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# Reconsidering The Battle of Hexham: A Lost Play by Barnabe Barnes?

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### Résumé de l'article

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## Reconsidering *The Battle of Hexham*: A Lost Play by Barnabe Barnes?

*This note draws on new evidence from nineteenth-century auction catalogues to reconsider the question of whether Barnabe Barnes was the author of a lost play titled The Battle of Hexham.*

Barnabe Barnes (1571–1609) is known to early modern theatre historians as the author of *The Devil's Charter*, performed by the King's Men at Whitehall on 2 February 1607 and printed in quarto the same year.<sup>1</sup> Since the nineteenth century, however, scholars have noted that Barnes may have authored another play that no longer survives. The evidence for this lost play appears in *Bibliotheca Reediana*, the sale catalogue printed when the library of Shakespeare editor Isaac Reed (1742–1807) was put up for auction over thirty-nine days in November and December 1807. Among the extensive collection of plays in quarto listed in the catalogue of the sale were two titles attributed to Barnes: a copy of the 1607 edition of *The Devil's Charter* and an item described as 'Battle of Hexham in manuscript'.<sup>2</sup> Based on this evidence, scholarly accounts of Barnes's life and work routinely mention a possible lost play titled *The Battle of Hexham*.<sup>3</sup> While the manuscript itself remains untraced, Mark Eccles, the most comprehensive biographer of Barnes, attempted to glean some further information from annotated copies of the Reed sale catalogue: 'From notes in British Museum and Harvard copies of the catalogue I find that while the *Devil's Charter* quarto brought a pound, the *Battle of Hexham* MS. went for one shilling. This suggests that it was either a fragment or in bad condition'.<sup>4</sup> While Eccles did not mention who it was that spent a shilling on the *Battle of Hexham* manuscript, an annotated copy of the 1807 sale catalogue at the Grolier Club in New York identifies the buyer as one 'Barker'.

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348		Plays.—Quarto.		
4	6	7688 ADDISON (Joseph) Cato, Tr. 1713. Life of Cato. 1713. Rosamond, an Opera, 2 copies	1707	Malone
2	1	7689 ALEXANDER (William) Monarchick Tragedies &c. 1604, with his Aurora, rare	1707	Place
2	10	7690 ARMIN (Robert) History of the Two Maids of More clacke, front.	1609	Payne
2		7691 ARROWSMITH. The Reformation, Com.	1673	Mathews
		7692 ————— 2 copies, ib.		
1	6	7693 Baker (Thomas) Fine Lady's, Com. 2 copies. Tunbridge Walks, Com. 1703		Lum
7		7694 ————— Humour of the Age Com. 1701. Tunbridge Walks Com. 1703. An Act at Oxford Com. 1704. Hamstead Heath Com. 1706. Fine Lady's Airs Com. in 1 vol.		Barker
2		7695 BANCROFT (John) Sertorius Tr. 1679. Henry II. Tr. 1693		Mathews
5		7696 BANKS (John) Cyrus the Great, Tr. 1696. Virtue Betrayed, or Anna Bullen, Tr. 1682. Destruction of Troy, Tr. 1679. Rival Kings Tr. 1677		Barker
2	6	7697 ————— Innocent Usurper, Tr. 1694. Unhappy Favourite, Tr. 1704. Albion Queens, Tr. 1704. Cyrus the Great, Tr. 1696		Mathews
1	—	7698 BARNES (Barnaby) Devils Charter, Tr. 1607		Heber
1		7699 ————— Battle of Hexham in manuscript		Barker
1		7700 BEAUMONT & FLETCHER, The Woman Hater, Com. 1649. Loyal Subject, or Faithful General		Thomas
2	6	7701 ————— Mons. Thomas, Com. The Two Noble Kinsmen 1634 title wanting Thierry and Theodore, Tr. 1649		Mathews
1	6	7702 ————— Cupid's Revenge 1635. The Maid's Tragedie, front. 1641		Heber
2	12	6 7703 ————— A King and no King, front. 1619		Kemble
	6	6 7704 ————— Woman Hater, Com. 1649. A King and no King 1655		Heber
£ 10 - 6				

Figure 1. *Bibliotheca Reediana. A Catalogue of the Curious & Extensive Library of the Late Isaac Reed, Esq.* (London, 1807), 348. Courtesy of the Grolier Club of New York.

