food chain.⁴⁸ This is what occurred with the works of Thomas Deloney. Not halted by an edict from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Deloney’s thoughts, ideas, and pride concerning England’s working-class artisans would seep through the pores of the London stage. While vastly altered, Deloney’s texts would retain some of their general sentiment.

Imagine the following: You have already been forced to relinquish the trade you love, silk weaving. However, you never considered this a job in the traditional sense, but instead thought of yourself as one of many linked to a proud and ancient craft. You felt pride in being associated with such labor. However, that pride was not one of biblical sin, but one of humility and the counting of blessings. Your work was the stuff of history. Your trade granted you a sort of immortality that came from living your life through long-standing traditions while also existing in the present. Now that your loom is silent, you recast yourself in the role of a writer—a weaver of ballads and histories instead of silk—but you retain the delight and honor of a tradesman. However, now that you have been forcibly detached from your trade’s history, the government has limited and in some cases silenced the power of your quill. How will your life’s work and story retain a life after death? You fight at first, and then your newfound peers reuse your work, in much

⁴⁷ Burt, *Censorship and Silencing: Practices of Cultural Regulation*, 17.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

the same way that a redwood tree acquires nutrients through decomposing substances on the forest floor. You once again anonymously contribute to the history of a craft.

When Thomas Deloney wrote part one of *The Gentle Craft* (1597), the historical novel did not exist as a formally acknowledged genre. However, I agree with A.F. Lange's statement that "from the point of view of fiction a wider interest attaches to these books, in the first place, from the fact that Deloney was the first English writer of stories to which—with only a little stretching—the name historical novels can be applied."⁴⁹ I would argue that it was this genre-establishing work that was responsible for attracting Dekker and others to Deloney's work.

I would now like to compare the third episode of Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*⁵⁰ with Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1600) in order to look at some of the most startling changes Dekker made while dramatizing the original prose work. This will demonstrate

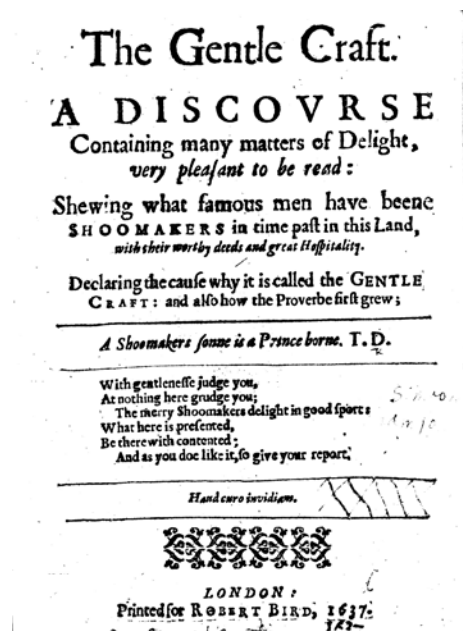


Figure 4-Deloney, Thomas. *The Gentle Craft*. London: Printed for Robert Bird, 1637.

why Dekker needed Deloney in order to achieve success, and vice versa.⁵¹ The narratives of both Deloney's third story in the *The Gentle Craft* and Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* have an almost identical structure and parallel characters. In both texts, Simon Eyre, a master shoemaker, takes on a traveling apprentice (who in Dekker's play disguises his real identity). This traveling apprentice, named John Deneuale in Deloney's story and Hans Meulter in Dekker's play, stumbles upon a business opportunity that will turn their employer, Simon Eyre, into both a

⁴⁹ Lange, *The Making of Deloney as a Novelist, Introduction to The Gentle Craft*, XXI.

⁵⁰ Unless otherwise specified, all mentions of Deloney's *The Gentle Craft* refer to part one of that work; the second part was published a year later.

⁵¹ *The Shoemaker's Holiday* was first performed in 1599, but was not published until 1600.

wealthy man and the Mayor of London. Deloney depicts the London shoemaker Simon Eyre as a respected member of the community and an adept businessperson. Deloney was being quite complimentary when he referred to the shoemaking profession as “the gentle craft.” In Deloney’s writing, “Simon Eyre and his people have a good life, and their work is beneficial to the community and to England. Eyre, it is true, seeks to rise in fortune and reputation by capitalist enterprise. Such were the opportunities offered by the commonwealth model constructed by Deloney.”⁵² The first major turn in Deloney’s tale has the shoemaker, Eyre, scheming on his own after hearing word of a Greek mercantile ship about to reach England’s shore laden with luxurious fabrics from afar. Eyre does not have the money to purchase such goods, so he dons a costume to give the appearance of a wealthy council member—and is able to purchase the fabrics on credit and turn a hefty profit. The important factor here is that the shoemaker had the wherewithal to accomplish this task with no outside assistance, save from his wife. Conversely, in Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, the money for Eyre’s purchase comes from the nephew of the wealthy Earl of Lincoln, who procures funds for the fabric. Furthermore, Dekker’s character Hans Meulter is actually an undercover aristocrat who avoids military service by disguising himself as a shoemaker. This alone demonstrates Dekker’s attempt to minimize the agency of Deloney’s John the Frenchmen, perhaps because Dekker was seeking royal patronage. Dekker does not seem to find Deloney’s version of a self-made merchant-class man to be appropriate for the London stage—and the success of his play will prove Dekker’s vision to be the correct one from a business standpoint. Dekker turns Deloney’s working-class yarn into one of adulation for the upper classes. Where Deloney focuses on the artisan mastery of the merchant classes, Dekker “is likely to be regarded as marking an advance in realism in its depiction of bourgeois life.”⁵³ In addition, Dekker eradicates the large degree of agency that Deloney

⁵² Wright, *Thomas Deloney*, 92.

⁵³ Price, *Thomas Dekker*, 34.

gives Eyre's wife. Concerning *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, Ann C. Christensen writes, "I nonetheless detect Dekker's persistent devaluation of the wife's role, particularly in her advice on business matters, a devaluation yet more pronounced when compared to that role in his chief source, Thomas Deloney's prose narrative *The Gentle Craft*."⁵⁴ I agree with Christensen's statement, but with one caveat: while Dekker does indeed minimize the role of the wife, I believe part of that stems from her shared love of the craft of shoemaking. Dekker skews these roles in a way that almost idolizes the aristocracy—an aristocracy that Dekker wished to join. In all sections of his play, Dekker diminishes Deloney's realistic descriptions of merchant and working-class characters, but bolsters those of the minor and mid-level bourgeoisie. While Deloney refers to the gentle craft as a term of endearment, Dekker uses the same words as a pseudo-epithet. Deloney's pride in his lower social class was one of the aspects of his work that prevented it from garnering high acclaim with the aristocracy and nobles who sponsored the theater companies. The strategy of distancing himself somewhat from the lower classes would work well for Dekker, as Lord Chamberlain's Men would soon present his play before Queen Elizabeth I, an eventuality that Deloney the ballad-monger and pamphleteer could never have imagined. However, I posit that Dekker needed Deloney for the husks of his working-class characters, which Dekker could now fill with the stereotypical buffoonery typical of late Elizabethan comedies. In addition, Deloney lacked the elevated social class background that would warrant vaulting his prose onto London's stage, but Dekker, who had no discernable lineage either way, could have been the mask needed to present Deloney's work to the court. Dekker was one dramatist who both had access to Deloney's work and could also deliver Deloney's texts to a wider audience, even though there is no evidence beyond conjecture that Deloney was ever in the same room as Dekker. However, Dekker opted out of one substantial aspect of Deloney's work: Deloney's

⁵⁴ Christensen, "Being Mistress Eyre in Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*," 454.

tendency to frame his characters within a historical context that is both embellished by and deeply rooted in English lore and trade-guild culture.

