PREFACE

“Early Stuart Libels” is a web-based edition of early seventeenth-century political poetry from manuscript sources. It brings into the public domain over 350 poems, many of which have never before been published. Though most of the texts are poems of satire and invective, others take the form of anti-libels, responding to libellers with orthodox panegyrict. These poems throw new light on literary and political culture in England in the decades from the accession of King James I to the outbreak of the English Civil War.

The edition is divided into chronological and thematic sections, for ease of navigation. It is fully searchable, by name and source. Editorial principles are explained in the introduction.
EDITORIAL TEAM

Editors

Alastair Bellany is Associate Professor of History at Rutgers University. He is the author of The Politics of Court Scandal in Early Modern England: News Culture and the Overbury Affair, 1603-1660 (2002), and of numerous articles on early Stuart political culture. With Thomas Cogswell, he is currently working on England’s Assassin: John Felton and the Murder of the Duke of Buckingham, for publication by Yale University Press.

Andrew McRae is Professor of Renaissance Studies in the School of English, University of Exeter. His publications include God Speed the Plough: The Representation of Agrarian England, 1500-1660 (1996), and Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State (2004). He is currently developing a new project on literature and domestic travel in early modern England.

Assistant editors

Paul E.J. Hammer is Lecturer in History at the University of St. Andrews. His publications include The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585-1597 (1999), and Elizabeth’s Wars: Society, Government and Military Reformation in Tudor England, 1544-1604 (2003). He is currently working on a book provisionally titled The Late Elizabethan Crisis: War, Faction and the Politics of Royal Decline, 1598-1603. Dr. Hammer was responsible for the annotation of Section A.

Michelle O’Callaghan is Reader in English at Oxford Brookes University. She is the author of The “shepheards nation”: Jacobean Spenserians and Early Stuart Political Culture, 1612-1625 (2000), and is working on a study provisionally entitled Literature, Sociability and Urbanity in Early Modern England. Dr. O’Callaghan was responsible for the annotation of Section C.

Electronic publishing project manager

Chris Boswell’s PhD dissertation, “The Culture and Rhetoric of the Answer-Poem, 1485-1625” was completed at Leeds University in December 2003. His ongoing projects include an
electronic database of early modern verse exchanges, and a pair of companion articles (co-written with Eric Langley) on an exchange of verses between Sir George Rodney and Frances Seymour, Countess of Hertford, in 1601. Dr. Boswell also sits as a director for the international trading company, Gigabiz, and is the senior partner in FourSquare Innovations, a computing consultancy specializing in bespoke software solutions.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The electronic preparation of this edition of early Stuart libels was principally funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Additional funding was supplied by Rutgers University and the University of Exeter. The editors’ research on libels spans a much longer period, and has been funded from a number of sources, including the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the Australian Research Council, the British Academy, Mrs. Giles M. Whiting Foundation, Princeton University, Rutgers University and the University of Sydney. The editors are grateful to all these institutions for their support with a project that has been necessarily costly and time-consuming.

The work of all those involved in the edition has been aided greatly by various colleagues who have advised on manuscript sources and information for annotations. In particular, we wish to thank: Peter Beal, Jack Cargill, Thomas Cogswell, David Colclough, Joshua Eckhardt, Karen Edwards, Cynthia Herrup, Caroline Hibbard, James Knowles, Peter Lake, Harold Love, Nick McDowell, James Masschaele, Graham Parry, Kevin Sharpe, Adam Smyth, Andrew Thrush, and Alex Walsham. Moreover, we have benefited from the work of scholars who have identified or edited libels in the past. In particular, the unpublished archive of Julian Mitchell has been extremely helpful.

For assistance and advice with electronic publication, we are grateful to: Jan Broadway, of the Centre for Lives and Letters; Martin Butler, Karen Britland and Orietta Da Rold, of the Jonson Project; Martin Thomas, of Leeds University Electronic Text Centre; and the Oxford Text Archive. Thanks are also due to the English department at Leeds University for hosting a development version of the project on their web server and to the ISS team at Leeds for technical support. Finally, we are grateful for the support of Lisa Hopkins and Matthew Steggle, successive editors at Early Modern Literary Studies, and for the editorial assistance of Tamsin Kilner.
TECHNICAL NOTES

The electronic publication of a single-volume edition of verse posed a number of challenges. Not least of these was the relative scarcity of comparably edited electronic editions of early modern material upon a similar scale. Such works might have provided a standard against which we could measure our technical and presentational success, and no doubt would have offered inspiration for the project. It was recognized from early on that it would be our lot to co-exist alongside much larger, extravagantly funded multivolume works with the combined experience of large editorial and technical teams. While it would be hubristic of us to attempt to compete with these, we have been concerned to show that a technically and academically proficient single-volume publication might be achieved in our chosen medium within a comparatively short timescale.

This edition seeks in many ways to be a pathbreaking endeavour, most noticeably as a single-volume electronic text of early modern verse, and of verse largely inaccessible outside of manuscript archives; among the notable exceptions being Ray Siemens’ forthcoming electronic edition of the Devonshire Manuscript. Indeed, while late-twentieth-century criticism moved away from privileging canonical works, the bulk of recent electronic publications of early modern literature have focused upon the old canon and upon drama. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with disseminating the works of well-known dramatists and other literary figures to the hypertext community. In fact there are great benefits to be gained by widening their accessibility. However, the electronic medium also provides a superb opportunity to offer scholarly editions of works otherwise largely inaccessible or unknown to both the academic community and the layperson alike.

Accessibility, navigability, searchability

It has never been far from our minds during the production of the edition that different readers will come to the text with different needs, whether due to differences of academic and educational background, varying levels of computer literacy, availability of up-to-date software, or owing to accessibility requirements. In response to our anticipation of such diverse requirements we have attempted to offer a text presented in formats that enhance accessibility
and that are comfortable to read, while ensuring that information relevant to the interests and needs of our readers is readily attainable. In doing so, our goal has been to combine and integrate the technologies of printed text, hypertext and electronic text. It will be noticed, for instance, that the look, feel and structure of a printed text has been retained so far as possible, and that linear, page-by-page navigation is available as well as the usual hypertext tree structure. We have also sought to combine the navigability of the hypertext medium with the depths of searchability enabled by an extensible markup language.

**Textual stability**

The integrity of XML elements and attributes and consistency of the markup rules has been tested in a number of ways. Groups of elements and attributes were generated and compared using a combination of PHP 4.1 and XSLT, and other global searches were performed using markup editing software. A number of schemas were also generated in order to test for the integrity of a selection of document rules. It was found, however, that discrepancies in the parsing performed by a range of schema validation services sometimes rendered it difficult to make accurate assessments here, although some degree of improvement to document structure was achieved in a number of areas using this method. On the topic of schema validation consistency see:

www.html.gov/presentations/siösmashers/XSDValidation.ppt

**Specifications**

The text has been marked up using XML 1.0 and output statically as W3C HTML 4.01 transitional using Instant Saxon 6.2.2. Metadata is presented in the Dublin Core format on the front page only. XML markup is largely derived from TEI guidelines for TEILite with the exception of tagging for manuscripts, and in a few other instances. XSLT stylesheets are our own. Our search engine scripts were originally written in PERL, but appear here written in a combination of PHP 4.1 and XSLT. The W3C’s “Double A” guidelines for accessibility have been followed. A printable PDF version of the text is provided in full on the front page and PDFs of individual poems can be accessed either through the contents pages or from the HTML renderings of the poems. These have been optimized for Adobe Reader 6 and above. The most recent version of Adobe Reader can be downloaded for free from http://www.adobe.com/.
For purposes of citation the hypertext output of the electronic edition is to be regarded as
the authoritative text, although textual stability between renderings should be close to 100%.

Software and other resources

The project made use of the following software: Xpath Visualiser, XMLSpy Home
Edition, Adobe Professional 6, PaintShopPro 8, Instant Saxon 6.2.2, ActivePerl 5.6, PHP 4.1,
Adobe PhotoShop 7, Apache HTTP Server 2.0, Amaya, ConTEXT and NoteTab Standard.

Interoperability

The project has been tested for compatibility with the following browsers: Netscape7,
Mozilla Firebird/ Firefox 1.0.2, DocZilla, IE5/6, Smart Explorer, Lynx, Konqueror and Opera5;
and with the following operating systems: WIN 98/2000/XP, Linux Redhat Fedora and Mac.

Chris Boswell, 2005

Technical bibliography


The Dublin Core Metadata Initiative. http://dublincore.org/

Holzner, Stephen. SAMS Teach Yourself XML in 21 Days. 3rd edn. Indianapolis, IN:

McIntosh, Jason and Erik T. Ray. Perl and XML. Sebastopol, CA: O’Reilly, 2002

Meloni, Julie C. SAMS Teach yourself PHP, MySQL and Apache. Indianapolis, IN: SAMS,
2004.

Moncur, Michael. SAMS Teach Yourself Javascript in 24 Hours. 3rd edn. Indianapolis, IN:
1) Although there is a dearth of such material published electronically, this is far from the case where vanilla hypertext transcriptions are concerned.
ACCESSIBILITY

A significant part of the remit of this project has been accessibility or, in other words, to make a modest contribution to the democratisation of knowledge. Accessibility is all too often overlooked in hypertext environments and the industry standards available for guidance ignored. These guidelines include those of the World Wide Web Consortium’s (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), Watchfire’s Bobby (which offers a useful accessibility validator), and the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB).

We have endeavoured to exceed general accessibility requirements such as using “alt” and “title” attributes and ensuring text-only readability. This has involved the inclusion of several features, of which only those arriving at the text with special requirements would usually be aware. Among these are summary descriptions for tables, the provision of accesskeys for hyperlinks and literal descriptions for pop-up and drop-down menus. Although the formatting of the edition has been tailored to match, in many ways, that of a printed text through fairly extensive use of Cascading Stylesheets (CSS), we are aware that such formatting will not satisfy the requirements of all, and that some features of the site may not function fully alongside some assistive technologies. It is with this in mind that we offer a text-only view of the edition and instructions below for changing the styles and formatting of the text to suit the requirements of individual readers.

