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## ROBERT WILSON AND RICHARD TARLTON – THE MUTUAL FRIENDS

There is no record to tell us when John Florio arrived in England. Having been born in London he did not have to register as a foreigner, declare his whereabouts or pay extra taxes as many others did. However there are clues in his early work to suggest that he came straight to England from University. There are references to contemporary events in London in his ‘First Fruits’ which can be dated as early as 1571, (the Duke of Alba raising troops in London), when Florio was about 18 years of age. The book itself was published in 1578, but some of the dialogues seem to date from a previous period in his life when he may have been teaching Italian to London merchants or helping newly arrived Italians cope with English. By the time the book was published, Florio had been at Oxford University for two years, formally employed by Lord Burleigh as tutor to Emmanuel Barnes, and yet the dialogues suggest he frequently travelled back and forth to London where he was able to observe, and record, events of the times.

The language of the early dialogues is often colloquial, featuring slang expressions such as ‘Certis’ (it certainly is) and ‘good cheappe’ (good value for money). This is not the English of a formal education but the speech of the market place and suggests that Florio’s first encounter with the language probably came at home, by the kitchen hearth, where his English mother would have taught him and his sister Justina her native tongue, if only for the pleasure of hearing it spoken in her own house, far from her birthplace up in the Swiss mountains. You can see Florio’s command of English progress as ‘First Fruits’ moves through its chapters, again suggesting it was compiled over a period of years.

The language of 'Second Fruits', written a decade later, is far more sophisticated.

What took Florio back and forth to London in these years was almost certainly a commission from Oxford University's Chancellor, a former pupil of Florio's own father, Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester and the Queen's favourite courtier. Dudley needed an Italian tutor for his own company of players.

'Leicester's Men', the first theatrical company to be formally registered, were required to entertain foreign dignitaries at Court, but English, as Florio himself had observed, was as remote as Icelandic or Norwegian to most Europeans. Italian, however, the most Latinate of all modern languages in this period, was widely understood and its comedy theatre traditions were popular all over Europe.

This early experience would eventually lead to Florio's first meeting with William Shakespeare.

Among their few mutual friends, it seems to me most likely that the famous stage clown Richard Tarlton and his fellow comedic actor and writer Robert Wilson forged the introduction, possibly sometime during the late 1580s. In 1590, Southampton's last year in London at Gray's Inn, Florio appears to mention Shakespeare in the context of a newly discovered talent in 1591. ("Aesop's cock found a pearl in a lower place" he comments in the preface to 'Second Fruits' when passing judgement on University scholars who labour in vain.) Wilson and Tarleton I think made this introduction to a purpose; it seems likely they actively hoped the two would collaborate to bring the essence of the Italian comic stage to English audiences. To track the story of several interconnecting relationships which led to this point I must go all the way back to Michelangelo Florio's time in London in the 1550's, before John was even born.

John Dudley, First Duke of Northumberland, was among the sixteen members of the regency council appointed to govern the country while Edward VI was still a minor, and during those years he had manoeuvred himself into the most important position in the land. As Lord President of the Council and Great Steward of the King's Household he virtually ruled England and persuaded the young King to exclude both his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth from the succession in favour of Lady Jane Grey, who had just married Dudley's own youngest son. It amounted to a coup, which Mary swiftly overthrew, ultimately sentencing both Jane and her father in law to death for treason.

Michelangelo Florio was closely connected to this powerful camp, in the household of the Duke of Suffolk, Jane's father, and Italian tutor to several of the young people of these leading families. He subsequently wrote a biography of Jane and dedicated works to the Dudley family and Princess Elizabeth. It is perfectly reasonable to presume he at some time tutored all of them in the Italian language and culture, especially as his religious views closely matched those of the Protestant faction they represented. Years later, when John Florio was moving in the same circles, he wrote of the linguistic abilities of Queen Elizabeth and one can sense the filial pride in his comments on her command of Italian.

With the fall of John Dudley, Michelangelo Florio, his apparently English wife and young son John were forced to flee the country and, as we have seen, finally settled in Soglio in Switzerland, where John spent his childhood.

When John returned to England as a young man, he revived his father's old social connections to swift and good effect. We have already seen how Lord Burleigh established Florio at Oxford and made repeated use of his services as a tutor in the years that followed. Michelangelo Florio died in 1576 at his parish in Soglio, the same year John went up to Oxford, so it may be that he had a

small legacy to help him on his way. What can also be seen is that Florio found another useful patron in The Earl of Leicester.