Perhaps due to insecurities based on his marginalization as a writer, Deloney used the pages of his historical proto-novels to give the working tradesman a similar foothold in English history as that of the aristocracy. While the titled class could peruse the Baronetage book to trace their lineages and their contributions to the building of English society, Deloney created historical fictions that performed the same function for tradesmen.⁵⁵ In the case of *The Gentle Craft*, Deloney bestowed historical agency on England's shoemakers. In the first quarto of Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft* (1600), Dekker pays homage to his source author in his title, but readers and scholars would soon drop the last four words, leaving the title known to history as

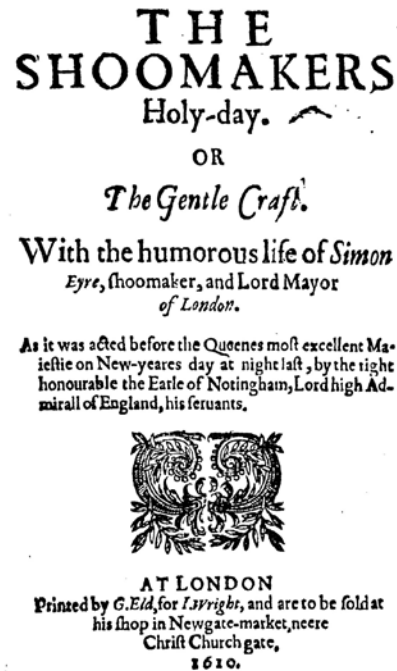


Figure 5 --Dekker, Thomas. *The Shoemakers Holy-Day*. London: Printed by G. Eld, 1610.

only *The Shoemaker's Holiday*—thus further divorcing Deloney from his own work. However, the paring-down of the title might seem trivial considering the large expanse of the original work omitted from Dekker's play. For example, Dekker only mentions the patron saint of shoemakers, St. Hugh, in passing, when the shoemaker Firk pronounces that a wandering shoemaker is walking by their shop: "Maister, for my life, yonders a brother of the Gentle Craft. If he beare not Saint Hugh's bones, I'll forfeit my bones."⁵⁶ Although the audience would have most likely needed an explanation as to who St.

⁵⁵ The OED defines a "Baronetage" as "A list of the order of baronets; a book giving such a list with historical and other particulars."

⁵⁶ Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft*, 1.4. 45-6.

Hugh is and what function his bones play in this tale, Dekker does not provide any explanation. Deloney, however, dedicates four chapters of *The Gentle Craft* to St. Hugh and explains in detail just how he became the patron saint of shoemakers and how shoemakers' tools became known as St. Hugh's bones.

Deloney presents St. Hugh in the first part of *The Gentle Craft* as a roaming knight meeting the challenges of his post, not unlike Edmund Spenser's Red Cross Knight in Book I of *The Faerie Queen* (1590). Sir Hugh travels Europe after his love, Winifred, snubs his advances to pursue a sort of religious asceticism, but he finds neither solace nor love in his travels. Soon after Sir Hugh's return to Britain, he learns that the new pagan invaders have imprisoned Winifred for her worship of Christ. Fearing a similar reprisal, local shoemakers agree to hide him in their shop, "during which time, Sir Hugh wrought in a shoemakers shop, hauing learned that trade, through the courteous directions of a king Iourneyman."⁵⁷ The process of learning the shoemaker's craft is less a pastime to entertain Hugh's idle fingers during his self-imposed incarceration and more an adventure into the unknown that leads Hugh to self-discovery. Deloney, if you will, puts the existential journey into the title of journeyman. Significantly, Deloney is here demonstrating that nobles like Sir Hugh can learn as much from the tradesmen who create their wares as they can from those in power.

Sir Hugh is a knight of unknown order, and his actions in this story, up until the time of his residence among the shoemakers, lack, or at least do not call to our attention, the fierce loyalties associated with the knighthood, with the exception of his obsessive devotion to Winifred. It is only after the same tyrant holding his beloved Winifred captive imprisons Sir Hugh that we see that same loyalty embodied by none other than the shoemakers. For "during the time that they lay both in prison, the Iourneymen

⁵⁷ Deloney, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broad-sides with an Introduction and Notes*, 82.

Shoemakers neuer left him, but yeelded him great relief continually, so that he wanted nothing that was necessarie for him, in requital of which kindness he called them Gentlemen of the Gentle Craft."⁵⁸ Here, Deloney does not entirely relinquish the class distinctions with regard to the shoemakers, as they provided for Sir Hugh's needs and *yeelded him great relief*; but those shoemakers also demonstrate a mastery of the chivalric code by defending their liege's well-being with all the comforts at their disposal. They *neuer left him*. It is important to remember that Deloney was demonstrating the ideals and general congeniality of the class at a time when this was rare. David Margolies reminds us that the "importance Deloney places on sense of community and peaceable, harmonious living is clearer when it is recognized that these virtues are not yet fashionable ones of that society."⁵⁹ In short, the aristocracy and nobles wanted to read working-class characters as oafish and disagreeable sorts. This is also the moment where Deloney establishes that a knight granted their trade the title of *The Gentle Craft*, thus forever attaching the shoemaker to both England and that country's history.

In the climax of the first tale of Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*, the tyrant pagan ruler condemns Sir Hugh to death alongside his beloved Winifred—this is where St. Hugh's Bones become the name of shoemakers' tools. As the tyrant forces Sir Hugh to drink the poisoned blood of his now-dead Winifred, he gazes at the sullen faces in the crowd and sees the shoemakers who housed him in his time of need. He realizes he can never repay them for their hospitality after his death. So he raises his glass of poisoned blood in the direction of the shoemakers and bravely toasts, "I drink to you all (quoth he) but I cannot spare you one drop to pledge me. Had I any good thing to giue, you should soon recieue it: but my selfe the Tyrant doth take. And my flesh is bequeathed to the fowls, so that nothing is left but onely my bones to pleasure you withal; and those, if they will do you

⁵⁸ Ibid., 83.

⁵⁹ Margolies, *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England*, 149.

any good, take them: and so I humbly take my leaue, bidding you all farewell.”⁶⁰ Not only does Sir Hugh die proudly with the postured poise of a knight, recognizing and publicly praising this band of shoemakers, he also endows his would-be relics to the custody of the shoemakers. Keep in mind that this knight has just died a martyr’s death, and that his remains should be enshrined in a Christian reliquary after his canonization. This folktale has become a hagiography. Yet Deloney demonstrates that to truly worship a saint, one should not simply gaze adoringly at that person’s idle bones; rather, one should use those bones as tools in the workshop of England’s psyche. How would a craftsperson wish to appear to future generations? An artisan would presumably wish to be useful; an artisan would want to be a tool that continues to create, rather than merely a museum piece. This is Deloney’s grand allegory for one’s societal worth, for “It is not station, but active contribution to societal good, that is Deloney’s measure of worth.”⁶¹ Sir Hugh’s bones will be whittled, shaved, ground down, and cut into the tools of a shoemaker. Deloney provides a masterful bit of revisionist history for the shoemaker’s trade that makes a deeper class-based economic point, namely: an artisan’s first wish is to be useful and to create, whereas the nobles wish only to see their portraits hanging on a parlor wall. The implicit message in Deloney’s text is that the most useful class of people in English society are the men who work with their hands.

Deloney’s grand historicizing of the moral, honest, and comforting nature of the shoemakers is something Thomas Dekker either could not add due to the constraints of the stage, or something he opted out of as it might not have sat well with the courts he wished to appease. This proved to be a good business decision for Dekker, as Queen Elizabeth I would soon view a presentation of this play, just as Deloney’s life was nearing its end. However, this is not to say that Dekker completely ignores the story of St. Hugh.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 87.

⁶¹ Margolies, *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England*, 149.

He mentions the man many times in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, but Dekker uses this legend of a knight turned saint in a purely reverential way, and not as a means of depicting the bottom-up social hierarchy that Deloney grants his shoemakers.

With Thomas Deloney's history of St. Hugh's Bones established, I would now like to reexamine the first mention of St. Hugh in Dekker's play against the corresponding original line in Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*. To recall the Dekker line from earlier, the character Firk says, "Maister, for my life, yonders a brother of the Gentle Craft. If he beare not Saint Hugh's bones, I'll forfeit my bones."⁶² If you look at the above quotation, the only detail that may have rang authentic for an Elizabethan shoemaker is the mention of St. Hugh's bones. Dekker leaves this line stripped of the excitement one might imagine a shoemaker experiencing upon seeing one of his brethren traipsing in front of his shop. Admittedly, Dekker does allow Firk to demonstrate the value of his own shoemaking tools through his offer to forfeit them if he is wrong about the trade of the passerby. However, I would argue that Deloney's original version of this line has equal stakes, but is a better example of an excitable spontaneity of spirit and color, both of which are lacking in Dekker's work. In addition, I would like to note the upward movement of Firk's words. When Firk states "Maister, for my life," he is confirming the elevated status of his master whilst also asking for permission to speak his own words. This would have sat well with the audience Dekker was in the process of courting. These simple words will become important when we overlay Deloney's version of events in his proto-novel.