Accessibility Instructions for Internet Explorer

To change fonts and colours

Go to “Tools” and Select “Internet Options” > “General” >“Accessibility” > tick the three check boxes >“OK”

To enlarge text

Go to “Tools” and Select “Internet Options” > “General” > “Accessibility” > Tick the “Ignore font sizes specified on web pages” check box > “OK” > Select “view” on the browser menu bar> Click “text size” > Choose text size
Changing text and background colour

Go to “Tools” and Select “Internet Options” > “General” > “Colour” > Deselect the “Use Windows Colours” check box > Select the box next to “Text” and choose a colour > “OK” > Select the box next to “Background” and choose a colour > “OK”

To switch off graphics and images

Go to “Tools” and Select “Internet Options” > “Advanced” > scroll to the “Multimedia” heading > Deselect options for “animations”, “videos”, “pictures” and “images” > “OK”

To change the size of the window

Go to the “View” menu and Select “Full screen” (shortcut key is F11)

Changing the colour of links

Go to “Tools” and Select “Internet Options” > “General” > “Accessibility” > Select “ignore colours specified on Web pages” > “OK” > “General” > “Colours” > uncheck the “Use hover colours” check box > Select “Visited” and pick a colour > “OK” > Select “Not Visited” and pick a colour > “OK” > Select “OK” for “Colours” and for “Internet Options”

Mozilla Instructions

To enlarge text

Go to “Tools” > “Options” > “Fonts and Colors” > Select the top or/and bottom “Size” drop box. Or, Select “View” > “Increase/Decrease Text Size”.

Changing text and background colour

Go to “Tools” > “Options” > “Fonts and Colors” > Select “Text” and/or “Background”

To switch off graphics and images

Go to “Tools” > “Options” > “Web features” > Deselect “Load Images”

To find links using the keyboard
Go to “Tools” > “Options” > “Advanced” > “Accessibility” Select “Use find as you type”

**Netscape Instructions**

**To enlarge text**

Go to “Edit” > “Preferences” > “Appearance” > “Font” > Select a “Variable Width Font” and “Fixed Width Font” > “OK” > To set these fonts permanently, Select “Use my default fonts overriding document specified fonts”

**Changing text and background colour**

Go to “Edit” > “Preferences” > “Appearance” > “Colours” > Select the box next to “Text” and Select a colour >“OK” > Select the box next to “Background” and Select a colour > “OK” > To set your selection as the permanent default, choose “Always use my colours, overriding document”.

**To switch off graphics and images**

Go to “Edit” > “Preferences” > “Advanced” > Deselect “Automatically load images” by deselecting the check box > “OK”

**Accesskey Index**

Note that all keys are preceded by ALT, e.g. ALT + 4 and that some browsers override these shortcuts in favour of their own menus. The Netscape/Mozilla family generally work well; however, for the best results using this feature, please download the zipped hypertext version of the edition:

**Basic Navigation**

home page = H | previous page = D | next page = C | name search popup = A | manuscript search popup = B | move one hyperlink forward = 1 or TAB | move one hyperlink backwards = SHIFT + TAB | Table of Contents/Sitemap = T | to navigate between footnotes and links to footnotes use the footnote number.

**Table of Contents by section**
To navigate from contents pages to the relevant section introduction = 0.

Editorial Team = 1 | Acknowledgements = 2 | Technical Notes = 3 | Accessibility = 4 | Abbreviations = 5

Introduction = 6 | Section A = 7 | B = 8 | C = 9 | D = 10 | E = 11 | F = 12 | G = 13 | H = 14 | I = 15 | J = 16 | K = 17 | L = 18 | M = 19 | N = 20 | O = 21 | P = 22 | Q = 23 | R = 24

First-Line Index = 25 | Manuscript Index = 26 | Name Index = 27 | Bibliography = 28

To navigate from contents pages to links for individual pages of verse in HTML accesskeys = the number of the verse in the section + H. For example, 6H, 3H or 9H. Easier navigation is available through the following method (33, 66, 99 etc.): For example, use 22 to take you to the link for second poem (html) in the section, 222 to the link for second poem (pdf) in the section and 2222 to the link to the menu for section P.

To navigate from contents pages to individual pages of poems in PDF accesskeys = the number of the verse in the section + P. For example, 6P, 3P or 9P. Or you can use 333, 666, 999 etc. For simpler navigation use ALT + P to scroll through pdf versions of verse and ALT + H to scroll through html versions.

1. The code for the text-only version is provided by UsableNet (http://www.excellentsite.org/tut_textonly.shtml).
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

By page:

i  ii  iii  iv  v  vi  vii  viii  ix  x  xi  xii  xiii  xiv  xv

By section:

1. The conditions and practices of libelling
2. The edition: aims and methods
   a) parameters
   b) conventional editorial practice
   c) electronic editorial practice
   d) readers’ comments and suggestions
A. Essex, Ralegh and Late-Elizabethan Politics (c.1590-1603)


A2. The Disease of the stomack, and the Terme of Disgrace

A3. Goe soule the bodies guest [and A3b Flye soule the bodies guide]

A4. Staye Conick soule thy errante

A5. Courts scorne, states disgracing

A6. Courts commender states mantayner

A7. Go Eccho of the minde

A8. Where Medwaye greetes old Thamesis silver streames

A9. Admir-all weaknes wronges the right

A10. Proude and ambitious wretch that feedest on naught but faction

A11. Essex prayes, Southampton playes

A12. England thy early prime is gone, good Knight

A13. He that in Belgia fought for Englandes Queene

A14. Chamberlaine Chamberlaine, one of her graces kinn

A15. England men say of late is bankerupt growne

A16. This day is made Knight of the Garter

A17. Essex did spend, Northumberland did spare
B. Early Jacobean England (c.1603-1610)

B1. Nevil for the protestant, L Thomas for the papist

B2. The Great Archpapist Learned Curio

B3. Come all you Farmers out of the Countrey

B4. Watt I wot well thy over weaning witt

B5. Wilye watt, wilie watt

B6. Water thy plaints with grace divine

B7. To whome shall cursed I my Case complaine

B8. I speake to such if any such there bee

B9. As Cats over houses do go a catter-walting

B10. Who doubts of Providence, or God denyes

B11. The prelats Pope, the Canonists trope, the Courtyers oracle, virginities spectacle

B12. A Romane right, then rotten at the Kore

B13. The Divell men say is dead in devonshire late

B14. Here lyes the Lady Penelope Rich

B15. Heere lye’s a Lord that Wenching thought no sinne

B16. Immodest death that wouldst not once conferre

B17. Here Lyes Dick of Canterburie, suspected a Papist

B18. Here lieth one who if his case be bad

B19. Heer lye’s my Lord’s Grace at six & at seaven

B20. Bancroft Was for Playes

B21. Seventh Henryes Counsayle was of great renowne
C. The Parliament Fart (1607-)

C1a. Downe came grave auntient Sir John Crooke

C1b. Reader I was borne and cry’d
D. The Death of Robert Cecil (1612)

D1. Heere lies Hobbinoll our Shepheard while ere

D2. Advance, advance my ill-disposed Muse

D3. Ah was there nott a time when one man swayed

D4. Heere lieth Robbin Crookt back, unjustly reckond

D5. Two R:R:rs twoe Crookebacks of late ruled Englands helme

D6. Robert E. of Salisburie. Libellous Anagram on Cecil

D7. The old Cicilian fox

D8. The divell now hath fetcht the Ape

D9. This Taper, fedd, & nurst with court-oyle

D10. He nowe is deade, from whome men fledd

D11. Falshoods Jewell

D12. O Ladies, ladies howle & cry

D13. You say that Malefacit was dead:

D14. Reader, if that desert may make the stay

D15. Heere lyes interred wormes meate

D16. Heere sleepes in the Lorde beepepperde with pox

D17. Heere Robbin rousteth in his last neast

D18. At Hattfeilde neere Hartforde there lyes in a coffin

D19. Passer by know heere is interrd

D20. Heere lyes Salisbury that little great comaunder

D21. Heere lyes great Salisbury though little of Stature
Heere lyeth our great Lord Treasurer of late

You that reade passing by

If greatnes, wisedome, pollicie of state

Oh that such wisdome that could steere a state

When that rich soul of thine (now Sainted) kept

Ould Sarum now is dead Younge Salisburie lyves
E. Attacks on the Scots

E1. They beg our goods, our lands, and our lives

E2. Now doe your selves noe more so deck

E3. If either lotteryes or lottes

E4. Myene of Gold some say their’s found

E5. Well met Jockie whether away

E6. When Scotland was Scotland and England it selfe

E7. The King hee hawkes, and hunts
F. The Essex Nullity, the Somerset Marriage and the Death of Overbury (1613-1614)

F1. A page a knight a Vicount, and an Earle [1613 version]

F2. Letchery did consult with witcherye

F3. Were itt nott a brutish crueltye

F4. From Katherins dock there launcht a pinke

F5. Essex bird hath flowen hir cage

F6. Lady changed to Venus Dove

F7. Henrie, raysed Brandon

F8. Brave hardie Carre-man that with thy bastinado

F9. The fayre and famous mayde is gone

F10. Tis painefull rowing gainst the bigg swolne tide

F11. Heere lyes one nowe not worth despising
G. The Addled Parliament and the Death of Northampton (1614)

G1. The Court’s full of newes

G2. Mee thought I walked in a dreame

G3. The worst is tould the best is hide

G4. Sonne Benjamin, whil’s thou art yong

G5. Here lyes my Lord of Northampton, his Majestie’s erwigg
H. The Overbury Murder Scandal (1615-1616)

H1. There was an ould ladd rode on an ould padd

H2. In England there lives a jolly Sire

H3. From Roberts coach to Robins carr

H4. Robbin of Essex all in a rage

H5. A page, a knight, a viscount and an Erle

H6. Heere lyes hee that once was poore

H7. When Carr in Court a Page at first began

H8. The Sommers sun is sett

H9. I.C.U.R

H10. Poore Pilote thou hast lost thy Pinke

H11. The wealth he gott to make his meanes greate

H12. Why how now Robine? discontented quite

H13. From Car a Carter surely tooke his name

H14. Dazal’d thus with hight of place

H15. If ever woe possesst a stubbern heart

H16. A bird ill hatchd, from out a Cuckowes nest

H17. She with whom troops of bustuary slaves

H18. from Cathernes docke theer launcht A pritty Pinke

H19. Me thinks I see a lady sitt and mourne

H20. Looke, and lament behould a face of Earth

H21. Anagram on Frances Howard
H22. Anagram on Sir Thomas Overbury

H23. Sir you are one of those, who dare commend

H24. Once dead and twice a live; death could not frame

H25. Hadst thou lik other Sirs and knights of worth

H26. Hesperides, within whose gardens grow

H27. The house of the Howards

H28. Here under lyes a Counsellor of State
I. The Execution of Raleigh (1618)

