

# RECORDS OF EARLY ENGLISH DRAMA

## Pre-publication Collections

DISCLAIMER: The material below is offered in pre-publication form. It has not received editorial attention from REED's paleographers and Latinists, nor have the notes and other editorial apparatus been checked for completeness and accuracy. Please see the REED Pre-publication homepage for full details about this pre-publication project, as well as copyright information and instructions on how to cite these materials.

### Bremhill, Wiltshire

1618-19

Edited by C. E. McGee

Posted 21 December 2015

The transcriptions appear by permission of The National Archives.

### 1618-19

*Bill of Complaint in Harris et al v. Webb et al* [TNA: STAC 8/164/18](#)

mb 2

To the Kinges moste excellente *maiestie*

In all humblenes Complayninge Shewe and Informe vnto your moste excellent *maiestie*, your highnes faithfull, loyall, and obedient Subiectes Iohn Harrys of Tytherton Kellowayes in the parrishe of Bremhill, in the Countye of Wiltshire yeoman, Michaell Robbins of the parrishe of [ . . . . ] Bremhill aforesaid husbandman and Elizabeth Robbins his wyffe, That whereas your said Subiectes have in theirre Carriage, behavioure and Conversacion towardes all men alwayes lived in good estimacion and accompte *with* theirre neighbours and others, and weare never in all theirre lives suspected or detected to be *persons* that have ever Committed adulterie, incontineneye, or any other notorious Cryme or misdeameanor, but have ever lived quietly peaceablye and religiouslye in good reputacion *with* all theirre neighbours *which* theirre quiett and orderly Course of lyffe one Walter Webb alis Rawlins thelder of the parrishe of Bremhill aforesaid fuller, and Edyth his wyffe, and Walter Webb alis Rawlins the younger of Bremhill aforesaid fuller, Robert Webb *alias* Rawlins sonne of the saied Walter Webb thelder, Robert Kinge thelder of Speithill, in the parrishe of Bremhill aforesaid Clothier, Robert Kinge the younger of the parrishe of Bremhill aforesaid Clothier, and Bridgett Kinge his Sister, William

Tremnell of Bremhill aforesaid Clothier, Elizabeth Newman wyffe of Adam Newman late of Tytherton in the saied Countie of Wiltshire weavor, and Edyth Somerell Wyffe of Thomas Sommerell of Bremhill aforesaid labourer much envyeinge and labouringe and practizinge by all vndue and sinister meanes causleslye to traduce, slaunder, and scandalize your highnes saied Subiectes Cuninglye and malitiouslye and secretlye to take from them their good names and reputacions and to make them odious and Contemptible persons. They the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder, and Edythe his wyffe, Walter Webb alis Rawlins the younger, Robert Webb alias Rawlins, Robert Kinge thelder, and Robert Kinge the younger, Bridgett Kinge, William Tremnell, Elizabeth Newman and Edyth Somerell bearinge a deepe and setled mallice in their hartes againste youre saied Subiectes did aboute thende of december laste paste in the Sixteenth yeere of your maiesties raigne of England most wickedly, malitiouslye and vnlawfullye Confederate, plott, practize and agree together to take from your saied Subiectes their good names and reputacions by accusing them falcelye of adulterye and incontincencye, and to publishe the same by devulginge and dispersinge of infamous writinges and libells againste them conteyninge such falce accusacion And in execucion thereof did on or aboute the begynninge of Ianuarye laste paste moste malitiouslye and vnlawfullye frame, devyse, make, wryte and Contrive, or Cause to be framed, devised made written and Contrived a falce scandalous, scurrilous, infamous and approbrious writinge or libell in Ryme Conteyninge moste falce and scandalous matter of defamacion againste your saied Subiectees in these wordes followinge, *videlicet* Woe be the Michaell Robens, that ever thou wert borne, for Blancute makes thee Cuckoulde, And thou must weare the horne, he fetcheth the nurse to give the Childe sucke, that he may have fytt tyme thy wyffe for to fucke, A silly Asse that doe yt not finde, he doth yt vnder hedges, where there is not winde, And when the winde blowe, then to the hay ricke, they presently goe, A howse att Vnderdouns, he meanes to trym, that he may the Closer vnto his whore Clinge, the sillye owlde woman, of this thinckes noe harme, because shee have stronge beare for Colde ffleshe to warme, This Harrys is soe valiente, with [wem] weomen to fight, that he drawes out his weapon by daye or by night, A poxe on him he makes the trade deere, ffor he offerrs a Cowes whyte, and a howse rente ffree, to deale with him by the yeare, you Churchwardens of Bremble, I wyst you shoulde knowe of Blancutttes Bawdrye, and to looke to yt, I praye be not slowe, ffor yt is not longe since, that a Tenante he had that he profered his kindenes, but yet his minde was but badd, this woman beinge vertuos and honeste of lyffe caused Blancute and her to fall soone att striffe, This woman was forced from thence soone to goe, or else shee Coude not live <sup>honeste</sup> the truthe was soe, And havinge soe made and Contrived the same infamous libell or writinge as aforesaid, They the saied Walter Webb alis Rawlins thelder, Edyth his wyffe, Walter Webb alis Rawlins the younger, Robert Webb alis Rawlins, Robert Kinge thelder, Robert Kinge the younger, Bridgett Kinge, William Tremnell, Edyth Somerell and Elizabeth Newman did wryte and make, or Cause to be written and made diuerse Coppies thereof, And to thende to dissemble and keepe secrett the names of the makers and Contrivers thereof did vppon one of the saied libells and Coppies subscribe these wordes followinge (*videlicet*) lovinge ffrende William Isbilsse, And did alsoe on the backsyde thereof in forme of a direction wryte these wordes followeing, *videlicet* to my lovinge