The evidence surfaces in the opening pages of Florio's earliest language manual 'First Fruits' which is dedicated to the Earl of Leicester and even bears an imprint of the Earl's arms, something which could only appear if the author was on the family payroll. He addresses him as his lord and seeks his protection from critics as a novice scholar just setting out on his career. Further clues come in the various little commendatory verses from friends which precede the text; four of them, grouped together, were penned by members of Leicester's company of players. They are Robert Wilson, Thomas Clarke, Richard Tarlton and a John B, who is most probably the actor John Bentley, famous for his tragic hero roles as a member of the Queen's Men in the 1580's. His earlier career is hard to track but it's perfectly possible he was a member of Leicester's Men in 1578. He was later regarded as a serious rival to Edward Alleyn for his heroic lead characters. The other possible claim to the 'John B' verse is John Brayne, brother-in-law to James Burbage and the man who built the 'Red Lion' theatre in Tower Hamlets in 1567. This early attempt at a purpose-built theatre survived for less than two years but saw many performances by travelling companies of players while it lasted. Brayne is generally referred to as a financier but he clearly had more than a passing interest in theatrical productions and it would not be not surprising to find him associated with Leicester's Men at this time. James Burbage was a member of Leicester's Men from at least 1572 and he and Brayne joined forces to build 'The Theatre' in Shoreditch in 1576. This was closer to the heart of the City, although still outside its administrative jurisdiction, and was able to draw large enough audiences to pay the bills. By the time 'Firsts Fruits' was published, 'The Theatre' had been flourishing for about 18 months.

Each of Leicester's Men offers a little poem in praise of their friend Florio and thanking him for teaching them Italian. Most of the verses are routine fare, but there is personal warmth in Tartlton's, which runs like this:

'If we at home, by Florio's paynes may win,  
to know the things, that travailes great would aske:  
By openyng that, which heretofore hath bin  
A daungerous journey, and a feareful taske.  
Why then ech Reader that his Booke doo see,  
Give Florio thankes, that tooke such paines for thee.'

'Robert Wilson, in prayse of Florio, his first Fruits' is set in a rhyme form instantly recognizable from Wilson's surviving work, and also suggests a real bond of friendship:

'The pleasant fruites that FLORIO frankly yeeldes,  
unseene tyl now, save in Italian soyle:  
May quickly florish in our English fieldes,  
If in this woorke we take but easie toyle.  
He sets, he sowed, he plants, he proynes with paine,  
The seedes, and Cienes farre set from forraine landes:  
And geves us (idle) both the stocke and graine,  
Even his first fruites the joy of labouring handes.  
We geve hym nought, if we can not devise  
To geve him thankes, that may hym wel suffice.'

Thomas Clarke, a founder member of the company, puts forward a three-verse poem in both English and French, with a little Italian intertwined to demonstrate the skills he has acquired while studying with Florio.

It is generally considered doubtful that a humble player, such as Shakespeare, would have had occasion to learn the Italian language, though of course I would certainly disagree with that

view. Here we have an example of an entire company of players apparently learning Italian because their patron required them to do so and who was willing to pay for their lessons. The Earl of Leicester liked to travel abroad and frequently invited distinguished foreign guests to his home at Kenilworth Castle, where the Queen was a frequent visitor, or to Elizabeth's Court, where he would go to some pains to entertain them. It is well documented, for example, that in the 1580's Leicester took as many as fifteen actors and a company of musicians on a continental tour with him, visiting Holland, Belgium, Germany and Denmark. Of those fifteen, only Will Kemp gets a personal mention and it should be borne in mind that the Queen's Men had already been formed, filching Tarlton and Wilson from Leicester's company, so they may never have actually made the trip, though Clarke probably did, he stayed with Leicester's Men for most of his career. Pleasant entertainment could win hearts and minds among England's allies when an impending war with Spain required her to call in old favours. We should remember that the defeat of the Armada saved England from a fate all too familiar in Protestant Northern Europe. Had the Spanish been successful in their invasion, Elizabeth's forces would have needed a friendly base from which to launch a counter-attack. Leicester's apparently frivolous jaunt around the Low Countries with his players had a deadly serious purpose.