The person in question is not named at this point in Deloney's book, and is referred to only as a servant. The following line was spoken by an omniscient narrator: "at the last, one of his seruants spying one go along the street with a fardel at his back, called to his Maister, saying Sir, yonder goes Saint Hughs bones, twenty pounds to a penney."⁶³

⁶² Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft*. 1.4. 45-6.

⁶³ Deloney, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broadsides with an Introduction and Notes*, 110.

There is an important distinction between this statement and that of Dekker's Firk. Even though the narrator refers to the speaker as a servant, this character does not refer to his boss as his master. However, his congeniality is still evident from his use of "Sir." To call Eyre "master" would show the shop owner's absolute dominion over Firk. Deloney is characterizing these inter-shop relationships as equitable and free from the social-class tensions that constitute the conflict of many early modern narratives. This is an important distinction, seeing that the majority of the critics who have analyzed Deloney's works have characterized them as propaganda pieces for the new and emerging English middle-class bourgeoisie. In the introduction to the Thomas Deloney piece in *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England*, David Margolies establishes a skewed interpretation of Deloney's socioeconomic angle when describing Deloney's work. Specifically, Margolies argues that Deloney was working as a shill, by free choice or otherwise, to vaunt the elevated agency of the masters and merchants who lorded their grand and wise authority over their underlings. As Margolies states, "it is easy to overlook Deloney's role as a propagandist because he presents his values as valid, not for one class alone, but for society as a whole. Moreover, today, when the attitudes he celebrates have largely been incorporated into the accepted outlook of Western industrial society, and when most narrative is impersonal, his writing may appear simply 'natural.'"⁶⁴ I do not wholly endorse this view of Deloney. While I agree that Deloney examined society from the macro level, Margolies seems to be implying that Deloney's economics and class arguments would weave nicely into the zeitgeist of the modern Western corporate boardroom. I disagree with this entirely. The above quote from the servant shows us that while society might consider Simon Eyre's relationship with his worker as one of master and servant, Deloney's servant character believes Eyre is a respected peer. Master and servant are brothers of the gentle craft. I do not assert that Deloney was calling for social

⁶⁴ Margolies, *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England*, 144.

upheaval in this case, but I do believe he was attempting to blur the class distinctions inside the economy of Elizabethan England by calling for a general understanding of the value of the lower classes. We should not consider Deloney's gaze to be insular, but rather to represent a macro view of society that knows no borders.

Another difference between these two texts lies in the names assigned to the wandering shoemaker. In Dekker's play, the name is Hans Meulter; and in Deloney's book, it is Iohn Denuale (John Denvale). The former is Dutch, and the latter French. As both countries were at least partially responsible for involving England in the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648), the foreignness of these characters, at least on the surface, seems to play into xenophobic elements present in England at the time—that is, until one looks more closely at the origins of these names. The name “Meulter” was and still is a common Dutch surname. The employment of this name by Dekker seems intended to play on the English people's prejudiced misconceptions concerning the Dutch for comic turns in his script. There are several allusions to the Dutch people's propensity to drink to excess, and the term “butter-box” is bandied about to call attention to their supposedly rich eating habits. Subsequently, it is hard to pin any direct message to Dekker's choice of a name in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. However, one can discern a message in Deloney's choice of a name, one that does not depend on the choice of foreign nationality, but rather only on the fact that it is foreign. The first thing a reader will notice about the name “Denvale” is that while it does not sound foreign from an English speaker's perspective, it does not sound entirely English either. However, each of the names' component words can make a political and economic statement that stays true to Deloney's worldview without opening itself up to the buffoonery of Dekker's reimagining of Deloney's book. According to the OED, a den is a “lair or habitation of a wild beast,” or “a small room or lodging in which a man can seclude himself for work or leisure.”⁶⁵ If we apply these two

⁶⁵ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “Den,” definition 49902.

definitions of the prefix to the Frenchman's name, we can infer a foreignness with the *wild beast* and a name associated with labor with a *lodging in which a man can seclude himself for work*. These definitions fit nicely for a character who is a wandering foreign shoemaker in England looking for a location to ply his craft. Furthermore, the suffix "Vale" is defined as "a more or less extensive tract of land lying between two ranges of hills, or stretches of high ground, and usually traversed by a river or stream."⁶⁶ This implies that Deloney's Frenchman is a man between two countries who is simply in search of a place to ply his craft. This character is an everyman. He is English, he is foreign, and he is you and me as well. Margolies writes, "Deloney's explicit concern for social value implies that traditional degree is irrelevant and that the worth of each individual or occupation is related to its benefit to the country. It is not station, but active contribution to social good, that is Deloney's measure of worth."⁶⁷ Deloney has demonstrated the worth of a shoemaker through his tools and craft, and those supersede the artificial borders of nations. In addition, even though Dekker's character is Dutch, his play ends with a completely negative view of the French people.

In the conclusion of Dekker's dramatic version of Deloney's book, the king is present for a banquet to honor both Eyre (after his election to the office of Mayor of London) and the shoemakers of London (in whose honor Mayor Eyre has now named a holiday). This is where Dekker's script takes an unexpected and odd turn. The mayor states:

Eyre, I will taste of thy banquet, and will say
 I haue not met more pleasure on a day
 Friends of a Gentle Craft, thanks to you al.
 Thanks, my kind Ladie Mayoress, for our cheer.

⁶⁶ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Vale," definition 221117. ⁶⁷ Margolies, *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England*, 150.

Come, lordes, a while let's revel it at home,
 When all our sports and banquetings are done,
 Warres must right wrongs which Frenchmen have begun.⁶⁸

With its last line, this joyous toast to Eyre, his wife, and the shoemakers devolves into nationalistic mud-slinging. This is an odd choice for Dekker to make, because even though England did have a long history of wars with France, England's diplomatic relations with the French were at a high-water mark at the time. While diplomacy between these two countries thrived, England was financially dependent on France to bolster its diminished economy. Peter Ramsey emphasizes, "The old-established wine-trade continued to flourish at Bordeaux, the salt from the Bay of Bourgneuf was a significant item. The English printing-presses depended largely on French paper, and linens from Normandy competed with those from the Low Countries."⁶⁹ Dekker seems gleefully unaware of the political complexities of the work by Deloney that he is reimagining. With his last lines, in a play that debuted in front of Queen Elizabeth, Dekker is essentially, and I would assert, naively, thumbing his nose at the crown and court because of his lack of economic understanding. Deloney, yoked to international trade as closely as a silk weaver to his loom, would never have made this mistake. The closing of Deloney's book, and the subplot that leads to it, is a master class in trade relations.

While Dekker uses his words to alienate the French, even though the English monarchy had amiable relations with them at the time, Deloney uses a subplot to not only symbolically strengthen the economic relationship between the two countries but also wed them metaphorically. In Deloney's text, a subplot exists wherein Iohn the

⁶⁸ Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday, or The Gentle Craft*, 5.5. 188-94.

⁶⁹ Ramsey, *Tudor Economic Problems*, 60.

Frenchman pines for the love of Florence, one of Master Eyre's house maidens. Yet Deloney adds a wrinkle where another shoemaker, a Dutchman named Haunce, tries to steal her away through deceit and trickery, which ultimately backfires. Why would Deloney assign a duplicitous role to a Dutchman? As opposed to Dekker's approach of vaunting the greatness of the English at the expense of an important trading partner, Deloney was a man whose previous occupation as a silk-weaver made him very knowledgeable in the area of international trade. When Deloney was writing *The Gentle Craft*, England was losing a trade war with the Dutch. "Although backed by over a hundred London merchants, who had promised to subscribe £30,000, the efforts of the company did not remotely match those of the Dutch in the early years. They suffered from a relative shortage of capital and shipping, from a less purposeful and coherent organization, and from less enthusiastic support from their government."⁷⁰ In other words, the English government was losing markets to the Dutch, and despite the best efforts of the merchant class, a group Deloney was previously dependent on to buy and sell his silk, the government still lacked the resolve to make the necessary economic countermeasures a reality. Deloney used *The Gentle Craft* to incite anger against the Dutch within the government and the people in the hopes of spurring the economic changes needed for a comfortable middle and lower class. He also realized the importance of a solid English-French trading partnership.

