

**THE ALLEYN PAPERS. A COLLECTION  
OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS  
ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE LIFE AND TIMES  
OF EDWARD ALLEYN, AND OF THE  
EARLY ENGLISH STAGE AND DRAMA**

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
J. PAYNE COLLIER, ESQ., F.S.A.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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By permission of the Master, Warden, and Fellows of Dulwich College, the Shakespeare Society is enabled to make some curious and interesting additions to its publication, the "Memoirs of Edward Alleyn." These additions chiefly consist of documents relating to the life and times of the Founder of Dulwich College, preserved in that institution, with some others, the property of J. O. Halliwell, Esq., which in all probability formerly came out of the same depository, and copies of which he unhesitatingly furnished, in order to render the present publication complete. In the last century, little attention was paid to the custody of these papers: their value was not understood, excepting by a few individuals, and they seem to have been removed without restraint. Malone had the custody of many of them for a long period; and at his death, although the greater part were restored, not a few were dispersed, and found their way into other hands. Of some no intelligence has since been obtained; and it is likely, if they have not been destroyed, that

they belong to individuals who are not even aware that they have possession of such relics.

Edward Alleyn was an actor of great and merited celebrity: he was the rival of Richard Burbage, (who seems to have performed most of the leading characters in Shakespeare's dramas) and it is probable that he left behind him copies of nearly all the parts he represented, as delivered out to him at the theatre to which he belonged, for the purpose of getting them by heart and studying them. One of these (Orlando, in R. Greene's "Orlando Furioso," 1594) is still extant at Dulwich College: but it is the only one; and as this has been handed down to us among the papers of the Founder, we cannot help thinking that they must originally have been much more numerous: if Alleyn kept one, why should he not have kept others?—and had they been now forthcoming, how much they would have contributed to the illustration of our drama and stage is evident from the single specimen which has been preserved, and which is printed entire in the Appendix to the "Memoirs," p. 198. We know that Alleyn was the representative of Faustus, in Marlowe's tragedy of that name, from the subsequent lines by one of his cotemporaries:—

The Gull gets on a surplis,  
With a crosse upon his brest,  
Like *Allen playing Faustus*;  
In that manner was he drest.

S. Rowland's *Knave of Clubs*. 4to. 1600.

Marlowe's drama was not printed until ten years after we first hear of the performance of it; and, as in the

ease of Greene's "Orlando Furioso," had Alleyn's part in it, written out by the copyist of the theatre, been extant, we have no doubt that important additions and variations would have been found in it.

On a different authority we learn that another of Alleyn's famous characters was Cutlack. A play with this title, (derived no doubt from the hero of it) according to Henslowe's Diary, was performed in May, 1594; but no fragment of it has come down to our day. Alleyn's performance of it, with the peculiar "gait" he assumed in the part, it thus mentioned in that very scarce collection of epigrams and satires entitled "Skialetteia, or the Shadow of Truth," 1598, which we know, on the authority of "England's Parnassus," 1600, was the authorship of Edward Guilpin:—

Clodius, me thinkes, lookes passing big of late,  
 With Dunstan's browes and *Alleyn's Cutlack's gait*.  
 What humours have possess'd him so I wonder:  
 His eyes are lightning, and his words are thunder. Sig. B. 2 b.

It would have been highly interesting to have found at Dulwich even such portions of lost plays as Alleyn was concerned in in his capacity of an actor. If he did not take part in any of Shakespeare's works, there is good reason for believing that he did perform in some of the pre-existing dramas on the same subjects, such as the old "Hamlet," the old "Merchant of Venice," the old "Pericles," &c.; and it would have been most interesting to have recovered any fragment of these pieces, by which we might have seen, in some degree, the nature and extent of our great dramatist's obligations to his