Florio himself pointed out in 'First Fruits' that English was a language which would do you 'no good past Dover' and it is unlikely that Leicester's foreign guests would have had such a command of English that they could enjoy bucolic dramas or bawdy London comedies. The repertoire of English history plays available at the time was hardly the stuff of a diplomatic mission. These audiences would require more sophisticated fare and what better than the common currency of European courtly entertainment, the Italian theatre favourites of the *Commedia dell'arte*? The many Italian comedy plays and manuals on the

mechanics of theatre detailed in Florio's bibliography to 'World of Words' may well date from this period. Some he already owned and some were perhaps provided by Leicester so that his players could be coached to the required standard of performance. They would not have needed to learn a great many Italian plays, two or three would suffice, in repeat performances, on a tour of many venues or to entertain a sequence of different guests, but the quality of their rendition would reflect on the Earl's own merit.

When 'Twelfth Night' was first performed at the Middle Temple in 1602, the lawyer John Manningham noted in his diary: "At our feast we had a play called 'Twelve Night, or What you Will', much like the 'Comedy of Errors' or 'Menechmi' in Plautus, but most like and near to that in Italian called 'Inganni.'" It now seems likely Manningham had seen the earlier Italian play, which did in fact form the basis for the plot of 'Twelfth Night', at a Court performance by Leicester's Men. 'Inganni' is among the Italian plays listed as source material in Florio's 'World of Words'.

Florio's several references to trips to the theatre to see a comedy in 'First Fruits' suggest an interest on his part at the time of writing. So we can see that in his early twenties, Florio had made friends among the acting fraternity and was already 'hooked' on the theatre.

It seems Tarlton in particular was enchanted by the stock characters of the Commedia dell'arte and was certainly so familiar with them that touches of Harlequin, Pantaloon and Pulcinella were swiftly added to his popular repertoire of clownish stage creations. His career took him through several generations of theatre companies including The Queen's Men and he became a considerable celebrity.

Among the other friends who contribute verses is Stephen Gosson, who later engaged in a literary dialogue (quarrel is too strong a

word I think) with Sir Philip Sidney on the subject of theatre protocol (was it right or wrong to have Kings and clowns intermingling on the stage). We have already seen that Florio was in Sidney's circle during his French Embassy years in company with Giordano Bruno in the early 1580's and Tarlton had a special friendship with Sidney too, this was a small world of very connected individuals.

Of the actors in this list, Tarlton springs out as the most famous, but Wilson seems to me to be the most interesting of the group. His career and Shakespeare's overlapped for more than a decade and he may be the real connection between Florio and Shakespeare, but first let's examine the role of Tarlton.

Tarlton could be described as England's first stand-up comedian. Contemporary reports tell us he only had to stick his head out through the curtain at the start of a performance to reduce the crowd to mirth; such was his reputation and following. He was certainly a musician, he wrote ballads and poems and he became a qualified fencing master to add to his many talents. He was a master of the ad-lib, indeed what we would now call extemporizing was known in his day as Tarltonizing; a play could be held up for several minutes while he took a comic detour or engaged in banter with a member of the audience. If they threw an apple at him, he would catch it and toss it back, hecklers, however clever they thought themselves, had no chance against Tarlton and there are amusing tales about smart young fellows who took him on having to tip-toe, shame-faced, out of the theatre. It was an act which many copied, but few had the intellect or the perfect comic timing to carry it off as the original master had done. One of his Court performances had to be interrupted while the Queen recovered, she'd laughed so much she had got a stitch. Richard Tarlton had the ability to 'read' the audience, sense the mood and temperature, react in a trice to a line of comedy that hit the spot, a skill probably best represented among today's British comedians

by Ken Dodd – a latter day Tarlton with a similarly vast and well memorized repertoire of material for all occasions and every kind of audience. (*For UK readers:-* Attend a Ken Dodd gig if you want to get a real sense of what it must have been like to be in Tarlton's audience, he's the current leading exponent of a long and noble tradition which Tarlton himself labelled 'playing the clown.') If Shakespeare joined the Queen's Men towards the end of Tarlton's career, (he died towards the end of 1588) as many scholars believe likely, that ability to read an audience which we find in his plays was a skill he learned from the best, watching from the wings and storing stage-craft knowledge for the future. Shakespeare was certainly sufficiently established as a playwright to excite the personal attack in the 'Groatsworth' letter of 1592, a full two years before the Lord Chamberlain's Men, the company we associate him with, was formed. Some believe they can date his 'Titus Andronicus' to a date as early as 1589. Was he already under the wing of the actor/writer Wilson with the Queen's Men?