In the climactic scene of *The Gentle Craft*, Florence has uncovered the deceitful actions of the Dutchman Haunce, and she—together with the shoemakers—breaks into song in order to convince John to fall in love with her again. Here, Florence is acting as a surrogate for England, and John as a surrogate for France. Florence's song is the following:

⁷⁰ Ibid., 75.

Though Men are strong and Women weak,
 Stout hearts will yeeld before they break;
 And Women sometimes win the field
 When men are willing to yield.⁷¹

The first line above demonstrates the natural agility of Deloney's economic diplomacy, spoken here through Florence. Deloney has no trouble admitting England's economic weakness at this time. The line *Stout hearts will yeeld before they break* shows Deloney switching to a more didactic mode in an effort to leave room for economic bargaining. However, *The Gentle Craft* suggests an economic prediction of the future of the English economy if those in power follow Deloney's advice: *Women sometimes win the field*. The book ends with a marriage between Florence (England) and Iohn (France). While Deloney uses the page to fight for the future viability of the careers of the artisans, Dekker morphs Deloney's narrative into a self-absorbed satire. While Deloney's tale has serious consequences for the working class as well as the monarchy, Dekker's is two-dimensional, nationalistic, and shortsighted in an economic sense.

As mentioned previously, no extant first-edition printings of Thomas Deloney's work survive. Records of the nearly constant reprinting of his works are a testament to the popularity of this silk-weaver turned proto-novelist. However, a first-edition printing of Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* from 1600 sits in the British Library in near-perfect condition, while even the 17th and 18th century reprints of Deloney's works have been rebound several times, and the pages are tattered and torn. Thomas Deloney believed in social harmony and sharing between different social classes. Strangely, the repeated hand-to-hand redistribution and then reading of his work led to the destruction of his texts, but not to Deloney's inclusion in the literary canon. His legacy was stifled by his

⁷¹ Deloney, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broadsides with an Introduction and Notes*, 135.

own popularity. While we praise Thomas Deloney for his acumen concerning the economics of the craft trade, Dekker's personal ambition and understanding of what theatergoers and courtiers wanted to see may be one of the reasons only a few academics wish to study Deloney today.

William Rowley: Sending a Clown to Do a Shoemaker's Work

As opposed to Thomas Dekker, the playwright William Rowley (1585?-1626) had an easily discoverable employment history before he began to write plays. Rowley was a stage clown who jumped from one company to another before beginning a life of authorship. As with most clowns, Rowley "occupied a liminal space, creating a bridge between the theatrical world of the play and the real world of the audience."⁷² To further mix the space between stage and theatergoer, Rowley also found material to perform that

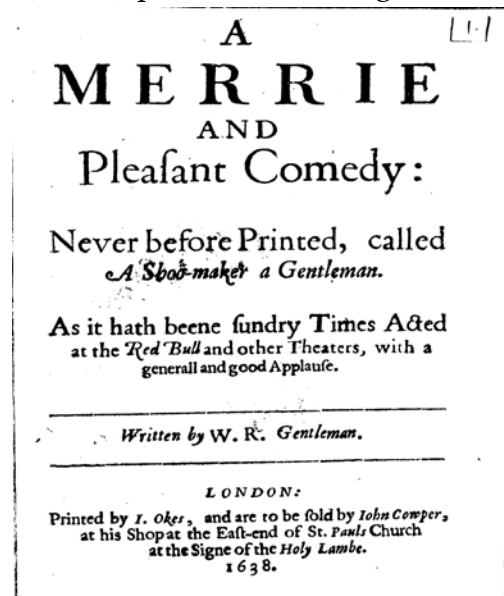


Figure 6--Rowley, William. *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman* y. London: Printed by I. Oakes, 1638.

attracted a certain demographic. In one case, the demographic was shoemakers and the literary source was Thomas Deloney. Rowley's plays were, in my opinion, unfairly judged as simple and frivolous, not unlike the unsavory critical reception that met the work of Thomas Deloney. In fact, the first printer to publish Rowley's 1638 play *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*⁷³ refers to this work while pinching his nose as "a Play that is often acted,"⁷⁴ thus not mentioning any particular accolade pertaining to the script or its popularity. This

printer, John Cowper, could not contain his derogatory opinion of the play even though he stood to profit from its sale. Why is that? First, a play's appearance at the Red Bull Theater automatically labeled the production as scandalous or as a work that catered to

⁷² Peacock, *Serious Play: Modern Clown Performance*, 91.

⁷³ Though printed in 1638, some guess that this play's debut was in 1608, although others say it could have first appeared in 1617-1618.

⁷⁴ Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, 2.

those with questionable morals and self-control.⁷⁵ Second, this play catered to London's shoemakers and not to the elite by taking the first two books of Thomas Deloney's *The Gentle Craft* and weaving them into one hagiographic play, a play that would bolster the value of the shoemakers and align them not only with St. Hugh, but with one of the most revered of England's proto-saints, St. Alban. Cowper addresses the shoemakers directly in his note set at the start of the printed play, "for it is well knowne to (Gentlemen Cordwiners)⁷⁶ that every yeare you doe celebrate the Feast of Crispine, & Crispianus..."⁷⁷ Adding a note directly to the perceived audience of this play was a purely economic move on Cowper's part. However, reading Thomas Deloney's introduction to *The Gentle Craft*, we can see that Cowper's inspiration for his introduction came from the Deloney source material, but did not attach the same value to the yoking of Crispine, Crispianus, St. Hugh, and St. Alban to the shoemakers. Thomas Deloney included both a letter to the reader and a full-page ballad written in homage to the shoemakers, which concluded with, "Thus liv'd Shoemakers of old, as ancient writers have it told; / And thus Shoemakers still would be, so fame from them shall neuer flee."⁷⁸ Deloney's motivation seems more altruistic than Cowper's letter to the reader. In *The Gentle Craft*, Deloney takes on the attributes of pure service on behalf of the shoemakers as he makes a plea for their enduring virtue. Even though Stephen B. Dobranski argues that while "some authors were concerned about readers having too much authority, an audience's participation could help elevate, not erase, the author," I would posit that some writers during this era were not concerned in the slightest if their names disappeared—as long as their message continued to live on for posterity.⁷⁹ This was essential for a play printed several decades

⁷⁵ Loughnane, *Reputation and the Red Bull Theatre, 1625-42*.

⁷⁶ The OED definition of a "cordwainer" (modern spelling) is as follows: "A worker in cordwain or cordovan leather; a shoemaker. Now obs. as the ordinary name, but often persisting as the name of the trade-guild or company of shoemakers, and sometimes used by modern trades unions to include all branches of the trade."

⁷⁷ Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, "Letter to the Reader From the Printer."

⁷⁸ Deloney, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broadsides with an Introduction and Notes*, 1.

⁷⁹ Dobranski, *Readers and Authorship in Early Modern England*, 50.

after its run on the stage, but Cowper nonetheless added his note as if the play was still being performed nightly. With the play's legacy now doubly cursed due to where it first appeared and whom it praised, William Rowley would depend on the support of shoemakers and other tradespeople to get bodies into the seats at the Red Bull Theater. I contend that William Rowley's adaptation of Deloney's text was essential for the general narrative to stay alive during the ever-changing political and religious environment of Jacobean England.

As previously mentioned, William Rowley had already labored for years as a low-wage actor before he began writing, but he had even greater professional and economic ambitions. He would later become a shareholder in a theater company, which meant that Rowley could now enjoy the three income sources of actor, playwright, and company shareholder. Phoebe Sheavyn explains, "it was the great ambition of every player to rise to be a sharer, by buying a share or half-share. In fact, only three dramatists appear to have had sufficient business acumen to join the sharers: Shakespeare, who owned four shares in Burbage's Globe and two in the Blackfriars; Samuel Rowley [no relation], a sharer with Alleyn in the Admiral's Company; and William Rowley, sharer in the Lady Elizabeth's Company from 1612 to 1625."⁸⁰ It would have been rare enough for an actor to be an accomplished playwright during this time, but the benefit of partially owning a theater company proves that Rowley was a rare breed in the Jacobean theater scene. Rowley's business prowess has been proven, which lends credence to the idea that catering a play to the tastes of laborers like the shoemakers was a sound business decision.