This piece of evidence, along with a hitherto unnoticed second auction catalogue in 1819, not only sheds light on the fate of the manuscript but helps us better assess whether *The Battle of Hexham* should be considered a lost play by Barnes.

The purchaser of the manuscript at the Reed sale was almost certainly J. Barker, who operated the Dramatic Repository, located at 19 Great Russell Street in Covent Garden. Barker was both a publisher of drama and a seller of playbooks, recent and antiquarian. An advertisement in Theophilus Mac's *Edward the Second*, which Barker printed and published in 1809, reads:

J. BARKER respectfully informs the Public, that he has a Collection of Plays on Sale, which, considered either as to its Extent or Rarity, has scarcely been equalled, having been upwards of Thirty Years accumulating and considerably enriched from the Libraries of

— SHELTON, ESQ.	DUKE OF BRIDGEWATER.
MAJOR PEARSON	DR. FARMER
DR. WRIGHT	G. STEVENS, ESQ.
MR. DODD	MR. FORSTER,
MR. MACKLIN	MR. REED, &c.
MR. HENDERSON	

In this Assemblage will be found the original Editions of our most valuable Writers; as,

SHAKESPEARE	MIDDLETON	SHIRLEY
JONSON	WEBSTER	DAVENANT
CHAPMAN	BEAUM & FLETCHER	GLAPTHORNE
HEYWOOD	MASSINGER	KILLIGEW &c. &c.

Subjoined to these, are the more modern Authors, to which every Article is added as soon as published.<sup>5</sup>

Barker was well known as a purveyor of playbooks: Charles Lamb's essay 'Old China' includes an evocative description of the author buying a 'folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which [he] dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden', describing how 'the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures'.<sup>6</sup> As Barker's 1809 advertisement boasts, his collection

of playbooks was assembled from an impressive array of library sales. Indeed, the Grolier's annotated catalogue of the 1807 Reed sale gives a representative glimpse of how active Barker was in acquiring printed playbooks from the sixteenth to late eighteenth centuries. Among the quartos of pre-civil war plays in the Reed sale, some titles acquired by Barker include George Chapman's *Monsieur D'Olive* (1606) for £1 10s and a sammelband of *A Humourous Day's Mirth* (1599), *All Fools* (1605), and the poem *Andromeda Liberata* (1614) for 10s; two copies of John Day's *The Isle of Gulls* (1633) for 6s each; a sammelband of Thomas Dekker's *Match Me in London* (1631) and *The Honest Whore, Part 2* (1630) for 15s; John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1633) bound with *The Sun's Darling* (1657) for 16s; eight playbooks by Thomas Heywood, including *The Silver Age* (1613), the two parts of *The Iron Age* (1632), *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1639), and the co-authored *Fortune by Land and Sea* (1655) for a combined total of £2 10s 6d; Thomas Middleton's *Michaelmas Term* (1630) bound with *A Game at Chess* (undated) for 4s 6d; and two copies of Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1619) for 7s 6d and 4s 6d, respectively.<sup>7</sup>

Barker was not, however, exclusively an antiquarian bookdealer, and his other purchases at the Reed sale illustrate the breadth of the bookshop's offerings, including many Restoration-era titles and such eighteenth-century printed playbooks as George Adams's *The Heathen Martyr, or The Death of Socrates* (1746), Thomas Boyce's *Harold; A Tragedy* (1786), and George Keate's *A Monument in Arcadia* (1773) as well as dramatic manuscripts including 'Green Room Chit Chat, a Prelude, 4to' (which he acquired for 7s) and 'The Island of Fools, a Farce of Two acts, 4to' (5s).<sup>8</sup> More significantly, Barker was himself a printer and publisher of drama, both older and contemporary. In 1807, the year of the Reed sale, a list of fifty-three dramatic titles 'Published by Barker & Son' boasted four by Thomas Dibdin (1771–1841), four by William Dimond (1781–1831), five by Prince Hoare (1755–1834), six by John O'Keefe (1747–1833) along with reprints of older plays such as Lillo's *The Fatal Curiosity* (1736) and Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773).<sup>9</sup> As such, the range of items in Barker's Dramatic Repository in 1807 ranged from antique sixteenth-century playbooks to recently staged opera libretti and everything in between.