Tarlton's friend and fellow comedy player Robert Wilson was multi-talented in a rather different way. It's a great pity that most of Wilson's written work has vanished from the archives, but we do have a few examples, records of what he wrote and some notes about what his contemporaries thought of his work to give us a few clues. Wilson was an early member of Leicester's Men, he and Clarke were both signatories to a letter in 1572 to the Earl about their new status with a royal patent. He was described by contemporaries variously as a wit and a scholar and spent the last years of his career (1598 to 1600) working primarily as a stable-playwright for Henslowe, collaborating on at least sixteen plays with the likes of Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, Richard Hathwaye and Anthony Munday. Acting was a physically tough profession for older men and those who lost their teeth in later life could no longer deliver the lines clearly enough for the galleries. In our age of modern dental care it is easy to forget the worry this must have caused the actors of Shakespeare's era.

Tooth loss might actually account for the apparently premature retirement of Will Kemp, who seems otherwise to have been fit and well enough to tackle his valedictory jig to Norwich.

A second career as a writer seems to have been a natural step for Wilson whose first known work; 'The Three Ladies of London' was published in 1584. It was followed by 'The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London' published in 1590, 'The Cobbler's Prophecy' published in 1594 and it is considered likely that he also wrote 'Fair Em' in 1590. Wilson has been proposed as the likely author of several other anonymous plays including 'A Knack to Know A Knave'.

'The Three Ladies of London' is an interesting play in that it reveals Wilson was something of a political animal. The usury laws were due for reform as Elizabeth's statute against usury was due to expire and there was much debate. Wilson swam against the current of the day by making the Jewish money-lender in his story the innocent and honest businessman who is conned by a deceitful, Christian, defaulter. The play has been cited by some, (including Geoffrey Bullough in his 'Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare') as an element of inspiration for 'The Merchant of Venice'. When Wilson's Jewish usurer discovers he has been cheated he cries in dismay,  
"Surely if we that be Jews should deal so one with another,  
We should not be trusted again of our own brother..."

By the late 1590s and early 1600s there were many thousands of regular play-goers in London and the appetite for new stories to stage was voracious. Henslowe brought teams of writers together to churn out fresh plays hand over fist; it is now acknowledged that even Shakespeare was collaborating with other writers to keep up production, (Fletcher, Middleton and Wilkins among others.)

Wilson's acting career had taken him from Leicester's Men to the Queen's Men and finally to the Lord Chamberlain's Men as each new company formed. If one accepts that Shakespeare may have begun his career by joining the Queen's Men on tour, then he made the switch to the new company alongside Wilson and their working relationship must have lasted for the best part of a decade. Was it Wilson who introduced Shakespeare to his old friend and tutor John Florio?

Tarlton and Wilson may also have known Florio's fencing master friend Vincentio Saviolo, who perhaps assisted the company in staging duels as the fashion changed from English style, feet planted firmly on the ground and heavy swords at the ready, to the newly-fashionable Italian style with rapier and dagger and much dancing about. Saviolo swore by teaching dancing and fencing side by side as related arts depending very much on balance and agility. The players liked to put on a spectacle for their audiences and to be right up to date. It has been asserted (by Professor Sergio Rossi of Milan University) that Saviolo's 'rules of the duel in Verona', published in the manual Florio helped him to write, formed the basis of the duel scene in 'Romeo and Juliet'. (Note 1) As for Tarlton, a fencing master himself, it is a fascinating insight into the social mobility of this age that he was able to call upon a nobleman, the distinguished soldier and poet Sir Philip Sidney, to stand Godfather to his son. On his deathbed, Tarlton sent word to Sidney asking him to take care of his family. The roots of this relationship probably lie in Tarlton's first career as a fencing master, for it was in this capacity that the Earl of Leicester had engaged him in the mid 1570's when his nephew, Sidney, was just of an age to begin learning how to use a sword. In Tarlton's youth, players had been dismissed as dubious vagabonds, now they rubbed shoulders with the great and the good; popular theatre, as culture, had come of age. When Sidney died there was a massive state funeral for him which the young Earl of Southampton and Florio would certainly have attended.