ffrende to whom soever yt shall Come first vnto, and afterwarde to Iohn Blancute yf you please maliciouslye and vnlawfullye incertinge into the saied superscription the saied wordes Iohn Blancute to thende to discribe and expresse that your saied Subiecte Iohn Harrys beinge oftentimes before that tyme called and termed by the saied Conspiratours and others as by a Nickename or byename Iohn Blancute was the person intended by the names of Blancute and Harrys in the saied libell or writinge, And then did seale vpp with hard waxe the saied writinge or libell soe superscribed, And to one other of the saied libells or Coppys thereof agreeinge verbatim with the saied before mencioned libell, vntill these wordes, (*videlicet*) you Churchwardens of Bremble &c and in place and steede of those wordes, and of all other the subsequent wordes Conteyned in the saied Recited libell, They the said Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder, Edythe his wyffe, Walter Webb alias Rawlins the younger, Robert Webb alias Rawlins, Robert Kinge thelder, Robert Kinge the younger, Bridgett Kinge, William Tremnell, Elizabeth Newman and Edyth Somerell did maliciouslye, scandalouslye and vnlawfullye frame, devise and wryte in the saied laste mencioned libell or Coppye as parte thereof, these scandalous, infamous and libellous Rymes followeing in these wordes (*videlicet*) This sillye poore Kuckoulde with harrys muste worke, that he in meane tyme his wyffe maye lurcke, But is not this brave to have such sporte with a wattell Chapt whoore, and a Swanfooted Knave, and did Subscribe also therevnto these wordes (*videlicet*) your lovinge ffrende William Isbiles, And therevppon alsoe plainelye and openlye to expresse that your saied Subiectes weare the Persons intended in the saied libells and Coppies thereof did vppon the saied laste mencioned libell or Coppye wryte this superscription followinge (*videlicet*) To Michaell Robens of Tetherton, sonne in lawe to Iohn Harrys of the Elmes give these I praye you with speede, your saied Subiecte Iohn Harrys then dwellinge att a place Called the Elmes in Tytherton aforesaid And your saied Subiectes Michaell Robins and Elizabeth his wyffe then dwellinge and inhabitinge there alsoe w[i]thin, And your saied Subiecte the saied Michaell Robbins beinge alsoe sonne in lawe to your saied Subiecte the saied Iohn Harrys, And did seale vpp alsoe the saied laste mencioned libell or Coppye with harde waxe, And the same scandalous writings, libells and Coppies beinge soe prepared, subscribed and directed, they the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder and Edyth his wyffe, Walter Webb alias Rawlins the younger, Robert Webb alias Rawlins, Robert Kinge thelder and Robert Kinge the younger, Bridgett Kinge, William Tremnell, Elizabeth Newman and Edyth Somerell in further execucion of their saied moste wicked and malitious plott and practize did vppon the Thirteenth daye of Ianuarye in the saied sixteenth yeare of youre maiestes raigne of England scatter, disperse publishe and devulge the saied severall writings, libells and Coppies in diuerse and sundrye places within the saied parrishe of Bremhill (*videlicet*) one libell vppon Barton Hill and the other Writinge, libell or Coppye soe varyeing from the saied firste recited libell as afore saied in the highwaye leadinge neere to the dwellinge howse of your saied Subiecte Iohn Harrys, and diverse other Coppies of both the saied libells in diuerse and sundrye other places both within the saied parrishe of Bremhill and other the adioyninge townes and parrishes within the saied Countye, And the saied Conspiratours not therewith satisfied did alsoe afterwarde vppon the saied thirteenth daye of Ianuarye laste paste, to thende that the saied scandalous and infamous libells might be