I1. Raleigh in this thy selfe thy selfe transcends
I2. Young witts are soone seduced and alwaies apt
I3. Even such is tyme, which takes in trust
I4. Essex thy death’s reveng’d, Lo here I lie
I5. Heere lyes the man whose death and life
I6. Heare heedlesse heedlesse matchlesse Rawly lies
I7. Of Raleighs life and death the sum of all to tell
I8. Who best did Calculate the life of man
I9. Hope flattered thee though lawes did life convince
I10. Heere lyes a treasure in this pitte
I11. O had thy name bene causer of thy death
I12. What Worlds of people hath death conquered
I13. Beholde Brave Raleigh here interr’d
I14. The Divell longe deceaved hath, Watt Raleighs wit with evell
I15. This stone can not inclose thy fame
I16. Thou seest my tombe, Grey haires lye in this grave
I17. Great heart, who taught thee so to dye
I18. Two kinsmen wrastlinge, who shold have the fall
I19. Fly Fame, report, that all the world may knowe
I20. I will not weepe for twere as great a sin
I21. Cease booteless teares, weepe not for him whose Death
122. If spite be pleas'd, when that her object dead

123. Once he was Grace it selfe

124. I knew thee but by fame and thy brave deeds

125. All earthlie things by Water knowe
J. The Lake-Roos Affair (1617-1620)

**J1.** Waste not a signe that courtlye Rosse should fall

**J2.** There is a close Prisoner in the Tower

**J3.** Heere lyes the breife of badnes vices nurse

**J4.** Greedie, Envious, malitious proud unstable

**J5.** Say, no man living would vouchsafe a verse
K. “Fortune’s wheel”: Reflections on the Jacobean Era

K1. Some would complaine of Fortune & blinde chance

K2. Bridewell I come be valient muse and strip
L. King and Favourite: James, Buckingham and the Villiers Clan (c.1617-1623)

L1. Above in the skies shall Gemini rise

L2. Now let us rejoyce sing Peans all

L3. O Joyfull newse for Buckingham is nowe

L4. Io to Buckingham great Admiral

L5. Listen jolly gentlemen

L6. The Kinge loves you, you him

L7. Arme, arme, in heaven there is a faction

L8. From such a face whose Excellence

L9. From a Gipsie in the morneing

L10. Heaven blesse King James our joy
M. Monopolies and Corruption: the 1621 Parliament

Mi. Attacks on Monopolists

Mi1. You Justices & men of myghte

Mi2. The tottering state of transitory things

Mi3. Pervertinge of the lawes makes justice blind

Mi4. Fly not Momperson sins thear is no inn

Mi5. Oyes

Mii. The Fall of Bacon

Mii1. The measled Boare is frankt I tell noe fable

Mii2. Stand fast thou shaking quaking keeper

Mii3. Great Verulam is very lame, the gout of goe-out feeling

Mii4. Why shoulde poore chauncelour be condemned by a cry

Mii5. The greate assemblie of the parliamente

Mii6. Heer is Francis Verulam Lord Chancelour God save him

Mii7. Within this sty heer now doth ly

Mii8. When you awake, dull Brittons, and behould

Mii9. What hatfull fury dipt thy raging Quill

Mii10. Blame not the Poet though he make such moane

Miii: The Aftermath: reflections and assessments

Miii1. One worthy Chancellour rendred up his place

Miii2. When Charles, hath got the Spanish Gearle
Miii3. Thy followers in hope to flatter thee

Miii4. Anagram on John Williams

Miii5. The Kinge & the court desyrous of sport
N. The Spanish Match Crisis (c.1618-1623)

Ni. Prophecy and Portent c.1618-23

Ni1. You men of Britaine, wherefore gaze yee so

Ni2. These put together, thus they crye

Ni3. A Prince out of the North shall come

Ni4. If 88 be past then thrive

Nii. Bohemia and the Palatinate

Nii1. Some say Sir Edward Cecill can

Nii2. Whiles thy sonnes rash unluckye armes attempt

Nii3. The famous Embassador, brother to the French Favorer

Nii4. The Belgick Frogge, out of the bogge, with Brittish mouse doth strive

Nii5. When we but heare that Turkes and Tartars fight

Nii6. Religion the most sacred power on earth

Niii. Gondomar


Niii2. Adew deere Don & Priest for ever

Niii3. Anagram on Count Gondomar

Niv. Saint Elizabeth

Niv1. If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare

Niv2. Your bold Petition Mortalls I have seene

Nv. Jack and Tom go to Spain
Nv1. What suddayne change hath dark’t of late
Nv2. From Englands happy & unequall state
Nv3. I’ve read of Ilands flotinge and removed
Nv4. False on his Deanrye? false nay more, Ile lay
Nv5. Tell mee for gods sake Christs Church what you meane
Nv6. The day was turnd to starrelight, & was runne
Nv7. A Phillipp once to england came
Nv8. The starre that rose in Virgo’s trayne
Nv9. Since Arthure, or his stable stood
Nv10. Ilium deplores, but still old Priams glad
Nv11. Our eagle is yett flowne, to a place unknowne
Nv12. Poor silly wight that carkes in the night
Nv13. Our Prince whom we soe dearely lov’d
Nv14. The Prince of Wales with all his royall traine
Nv15. All the newes thats stirringe now
Nv16. Oh for an Ovid or a Homer now
Nv17. The Prince is now come out of Spayne
Nv18. The fift of August, and the fift

Nvi. Against the Libellers

Nvi1. O stay your teares yow who complaine
Nvi2. Contemne not Gracious king our plaints and teares
Nvi3. Withold thy fiery steeds great God of light
O. Buckingham at War (c.1624-1628)

Oi. The Patriot Hero (1624-25)

Oi1. The Parliament sitts with a Synod of Witts
Oi2. Oh honoured England how art thou disgrac'd
Oi3. Our digby digd’e but digd’e in vaine
Oi4. The base on which mans greatnesse firmest stands
Oi5. There was a man, & hee was Semper idem
Oi6. There was a great fleete, all they that did see’t
Oi7. There was a Munkye clumbe up a tree
Oi8. Yee Spanyards, come away, come away
Oi9. There was some pollicie I doe beleive
Oi10. The Kinge and his wyfe the Parliament
Oi11. Why did the fond Plebeans say
Oi12. Fower Cheyffe Justices late wee had
Oi13. Justice of late hath lost her witts
Oi14. Ould Ned Cooke is putt to a new booke
Oi15. Rex & grex are both of a sound
Oi16. Come heare, Lady Muses, and help mee to sing
Oi17. There is a man, a Plauge uppon him

Oii. Parliament and Poison (1626)

Oii1. when the uncivill civill peace of State
Oii2. It makes mee to muse to heare of the Newes
Oii3. Great Buckinghame

Oii4. In reading these my Lord youll see I’ve gott

Oii5. And wilt thou goe, great Duke, and leave us heere

Oii6. Charles would yee Prevaile your foes, thine better Lucke

Oii7. Rejoyce brave English Gallants

Oii8. Why was the varlett sent into the meane

Oii9. One askte me, why I mournde

Oii10. Oure crossrow’s turnd, a signe off monstrous luck

Oii11. The noblest brave profession

Oii12. And art return’d againe with all thy Faults

Oii13. All you that will goe with me

Oii14. As sick men feare the cure & startle more

Oiii. The Ile de Re (1627)

Oiii1. O Admirall! Since thou camst back againe

Oiii2. The wisest King did wonder when hee spy’d

Oiii3. The warrlike King was troubled when hee spy’d

Oiii4. Excuse me Elliott if I heare name thee

Oiii5. Avaunt you giddie-headed Multitude

Oiii6. Here Dr Lambe, the conjurer lyes

Oiii7. If heav’n rejoyce, when men leave off to sinne

Oiii8. For Lambe go ringe some bell

Oiii9. Heare lyes the Impostar Lambe

Oiii10. Our state’s a Game at Cards the Councell deale
Oiii11. When onely one doth rule and guide the shipp

Oiii12. Of Brittish Beasts the Buck is King

Oiii13. To hunt the Doe I have refu’sd

Oiii14. The Parliament of late hath oft been broken

Oiii15. A thinge gott by candle light
P. The Buckingham Assassination (1628)

Pi. Mocking Buckingham

Pi1. lett Charles & george doe what they can

Pi2. Sith number with thy name doth thus agree

Pi3. Thy numerous name great George, expresseth thee

Pi4. Anagram of George Villiers

Pi5. A yere of wonder to the world was 88

Pi6. The Shepheards struck, The sheepe are fledd

Pi7. Thus Buck-in-game, Felt-one did soone abate

Pi8. England was sick, a plewresey possest her

Pi9. Lord, what are wee, that thou shouldst thus respect

Pi10. Beehold this Obsequie: but without teares

Pi11. This little Grave embraces

Pi12. The pale horse of the Revelation

Pi13. Here lies Leachery, Treachery, Pride

Pi14. Here lyes great George the Glory of our state

Pi15. Great Buckingham’s buried under a stone

Pi16. Pride lies heere, Revenge and Lust

Pi17. Fortunes darling, Kings Content

Pi18. Heere lies a gratious graceles Peere

Pi19. Had our great duke bene Joseph then might we

Pi20. Great potent Duke, whom fortune rais’d soe high
Pi21. And art thou dead! who whilome thought’st thy state
Pi22. Pale death, with Iron hand, hath struck a blowe
Pi23. Great Gorge, and art thou gonne
Pi24. Thou that on topp of Fortunes wheeles did mount
Pi25. What once was said by valiant Tomyris
Pi26. If good mens graces in heaven with them abide
Pi27. Great Duke, which art commaunder of the Seas
Pi28. At Portsmouth Duke I will no longer staye
Pi29. Make haste I pray, launch out your shipps with speed
Pi30. No sooner had the worlds most happy knife
Pi31. Great Duke, Although I litle am acquainted
Pi32. Away, away, great George, o come not here
Pi33. My honour, favour, life, & all
Pi34. I that my countrey did betray
Pi35. Mother / My humble dutie done, I crave
Pi36. The Argument is cold and sencelesse clay
Pi37. Ye gasly Spiritts that haunt the gloomy night

Pii. Celebrating Felton

Pii1. Anagram on John Felton
Pii2. Anagram on John Felton
Pii3. Felton, awake, & cheare thyselfe from sorrow
Pii4. The heavens approve brave Feltons resolution
Pii5. Some say the Duke was gratious, vertuous, good
Pii6. The Duke is dead, and wee are ridd of strife