Florio was about 25 years old when he sent 'First Fruits' proudly to the press with the Earl of Leicester's crest on its opening page. He would go on to take his Masters degree at Oxford and enjoy the protection of Lord Burleigh through two distinguished tutoring appointments over the next decade. In the late 1580's his association with the Earl of Southampton brought him back to London from Cambridge, accompanying his young master to Gray's Inn where he would complete his formal education. Perhaps it was there, during festive entertainments at the Inns of Court, that Florio once again met his old friend Robert Wilson.

1589/90 was a critical period for John Florio. These were the years of the marriage crisis, with his master Lord Burleigh pressing him to encourage the young Earl of Southampton to marry Burleigh's grand-daughter and the boy repeatedly refusing. His period of formal education and need of a private tutor would soon be drawing to a close and Florio must have been in some degree of uncertainty over what his future held. Would Burleigh find him another appointment or would he be cast adrift? We know now of course that Florio continued in the Earl's service right up to 1601, and the disaster of the Essex rebellion, but that picture wasn't clear to the tutor as the year 1590 drew to a close.

Florio produced a second language tutor and proverb collection early in 1591, as Southampton made his way to France to fight for Henry of Navarre, obviously believing at that point that he must seek new pupils and new sources of income. He dedicated the volume to Nicholas Saunderson of Ewell, by then an active Member of Parliament who campaigned to protect the brewing industry and came from a family of book-lovers. One of his forbears stands accused of purloining 'some 500 volumes' from the library of John Dee. Saunderson and Florio had matriculated from Magdalen College in the same week and were obviously old friends. Florio was, of course, also quietly labouring on the great collection 'World of

Words', which we describe today as an Italian/English dictionary, but which, to Florio, was really an English thesaurus modelled on an Italian key. Language was still, and would remain, Florio's primary stock in trade and means to earning a living; but it was not his only recourse. With time on his hands, another association with the theatre must have seemed attractive.

Back in 1990 I employed my rather basic home computer to tackle a challenge. I went to the Shakespeare First Folio web site, which one can search for individual words and phrases, I selected about 20 of John Florio's known favourite phrases and set it up to print out the findings. The elderly printer chugged through the night, consumed a whole packet of paper and drained an ink cartridge. The next day, when I sorted out all the paperwork I soon realised that it was the plays of Shakespeare's first ten years which had yielded these results. Not very scientific you may think, but enough, I hope to eventually provoke a more sophisticated analysis by those with the resources to carry it out. It seemed to me that Florio and Shakespeare had collaborated both directly (for example 'Two Gentlemen of Verona' contains vast numbers of Florioisms) and indirectly. Florio could provide Shakespeare with source materials which were rare and difficult. Those interludes performed by 'The Academy of the Thunderstruck' in Italy in the early 1500's had been published as a pamphlet, written mostly in semi-Medaeval local dialect. We know Florio had a copy; it is listed in his 'World of Words' bibliography, but how many other people in Shakespeare's circle would have owned such a book or have been able to translate it for him? Geoffrey Bullough (see above) was in no doubt that somehow or other, Shakespeare had access to it. Shakespeare's 'debt to Montaigne', or rather Florio's translation of the essays, has been well documented, but a friendship between them explains how the playwright seems to have had access to it in manuscript form before it was published. Shakespeare's use of language, his ability to create compounds and coin new words certainly has its roots in Florio's teaching and

there can be no doubts, in the dating of their published work, who was the tutor and who the pupil.

Robert Wilson, wit, scholar, actor and playwright was just the man to introduce these two friends and colleagues and to see the potential in forging a partnership.