the more generally knowen and devulged pretende accordinge to a former plott betweene them agreed vppon that the saied Edyth Somerell had founde the saied firste mencioned and recited libell and did bringe the same to a myll in the saied parrishe of Bremhill called Hastande myll, and vnder cullor and pretence thereof, the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins the younger in further execucion of the saied malicious plott and practize, and by and with the vnlawfull abetmente and procuremente of the saied other Conspiratours did moste maliciouslye and vnlawfullye then and there in the presence of diverse persons receive and take the saied Coppye or libell soe pretended to be founde by the saied Edyth Somerell from her the saied Edyth Somerell, and then and there did breake vpp and vnseale the same, and malliciouslye read, publishe and repeate not onelye the saied scandalous, scurrilous Rymes and libells therein Conteyned, but did reade alsoe the saied subscription and alsoe the saied superscription, *which* was soe indorsed therevppon as aforesaid, and in the readinge and repeatinge thereof did expounde the same to Concerne your saied Subiectes, And he the saied Walter Webb alis Rawlins the younger Edyth Somerell and Edyth Webb alias Rawlins beinge then and there alsoe presente did *with* much reioycinge scoffe and defame your saied Subiectes vppon the readinge thereof, And afterwarde on the same Thirteenth daye of Ianuarye laste, the saied Walter Webb alis Rawlins the younger did againe in the dwellinge howse of the saied Walter Webb alis Rawlins thelder att Hastande aforesaid in the presence and hearinge, and by the vnlawfull procuremente and instigacion of the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder, and of the saied Robert Webb alis Rawlins and other the Conspiratours aforesaid, in the presence of diuerse other your maiesties Subiectes againe likewise vnlawfullye and malliciouslye *with* much reioycinge, and by waye of a leste and merimente scoffinglye reade, devulge and publishe the same libell, wherevppon the mother of the saied Walter Webb alis Rawlins cryed ffe vppon yt, what a beastly thinge is this, burne yt, for there will Come anger of yt, And yet notwithstandinge Soe yt is further moste gracious Sovereigne that the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins the younger by the vndue procuremente of the saied other persons woulde not leave of nor deciste from the devulginge, readinge and publishinge of the saied libells, but then and there, att Bremhill aforesaid contynued the readinge and publishinge thereof vntill the same libells weere then and there throughly and wholye read, published and devulged to moste of the inhabitauntes of the saied parishe, And afterwarde that is to saye on the seventeenth daye of Ianuarye laste paste, the same beinge the sabboth daye, the saied Walter Webb alis Rawlins the younger by the vnlawfull procuremente of the other Conspiratours aforesaid did againe vnlawfullye and malliciouslye by waye of a leste and merimente scoffinglye singe, devulge, reade and publishe the same libell in the Tower Lofte or Belffrye *within* the parishe Church of Bremhill aforesaid in the presence and hearinge of diverse your maiesties Subiectes then and there presente to the greate profaninge of the sabboth daye, and to the exceedinge greate slaunderinge, defaminge and disgracinge of your saied Subiectes, And your maiesties saied Subiectes further informe your moste excellent maiestie that the saied Robert Webb alias Rawlins <sup>ffather of the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins</sup> the younger did on the fourteenth daye of Ianuarye laste paste (by the like malicious, vngodly and vnlawfull procuremente, instigacion and practize) of the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder and