Rowley had worked in collaboration with many writers, including Thomas Middleton, John Ford, and the previously discussed Thomas Dekker, but *A Shoemaker, A*

⁸⁰ Sheavyn, *The Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age*, 2nd ed., 97.

Gentleman marked a turning point in his writing career. “Until this point, Rowley was a very local playwright: for example, his sole authored play from 1617, *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*, was about Roman Britain, the persecution of local saints, and two heroes, Crispine and Crispianus, who become the patron saints of shoemakers.”⁸¹ Rowley endeared himself to shoemakers with his choice to welcome that artisan group’s characters to the stage alongside the saints most Britons held dear. Deloney’s original is a slow and methodical display of didacticism meant to teach England of the saintly associations of the shoemakers, but Rowley’s play begins *in media res* with the Christian King Allured having sustained a fatal injury. Rowley doubtlessly intended his version of Deloney’s tale to be an energizing force for the eyes and ears of the mostly working-class crowd huddled in London’s Red Bull Theater. However, associating one’s work with that theater was a risky proposition, as critics would begin to associate a playwright’s work with the crowd who viewed it. However, the Red Bull Theater may not have deserved its bombastic and unruly reputation. Mark Bayer writes that in 1612 William Turner noticed:

...a rather sharp distinction between ‘the players of the bankside...[who] will teach...idle tricks of love’ and the Red Bull where they ‘play the man’, the repertory wasn’t really as ‘masculine’ as the quotation might lead us to believe; many plays performed there highlight the exploits of women, even showing how women’s agency offers a form of resistance to the exploitation of tradesman by their social superiors...”⁸²

The featuring of women’s lives is one of the reasons critics assigned the Red Bull a riotous reputation. This theater was not unruly; it was politically radical. Connecting the politically disenfranchised trade guilds to a London stage was also in William Rowley’s purview. As Maya Mathur suggests, “as opposed to the ‘high’ political demands of the

⁸¹ Darby, *William Rowley: A Case Study Influence*, 251.

⁸² Bayer, “The Red Bull Playhouse,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, 226. William Turner was a pamphleteer and his “Dish of Lenten Stuff” was published in 1613.

aristocracy, plebeian complaints are disregarded because of their ‘low’ comic tenor.”⁸³ As a writer who used to be a clown, Rowley would not be concerned by this, as his name was already connected with the lower classes of English society. What *was* of concern to Rowley were the shoemakers who were both the subjects of his play and his audience. In fact, one of the definitions of a clown in the OED is a “man without refinement or culture; an ignorant, rude, uncouth, ill-bred man.”⁸⁴ With that definition in mind, a Jacobean clown had nothing to lose when it came to social status or the hope of a critic considering him a refined writer. Clowns understood this stigma like no others on the London stage. As opposed to the case of Dekker, there is no evidence that Rowley was at all concerned about his reputation—he simply wished to fill every seat of the theater. And here, Rowley understood his audience much better than Thomas Deloney did.

A Shoemaker, A Gentleman is a martial romance that differs from Deloney’s two stories in several ways, the first of which has already been mentioned—the addition of King Allured. In Deloney’s story, the impending destruction from the Roman wars is implied, but it is the Queen who ushers her sons to safety by sending them away dressed as peasants. In Rowley’s play, the king directs these actions while fending off the clutches of death. He commands his sons to:

Fly from death, hee’s now in pursuit of yee:
 Fly from the Tyrant, for this unhappy day
 Those bloody Persecutors Maximinus and Dioclesian,
 Display their by-neckt Eagle over Brittain,⁸⁵

Here, Rowley’s use of the anaphoric and epic “Fly” demonstrates the authority of the English king. This authority is further exemplified through the king’s shouting at his

⁸³ Mathur, *An Attack of the Clowns: Comedy, Vagrancy, and the Elizabethan History Play*, 34.

⁸⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. *Clown*, 34756.

⁸⁵ Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, 1.1, 23-6.

queen and at his sons Elred and Offa (who later disguise themselves as the apprentice shoemakers Crispine and Crispianus), commanding them to run for safety. Moreover, the text paints the picture of a brave and selfless king who puts the lives of his family members before his own. England needed this king back then (in Roman times), and England needed him at the time of the play's production too. Even though Rowley staged this play at the controversial Red Bull Theater, he wanted to invoke a sense of nationalism through a display of England's nobleness of character. The shoemakers inside the theater would soon believe the dying and glorious King Allured to be a patriarch of the shoemakers. As mentioned above, this scene and the character of King Allured do not exist within the Deloney universe. They are entirely Rowley's creations. The only English royal name that is remotely similar to Allured is Ælfweard of Wessex, but this is nowhere near a match. This spelling was therefore clearly a conscious choice, as Rowley was not yoking his play to history in an absolute sense. The OED defines "allured" as "attracted, tempted; charmed, [and] beguiled."⁸⁶ If the dying patriarch of the shoemakers was not enough to win over his artisan theatergoers, surely a name like King Allured would keep their eyes engrossed with the happenings on stage. Working-class tradesmen who attended this play also shared this sentiment along with a pride in their craft—a pride Rowley was also counting on feeding. The four lines cited above also deflect England's nascent empire buildup onto their old colonial overlords, the Romans. Even though the Romans "Maximinus and Dioclesian" were never actually in England at the same time (this is a side effect of Rowley shoehorning two of Deloney's stories into one play), the dual threat of two Romans on English soil is a convenience that allows Rowley to add his intriguing "by-neckt Eagle over Brittain" line. The double-necked eagle is an important symbol, as it is not just associated with the Roman Empire, but with the Byzantine and Serbian Empires as well. Double-necked eagles thus represent all things foreign and

⁸⁶ The Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "allured," definition 5512.

tyrannical. Symbols such as this were one of the many improvements made by Rowley to Deloney's original two stories in *The Gentle Craft*. However, Deloney's historical accuracy should also be noted when we attempt to compare the overall value of his work at a later time.

If one is familiar with Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*, it may be startling to read that Sir Hugh suddenly shares a scene with Crispine and Crispianus in Rowley's *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*. Even more intriguing is the fact that Hugh shares his debut on the stage with the character Amphiabel. In his play, Rowley has added the Amphiabel character as a stand-in for Amphibalus. In English history, Amphibalus is the man who converted the future St. Alban to Christianity and died a martyr's death because of his actions. Rowley's inclusion of the Amphiabel character is of interest because just as Thomas Deloney and then William Rowley thought to attach English saints to the gentle craft, a thirteenth-century historian and Benedictine monk named Matthew Paris (1200-1259) wished to attach the name Amphibalus to St. Alban and his monastery. Paris was the man in charge of St. Alban's Abbey and wished to increase the notoriety of his beloved abbey, hoping the legend of St. Alban was enough to keep the funding coming in. "But one saint was not enough for this undertaking, nor was just the story of his passion. Matthew exploited the history—or more properly, the legend—surrounding the martyr's tomb and the founding of the monastery, and he incorporated into the chronicles of the abbey another saint, Amphibalus, the missionary who converted Alban."⁸⁷ In short, Paris reconstructed the legend of St. Alban in a way that made Amphibalus a canonization prospect. Paris' plan was successful, and now St. Alban's Abbey had two saints to call their own. I do not need to remind the reader that this is the same strategy Thomas Deloney imagined would bring great pride to the shoemakers and all artisans in *The Gentle Craft*, and this is also

⁸⁷ McCulloch, *Saints Alban and Amphibalus in the Works of Matthew Paris: Dublin, Trinity College MS 177, 761.*

the approach Rowley would expand on in *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*. More saints meant more ticket sales for Rowley. Thomas Deloney's narrative was enjoying a vital afterlife.