Pii7. Why: is our Age turn’d coward, that no Penn

Pii8. Immortall Man of glorie, whose brave hand

Pii9. I mmortal man of glory, whose stout hand

Pii10. Enjoy thy Bondage; make thy Prison know

Pii11. Sir, I your servant, (who have sett you free

Pii12. You auntient Lawes of Right; Can you, for shame

Pii13. Feare not brave Felton sith it is thy fate

Pii14. Sorrow and Joy at once possesse my brest

Pii15. Heere uninterr’d suspends (though not to save

Pii16. Here uninterd suspends, (doubles to save

Pii17. Wants hee a grave whom heavens doe cover? was hee

Pii18. Is Felton dead? It’s that hee did desire

Pii19. Here Lyes the bonnes off him that did

Pii20. Awake, sad Brittaine, and advance at last

**Piii. Ambivalent Voices and Defenders of Buckingham**

Piii1. M alignant characters that did portend

Piii2. Heere lyes the best and worst of Fate

Piii3. Dearling off Kings, Patrone off armes

Piii4. You braveing spiritts (not brave) inflamd from hell

Piii5. I did not flatter thee Alive, and nowe

Piii6. Yee snarling Satyrs, cease your horrid yells

Piii7. Heere lyes thy Urne, O what a little blowe
Sooner I may some fixed statue be
Yet weere Bidentalls sacred, and the place
Reader stand still and read loe heere I am
Our countrie Merry England (once so styl’d)
Honor, worth, greatnes, and what part so ere
What! shall I say now George is dead
Who ever lov’d man vertuous
When Poets use to write men use to say
Might Teares Revive thee I could wish to be
Death come thy selfe and let thy Image sleepe
Hee that can reade a sigh, or spell a teare
Nourishd with sighs and frights, and form’d with fears
When in the brazen leaves of fame
Reader when these dumbe stones have told
Noe Poets triviall rage that must aspire
Q. The Castlehaven Scandal (1631)

Q1. My Lord high steward his grace

Q2. Romes worst Philenis, and Pasiphaes dust

Q3. I neade noe Trophies, to adorne my hearse

Q4. My life is done my heart prepard for death

Q5. A proud cuckold tollit cornua

Q6. Blame not thy wife, for what thy selfe hath wrought

Q7. Its true you need noe trophees to your hearse
R. Miscellaneous (1628-1640)

R1. Reader, Ile be sworne uppon a booke

R2. Surely the face of thinges is alter’d much

R3. Vainglorious man who can your witt applaude

R4. Come arme thy self brave England

R5. See what a love there is betweene

R6. A health to my Lady Duchess

R7. U. R. I. C. poore Canterbury

R8. Landless Will: of Lambeth strand

R9. Two Parliaments dissolv’d? then let my hart
INTRODUCTION

This is an edition of early Stuart political poetry, drawn from manuscript sources. Roughly half the poems have never before been published, and many others have been available only in relatively obscure and dated sources. The fact that these texts have remained difficult for modern readers to access, however, should not be taken as any indication of their significance. For, at a time when restrictions of censorship prevented openly critical discussion of political identities and issues, manuscript verse, which could be disseminated anonymously and passed from hand to hand with relatively little risk, assumed a special value. These poems were known as libels: a term derived from the law, but which came to define a range of unauthorized and controversial texts, on individuals or topical issues (McRae, Literature 27-28. Cf. Bellany, Politics 98; Croft, “Libels” 266). While the libel was indebted at once to popular traditions of invective and elite literary traditions of satire, it emerged in the early seventeenth century as a distinct textual mode. In this edition, we are adopting a consciously inclusive approach to libels and political poetry, in an effort to represent the breadth of exchange in early Stuart manuscript culture. Here, therefore, are straightforward libellous assaults on men and women of state, more abstract representations of political processes, and even some eminently conservative poems written in response to libels.

The edition is borne out of an awareness of widespread interdisciplinary interest in this field, which is being stifled for lack of easy access to sources. The editors have respectively confronted this challenge, having begun research projects which required access to libels, and subsequently having devoted years to the search for texts. Those searches encompassed a range of sources—including verse miscellanies, commonplace books, diaries and letters—which may be found in archives across the world. As a result, the edition performs the function of an early Stuart verse miscellany. Many miscellanies-manuscript volumes of poems, collected by individual readers-document an intense interest in libels. Bodleian MS Malone 23, to take the most stunning example, contains one of the richest contemporary collections of early Stuart political poetry, including many pieces which were over twenty years old when the volume’s owner deemed them worthy of transcription (McRae, Literature 42-43). The present edition
builds upon such sources, in order to gather the most comprehensive ever collection of early Stuart political poetry. Its purpose is twofold: to bring this material into the public domain in the most effective possible manner, and to provide a framework for further research. With these ends in mind, it provides one reliable text of each poem that has been identified in manuscript sources, along with explanatory annotation and a list of other known sources.

The purpose of this introduction is neither to present new arguments about early Stuart political poetry, nor to rehearse arguments that the editors have made elsewhere, but rather to contextualize the material and explain the editorial methods. Like the edition as a whole, it is prepared with an interdisciplinary audience in mind, and attempts to situate these poems in relation to scholarly concerns in both historical and literary studies. The first section considers the cultural and political conditions of early Stuart England, and outlines the principal characteristics and functions of libels. The second section describes in detail the editorial decisions on which the edition is based, and summarizes the practices that have been employed throughout.

1. The conditions and practices of libelling

The early Stuart period was not the first time that poetry had been employed in politics, nor would it be the last. Nonetheless, this edition aims to demonstrate that the political poems of these years form a body of interconnected work, which is lent coherence by virtue of the activities of both writers and readers. These people were without doubt aware of what their culture was producing, and were keen to participate in a vital cultural and political practice. Consequently, when surveying the literary and political culture of the period it is possible to identify a number of converging factors which might explain not only the proliferation of libels, but also the principal characteristics of early Stuart political poetry. As becomes apparent from any consideration of the poems and their contexts, early Stuart libels participated in an increasingly contestatory culture, and in turn helped to refine the central conflicts and struggles of that culture.

One of the most popular poems contained in this edition may seem, with the questionable benefit of temporal distance, a peculiar and quirky achievement. “The Parliament
“The Parliament Fart” (“Downe came grave auntient Sir John Croke”) records a fart emitted in the House of Commons in 1607. More significantly, however, it commemorates both an institution and a community, as it accumulates couplet after witty couplet attributing reactions to the fart to individual members of parliament. Though it seems innocuous enough politically, readers appear to have responded not merely to the display of wit, but also to the focus on an institution which became increasingly problematic in the course of the reigns of James and Charles. Indeed none of the early Stuart parliaments was an easy experience for the monarch, and by the late 1620s the evident tensions placed acute strains on traditional ideals of a politics of consensus and counsel. It was perhaps partly for this reason that collectors continued to transcribe “The Parliament Fart” into miscellanies in the 1620s and 1630s, making it one of the most popular poems in manuscript circulation during the early seventeenth century. The poem offered, simply, an unauthorized history of the Commons. It was perhaps also for this reason that the final lines (in our chosen version) seek to identify the poem as a libel: “Come come quoth the King libelling is not safe / Bury you the fart, I’le make the Epitaph”.

Although authorship of “The Parliament Fart” appears to have been in part a group activity, and although the poem changes considerably from one version to another, some readers may also have been attracted to it because it was most commonly linked to John Hoskyns. In the early years of James’s reign, Hoskyns typified a political milieu characterized by transgressive acts of wit. Associated equally with the interlinked legal and literary communities of London, he established a reputation for outspokenness and dissent. Moreover, after he was imprisoned by the Crown for his contributions to the Addled Parliament of 1614, he continued to write satirical verse, and appears to have attained the status of “a martyr to the cause of free speech” (Colclough 373). Therefore, while it would risk exaggeration to identify Hoskyns as a figure of political “opposition”, he assumes a central position within a culture which was increasingly prepared to question the structures of authority. There are demonstrable links between Hoskyns and the Spenserian poets of the 1610s and 1620s, who consistently agitated for political reform (O’Callaghan). More importantly, in the current context, his work is increasingly associated in manuscript culture with the waves of libels that shaped political discourse. As will become apparent, in the decades following the emission of Croke’s fart these poems became freshly strident in tone and forthright in analysis.
The evident transformation of “The Parliament Fart”, from a coterie production into a text of national renown, also typifies the way in which networks of political comment were stretching across the nation (Cust; Raymond). Although the discussion of domestic politics in print was heavily proscribed, contemporaries exhibited new levels of sophistication in their production and dissemination of news. The aisles of St. Paul’s Cathedral, long recognized as a central meeting place in the city, became the heart of the news business: “the great Exchange of all discourse”, according to one commentator, where men might “turn merchants...and traffick for news” (Earle 111v; Cogswell, Blessed Revolution 20-53). Beyond Paul’s Walk, news was circulated into the provinces either informally, or through the expanding commercial production of newsletters and manuscript “separates” reporting events and debates. Letters and diaries from the period document the spread and intensity of interest in politics, and equally underline the importance of libels. The Suffolk clergyman John Rous, for example, appears to have found libels both unsettling and compelling. Though generally scornful of “light scoffing wittes” who “rime upon any the most vulgar surmises”, Rous nonetheless recorded a significant number of libels (30). Transcribing a poem about the Isle of Rhé expedition, for instance, Rous commented that, “whether any more be sette downe then vulgar rumor, which is often lying, I knowe not” (22).1

These practices of textual circulation coalesced with established methods for the dissemination of poetry. Many poets, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, acknowledged what has become known as the “stigma of print”, and consequently eschewed the relatively new technology of the printing press in favour of scribal distribution (Saunders). John Donne is the most notable example of a poet whose work circulated only in manuscript form in this lifetime; by contrast, Michael Drayton draws attention to this phenomenon by presenting a contrary argument, lamenting that “nothing [is] esteem’d in this lunatique Age, but what is kept in Cabinets, and must only passe by Transcription” (4.v*). Moreover, despite Drayton’s biased representation, manuscript culture was by no means a private and controlled mode of textual circulation. Though most prevalent within certain sites—the universities, the court, and the inns of court-surviving evidence reveals authors and collectors alike seeking and exchanging poetry, thereby constructing miscellanies which reflect personal tastes and interests. Moreover, while literary history has tended to focus on identifiable canonical authors, scores of surviving
miscellanies also include anonymous libels. These poems were appreciated as products of wit, and therefore transcribed, often without comment, alongside the works of authors such as Donne, Ben Jonson and Robert Herrick.

Some scholars have argued that the vogue for libels within this context was influenced by the “Bishops’ Ban” of 1599, which outlawed the works of certain prominent satirists. According to this argument, the banning of printed satires drove this vital literary mode “underground”, where it metamorphosed into more virulent strains of libel (esp. Cogswell, “Underground”). This narrative is in many respects simplistic, and overlooks the many important distinctions between the neoclassical verse satire that flourished in the 1590s and the libels of the early Stuart decades (Bellany, Politics 99-100; McRae, Literature 27-29). Crucially, the libel was not merely a debased offshoot of an acknowledged genre, but an independent mode with its own traditions and conventions. Nevertheless, it remains unquestionable that in the early seventeenth century formal verse satire slipped from the prominent status it had held in the preceding decade, while the related mode of the libel was increasingly embraced as a preeminent product of wit. The vogue for the libel, in other words, is attributable to developments in literary culture as well as those in politics. Under the conditions of censorship which prevailed in the early seventeenth century, as contemporaries became anxious about the state of their nation and sought new ways to engage in political discourse, the libel emerged simply as the most pertinent form of satire.