Edyth his wyffe, Walter Webb alias Rawlins the younger, Robert Kinge the Younger, Bridgett Kinge, William Tremnell, Elizabeth Newman, and Edyth Somercell vnlawfully Carrye the saied malitious, lewde and infamous libell vnto a markt Towne Called the devizes in the saied Countye of *Wiltshire* of purpose to publishe and devulge the same libell in the same markt towne, and did then and there deliver the same to the saied Robert Kinge the younger, And the saied Robert Kinge the younger and Robert Webb alias Rawlins by the vnlawfull practize and procuremente of the saied other Conspiratours did vnlawfullye and maliciouslye & in the presence and hearinge of diverse other of your maiesties Subiectes then and there att the devizes aforesaied and on the markt daye there, and in the open markt place shewe, reade, publishe and devulge the saied malitious, faulce, infamous and scandalous libell vnto Richard Hellier and diverse others of your maiesties Subiectes then and there presente, And Soe yt is further maye yt please your moste excellent maiestie that the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder and Edyth his wyffe, Walter Webb alias Rawlins the younger, Robert Webb alias Rawlins, Robert Kinge the younger Bridgett Kinge, William Tremnell, Elizabeth Newman and Edyth Somerell Contynuinge their vnlawfull and malitious Courses againste your saied Subiectes did within shorte tyme after (*videlicet*) aboute the ffiveteenth daye of Ianuarye laste, sende the saied scandalous libell by the saied Edyth Somerell vnto the saied William Tremnell to the intente that he might see, pervse, publishe and devulge the same in other places, And the saied William Tremnell did accordinglye then furthwith on the saied ffiveteenth daye of februarye laste, and on sunday other dayes within shorte tyme after by the vnlawfull procuremente of the saied other Conspiratours vnlawfullye and maliciouslye reade, publishe and devulge the saied infamous and scurrilous libells and Coppies thereof both in his owne then dwellinge howse, and in diverse other Townes, parishes and places thereabouts, And after that he the saied William Tremnell hadd redd and published the same libells as aforesaied, then the saied William Tremnell did maliciouslye and vnlawfullye in further execucion of the saied plott and practize and by the vnlawfull abettmente and procuremente of the saied other Conspiratours sende backe the saied scandalous libell and wrightinge by the saied Edyth Somerell vnto the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder and to the saied other Confederates, And within two or three dayes after the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder and the saied other Conspiratours in further execucion of the saied plott and practize and by the vnlawfull procuremente, practize and Combinacions aforesaied did seale vpp the same libell againe, and therevppon did sett the very same printe and Seale: wherwith the saied libell was firste soe sealed, And after that they had soe sealed vpp the saied infamous libell They the saied Conspiratours did againe vnlawfullye and maliciouslye sende the same libell vnto one Thomas Collier a learned Preacher and Parson of Bremhill aforesaied, to the intente that he might alsoe publishe and devulge the saied scandalous libell, But the saied Thomas Collyer beinge a learned honeste discrete man Refuzed and denied to reade or publishe the same, And Soe yt is further yf yt shall please your moste Excellent maiestie that on the saied Seventeenth daye of Ianuarye laste beinge the Sabboth daye, the saied Robert Kinge the younger Cominge to, and returninge from the Church of Bremhill aforesaied att morninge prayer there, did then againe both in the waye as he wente, and in the Church and