One might be tempted to apply papist labels to these works by Deloney, Dekker, and Rowley when reading the exultation and praise thrust upon the patron saints who play an integral part in all three of these works. In fact, this accusation would not be illogical at all, but the thought of it must have made Rowley a bit nervous, as he adds an angel to Deloney's Winifred-at-the-spring scene in order to deflect charges of Catholic sympathy. In Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*, it is Winifred who performs the miracle of making water flow from a spring where there was no water before. Deloney was simply aping the Elizabethan position that sometimes straddled the Protestant and Catholic rites. This was due to the fact that "[v]igorous rejection of the Protestant precept that miracles had ceased [had] also [become] an increasingly prominent feature of English Catholic polemic in the course of Elizabeth's reign."⁸⁸ However, Rowley was operating under James I, whose religious edicts more closely resembled those of the Continental Protestants. Rowley therefore allows an angel to take responsibility for the water's healing properties in Winifred's well. This is therefore no longer a miracle in the purest sense, but rather an angelic act. Winifred makes this clear when she explains to Amphiabel the reason her water is blessed:

A heavenly shape appear'd, and bless'd it more:
 Gave it power, as heaven had so assign'd,
 To cure diseases, help the lame and blind;
 For which poor people, their poor thanks to tell,
 Calls, as I would not, 'Winifred's Well'.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Walsham, *Miracles and the Counter-Reformation Mission to England*, 786.

⁸⁹ Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, 1.3, 94-8.

Even though Rowley changed this scene drastically from the Deloney original, he still left a fragment of the Elizabethan quasi-Catholic belief system. The evidence for that lies in the first line of the above passage, “A heavenly shape appear’d, and bless’d it more.” Here, Rowley’s text implies that the water’s blessing occurred before the angel arrived, for the angel only “bless’d it more.” The text thus lets the reader infer that it was Winifred herself who originally conjured the miracle of the healing water. To mitigate matters and morph the tone of Winifred’s recollection of this event, Rowley’s text backs off the Elizabethan and turns Jacobean with, “as heaven had so assign’d.” Not only did this transfer the source of the miracle from Winifred to heaven, it also may have appeased theatergoers who subscribed to Calvin’s theory of predestination. Winifred also diverts attention away from herself when she states, “Calls, as I would not, ‘Winifred’s Well.’” Now no one could accuse the playwright of promoting to a Catholic policy of good works. Winifred almost seems to be distancing herself from her well’s own heaven-sent healing properties. Not only has Rowley managed to keep all of the sentiment of his Deloney source material, but he has also managed to prolong the life of Deloney’s narrative by allowing it a flexibility to withstand the abrupt political and religious changes for which early modern England is known.

Rowley’s play also hovers in areas of time that Dekker would not have found important—and Deloney, perhaps, did not have the writerly wherewithal to accomplish such a temporal feat properly. Through the character of Offa (disguised as Crispinus), Rowley demonstrates that the life of an artisan shoemaker is actually preferable to a seat on a throne. As an aside to the audience, Prince Offa questions his past life and wonders who “would venture / To walk upon the icy path of royalty, / That here might find a footing so secure?”⁹⁰ Offa’s brother Elred was standing beside him when he clues the audience in to his revelation, as he does not yet feel comfortable enough with his newly

⁹⁰ Ibid., 1.2, 39-41.

acquired bottom-up social hierarchy to share this notion with his brother. Feelings akin to this are present in the Deloney source text as well. While Deloney writes of an artisan class which rises up to occupy seats of power, Rowley is more pragmatic by suggesting artisans remain in their current socioeconomic rank, but savor the unique pleasures of a working-class life. As Margolies notes, “though the industrial bourgeoisie may not have been highly developed as a class (and hence less obviously marked off from their workers), there was a clear distinction between master and man, which Deloney himself indicates.”⁹¹ Margolies seems to hesitate just short of an even grander thesis, that is, that the artisan class’ social structure was far more developed, nuanced, and well thought-out than that of the new bourgeoisie class, enabling the working-class guilds to thrive with minimal social tension (as opposed to the nascent capitalist class, which invited derision). Even though there is no such scene in *The Gentle Craft*, Rowley’s vignette perfectly emulates Deloney’s thoughts on the value of the artisan class. By living in the shoes of the people who make them, Offa now sees the violent reality of royal life and realizes that it is an “icy path” where one can easily slip, while life among the supportive cast of shoemakers has enabled Offa and Elred to find a social and economic “footing so secure.” With nascent capitalism also attempting to find its place among England’s well-established trade guilds, something happened that must have seemed off-kilter to England’s high society—the tradesmen were acquiring wealth like never before. More explicitly, it is “the rise of an urban service sector in which servants in theory gain the potential for profit making and social advancement. In a circulatory economy, they suggest, performances of service can engender, rather than hinder, social mobility and agency for servants.”⁹² Where Thomas Deloney used his characters in *The Gentle Craft* to conjure feelings of pride and an interconnectedness between the trades and the history of England, Rowley leads an exploration into the definition of social class in this new

⁹¹ Margolies, “Thomas Deloney,” in *Novel and Society in Elizabethan England*, 146.

⁹² Rivlin, *The Aesthetics of Service in Early Modern England*, Chapter 3, 74.

capitalist era. Rowley is perhaps also dipping his toes into some anti-royalist sentiment—albeit very carefully. *The Gentle Craft* thus lives on through Rowley not just as a reimagined narrative, but also as an economic idea where the trades could live autonomously and well, while the nobles and landowners were more vulnerable to the changing tides of public sentiment and downturns in the markets.

While Deloney's Hugh bequeathed his bones to the shoemakers after his execution and the shoemakers, in turn, carved the bones into useful relics, Rowley managed to lessen the impact of this scene in ways that would appeal to Jacobean Anglican aesthetics. The shoemakers in *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman* send their men Barnaby and Ralph to Hugh's execution. Before Hugh takes a sip of Winifred's poisoned blood, he relates the following last message after bestowing the title of *the gentle craft* on the shoemakers: "death has seiz'd my flesh, take you my bones, / Which I bequeath amongst you to be buried."⁹³ Unlike in *The Gentle Craft*, here Hugh does not want his martyrdom to be a cause for his bones to become relics. He wants the shoemakers to take his bones, and Barnaby agrees to bury them "in a state of pomp."⁹⁴ Rowley might have been wary about Deloney's reverence for relics, as can be seen in this transformation of St. Hugh's bones from functional relics to the stuff of allegory. With King James having recently introduced the Oath of Allegiance to the Anglican Church, this was no time to test the boundaries of religious tolerance—especially since Rowley seems to have only been concerned with bolstering the ranks of the working class and selling theater tickets in the process. At this time, it was understood that to "give the saints their due honour was to symbolize the defeat of Protestantism and to encourage an attitude of militant anger among Catholics."⁹⁵ Rowley denies the utilitarian nature of St. Hugh's bones in *The Gentle Craft* in a manner that would be unlikely to anger any faction on religious grounds, but he also

⁹³ Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, 4.3, 159-163.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.3, 181.

⁹⁵ MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, 455.

denies the Romans the possession of these remains. Smart, effective, and still sweetly nostalgic, Rowley's work breathes new life into Deloney's proto-novel in a way that ensures its survival. Paradoxically, by denying the reliquary possession of St. Hugh's bones, Rowley is simultaneously protecting and displaying Deloney's text as an artisan class relic primed for worship.

There are stark differences in the directness of communication between the sexes in *The Gentle Craft* and *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*, and these cannot simply be explained by differences in the respective genres of the two works. In a scene shared by both works, the Roman princess—Ursula in *The Gentle Craft*, and Leodice in *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*—takes on different forms of thought when she finds herself in love with Crispine (or Crispinus in *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*). Rowley's Leodice blames distinctions in social class for perverting her sensibilities: "I could love him: this tastes well of my tongue. / Oh, but the coarseness of his condition / Offends my stomach, when I should digest it!"⁹⁶ Here, Rowley does not let his character trust her tongue. Leodice's bodily senses know that the love of Crispinus tastes sweet, but his perceived lower social standing (that of a shoemaker) nauseates her. Rowley is tipping his hand here as to why, in his professional life, he strove to elevate his own social standing from clown to owner of a theater company. This demonstrates a class insecurity not present in Deloney's work.