In addition to being a retailer, printer, and publisher of drama, Barker was also something of a theatre historian. In 1801, Barker and Son published *Barker's Continuation of Egerton's Theatrical Remembrancer*, an expansion of John Egerton's comprehensive 1788 list of plays undertaken by Walley Chamberlain Oulton, and soon after an updated edition appeared with the title *Barker's Complete List of Plays* (1803). Unlike some previous lists, Barker's list did not simply include



printed playbooks but also a number of manuscripts that had become known to theatre historians but remained unpublished, including *Sir Thomas More* and *The Cyprian Conqueror*, both known to be extant in the British Museum; *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, *The Queen of Corsica*, and *The Bugbears* (currently MS Lansdowne 807); and *Timon* (currently Victoria & Albert Museum, MS Dyce 52). Barker's list even included Philip Massinger's *The Parliament of Love* ('The four last Acts are extant in MS.'), which had recently been lent by Edmond Malone to William Gifford, who would soon print the play for the first time in his edition of Massinger. (Barker presumably had information about this manuscript in his capacity as one of the publishers of Gifford's edition.) When an updated edition of Barker's list appeared in 1814 under the title *The Drama Recorded*, new additions included recently discovered manuscripts, such as *The Faithful Friends* ('MS. in the possession of the Rev. H Kett', who had announced his ownership in a 1810 letter in *The Gentleman's Magazine*) and 'Comœdies and Pastoralls, MS' by 'W.P.' (William Percy's six plays, which had surfaced at the sale of Sir William Burrell's library on 2 May 1796).<sup>10</sup>

Critically, Barker's 1814 list in *The Drama Recorded* was updated to incorporate titles newly known to Barker from the Reed sale of 1807: 'Craft and Credulity' (which had appeared as lot 8688), 'Schemers' (lot 8697), and 'Sham Philosopher, or Country Gambol' (lot 8687) are all included with the provenance note 'MS. Reed's Library' as well as the two manuscripts that Barker himself had purchased in the sale: the 'Island of Fools' and the prelude of 'Green Room Chit Chat'.<sup>11</sup> Barker's 1814 list also included manuscript material that he himself had acquired apart from the Reed sale: a tragedy titled *The King of Lombardy* is described as 'MS (in the possession of the Publisher)'.<sup>12</sup> Such precision reflected Barker's intentions stated in an introduction to the 1814 list: 'The Publisher respectfully informs the Reader, that in re-printing this Dramatic Catalogue he has, by the aid of the greatest part of the Drama which has passed through his hands for nearly half a century, and the extensive Collection still in his possession, taken all the means in his power to render it as correct as possible'. Given that Barker's 1814 list included manuscripts owned by Barker as well as manuscripts in the Reed sale that Barker did not himself acquire, the fact that the list lacks an entry for *The Battle of Hexham* by Barnabe Barnes demands explanation.

If the manuscript sold at the Reed sale represented an unprinted play by Barnes, why should Barker's otherwise comprehensive list of 1814 failed to have mentioned it? A simple answer arises: the play manuscript sold in 1807 was not, in fact, by Barnes. Indeed, both Barker's 1803 and 1814 lists do mention a play called *The Battle of Hexham*, but in both cases the authorial attribution to 'Colman'

clarifies that these entries represent the relatively recent play by George Colman the younger, premiering in August 1789 at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, where it enjoyed a first run of twenty nights with continued success in subsequent years, receiving eighty-nine total performances before 1800.<sup>13</sup> While Barker's 1803 list describes the 'Battle of Hexham' as unprinted, the 1814 list updated the entry to reflect the 1808 edition, published by Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme.<sup>14</sup> The possibility that the manuscript mentioned in the Reed auction catalogue was, in fact, the play by Colman was tentatively suggested by Mark Eccles: 'It occurs to me that a MS. of his [ie Colman's] play may have been catalogued by title instead of by author, in which case it would alphabetically follow the entry under Barnes, but this would have been a curious error'.<sup>15</sup> The error, however, seems significantly less curious when we consider the other entries in the 1807 sale catalogue. While the quarto playbooks are largely listed alphabetically by author, a number