Churcheyarde of the saied parishe, and in the way as he Returned home, vnlawfullye and mallitiouslye publishe and devulge and saied scandalous libels to diuerse others of your maiesties Subiectes then and there presente, and did soe reade and singe the same in scoffinge manner with much laughter and reioycinge, oftentimes sayeing that he woulde publishe the same as much as he Coude, And in the afternoone of the same daye, the saied Robert Kinge the younger (by the like Combinacion and practize aforesaied in the hearinge and presence of diuerse other of your highnes Subiectes there assembled with a lowde and audible voyce did vnlawfullye and malitiouslye<sup>1</sup> publishe and devulge parte of the saied infamous and scurrilous libells in the body of the saied parishe Church of Bremhill, And the saied Robert Kinge thelder, and Robert Kinge the younger after eveninge prayer on the saied sevententhe daye of Ianuarye aforesaied, the which the saied Thomas Collier refuzed to doe, And therevppon the saied Robert Kinge thelder and Robert Kinge the younger in angerye and furious manner saied vnto him, why will you not reade yt, what Cann he make of yt (meaninge Iohn Harrys nowe one of your maiesties saied Subiectes being then and there presente ffor the saied Robert Kinge the younger then alsoe saied and Affirmed that yt was William Isbells that made the saied libells and where he will finde him, Wheras in truthe there was no such person as is Called William Isbells, but the saied libell was lewdlye and malitiouslye made and Contrived by the saied lewde and mallitious persons aforesaied, And the saied Robert Kinge the younger did then and there alsoe in the saied Church in very prowde and insolente manner will your saied Subiecte the saied Iohn Harrys to doe the worste he Coude therein, And the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder then and there perceivinge that the saied Thomas Collier the Parson of Bremhill aforesaied Woulde not publishe the saied scandalous libell either in the saied Church of Bremhill nor in the Chauncell thereof as he was by the saied Robert Kinge thelder and Robert Kinge the younger importuned or in any other place wente then furthwith vnto one Henry Newman beinge one of the Churchwardens of the same parrishe of Bremhill aforesaied, and then in the saied Church toulde him that the saied libell was aswell to Come to the Churchwardens of the saied parishe of Bremhill as vnto the saied Thomas Collier the Parson there, And the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder by the practize and procuremente of the saied other Conspiratours before mencioned oftentimes, and from tyme to tyme did vnlawfullye, mallitiouslye and scoffinglye att diverse and sundrye other tymes and in diuerse and sundrye other places devulge and publishe the saied scandalous libell openlye and publicklye, and of purpose to discredytt and disgrace your saied Subiectes as aforesaied And the saied Walter Webb alis Rawlins thelder oftentimes hearinge the saied libell sunge and readde in his presence and in his owne howse, And knoweinge the same was there diuers dayes never offered in all the tyme of the Contynuaunce of the saied libell in his howse to rebuke or dislike any of his servauntes or others that then readd and sange and published the same libell in his presence, but did animate and encourage them to goe on and proceede with the publishinge of the saied infamous libell remayninge in his howse as aforesaied from wensdaye morninge beinge the thirteenth daye of Ianuarye laste paste aforesaied, vntill Saturdaye beinge the Sixteenth daye of the saied monethe of Ianuarye, And soe the saied Libellers and disordered persons as aforesaied from tyme to tyme endeavoured and vsed all the meanes they Coude to

have the same libell in a mallitious and scoffinge manner openlye and publiclye devulged and published in all the places and Townes they Coulde, And the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder, Edyth his wyffe, Walter Webb alias Rawlins the younger, Robert Webb alias Rawlins, Robert Kinge thelder, Robert Kinge the younger, Bridgett Kinge, William Tremnell, Elizabeth Newman and Edyth Somerell did att diuerse and sundrye other tymes in diuerse and sundry other places sythence the saied sevententhe daye of Ianuarye and before mallitiouslye and vnlawfullye reade, publishe and devulge the saied libells and the Coppies thereof in the presence of diuerse others your maiesties Subiectes to the greate <sup>damage</sup> wronge and vtter disgrace and discredit of your saied Subiectes. In Tender Consideracion Wheereof, And ffor as muche as the saied makinge, fframinge, devisinge, writinge Contrivinge and publishinge of the saied infamous, scurrilous and scandalous libells are directly contrarye to diuerse the good and wholsome lawes and statutes of this your maiesties Realme of England, and have bynn all perpetrated, Committed and donne sythence your maiesties laste moste gracious generall and ffree pardon, And that yt woulde be a greate encouragemente to other like evill disposed persons to Commytt the like offences, yf these soe fowle and notorious offendours shoulde escape vnpunished, and the rather, for that the same doe soe totallye tende to the takinge awaye of your saied Subiectes good names, Credit and reputacions, May yt therfore please your moste Excellence maiestie to graunte your saied Subiectes your highnes moste gracious writtes of Subpena to be directed to the saied Walter Webb alias Rawlins thelder, Edyth his wyffe, Walter Webb alias Rawlins the younger, Robert Webb alias Rawlins, Robert Kinge thelder, Robert Kinge the younger, William Tremnell, Bridgett Kinge, [Andrew Newmann and] Elizabeth Newman [his wyffe Thomas Somerall] and Edyth Somerell [his wyffe] Commaundinge them and everye of them thereby att a Certeine daye, and vnder a Certeine paine therein to be lymitted to be and personallye to appeare before your maiestie and the Lordes and others of your highnes Counsell in your maiesties highe Courte of Starr Chamber then and there to Awnsweare the premises, And further to stande to and abyde such order and punishement in for and touchinge the premises as to your maiestie and to your highnes moste honorable [privye] Counsaile shall seeme to agree with Right and Iustice, And your saied Subiectes shall accordinge to their bounden duties dayly praye to god for the prosperous estate of your Royall maiestie in peace and tranquillitye longe to raigne over vs/.