In *The Gentle Craft*, the princess' tongue does not betray her as Leodice's did in *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*. Deloney allows the tongue and taste of his princess to go beyond the limitations of social class in order to find true love. When pondering her burgeoning love for the prince disguised as a shoemaker, Deloney's Ursula is described as "all solitary, got her self into her Chamber, entred there into consideration, and found within her self great trouble and sorrow, while the tongue, the hearts aduocate was not suffered

⁹⁶ Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, 2.1, 44-6.

to speak.”⁹⁷ While Ursula is alone, she is not obliged to honor the stigma associated with loving a man below her station. While she is experiencing “great trouble and sorrow,” it does not stem from the fact that the man she loves is from a lower class, but rather from the social stigma surrounding such love. Deloney’s princess trusts her tongue unequivocally. Deloney, as he does in most of his work, has melted the classes together here: it is difficult to determine where one class ends and the other begins. Deloney’s pride in his class allows him to lessen the outside influence of social class distinctions within his texts; this is a task that Rowley finds difficult to maneuver. Alexandra Halasz argues that at “the very least then, Deloney’s books are about complications of class, especially the crossing and maintenance of class boundaries.”⁹⁸ I would take this argument one step farther by asserting that Deloney’s works are in fact a wholesale deconstruction and revaluation of the entire class system’s inadequacies with regards to assessing human worth. While Deloney takes pride in his class, Rowley has insecurities, which are evident in *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman*. But Rowley’s feelings of inadequacy sometimes lead his work into areas Deloney’s work never explores.

It is not my intention to undermine the style and structure of Deloney’s work, but Rowley’s theatrical medium better lent itself to such moments of emotional motivation. Whereas Deloney’s Hugh (in *The Gentle Craft*) stoically faces death far removed from his shoemaking brethren, Rowley lets his clown Barnaby accompany Hugh on his journey to death and martyrdom. While Dewar M. Robb complains about the “bawdy jokes [and] the (lightly touched-on) cowardice of Barnaby, the journeyman shoemaker,”⁹⁹ I contend that Barnaby’s perceived cowardice is more of a realistic and well-developed protective device for Hugh, whom Barnaby now considers a brother in the gentle craft. For example,

⁹⁷ Deloney, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broadsides with an Introduction and Notes*, 95.

⁹⁸ Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, 118.

⁹⁹ Robb, *The Canon of William Rowley's Plays*, 132.

after Maximinus has carried out the execution of both Amphiabel and Alban, Barnaby attempts to deflect any residual Christianity from Hugh in order to save his life. Barnaby lectures Hugh in order for Maximinus to overhear:

Nay, fellow Hugh, or noble Sir Hugh, remember 'tis not every man's case to die a Christian. Prithee, leave it, then, and save thy life. The Roman gods are as good gods as e'er trod on shoe of leather, and therefore, sweet Hugh, we may get their custom, and bring 'em to our shop, and so we shall be shoemakers to the gods.¹⁰⁰

Here, Barnaby is not speaking in a bawdy or cowardly manner, as Robb suggests; rather, he is using the philosophy imbedded in King James' Oath of Allegiance. When Barnaby suggests to Hugh with a wink that "tis not every man's case to die a Christian," he is imploring Sir Hugh to temporarily shelve his Christianity in order to save his life. King James also urged his Catholic citizens to sign his oath in order to avoid martyrdom. James did this not with the hope of actually converting the English Catholics to the Anglican Church, but rather to have all appear to be unified in the public sense, even if they continued their Catholic rites in private. The clown Barnaby is now espousing the edicts of the reigning English monarch of Rowley's day. Furthermore, Barnaby's character also demonstrates business acumen when he realizes that the pagan Roman's polytheism would be better for business than their monotheistic Christian religion. When he states, "The Roman gods are as good gods as e'er / trod on shoe of leather, and therefore, sweet Hugh, we / may get their custom, and bring 'em to our shop, and / so we shall be shoemakers to the gods," he is appealing to the newly formed shoemaker side of Hugh's personality. More gods translates to more shoes to cobble and sell. Barnaby, a clown, is

¹⁰⁰ Rowley, *A Shoo-maker a Gentleman*, 4.3, 51-6.

using humorous irony here and he does not actually believe he will be a shoemaker to the gods, but this clown is showing his commitment to the financial success of the gentle craft over that of any other authority, religious or monarchical. Rowley used the character type he is the most familiar with, the clown, to attempt the most complicated negotiations of the entire play. Clowns like Rowley courted danger on the stage as they attempted to challenge their patron's positions via humor while also knowing when they had overstepped their position. All of this makes it seem like Deloney's version of events take a decidedly defeatist tone when faced with the execution of Sir Hugh; but in reality, both literary works end with Hugh's death. The only difference is that Rowley's Barnaby was not only negotiating for the life of Hugh but also bargaining on behalf of Deloney's original narrative. The clown has always been an advocate for Deloney, even outside of literature.

Deloney's Petulant Pamphleteering Peerage

Deloney's appeal to the masses is undeniable; after all, he was one of them. However, his work was vilified not for its politically tumultuous content, but for the literary technique employed, so that the literati could then hold him out of favor, and therefore keep his work outside the canon. Deloney's name was therefore dragged through the streets with the likes of this criticism from Deloney's rival ballad-monger, Robert Greene: "Such triviall trinkets and threadbare trash, had better seemed T.D. [Thomas Deloney] whose braines beaten to the yarking up of Ballades, might more lawfully have glaunst at the quaint conceites of conny-catching and cross-biting."¹⁰¹ Even though most critics believe Greene was criticizing Deloney for the sole purpose of promoting his own writing, this example was typical of Deloney criticism at the time.¹⁰² Another frequent criticism of Deloney was that he employed common folk in literature outside of comedy. The readers of the period expected comedy whenever a working-class character was introduced in a story, but Deloney believed these characters were not innately comic, but rather human and the brothers and sisters of the working class. The "heroes and heroines of his stories were clearly common people. As such, they were not suitable for any theatrical or poetic genre except comedy, or, more correctly, [a] bumbling, blustering farce."¹⁰³ There appeared to be a concerted effort by critics to subdue the possibility of Deloney's literary canonization. Beyond the Greene example, "other contemporary writers slandered ballad writers generally and Deloney specifically, street ballads not being much admired by those who chose to refer to them in print."¹⁰⁴ Scholars might have completely forgotten the work of the ballad-writing silk weaver

¹⁰¹ Greene, *The Defense of Conny Catching*, 4.

¹⁰² Wright, *Thomas Deloney*, 118.

¹⁰³ Rollison, *A Commonwealth of the People: Popular Politics and England's Long Social Revolution, 1066-1649*, 330.

¹⁰⁴ Wright, *Thomas Deloney*, 118.

without the reimagining of his work through the quills of Dekker and Rowley. This was because Deloney's writing defied the old guard of London's literary scene, and because "Deloney's books exemplify a politics of literacy and generate an image of the public sphere that directly and indirectly challenges the claims of learning and learned men to a presiding and supervisory relation to public discourse."¹⁰⁵ Deloney was a weaver and a writer, and he practiced both professions with honesty and pride; and for these noble traits, critics pushed Deloney to the margins of literary criticism. Which brings us to Deloney's death, or more importantly, how we know about the writer's demise.

It is believed that Deloney died sometime before the 1600 publication of *Kemps nine daies vvonder*, which was written by William Kemp, an ex-clown in Shakespeare's theater company. Kemp had recently had a falling out with Shakespeare's company, and this text was an account of a dancing publicity stunt Kemp employed to regain his former popularity. The lead-in sentence to one of Kemp's last passages is set up with, "To the tune of Thomas Deloney's epitaph."¹⁰⁶ Deloney's popularity at the time was certain; however, his reputation would not endure time, much the same as his first-edition texts. "One reason Deloney is little known to most students of literature is that his works were literally read out of existence. I would like to pause here to reflect on something. Published and reprinted continuously since 1583, Deloney's work garnered much scathing criticism from the literati of the time, as well as praise from the underclasses; but the only reason we as readers know the possible date of Deloney's death is a vague mention of his epitaph in Kemp's play. Why does Kemp break the silence concerning Deloney's death? Who deemed Kemp to be the appropriate mouthpiece for releasing this information, and was it because of Kemp's profession?