Place	8444	TROTTER (Catharine) Revolution of Sweden, Tr. 1706. Fatal Friendship, Tr. 1698, & 1 other	1704	1
Barker	8445	Plays (5) in one vol.	1696	5
do	8446	Tragedie of King Charles 1st. 1649. Shuffling, Cutting and Dealing in a Game at Pickquet from 1653 to 58	1696	1 0
Thomas	8447	Two Merry Milke Maids, by J. C.	1620	1 -
Hemble	8447	TUKE (Samuel) Adventures of 5 Hours, Tr. Com.	1664	2
Bindlay	8449	Valiant Scot, by J. W.	1637	5
Barker	8450	Welshman, front.	1663	3 6
Malone	8452	VANBURGH (John) False Friend, Com. 1752. Ælop, Com. 1702. Confederacy, Com. 1705	1752	1 2
Bindlay	8453	Mistake, Com. 1706. Ælop, large paper, morocco	1697	3
Barker	8454	WALKER (T.) Wit of Woman, 1705. Victorious Love, by W. Walker, 1698	1697	4 6

Figure 2. *Bibliotheca Reediana. A Catalogue of the Curious & Extensive Library of the Late Isaac Reed, Esq.* (London, 1807), 381. Courtesy of the Grolier Club of New York.

of exceptions appear interspersed in the list by title. Consider the run of eleven lots from 8444 to 8454: six are listed by author's last name (Trotter, Tuke, Vanburgh, Walker), while five are alphabetized by title (*The Tragedy of King Charles*, *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, two copies of *The Valiant Scot*, and *The Valiant Welshman*).

This section is not unusual as a number of other plays interspersed alphabetically by title appear elsewhere in the catalogue.<sup>16</sup> In light of this convention, it seems entirely possible that the printer of the Reed catalogue intended to include 'The Battle of Hexham' in its alphabetical place between 'BARNES' and 'BEAUMONT & FLETCHER' but mistakenly included the long dash that erroneously implied authorship of that play to the last-named author — that is, Barnabe Barnes.

Perhaps even more compelling evidence than the absence of a Barnabe Barnes play titled *The Battle of Hexham* in Barker's 1814 list is its absence in the 1812 edition of *Biographia Dramatica*. Based on David Erskine Baker's *The Companion to the Play-House* (1764), the substantially expanded second edition of 1782, newly titled *Biographia Dramatica*, was the work of Isaac Reed himself, adding more than 1,200 plays and 300 playwrights to Baker's original.<sup>17</sup> While he never produced another edition before his death in 1807, as Richard Schoch explains, 'Until the end of his life Reed maintained an interleaved copy of his 1782 edition, which eventually came into the hands of Stephen Jones', who was responsible for producing the 1812 edition.<sup>18</sup> Jones's expanded *Biographia Dramatica* drew on Reed's research and collections, incorporating the unpublished manuscripts that had been sold from Reed's library such as *Craft and Credulity*, *The Island of Fools*, and the *Green Room Chit Chat* prelude; however, the only work titled *The Battle at Hexham* in the 1812 edition is Colman's opera of 1789. Presumably if Reed had, in fact, owned a manuscript of an otherwise unknown play by Barnabe Barnes, one would expect to find it in the reference work that he helped shape and that was revised using his unpublished notes.

We find further evidence that the manuscript sold at the Reed auction was not by Barnes in its next appearance in an auction catalogue, which, like Barker's acquisition of the manuscript at the Reed sale, has gone overlooked. In 1819, the library of the recently deceased John North was put up for auction, and the accompanying sale catalogue suggests that North had purchased from Barker the *Battle of Hexham* manuscript, which appears as lot 521, along with two other dramatic manuscripts that Barker had acquired at the Reed sale ('Green Room Chit Chat, a prelude, MSS' and 'The Island of Fools, manuscript').<sup>19</sup> Unlike the 1807 catalogue for the Reed sale, the 1819 catalogue's entry 'Battle of Hexham, manuscript, and various old Plays'<sup>20</sup> does not provide any authorial attribution for the play, and the fact that this is followed by lots specifically naming Webster, Middleton, Meriton, and Heywood as the authors of their respective plays strongly suggests that, had the cataloguer seen an authorial attribution in the *Battle of Hexham* manuscript, it would have been reproduced in the catalogue.