Laurence Hyde:/

Higgon

Iur Veneris vicesimo tercio die Aprilis Anno decim septimo Iacobis

Harker

The loynte and seuerall Answeres of Roberte Webbe and Roberte Kinge the younger Two of the *defendants* to the bill of Complaynt of Iohn Harris Michaell Robyns and Elizabeth Robyns his wief Complaynantes The saide *defendants* saviage to themselues nowe and at all tymes hereafter all advantages and benefittes of exception to the incerteynetyes insufficiencies ymperfections and other the faultes of the Complaynantes saide bill of Complaynt, ffor Answer therevnto the saide *defendants* saye and eyther of them for himself sayeth ffor playne declaracion of his and their knowledges touchinge the matters and sugestions layd to their charges in and by the saide Bill of Complaynt And ffirste the saide Roberte Webbe for his parte sayeth That Edith Somerell one of the *defendants* named in the saide bill aboute the tyme in the saide Bill of Complaynt mencioned did bringe vnto the saide *defendant* Walter Webbe the younger this *defendants* sonne a boye aboute Seaventeene yeeres of age one written peece of paper vnto this *defendants* house in Bremble in the saide Countye of Wiltshire sayinge shee found yt in the foote waye at Barton hill, and shewinge the same to the saide boye he tooke yt of her as the boye reported to this *defendant* Afterwardes this *defendant* percevinge him to haue the saide Writinge he tooke yt from him whoe said he had yt from the saide *defendant* Edith Somerell, Wherevppon this *defendant* Roberte Webbe readinge the same writinge and percevinge that the same was some such libell or writinge as is mencioned in the saide Complaynantes Bill of Complaynt he makinge noe wordes or other publicacion of yt putt vpp the same libell or writinge into his pockette, and presentlye vppon the same daye havinge yt in his pockett and occasion to goe to the markett at the devizes in the saide Countye of Wiltes this *defendant* beinge there and meetinge with the saide *defendant* Roberte Kinge this *defendant* demaunded and asked of the saide *defendant* Roberte Kinge whether he knewe the hand writinge of the saide libell which this *defendant* had taken from the saide boye and then shewed yt to hym not with any intente to publish the same writinge But because this *defendant* Roberte Webbe was desirous to knowe whoe made yt & whether he made yt there havinge byn somme dislike betweene the Complaynant and him as was conceived by this *defendant* which he did with an intente not to publish the same, but to fynde out the maker thereof and so suppress yt asmuch as he could, Wherevppon the saide Robert Kinge the younger Readinge & lookinge into the saide Writinge protested and saide to this *defendant* that the same Writinge was not of [the] his hand writinge, neyther did he knowe whose hand yt was, and therevppon <sup>he</sup> the saide Roberte Kinge deliuerd the saide Writinge or libell into the handes of this *defendant* Roberte Webbe agayne, but whether the saide Richard Hellyar in the Bill mencioned heard the saide Roberte Kinge to reade the saide libell this *defendant* knoweth not And shortlye after on the same daye the saide Edith Somerell came to this *defendants* house enquiringe for the saide boye and vnderstandinge that this *defendant* had taken awaye the saide libell from the saide boye came to him this *defendant* for the saide libell sayinge shee came for the letter shee gaue to his sonne and to haue yt deliuered to her