In the course of the early Stuart period, it is also evident that the libel assumed its own loose set of generic expectations. Though perforce an anonymous mode, writers consistently turn their anonymity into a fundamental, and in many respects empowering characteristic. In numerous poems, especially from the latter half of our period, the speaker is positioned as a representative of the people, and looks critically at the actions and motivations of those in positions of great power. One, for example, begins by invoking the poet’s muse to “Goe to the Court let those above us knowe / they have theire faults as well as we belowe” (“Bridewell I come be valient muse and strip”). In others, accounts of the sufferings of a politicized “we” assume a tone of menace, embracing suggestions of popular revolt (Norbrook 50-57). Formally, libels lack the consistency of satire, which was generally written in iambic pentameter couplets. By comparison, libels inhabit a range of forms, from the epigram to the ballad, and often deploy
a rough-hewn populism to underscore a political point. In their stances towards politics, the poems range from confrontational assault to ironic commentary. Yet all participate in a distinctive poetics of engagement, and this edition attempts to represent the breadth of this phenomenon by also including examples of the period’s anti-libels: poems concerned to rebut the claims of libellers, written not only by court poets but also by James I himself.

Much scholarship, particularly in the field of political history, has tended to diminish the significance of libels because of their recurrent prioritization of morality over ideology. Libellers are undeniably drawn to instances of sexual depravity and corporeal corruption; to take the most notable example, poems on the death of Robert Cecil in 1612 seem to be fuelled almost as much by a fascination at his grotesque process of bodily decay, as by any concerted opposition to his policies and achievements (Croft, “Reputation”). But this objection to libels runs the risk of imposing upon the early Stuart period anachronistic perceptions of politics. For contemporary commentators, corporeal corruption was inextricably connected with moral corruption, while discourses of politics were effectively inseparable from those of morality. Consequently, representations of courtly immorality were at once a powerful form of political critique, and also created a forum within which a writer might think his or her way towards more abstract ideas of politics. For instance, suggestions of sodomy at court swerve from mere titillation, through moral outrage, to intimations of a discourse of opposition (P. Hammond 128-150; Knowles; Perry). One of the most important libels of the 1620s, “The Five Senses” (“From such a face whose Excellence”), focuses on the relationship between King James and his powerful court favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. The poem is striking in its suggestions of regal fallibility, as it suggests that the “whoreish breath” of “a Ganimede” has the “power to lead / His excellence which way it list”. It concludes with a menacing prayer that God should give the king himself “a Taste.../ Of what his Subjects undergoe”, and “a Feelinge of there woes”. Only then might he truly appreciate the problems of his realm.

While this poem is rare in its explicit attention to the king, an analysis of the politics of libels reveals a remarkable range of political positions. Traditionally, libelling had been accepted, especially in London, as a form of crisis communication between the people and their rulers (Croft, “Libels” 270). Like many early modern riots, such libels were essentially conservative, begging for the restoration of an order perceived to be lost. Others served as
weapons in factional disputes at court, at a time when struggles for power could effectively centre on contests over the reputations of prominent statesmen. (This, indeed, is perhaps the principal explanation for the plethora of poems on the death of Cecil.) And others still used conventional discourses of denigration in order to touch upon issues of wider concern, including some of the nation’s most fundamental values. At law, the doctrine of *scandalum magnatum*, under which numerous libel actions were brought to the Star Chamber, held that to libel a person in public office was also to libel the government, and hence the king himself (Bellany, “Poem” 156). As Francis Bacon recognized, counsellors and court favourites were placed in especially precarious positions; writing to Buckingham, he warned that “the King himself is above the reach of his people, but cannot be above their censures, and you are his shaddow” (*Letter* 2). This potential was exploited in the years immediately before and after Buckingham’s assassination. When libels laud the assassin, John Felton, for liberating the country “from one mans thrall“, they teeter uneasily between a celebration of order restored and a contrary suggestion that the very system within which Buckingham operated might itself be irreparably cankered (“You auntient Lawes of Right; Can you, for shame”).

Such poems have prompted some to identify libels with the development of political opposition in the years preceding the Civil War (Cogswell, “Underground”; Holstun 143-191). But while particular poems unquestionably contain traces of radicalism, it would be misleading to approach either the politics or poetry of this period as in any way coherent. As recent historical scholarship has demonstrated, the development of opposition, from the 1620s to the 1640s, was a complex and uncertain process. In this context, much of the value of libels lies in the way that they document this process, revealing critical struggles over the meanings of political figures and events. In some cases, the satiric strategies of the poems seek simply to strip away myths of power. As Harold Love comments about Restoration satires, they function by “neutralising or evacuating the dominant fictions of state” (175). In other cases, their practices of stigmatization and discrimination create the potential for new discourses of confrontation. Ultimately, although libels may not be aligned with an identifiable and coherent oppositionist movement, and although their politics are at times provocative and evasive rather than rational and purposeful, they decisively contribute to political change. They help to make opposition conceivable: and speakable.
2. The edition: aims and methods

After centuries of historical and literary scholarship throughout which libels received relatively little attention, over the past twenty years they have finally begun to gain the attention they deserve. In the field of political history, post-revisionist scholars have focused valuably on the role of public opinion, while others have reassessed the significance of individual reputations and particular court scandals. Moreover, some historians have accepted a need to adopt different interpretative strategies when reading pamphlets and ballads, compared to those required for more direct or explicit documents (e.g. Sharpe 5). In literary studies, meanwhile, there are signs that the enthusiasm for history that propelled the new historicism and cultural materialism is increasingly now being married to a heightened appreciation of archival research and historical method. Significantly, a number of new “historical” editions of early Stuart poetry have highlighted the complex politics of manuscript culture, while important critical studies have properly situated libels within narratives of cultural and political upheaval (e.g. Ralegh, Poems; G. Hammond 41-66; McRae, Literature; Marotti 75-133; Norbrook 50-58).

This edition is a product of these movements, since it brings into the public domain the findings of two parallel research projects: one in the field of political history, the other in that of literary studies. Its collection of approximately 350 poems surpasses all existing sources for the study of libels, and includes roughly 200 that have never before been published. Its breadth of coverage and its editorial apparatus are intended to establish a foundation for further research, in a field which raises so many problems and unanswered questions. The presentation of the poems, and the explanatory notes, are also intended to make this material accessible to a wider range of readers.

a) parameters

The edition encompasses poems directly relating to English political identities and issues, which were produced for and circulated within manuscript culture. This includes anything that contemporaries would have identified as a libel, while also incorporating a number of pieces
that directly respond to libels, and others that function more in the manner of satiric commentary. But it is unashamedly biased towards expressions of dissent, and hitherto unheard voices. While critics might argue that canonical poets such as Donne and Jonson wrote politically sensitive verse, there is little reason to include their work in an edition of libels; and while poets of print culture such as Drayton and George Wither unquestionably forged new models of political poetry, they consistently defined their work against that of anonymous libellers. These parameters create a particular kind of miscellany—more than commonly focused and thorough in its selections—yet one which retains the basic experience of encountering a contemporary collection of manuscript poetry.

Some of the implications of these editorial decisions may require justification. Firstly, it will be apparent to those who are familiar with this material that a significant number of the poems here have been printed elsewhere. A couple of printed sources—F.W. Fairholt’s edition of *Poems and Songs Relating to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham*, and Norman Farmer’s edition of “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript”—have provided the basis for much of the existing scholarship on libels. Other sources include published news-diaries and commonplace books (e.g. Rous; Whiteway; *Dr. Farmer Chetham Manuscript; First and Second Dalhousie Manuscripts*). But since some of these sources are not easy to access, and none aims for comprehensive coverage, a certain amount of duplication is necessary. Secondly, since libels were written by such a broad range of authors, a number have been published in editions of the works of major seventeenth-century poets. While our versions, which are unmodernized and taken from single manuscript sources, may lack the appearance of reliability and coherence projected by a scholarly edition, to have given such poems special treatment here would not only have been inconsistent, but would unduly have privileged the canonical over the anonymous and non-canonical. Therefore, while modern editions are cited where appropriate as alternative sources, it is important here that a modern reader, like his or her early Stuart counterpart, should encounter the occasional work of a well-known author in a miscellaneous context.

The edition’s borderlines are inevitably shadowy in places, largely due to the subject-matter of the poetry. The modern category of “politics” did not exist in early Stuart England; far from being an independent sphere, the political was inextricably intertwined with matters of
religion and morality. Nonetheless, most cases are obvious enough. Libels proliferated especially around key figures in the business of state, such as Robert Cecil and the Duke of Buckingham, and around court controversies and scandals, such as that surrounding the divorce of Frances Howard and her subsequent involvement in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. Many more, especially in the 1620s, isolated issues of concern in parliament, such as monopolies and foreign affairs, or represented tensions between the parliament and the court. But others are more problematic. Firstly, editorial decisions have been made about poems concerned with religion, to determine whether individual pieces have any content that might reasonably be described as political. This has meant the inclusion, for example, of some pieces that specifically aim to politicize the stigmatized identity of the Puritan, but the omission of others concerned more with perceived ecclesiastical or theological aberrations. Secondly, in determining “political” content, it was determined that the edition should focus principally on a national context, as opposed to international or local contexts. Consequently, poems on the Thirty Years’ War are included only if they focus particularly on the debates concerning English involvement, while numerous elegies from the early 1630s on the Swedish military hero Gustavus Adolphus are omitted on similar grounds. While it might fairly be argued that such poems are concerned to reflect upon English politics, they lack the qualities of outspokenness and satire that characterize libel. Thirdly, although libels on local political matters inevitably reflect upon wider debates, this edition privileges poems that were principally concerned with national figures and issues, and that circulated beyond local contexts. Poems from the provinces that survive in records of Star Chamber libel actions typically did not also circulate in verse miscellanies, and as a result this edition excludes texts from these sources (cf. Fox 299-334; McRae, “Verse Libel”).