- 7	- 520	The Mall or Modish Lovers, 1674. Mock Marriage, 1696. Metamorphosis, or Old Lover Outwitted, 1704, and various old Plays.	Barker
- 10	- 521	Battle of Hexham, manuscript, and various old Plays.	Booth
- 1	- 522	Webster Devils Law Case, - - - 1623	D <sup>e</sup>
- 4	- 523	Middleton's Mad World My Masters, - - - 1640	D <sup>e</sup>
- 5	- 524	King and Queene's Entertainment at Richmond, in a Masque presented by the most illustrious Prince Charles, 1636	D <sup>e</sup>
- 7	- 525	Meriton's Love and War, 1658. Love's Victory, an Opera, manuscript. Thomson's English Rogue, - - - 1668	Rodd
- 3	- 526	Heywood's Golden Age, scarce, - - - 1611	Booth
- 15	- 527	Heywood and Rowley's Fortune by Land and Sea, 1655	D <sup>e</sup>
- 17	- 528	Honest Lawyer, 1616. Hofman, 1631. Love's Sacrifice, wants title.	D <sup>e</sup>

Figure 3. *A Catalogue of the Curious and Extensive Library, of the Late John North, Esq... Part the Third* (London, 1819), 21. Courtesy of the University of Michigan Library Special Collections Research Center.

To summarize: identifying Barker as the buyer of the 'Battle of Hexham in manuscript' at the 1807 Reed sale, noticing the absence of a play by that title attributed to Barnabe Barnes in Barker's 1814 list *The Drama Recorded* as well as in the 1812 edition of *Biographia Dramatica*, and finding no attribution to Barnes in the 1819 North catalogue all gives us ample reason to doubt that the manuscript sold in 1807 was, in fact, by Barnes. Taken as a whole, no reliable evidence survives that Barnabe Barnes ever wrote a play called *The Battle of Hexham*.

## Notes

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I wish to thank Jamie Cumby and Scott Ellwood at the Grolier Club for their assistance in researching this note as well as *Early Theatre*'s two anonymous readers for their helpful suggestions.

- 1 Barnabe Barnes, *The Devils Charter: A Tragédie* (London, 1667; STC 1466).
- 2 *Bibliotheca Reediana. A Catalogue of the Curious & Extensive Library of the Late Isaac Reed, Esq.* (London, 1807), 348.
- 3 W. Carew Hazlitt, *Hand-Book to the Popular, Poetical, and Dramatic Literature of Great Britain, from the Invention of Printing to the Restoration* (London, 1867), 27; Frederick Gard Fleay, *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama 1559–1642*, 2 vols (London, 1891), 1.30; Hazlitt, *A Manual for the Collector and Amateur of Old English Plays* (London, 1892), 23; C. Creighton, *Shakespeare's Story of His Life* (London, 1904), 159, 178; E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1923), 3.214; Mark Eccles, 'Barnabe Barnes', in *Thomas Lodge and Other Elizabethans*, ed. Charles J. Sisson (Cambridge, 1933), 165–241, 235; Alfred Harbage, 'Elizabethan and Seventeenth-Century Play Manuscripts', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 50 (1935), 687–99, 699; Harbage, *Annals of English Drama 975–1700* (Philadelphia, 1940), 78–9; Madeleine Hope Dodds, 'Barnabe Barnes', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4th series, vol. 24 (1946) 1–59, 56; Philip E. Blank, *Lyric Forms in the Sonnet Sequences of Barnabe Barnes* (The Hague, 1974), 16 n 21; Dominic Head, ed., *The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English*, 3rd edn (Cambridge, 2006), 73; Tanya Pollard, 'Barnes, Barnabe', in *The Encyclopedia of English Renaissance Literature*, 3 vols, gen. eds Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr, and Alan Stewart (Malden, MA, 2012), 1.46–7, 47. Reverend Alexander B. Grossart seems to have been responsible for misleading some later critics by discussing this lost play with the title 'The Battle of Evesham': see Grossart, ed., *The Poems of Barnabe Barnes* (London, 1875), viii; A[rthur] H[enry] B[ullen], 'Barnes, Barnabe', in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Leslie Stephen, vol. 3 (London, 1885), 247–8, 248; Dinah Birch, ed., *The Oxford Companion of English Literature*, 7th edn (Oxford, 2009), 98. Matteo Pangallo provides an extensive consideration of the historical sources available to an early seventeenth-century playwright at 'Battle of Hexham', *Lost Plays Database*, ed. Roslyn L. Knutson, David McInnis, Matthew Steggle, and Misha Teramura, last modified 4 October 2022, [https://lostplays.folger.edu/Battle\\_of\\_Hexham](https://lostplays.folger.edu/Battle_of_Hexham).
- 4 Eccles, 'Barnabe Barnes', 235.
- 5 Theophilus Mac, *Edward the Second, A Tragedy, and Other Poems* (London, 1809), ix.