¹⁰⁵ Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, 119.

¹⁰⁶ Kemp, *Kemps Nine Daies Wonder*, 27.

As mentioned above, critics were harsh on Deloney regarding his use of tradespeople and craftsmen in non-comedic roles, so Kemp's mention of Deloney could be an attempt to hammer the final nail in Deloney's literary coffin, as the only person who thought to mention his death was, in fact, a clown. However, Kemp may have had another axe to grind, and the evidence lies in his own writing. The opening page of *Kemps nine daies vvonder* begins with "Performed in a Morrice from London to Norwich. Wherein euery dayes iourney is pleasantly set downe, to satisfie his friends the truth, against all lying Ballad-makers; what he did, how hee was welcome, and by whome entertained."¹⁰⁷ This line ties Kemp's personal motivations together. Kemp and Deloney shared a hometown, Norwich, and because Kemp came from similar working-class stock as Deloney, the likelihood that the two crossed paths is very high. Kemp's reference to the "lying ballad makers" is possibly the second direct reference to Deloney in this work, as he was known as the General of the Ballad Mongers. We can explain this strange dichotomy between Kemp and Deloney by comparing the directions each took with their particular art. Kemp was all about folly, and he used the traits of the underclasses to make base jokes and generally make fun of working-class people. However, Deloney also exploited the traits of the working class, but he refrained from hyperbole and instead took great pains to add details to the lives of the tradesmen he knew, which made their characters fly off the page with startling realism. Therefore, if there was agreement to silence the mention of Deloney's death in order to denigrate the impact of his work in England, there could have also been a careful selection of who would let the world know of the death of Deloney. Deloney's death is only mentioned by Kemp the clown, and this posthumously associates Deloney's work with comedy and clownishness. Since clowns are often "the only person to move between two worlds"¹⁰⁸ in Shakespeare's theater, Kemp would have been the natural choice to accomplish this task. Kemp, like Rowley,

¹⁰⁷ Kemp, *Kemps Nine Daies Wonder*, 3.

¹⁰⁸ Peacock, *Serious Play: Modern Clown Performance*, 91.

can use his clowning public as a bridge between social ranks. His main disagreement with Deloney may very well have been the latter's staunch refusal to accept his place within the third estate as one of ashamedness and subservience. However, this one mention by Kemp kept Deloney's name and work alive.

Thomas Deloney wrote during Elizabeth I's reign, and his work closely adheres to the edicts, rulings, and aesthetics of Elizabethan England. For Deloney, the rewriting of the legends of England's saints was no stranger than England's monarchs positioning themselves at the helm of the Anglican Church, though Deloney's gambit of attaching obscure saints to the shoemakers of London was far less of a risk than the reinvention of an entire church. However, after Elizabeth's death in 1603, Deloney's writings became relics of past monarchic reigns. As we explored with Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, in order to be successful in reworking Deloney's texts one has to understand England from the ground up and from the viewpoint of the nobles. Even though Dekker's play holds a myopic economic outlook and adheres to blind nationalism, it did serve Deloney in one important way—it preserved the skeletal remains of *The Gentle Craft* for posterity. It is virtually impossible for a student of early modern drama to analyze *The Shoemaker's Holiday* without scouring the Deloney source material for contrast. Being an author during this period meant creating with the literary remains of the past. If one could add a certain level of modernity to the original piece, it could then be sent on its way to either a new writer or a new audience. The alternative was to let the work stand on its own against time and risk disappearing completely from the literary landscape—which might have been the fate of Deloney's works had other artists not considered them fit for adaptation.

Rowley's reworking of Thomas Deloney's narrative was elastic enough to navigate James I and his censors while still retaining the spirit of the original work and also reinvigorating the excitement of Deloney's original audience of shoemakers. The addition

of St. Alban and Amphiabel was the extra element needed to win over his shoemaker audience with examples of their greatness and add credence to the words, "A Shoemakers Son is a Prince born."¹⁰⁹ As nobles paraded themselves publicly as exemplars of Englishness, Rowley's reinterpretation of Deloney's narrative allowed artisan shoemakers an equal claim to English history. Deloney's work circled in and through a stream of authors of various classes and talents that allowed English Renaissance literature to remain vibrant and relevant. The revision and reimagining of ballads, narratives, and proto-novels not only allowed authors to easily obtain material with a minimum of creative output, but also afforded readers multiple views of similar scenes. When modern literary theorists attempt to reawaken the dormant souls lying silent in texts due to socioeconomic or gender inequities, those theorists use their own worldviews to reanimate another author's work. This is essentially what was occurring in the early modern literary era, except that the writers of the time were manipulating and building on the actual narratives of those works instead of writing outside the works in a theoretical capacity.

¹⁰⁹ Deloney, *The Works of Thomas Deloney: Edited from the Earliest Extant Editions & Broadsides with an Introduction and Notes*, Title Page.

The Final Shoe to Drop

Many in academia have ridiculed Thomas Deloney for his simplistic prose that sometimes reads as propaganda meant to elevate the status of England's newly wealthy merchant class. However, this dismissal of his artistry shuts down any meaningful discussion about this proto-novelist and his important work. During Deloney's life, England was in a state of economic and social upheaval, with nascent capitalism creating merchants out of artisans and creating a middle class where there was none before. Of course, not all artisans were able to make the leap into this socioeconomic category, as some still had to cobble shoes or spin silk. New to the vocation of managing their former peers while not doing any physical labor themselves, this merchant class needed direction in order to maintain the morale of their artisans while also encouraging efficiency—a nuanced activity that still vexes the capitalists of the modern age. The nobles often suggested the merchants employ intimidation tactics in order to meet their production quotas, as this was the only tool these proto-managers had at their disposal.

Deloney, however, suggests another course of action in his writings. As an artisan, he knew the pride his fellow silk weavers took in their craft. He also knew this pride extended to all who worked with their hands to create the goods England needed. More than merely a pride in a specific craft or a desire for personal enrichment, this was a pride in England itself. Deloney therefore began a literary journey that allowed actual merchant bosses to peek into Deloney's utopian world, where his merchant characters maintained an almost religious zeal for the craft that helped fill their newly christened coffers. The only "propaganda" Deloney spread was pride in artisanship. However, Deloney could also claim authority in the creation of narratives, as the oral tradition of storytelling stems from artisans. As Walter Benjamin writes, "[t]he sedentary master and the wandering

apprentice worked together in the same room; indeed, every master had himself been a wandering apprentice before settling down at home or in a foreign city. If peasants and sailors were the inventors of storytelling, the guild system proved to be the place of its highest development."¹¹⁰ Deloney was just such a guildsman, and, following the oral tradition of storytelling where each new tale spinner would add their own embellishments to the original story, other English writers would preserve and transport Deloney's narratives for the enjoyment of future generations.

Literary critics have eschewed referring to Thomas Deloney in the same breath as other early modern literary greats. When they do grant Deloney a mention in the book of literary critique, it is to use him as a negative counterpoint to canonical authors. If we accept the idea that all narratives owe a debt of gratitude to the artistry of previous writers and storytellers, then those whose creations stay alive through future writings should occupy the highest rung among modern critics. Furthermore, if popularity and acclaim during a writer's life are good measures of their importance to literature, then it is imperative to grant Deloney entry into the canon of English literature.

However, we should not only consider Deloney's popularity during his own lifetime when, in modernity, we still read his ballads under Shakespeare's name and we still study his proto-novel under Dekker and Rowley's names.¹¹¹ An architect or engineer who longs to design a structure of soaring beauty must pay particular attention to the strength and structural integrity of the foundation that lies below. If one overlooks the importance of a brick or structural support, the entire edifice may crumble. While it is impossible to study every piece of writing created during the early modern era with the

¹¹⁰ Benjamin, "Versions of Marxist Hermeneutic," in *Marxism and Form; Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature*, 80.

¹¹¹ Many current prints of "The Passionate Pilgrim" are still emblazoned with Shakespeare's name. Including a 1900 lithograph of "Age and Youth" that adorns my wall.

same level of intensity, the important work of the silk weaver turned writer Thomas Deloney should be included in the education of every student of English literature.

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