The edition’s canon is determined further by a decision to privilege poems that originated in manuscript culture. Some pieces were subsequently printed, most notably after the effective collapse of censorship in the 1640s; and in such cases details of publication are provided, though manuscript sources are preferred. But a handful of other poems (not included here) moved in the other direction, originally surfacing in fugitive printed texts, but surviving in manuscript sources once the printed source was no longer available. The Interpreter (1622), probably written by Alexander Leighton, is a signal example of this phenomenon. Other poems
that are clearly libellous managed to scrape past the censors, often when packaged in a volume of otherwise relatively innocuous material, or when presented in a sufficiently veiled manner. William Goddard managed this risky feat in 1615, when he published two epigrams on the controversial marriage of Frances Howard and Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, in which the latter is identified pointedly as “the dunghill Carr” (F4r). In the present context, however, it is entirely justifiable to treat poems which were presumably written for manuscript circulation as a relatively discrete body of writing. Manuscript poetry had its own codes and conventions, and the libel was without question a product of this particular culture.

The temporal parameters, though relatively clear, also require some notes of justification. At the beginning of our period, the only significant questions concern poems on Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex, who was executed after his failed uprising against Elizabeth I in 1601. Strictly speaking, these should not belong in an edition of early Stuart poetry; however, they are included partly because they do much to establish the conventions of libelling, and partly because the factional conflicts they describe continue to influence politics over the following decades. Most notably, many of the vitriolic libels on the death of Cecil in 1612 explicitly invoke this context, and the study of such poems can only benefit from being read alongside the earlier works (Croft, “Libels” 275-76; Croft, “Reputation” 46-47). The main body of material, as will become apparent, dates unproblematically from the middle decades of the early Stuart period, with the activity of libelling reaching a high-point in the 1620s. The edition’s range ends in the early 1640s, with the collapse of the early Stuart censorship regime and the subsequent outbreak of the Civil War. As has been demonstrated in numerous studies of the 1640s and 1650s, these two events mark a relatively distinct cultural watershed (esp. Hill; Loxley; Potter; Smith; Zwicker). Although is hoped that this edition will demonstrate some of the ways in which libels of the preceding decades informed the better-known writing of the revolutionary era, it is nonetheless sensible in the present context to keep the two periods distinct.

Throughout the period, libels did not stand alone, but rather functioned within a highly contentious culture. Numerous poems directly respond to others, while all pieces contribute regardless to often bitter debates over the significance of individual lives and events. In recognition of this context, the present edition includes a range of laudatory poems, which could
not strictly be defined as libels. Instead, many might be described as anti-libels: poems directly responding to the charges of libels, and “offering rival interpretations of controversial events or attacking those whom the libellers criticised” (Bellany, “Poisoning” 115). Others simply try to maintain principles of orthodoxy and decorum: lamenting the death of Buckingham in a conventionally elegiac voice, for instance, despite the plethora of libels presenting contrary images. Given that poetry of praise accounts for a significant proportion of seventeenth-century literature, however, editorial decisions have necessarily produced a limited selection of such works. These decisions have been determined by the extent to which particular poems demonstrably participated in conflicts conducted in manuscript culture. Hence most of the poems included are concerned with individuals who were attacked in libels, while those on relatively uncontroversial figures are generally not included. In particular, the edition does not represent the wealth of poems marking royal deaths and births, even though some of these may contain critical political content.

Another way in which the parameters of the edition have been determined by the culture of the manuscript miscellany is apparent in the inclusion of anagrams and chronograms. Each form typically scrutinizes the name of its target: either by teasing meaning out of the name’s rearranged letters, or by assigning numerical values to letters (“usually employing Roman numerals, so that V signified 5, C 100 and so on”) (Bellany, Politics 105). Anagrams and chronograms appear to have had an ambiguous function, appreciated widely as entertaining products of wit, but also offering themselves as “keys to deeper...meaning”, or unauthorized truths (Bellany, Politics 107). A popular chronogram on Buckingham, for example, derived the year of his assassination, 1628, from the letters of his name. Noting this curious fact, one couplet commented darkly: “Thy numerous name great George, expressteth thee / But XXIX I hope, thou ne’re shalt see” (“Thy numerous name great George, expressteth thee”). For the purposes of this edition, anagrams and chronograms assume significance principally because of their obvious connections with libels. In many instances, such as that of the Buckingham chronogram, they are followed by explanatory epigrams. More fundamentally, they were commonly composed and collected by those involved in the culture of political libelling, and valued as products of wit. As Sir Simonds D’Ewes recalled in his Autobiography, when relating the murder of Thomas Overbury: two anagrams “came ... to my hands, not unworthy to be
owned by the rarest wits of this age” (1.87).

Ultimately, it is fair to conclude that the edition provides an extensive, though not exhaustive, collection of libels and related material. The texts are drawn from research in over twenty major research libraries and records offices, mainly in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Within these archives, research was guided partly by available catalogues and first-line indices, and partly by the previous research of other scholars. No known source of any significance has been overlooked, and many new sources have been identified. Nonetheless, while there is good reason to believe that the edition has identified and collected the majority of libels extant in manuscript collections, there is also reason to believe that other poems remain to be identified. Since the cataloguing in some archives is far from complete, it is likely that further discoveries will be made as more resources become available.

b) conventional editorial practice

The editorial practice does not conform to what are generally accepted as the requirements of a “scholarly” edition of poetry. Typically, the editors of such volumes will seek all available sources for individual poems, and will produce a text by comparing these sources and identifying that which best represents the final intention of the author. Further, a scholarly edition will collate extant texts, and identify variations. By comparison, this edition reproduces one sound version of every known libel, and does not depart in any way from the selected version unless there is a special reason for doing so. In most cases, more than one version has been consulted, and a choice of a copy-text has been made on grounds of clarity and (if it is possible to judge) quality. In all cases, the text of a poem is accompanied by a list of other known sources, so that readers with particular interests may independently pursue further research into variants.

This practice combines practical and scholarly demands. For an edition of libels, it is by no means clear that the benefits of a “scholarly” edition would outweigh the extraordinary costs it would demand. Since many libels may be identified in over twenty different sources, the task of transcribing and comparing all these sources for all the poems identified for this edition would
be immense. More importantly, since libels were typically circulated anonymously, and since there is very little evidence of readers concerning themselves with variant texts and questions of authorship, the argument that one version of a poem will necessarily be “better” than another is tenuous. Distinctions between “good” and “bad” versions would inevitably become subjective, while an editorial project that produced conflated texts from different versions would have the dubious consequence of creating poems that nobody in early modern England actually read. Instead, in its presentation of each poem this edition mirrors the activity of contemporary readers, by intervening in manuscript culture at one particular and identifiable moment. The edition follows those readers in not trying to differentiate between an original and an altered version, and seeks only to identify one legible, clear and coherent source.

The physical presentation of texts similarly balances demands of textual scholarship and legibility. Consequently, the selected manuscript source for any one poem is reproduced exactly—including original spelling, punctuation, and even apparent scribal errors—except for two concessions to the modern reader. Firstly, while the seventeenth-century writer tended to follow the Roman alphabet, using interchangeably “i” and “j” and also “u” and “v”, here these letters have been regularized in accordance with modern usage. Since there are no instances in which the process of regularization produces ambiguities, or asserts an editor’s interpretation of a text in the face of uncertainty, there can be few arguments against this practice, especially when one considers the enhanced clarity of the regularized text. Secondly, standard scribal abbreviations and contractions are routinely expanded. Hence, while readers of early modern manuscripts are familiar with annotations that indicate, for example, an extra letter or syllable, this edition simply adds those letters and syllables without comment. Scribes are almost always clear and consistent in their practice, which is designed merely to save on labour. Given the aims of this edition, there is no good reason either to replicate their practice, or to alert readers every time an obvious abbreviation is used.

Some readers might reasonably ask why spelling and punctuation have not also been modernized. Given that the texts were considered relatively flexible at the time, there might appear to be little cause to be so careful now, especially when that care may in fact reproduce clear scribal errors. This may appear at times nonsensical, or even perverse. But the counterargument, which seems too strong to ignore, is that the process of “correction” involves
too many subjective, and possibly unsignalled, editorial decisions. In short, it becomes almost impossible, for editors and readers alike, to determine where this process should stop, and there is a risk that the experience of encountering these texts in their manuscript sources would irrevocably be altered. Instead, the best and clearest course, in this particular edition of these poems, is for the editors to perform the role of diligent and faithful (albeit at times somewhat mechanical and uncritical) scribes. Those who use the edition, either for research or teaching purposes, may of course wish to be more intrusive. One unquestionable benefit of the practice adopted here is that such users will be able to do so, while those wanting an accurate representation of the manuscript sources will equally be able to rely on the texts provided.

The edition is structured into sections, which are organized partly by topics and partly by chronology. Some of these are self-explanatory. The libels on the death of Cecil, for example, or those a generation later on the death of Buckingham, form discrete bodies of poetry. Indeed it is evident that such libellers were reading other libels, and had a sense of their participation in a distinct cultural movement. Others, due to the nature of the issues with which they engage, are not quite so clear. In the early 1620s, for instance, numerous poets, concerned by fraught relations between the court and parliament, tried to find new ways of representing such political struggles. For instance, the longest poem in the edition, “Fortunes wheele. or Rota fortunæ in gyro” (“Some would complain of Fortune & blinde chance”), is unlike any other in its method and detail, but entirely typical of the period in its underlying motivation (McRae, “Political”).

While some issues and individuals may be traced throughout more than one section, the structure is nonetheless intended to make the edition easier to navigate. As such, it follows the practice of a number of early Stuart miscellanies, which variously grouped, labelled and even indexed poems (McRae, Literature 36-44).

The editorial annotation attends principally to matters of historical detail. Given that they are so highly topical in character, most poems benefit from some explanation of references to individuals, events and political debates. While many will inevitably remain somewhat opaque, and while others will doubtless benefit from further contextual research, the annotation here aims simply to make the material more accessible with the benefit of information currently available to specialists in the field. The headnotes to poems provide contextual information, identify connections with other poems, and cite relevant critical material. Footnotes are usually
explanatory in nature: identifying individuals, expanding upon topical references, and glossing difficult words and phrases. Others are more strictly textual: perhaps drawing attention to variant readings, or identifying probable scribal errors.

c) electronic editorial practice

Electronic publication gives the edition a number of benefits. One central goal of the project has been to make libels as accessible as possible, thereby abolishing the monopolistic grip on their interpretation effectively claimed in the past by those with the skills and resources necessary to deal with manuscript sources. In this respect, a web-based resource, published in association with a respected free-access journal, provides an attractive alternative to conventional forms of publishing. Furthermore, when dealing with a large and disparate body of poems, electronic publication enables a high degree of navigability and flexibility. Relatively few readers will choose to read through the collection from beginning to end; others will come to the collection with particular interests, and will want tools to facilitate their research. In other words, they will want to compile their own miscellanies: and this edition encourages them to do so.