- 6 Charles Lamb, *The Last Essays of Elia* (London, 1833), 219.
- 7 In Henrietta C. Bartlett and Alfred W. Pollard's *Census of Shakespeare's Plays in Quarto*, rev. ed. (New Haven, 1939), Barker's name occurs frequently in auction records and copies of *Henry IV, Part 2* (1600), *The Merchant of Venice* (1619), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1619), *Richard III* (1612), *Henry V* (1619), *King Lear* (1619), *Love's Labour's Lost* (1631), *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1630), and *Richard III* (1629) all seem to have entered his possession at various times.
- 8 *Bibliotheca Reediana*, 847 (lot 7685), 349 (lot 7719), 368 (lot 8164), and 395 (lots 8696 and 8698).
- 9 The advertisement appears at the end of Charles Macklin, *Love a la Mode. A Farce* (London, 1807).
- 10 *The Gentleman's Magazine* 80 (April 1810), 321; *A Catalogue of the Town-Library of the Late Sir William Burrell, Bart. L.L.D.* (London, 1796), 21–2.
- 11 Barker, *Drama Recorded*, 36, 159, 163, 89, and 71.
- 12 Barker, *Drama Recorded*, 95.
- 13 Charles Beecher Hogan, *The London Stage, 1776–1800: A Critical Introduction* (Carbondale, 1968), clxxiii.
- 14 George Colman the younger, *The Battle of Hexham; or, Days of Old* (London, 1808). An earlier edition had in fact been printed in Dublin in 1790.
- 15 Eccles, 235–6 n 3. The Larpent manuscript of Colman's *The Battle of Hexham* survives at the Huntington Library (LA 840), although this presumably could not have been the copy owned by Reed.
- 16 See 'Cupid's Whirligig' (lot 7926), 'Honest Lawyer' (lot 8000), 'King and Queen's Entertainment at Richmond' (lot 8167), 'Nero' (lot 8211), 'Oratorios, Entertainments, &c. a parcel' (lot 8214), 'Oxford Repertory' (lot 8217), fourteen sammelbande or collections listed under 'Plays' (lots 8225–39), 'Pleasant Comedie, called a Woman will have her Will' (lot 8240); 'Wily Beguiled' (lot 8622).
- 17 Richard Schoch, *Writing the History of the British Stage, 1660–1900* (Cambridge, 2016), 174.
- 18 Ibid, 183.
- 19 *A Catalogue of the Curious and Extensive Library, of the Late John North, Esq.... Part the Third* (London, 1819), 7 (lot 141), 8 (lot 174), and 21 (lot 521). According to an annotated copy of the catalogue at the University of Michigan (call number Z 997 .N86), the 'Battle of Hexham' manuscript sold for 10s 6d to 'Booth', perhaps the London bookseller John Booth of Duke Street, Portland Place. While the fate of the *Battle of Hexham* manuscript remains unknown, the *Green Room Chit Chat* manuscript seems to have passed into the hands of Thomas Jolley (whose library was sold by Sotheby's in 1844), was then bound with two other dramatic manuscripts from

Jolley's collections (*The Generous Courtesan* and *Camber and Thuringia*), and is preserved today as Folger Shakespeare Library MS D.a.53. See *A Catalogue of the Third Portion of the Extensive, Singularly Curious, and Valuable Library of Thomas Jolley, Esq.* (London, 1844), 20 (lot 264). Strangely, the North catalogue groups the 'Island of Fools, manuscript' with five other plays (four plays by the eighteenth-century playwright Charles Johnson and *The Widow* by Jonson, Fletcher, and Middleton), which lot, according the Michigan copy, Barker purchased for 6s; admittedly, this may or may not have been the same manuscript that Barker purchased at the Reed sale. However, the Reed/Barker manuscript does seem to have entered the possession of Sir Thomas Phillipps by 1837, that of the Manchester bookseller John Gray Bell by 1859, surviving today as Yale University Library MS Osborn c281. See *Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum in Bibliotheca D. Thomae Phillipps, Bart., A.D. 1837* (Middle Hill, 1837), 326 (item 16888); *The Bibliographer's Manual and Collector's Assistant, A Periodical Register of New and Second-Hand Books, Manuscripts, Autographs, Literary Miscellanies, &c. on Sale at Very Exceedingly Low Prices by John Gray Bell* (London, 1859), 6 (item 166).

- 20 *A Catalogue of the Curious and Extensive Library, of the Late John North, Esq... Part the Third* (London, 1819), 21.