In his early years Shakespeare's writing talents were mainly put to the test in re-working earlier plays for new audiences. Text editing was another of Florio's skills. Sir Fulke Greville had employed him to tackle the job of preparing Sidney's 'Old Arcadia' (as we now know it) for the press. Modern analysts, intrigued by the notion of Shakespeare as a collaborator, have established that most of Henry VI part 1 was the work of Thomas Nashe (Shakespeare's style can only be identified in about 20 percent of it) and that Robert Greene may have had a hand in parts 2 and 3 of the series. However, we should ask: was this collaboration, or re-editing? I suspect the latter and that resentment at seeing Shakespeare make a name for himself in remodelling the plays of his elders (and as they saw it, betters) resulted in the attack on the 'upstart crow' in the 'Groatsworth' letter. Perhaps the Henry VI cycle was originally written for an academic audience, sold for a pittance when times were hard (as they always were for Greene and Nashe) and young Shakespeare, assisted by his friend 'Resolute John Florio' (aka 'Absolute Iohannes Factotum') refreshed them for London theatre audiences. These are murky waters, stirred about by professional scholars and amateurs alike for more than a century of curiosity about Shakespeare, so it is unsafe to assume anything, but that seems to me the most likely scenario.

There is a bitter taste of irony, I feel, in the comments of Nashe about the success of the Henry VI series: "how would it have joyed brave Talbot, the terror of the French, to think that after he had lain two hundred years in his tomb, he should triumph again on the stage and have his bones new-enbalm'd with the tears of ten

thousand spectators at least, at several times, who in the tragedian that represents his person imagine they behold him fresh bleeding?" A hit, with thousands, but it was Shakespeare who took the credit, the plagiarist upstart crow, with his "tigers heart wrapped in a players hide" (a warped quotation from the play itself) even though stylometric analysis leaves little doubt that Nashe had written much of the original play. Small wonder that the two gentleman (one rather refined) who beat on the door of the 'Groatsworth' publisher Thomas Chettle said they believed Mr. Nashe had written it and demanded to see the manuscript (where they would have recognized his handwriting of course, having recently worked over his old manuscript.)

The 'Groatsworth' letter and Nashe's lengthy literary quarrel with John Florio are rooted in wounded pride and missed opportunities to share in the fame and fortune that Florio helped Shakespeare to achieve. We can see from Nashe's own complaints that Florio edged him out of the picture when it came to bids for patronage from the Earl of Southampton and used his influence instead to promote his own protégé William Shakespeare.

When the young Earl finally turned 21 and came into his fortune, it is Shakespeare alone who claims, in his dedication to 'The Rape of Lucrece' that he has the financial backing of Southampton; a turn of fortune which was surely down to his friend Florio.

"Where shall we goe?

To a playe at the Bull, or else to some other place.

Doo Comedies like you wel?

Yea sir, on holy dayes.

They please me also wel, but the preachers wyll not allowe them.

Wherefore knowe you it:

They say they are not good.

And wherefore are they used?

Because every man delites in them.

I believe there is much knavery used at those comedies:

So beleeve I also.”

John Florio, ‘First Fruits’ 1578. (Notice that the prospect of much knavery does not deter the speakers from heading for the Theatre!

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#### NOTES AND FURTHER READING:

(Note 1) ‘Saviolo, His Practise’ is a definitive manual on duelling techniques of the day and is still referred to by fencing clubs and associations today. Theatre directors should seek it out and discover, for example, that the duel between Hamlet and Laertes should probably be fought with rapier and cloak. The cloak, in a rapier-only duel, was wrapped around the left arm to fend off the opponent’s blows with a drape left free to baulk his view of the wearer’s manoeuvres. It is a difficult technique and was generally the province of the upper echelons of fencing students and society, but it is well worth mastering for a stage production as it adds greatly to the drama of the spectacle. At the time ‘Hamlet’ was being performed this new style of swordsmanship was the height of fashion.

Further reading:

Playgoing in Shakespeare’s London, Andrew Gurr, third edition, 2004.

The Shakespearean Stage, Andrew Gurr, 1992.

The Review of English Studies, 1943.

The Elizabethan Stage, Chambers, 1923.

The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

‘First Fruits’, John Florio, 1578.

Geoffrey Bullough’s 13 volume epic, listed elsewhere.

Sergio Rossi’s essay linking Saviolo and Florio and making the connection to ‘Romeo and Juliet’ was published on the internet

where I consulted it in the 1990's but it has since, sadly, disappeared.

[www.globe-theatre.org.uk](http://www.globe-theatre.org.uk) has plenty of information about Shakespeare's contemporaries and other famous actors. See also 'Performing the Queen's Men' and the many web pages about the theatre companies described above.

Information about the Saunder family comes courtesy of Suffolk County Library archives.