The edition’s method is clear and uncomplicated. Each poem occupies a separate page, with its first-line used as a heading and a brief headnote providing some introductory information. Footnotes are marked conventionally on the text, and are accessible by following links to the bottom of the page. Between the text and the notes on a page are a number of buttons providing links to other sections, and other poems in the same section. Readers are also given access here, as on the site’s home-page, to a range of search functions: by person (subject or author) and manuscript. These categories have been chosen to accommodate the most likely lines of enquiry. Most readers will be interested in individuals targeted by libels, and the search-engine will take them to whole poems, or parts of longer poems, that are relevant to those interests. Other searches will facilitate research on literary culture. While only a small number of poems can be ascribed to particular authors, the lists of all known sources of a poem, and also the searches by manuscript, should highlight practices of collecting and circulation. Within a matter of seconds a reader can identify all political poems in a particular manuscript, and then
use this as a point of comparison with other manuscripts. This might well provide a foundation for research with the actual manuscripts themselves. In particular, navigation is facilitated by indices of names, manuscripts, and first-lines. The index of names includes individuals mentioned in libels and authors of libels, as well as classical and biblical names to which the poems refer. The index of manuscripts lists all manuscripts cited in the edition, and contains links to poems contained in respective manuscripts.

At various points, the reader has an option to download poems in PDF format. Some may choose to download the entire text, to preserve in the manner of a printed book. Others will choose to compile their own miscellanies, gathering individualized collections for electronic storage and printing. In this way, the edition combines the manifold benefits of twenty-first century technologies with some of the basic reading practices of the seventeenth century. Though separated historically from the poetry’s contexts, the user of “Early Stuart Libels” therefore has a breadth and ease of access that was no more than a dream for the poems’ contemporary readers.

d) readers’ comments and suggestions

The edition is not designed to be updated on a regular basis. It is intended rather to have the textual integrity of a conventional book, to be used and judged as it stands for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, the editors are well aware that a project of this nature will inevitably be incomplete in various ways. Extra poems and sources will come to light, while new information could undoubtedly help to improve our explanatory notes. For this reason, we plan to gather information over the coming years, with a view to producing a second, and presumably final, edition. Consequently, we warmly invite comments and suggestions from researchers using this edition, all of which will be acknowledged in any future edition. Please email comments to stuart.libels@exeter.ac.uk.
Libels and other partisan documents which were discreetly circulated in manuscript form seemed to proliferate during the latter part of Elizabeth I’s reign, as did the surreptitious printing or importing of “banned books”. Many of these clandestine writings and copyings were encouraged by the religious policies of the Elizabethan regime, which attracted sharp criticism from both Catholic recusants and extremist Puritans (especially Presbyterians) by the late 1560s. Perhaps the most significant of these religious tracts were the “Martin Marprelate” pamphlets which were secretly printed and disseminated by Presbyterian radicals in 1588-89. Ironically, such critiques gained extra currency from the Elizabethan government’s own efforts to punish these authors and discredit their ideas. In their endeavour to crack down on libel-spreaders and publicly counter the claims of “seditious” writers and printers, the ecclesiastical authorities and the Privy Council gave their critics the oxygen of publicity and effectively recognized a kind of proto-“public sphere” which was entirely contrary to the legal orthodoxy that the business of government was secret and the actions of the sovereign were accountable only to God (Lake and Questier).

The most notorious and widely-circulated libel of the Elizabethan era was a prose attack by Catholic exile writers on the Queen’s great favourite, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Printed overseas under the title of The copy of a letter written by a Master of Art of Cambridge in 1584, this work quickly became known as “Leicester’s Commonwealth” (Leicester’s Commonwealth). Although printed copies were smuggled into England (despite official efforts to suppress it), the work also circulated widely in the form of manuscript copies, as well as spawning shorter derivative libels such as “News from heaven and hell” (“News from heaven and hell”). In 1592, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, the Lord Treasurer and Elizabeth’s most influential advisor, received similar treatment from Catholic polemicists, following a new government crackdown on Catholic nonconformity in late 1591. Tracts such as Richard Verstegan’s A declaration of the true causes of the great troubles (1592) and Robert Parsons’ (or Persons’) An advertisement written to a secretarie of my L. Treasurers of Ingland (1592) were smuggled into the realm and collectively created the defamatory notion of “Burghley’s commonwealth” or a regnum Cecilianum, in which Elizabeth and her realm were shamelessly manipulated for the
benefit of the Cecil family and their supporters.

During the mid-1590s, the task of the Privy Council in stemming libels and other “seditious” writings became even more difficult because a factional divide emerged at the very heart of Elizabethan government, which created growing tensions at the Council board itself. Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, who emerged as the Queen’s dominant royal favourite after the deaths of the Earl of Leicester and Sir Christopher Hatton in 1588 and 1591, espoused an expansive war policy against Spain which was increasingly at odds with the wishes of Elizabeth. Essex’s political ambitions also provoked growing resentment from older members of the Council, especially the septuagenarian Lord Burghley, who mistrusted Essex’s martial aspirations and was anxious to promote the career of his own younger son, Sir Robert Cecil. Thwarted in his efforts to win over Elizabeth to his agenda, Essex began to circulate letters and treatises in manuscript form which advocated policies markedly different from those endorsed by the Queen. The most important and widely-copied of these tracts was a letter nominally addressed to his friend Anthony Bacon, which was later printed as *An apologie of the earle of Essex against those which falsly and maliciously taxe him to be the onely hinderer of the peace and quiet of his countrey* (1603). Such behaviour infuriated his conciliar colleagues, as did the Earl’s constant efforts at self-promotion, which were increasingly seen as courting the sort of popular acclaim that the Elizabethan regime reserved solely for the Queen herself (Hammer, “‘The smiling crocodile’”). A growing number of courtiers began to line up against Essex and his friends, including Burghley (who died in 1598), Sir Robert Cecil and his brother-in-law Henry Brooke (who succeeded as 11th Lord Cobham in 1597), and Sir Walter Ralegh, who had lost out to Essex in the competition to become the new royal favourite in the late 1580s (Hammer, *Polarisation*).

Most of the libels in Section A relate directly to this bitter factional struggle during the closing years of Elizabeth’s reign. Ralegh, in particular, had a combative nature and skill with the pen, as did Essex. Although Essex and Ralegh were banned from actually using swords during their competition for the Queen’s favour between 1587 and 1591, both men seem to have challenged each other with mocking poems (May, *Elizabethan Courtier Poets* 119-125). As the most important literary patron of the 1590s, Essex attracted many writers who were eager to use their pens in similar fashion once factional rivalry for political ascendancy began to become
obvious in the mid-1590s. Essex’s own carefully-cultivated public image also made his cause seem more noble and that of his opponents more corrupt. Given that Sir Robert Cecil emerged as Essex’s most substantial political rival and the Earl’s following included a significant number of Catholics, it is perhaps not surprising that features of the Catholic critique of the so-called *regnum Cecilianum* in the early 1590s re-emerged in the context of this struggle between Essex and his enemies in the late 1590s. More generally, the rivalry between Essex and his enemies also echoed in the work of satirical writers such as Nashe, Marston and Guilpin, whose troubling publications were formally suppressed by Archbishop Whitgift and Bishop Bancroft on 1 June 1599 (Clegg 198-217).

When Essex was arrested in September 1599 after his return from Ireland, in what seemed like murky circumstances, the intense speculation about the cause and significance of this event prompted a veritable flood of libels against the Earl’s rivals. At the end of November, members of the Privy Council delivered a series of speeches in Star Chamber in an attempt publicly to justify Essex’s arrest. In doing so, they also vented their fury at the anonymous personal attacks against them. Lord Keeper Egerton, for example, inveighed against “the iniquitye of theise dayes, that the taverns and ordina ries are filled with tales of governement and matters of state, and they so farr procee de that they scatter libells, which doe falsely and trayterouslye slander her sacred Majestie and her whole counsell, nay in such manner as though (after 42 yeares’ governement) she knewe not whom to rewarde. They are dangerous enemyes and desleine to refuse the governement of the realme. I call them traytors, for the lawe condemnes [them] as traytors, but our state doe not severely punishe yt, and yet they are traytors”. Lord Treasurer Buckhurst echoed this opinion: “they deserve death better then open enemies: they are dangerous & who can be fre from their stroake; they lurke in secret and ought to be subject to the censure of death. There ys remedy against the sworde, against gunshott &c, but none against backebyters & libellers”. Sir Robert Cecil, who was perhaps the most frequently vilified member of the council, complained that libellers were “vipers” and “the children of the divell, for he ys the author of all lyes and there ys no truth in their papers” (Folger MS V.b.142, fols. 49r-v, 50r).

Yet no amount of public condemnation could stem the flow of libels. Shortly after the Star Chamber speeches, Francis Bacon (the younger brother of Anthony) felt obliged to respond to
the latest tales shaped in “the London forge”. As a highly conspicuous former dependent of the Earl, Bacon attracted particular comment for his public efforts against Essex while acting in his capacity as one of the Queen’s legal counsel. Bacon’s solution was to write a letter to one of the Earl’s aristocratic friends, Lord Henry Howard, to complain about the unfair criticism and to circulate it and Howard’s reply in manuscript form (HMC Hatfield 9.405-07). However, this manoeuvre proved wholly inadequate when Bacon took a leading role in the trial which resulted in Essex’s execution in February 1601. Like the Earl’s more conspicuous enemies, such as Ralegh, Cobham and Cecil, Bacon carried a stigma from his involvement in Essex’s death which lasted for years afterwards. When Essex’s reputation received a limited public rehabilitation after the accession of James in March 1603, the recriminations surrounding Bacon’s conduct resurfaced and Bacon again felt obliged to respond publicly, this time in the form of a letter to another friend of Essex, Charles Blount, Earl of Devonshire (formerly Lord Mountjoy). Published as *Sir Francis Bacon his apologie, in certaine imputations concerning the late earle of Essex* (1604), the work went through four printings during 1604-05. Like many of the libels included in later sections, Bacon’s need to pen his *Apologie* is testimony to the intense passions aroused during the great political struggle of Elizabeth’s last years and the magnetism of Essex’s name and memory. For the winners in the great Elizabethan political battle, the taint associated with their victory would perhaps outlast even the Essexians’ bitterness at their defeat.