agayne wherevppon this defendant asked her what shee would doe with yt whoe Answered shee would deliuer yt to the Complaynant Harris, Wherevppon this defendant tolde her yt was not directed to him but by a Nicke name and that there was knavery in yt and wished her beinge a poore woman not to deliver yt [agayne] to any all *which* notwithstandinge shee grewe very earneste with this defendant to haue yt because shee found yt and desyred him to make yt vp as it was before when shee deliuered yt to the boye, Wherevppon this defendant putt yt vp close together as yt was before as he conceved and there beinge waxe in that *parte* thereof Where yt was sealed before, he did with his hand putt yt together without setting any pryntt or Seale therevnto admonishinge her not to meddle with any such busines And the saide defendant Roberte Kinge for his *parte* sayeth That true yt is that the saide other defendant Roberte Webbe did shewe to him this defendant the saide Writinge at the devizes aforesaide and that this defendant Reade the same and tolde the saide Roberte Webbe that yt was not of this defendantes hand writinge, And after did the readinge thereof he deliuered yt againe to the saide Roberte Webbe the other defendant and this defendant denyeth that he did ever see or heare of the same before that tyme neyther did the saide Richard Hellyar heare this defendant Reade the same writinge to the knowledge of this defendant, And the [sayet] saide Roberte Kinge further sayeth and Confesseth, That aboutes Ianuarye last paste on a sabbboth or hollye daye in the morninge as he Came from the Church of Bremhill and also in the afternoone of the same daye in the Belfrye of the saide Church in the hearinge of somme fewe of the *parishioners* of Bremhill he spake some fewe wordes of the saide libell, But What those Wordes were he then spake he this defendant remembreth not And further sayeth That the saide Complaynant Harris aboute the saide tyme Challenged diuers persons then in the saide *parish* Church of Bremhill aforesaide to be acquaynted with the <sup>makere of the</sup> saide Writinge or libell and the saide Complaynant Harris layed the makinge of the saide Writinge or libell to the Charge of this defendant Roberte Kinge the younger vppon *which* wordes of the saide Complaynant Harris to this defendant Roberte Kinge the younger this defendant Answered the saide Complaynant doe therein the worste you canne or to such effecte, and further this defendant then sayed to the saide Complaynant Harris that the name of the saide William Isbell named in the saide Bill of Complaynt was in the saide Writinge or Libell and that yt was liklye he made the saide libell, And both these defendantes doe vtterlye denye that they or eyther of them did sende the saide libell vnto the saide Thomas Collyer *parson* of Bremhill or to the saide William Trymnell or that the saide Libell was published or divulged or did intreate the saide Mr Collyer to publish or Reade yt as the Complaynantes by theyre bill suggesteth And both these defendantes doe further saye for themselues and each of them for himself seuerallye sayeth That as to all and everye the framinge devisinge makinge Writinge or Contrivinge of the saide libell or Infamous [in the bill] writinge in the Bill mencioned makinge or deliueringe of any Coppyes of the same Writinge or libell <sup>or any < d...tes> vppon the same</sup> or publicacion thereof in any oth<sup>er</sup> manner then these defendantes haue seuerallye for himself herein before Confessed, and as to all and everye the practizes Confederacyes Conspiracyes instigaciones lewed devices plottes malicious Courses abettmentes and other mysdemeanours in the saide Complayntes Bill of Complaynt Conteyned and layed to the Charge of these defendantes That they are not nor

eyther of them ys of of them or any of them guyltye in such manner and forme as in and by the saide Bill of Complaynt they are sett forth and declared Without that that any other matter Cause or thinge in the saide Complaynantes saide Bill of Complaynt Conteyned matteriall or effectuall to be Answered vnto by these defendantes < .... > not herein sufficientlye Answered vnto Confessed and avoyded denied or trauersed is true, All *which* matters these defendantes wilbe readye to averre and prove as this highe Court shall awarde, And these defendantes doe humblye praye to be dismissed out of this honorable Court with their reasonable Costes and Charges in this behalf wrongfullye susteyned

G. Harker

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>two words lost in a crease at this point

## DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION

*Harris et al vs. Webb et al*

London, The National Archives: Public Record Office, STAC 8/164/18; 1619; English; vellum; 4 membranes of various sizes; stitched together near the top left corner; generally good condition despite some wrinkling, stains, and fading (especially on mb 4). Relevant items include:

mb 2: 20 April 1620; English; 750mm x 620mm; good condition despite stains along the bottom and holes in the top right corner; modern mb number in left margin; dated on the dorse "Martis vicesimo Aprilis Anno decimo septimo Iacobi Regis and endorsed "Harker". Contains plaintiffs' bill of complaint.

mb 1: 23 April 1620; English; 524mm x 330mm; good condition; modern mb number in the bottom margin; endorsement at bottom right corner; dorse blank. Contains sworn answer of two defendants: Walter Webb, Jr. and Robert King Jr.