A0
Notes. This couplet, attributed to Ralegh, is commonly collected with a corresponding couplet on Ralegh himself (see “The Disease of the stomack, and the Terme of Disgrace”). Although the author of the latter is named in this manuscript copy as “Dr Noel”, other copies identify Ralegh’s adversary as “Mr Noel”. Given that “Dr Noel” can only refer to Dr. Alexander Nowell or Noel, Dean of St. Paul’s and aged in his nineties by the time of his death in 1602, “Mr Noel” seems a more probable attribution. “Mr Noel” can be identified as Henry Noel, a Gentleman Pensioner (i.e. a member of a band of socially elite bodyguards for the sovereign) who died in 1597. Noel was described by John Harington as “one of the greatest gallants” at Elizabeth’s court and mixed in the same social circles as Ralegh from at least the late 1570s. It is possible that this verse exchange dates from this early period and was meant to tease or amuse their mutual friends rather than intended as a genuine criticism (May, “Companion Poems” 261, 272; Ralegh, Poems 150).

“On Dr Noell”

The Word of Deniall, and the Letter of Fifty,¹

Makes the name of the man that will never be thrifty.

Source. Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 68r

Other known sources. Manningham 161; Ralegh, Poems 28; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 31r; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 53; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 271v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 148, fol. 1r; BL MS Harley 5353, fol. 83r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 140; Houghton MS Eng 686, fol. 17v; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 195

¹ The Word of Deniaill...Fifty: i.e. “No” and “L”—the Roman numeral for the number fifty—creating “Noel”.
A2 The Disease of the stomack, and the Terme of Disgrace

Notes. This couplet on Ralegh, attributed to “Dr. Noell”, is commonly collected with a corresponding couplet on Noel, attributed to Ralegh (see “The Word of Deniall, and the Letter of Fifty”). See further the introductory comments for “The Word of Deniall, and the Letter of Fifty”.

“On Sir W. Rawly”

The Disease of the stomack, and the Terme of Disgrace

Makes the name of the man with the brazen face.

Source. Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 68r

Other known sources. Manningham 161; Ralegh, Poems 28; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 31r; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 52; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 72v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 148, fol. 1r; BL MS Harley 5353, fol. 83r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 140; Houghton MS Eng 686, fol. 17v; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 195

A2

1 The Disease...Disgrace: i.e. “Raw”, meaning uncooked and hence normally inedible, and “Lie”, creating “Rawlie” or “Rawly”. The “Lie” is “the terme of disgrace” because a challenge to a duel was usually incited by “giving the lie” (i.e. claiming that a rival had told an untruth). Although this verse was probably written in the late 1570s or 1580s, the allusion probably struck later readers as doubly appropriate because Ralegh’s poem “Goe soule the bodies guest” is best known as “The Lie”.

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66
A3 Goe soule the bodies guest [and A3b Flye soule the bodies guide]

Notes. Sir Walter Ralegh’s poem “The Lie” (or, as here, the “Farewel l”) is a relatively conventional satire, which hardly warrants inclusion in the present edition. It assumes greater significance, however, because it elicited several answer-poems, which focused hostile attention on Ralegh himself. Although the poem initially circulated anonymously, these responses show that its authorship clearly became widely known. Ralegh’s poem is typically transcribed alone (as is the case in most, if not all, of the other known sources listed below), but perhaps the most enlightening way of presenting “The Lie” and one of the answer-poems is simply to follow the scribe of Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 212. The following text intersperses stanzas from Ralegh’s poem (marked as “Far ewell”) with stanzas from the answer-poem (marked “Ans[wer]”), attributed to “Dr. Lateware” (“Latworth” in some manuscript copies). As these attributions suggest, the apparent author of the “Answer” is Dr. Richard Latewar, a chaplain of Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, whose long and openly adulterous relationship with Essex’s sister Penelope, Lady Rich, made him the Earl’s de facto brother-in-law during the 1590s. The earliest date associated with “The Lie” among its many manuscript copies is 1595 (Ralegh, Poems 33), by which time Ralegh had endured three years of exclusion from court for lying about his secret marriage to Elizabeth Throckmorton, one of the Queen’s maids of honour. Ralegh finally recovered his position at court in May 1597, thanks to his cultivation of Cecil and Essex. During the naval expedition to the Azores that summer, however, the relationship between Ralegh and Essex collapsed and it seems likely that the anti-Ralegh rhymes by Essexians such as Latewar were written after Ralegh re-emerged as an opponent of Essex in late 1597. Here Ralegh’s bitter “farewell” to the courtly life from which he had been excluded is transmuted to become a poem urging respect for the institutions scorned by Ralegh and instead wishing good riddance to Ralegh himself, whose name is mocked as “Rawhead” and “rawlye made against all stats”. Latewar’s “Answer” also repeatedly condemns qualities and actions associated with Ralegh, such as excessive “ambition”, “pride” and “spendinge”. As indicated in the textual notes, the version of Ralegh’s poem answered in this manuscript lacks one stanza found in some other copies which circulated in the 1590s.

“W R farewell made by D: Lat:”

Far: Goe soule the bodies guest

Upon a thanckles arrante

Spare not to tuch the best

The truth shalbee thy warrante
Goe since I needs must dye
And give the world the lye.

Ans: flye soule the bodies guide
with speede in honors arrante
feare not to touch prince pride
duty shall bee thy warrante
And since thou needs must flye
Give him againe the lye

f: Say to the court it glowes
And shines like rotten woode
Say to the church it showes
whats good, yet doth no good
If Courte or Church replye
Give Courte & Church the lye

A: Say to the Courte it shines
Gone is that rotten woode
from courte & church devine
which never there did good
If Rawhead\(^2\) this denye
Tell him that hee doth lye

f: Tell potentats they live
Actinge but others actions\(^3\)
Not lovd unles they give
Not stronge but by a faction
If potentats replye
Give potentats the lye

A: Say potentats neare\(^4\) leave - off
Actinge princelye actions
Well lov'd though grooms deceave
Stronge to subdued their factions
   And if hee this denye
   Give him againe the lye.

f:   Tell men of high condition
    That rule affaires of state
    Their purpose is ambition
    Their practise onlye hate
       And if they once replye
       Then give them all the lye

A:   Say men of high condition
    Rule well affaires of state
    They plucke downe proude ambition
    which only breedeth hate
       If Rawhead this denye
       Tell him his tongue doth lye

f:   Tell those that brave it most
    They begg for more by spendinge
    who in their greatest coste
    Seek nothinge but commendinge
       And if they make replye
       Give each of them the lye

A:   Tell him that brav'd it most
    whose begginge gott his spendinge
    was at such thankles coste
    As well deserved hanginge
       Which if hee doe denye
       Tell him that hee doth lye.
f:  Tell zeale it wants devotion
Tell love it is but lost
Tell time it meets but motion
Tell flesh it is but dust
   And wish them not replye
   for thou must give the lye

A: ——— deest

f:  Tell age it dayly wasteth
Tell honor how it alters
Tell beauty how it blasteth
Tell favour how it falters
   And as they shall replye
   Give every one the lye

A: ——— deest

f:  Tell Physick of her boldnes
Tell skill it is prevention
Tell charity of coldnes
Tell lawe it is contention
   And if they doe replye
   Straight give them all the lye

A: Say Physickes skill is bolde
diseases to prevente
And charities not colde
The law goodmen contente
   If Rawhead this denye
   Tell him that hee doth lye

f:  Tell fortune of her blindnes
Tell nature of decaye
Tell frindshippe of unkindnes
Tell justice of delaye
And if they doe replye
Give all of them the lye

A: ——— deest

f: Tell arts they have noe soundnes
But vary by esteeminge
Tell schooles they lacke profoundnes
And stand to much on seeminge
If arts & schooles replye
Give arts & schooles the lye

A: Say arts weare neare more sounde
By learnings deepe esteeminge
Nor schools weare more profonde
Then in this age is seeminge
If Rawhead this denye
Arts schooles & schollers give the lye

f: Tell fayth is fledd the cittye
Tell how the country erreth
Tell manhoode shakes off pittye
Tell vertue least preferreth
And if they doe replye
feare not to give the lye

A: Say fayth is in the cittye
In country erres not one
In men is manly pittye
Now prince of beggers gone.
Whose raw-lye made against all stats
deserves both prince & subjects hates.

f: Soe when thou hast as I
Commaunded thee done blabbinge
Although to give the lye
deserve noe lesse then stabbinge
Stabbe at thee hee that will
No stabbe thy sowle can kill

A: Now since thy taske is done
And dutye showne by blabbinge
Though little thou hast wonne
That though deservst noe stabbing
for all men out did crye
Returne prince pride his lye.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 212, fols. 88r-90r

Other known sources for A3a. Poetical Rapsodie 17; Dr Farmer Chetham Manuscript 114; First and Second Dalhousie Manuscripts 110 and 181; Bodleian MS Ashmole 51, fol. 6r; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 11r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. d.3, fol. 2v; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 146r; Bodleian MS Firth e.4, p. 3; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 172, fol. 12v; BL Add. MS 29764, fol. 9r; BL Add. MS 69847A, fol. 5r; BL MS Harley 2296, fol. 135r; BL MS Harley 6910, fol. 141v; Doctor Williams’s Library MS Jones B.60, p. 257; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 138; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 67r; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 176; Folger MS V.b.198, fol. 2r; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 32

A3

1 arrante: i.e. errand.

2 Rawhead: often used in a phrase with “bloody-bones” as the name of a bug-bear to terrify children (OED), but also an obvious allusion to Ralegh’s name. The reference to Ralegh as “rotten woode” expelled “from courte & church devine” turns the wording of his poem “Goe soule the bodies guest” against him; however, the allusion also presumably reflects more directly on Ralegh’s own career—specifically his sequestration from court in 1592 and the curious investigation of charges of atheism
against him and his friends held in Dorset in March 1594.

3 Actinge but others actions: i.e. acting only by means of the actions of others. This line, like the verse as a whole, could mean either that a prince can only be strong by working through others, or only if factional politics among the courtiers permit him to seem strong. The former reading makes the prince a puppet-mast er, while the latter makes him a puppet—a proposition repugnant to official Tudor notions of royal authority (as the answering verse shows).

4 neare: never.

5 bravd: put on an impressive display to the world.

6 whose begginge gott his spendinge: Ralegh’s wealth was heavily dependent upon the royal grants he won from the Queen in the 1580s.

7 zeale...devotion: i.e. excessive commitment to the display of faith results in losing the essential qualities that make it laudable. This could be a comment on either Catholic or Puritan extremism (or both).

8 lost: probable scribal error; read “lust”.

9 meets: measures out.

10 deest: “it is lacking”.

11 blasteth: is blasted, worn away.

12 lye: a variant of Ralegh’s poem, dated 1595, includes another stanza at this point: “Tell wyt how mutche it wrangles, / In tyckle poynts of nycenes / tell wysdom shee intangles / her sellfe in others wysenes / and when they do replye / strayght gyve them boothe the lye” (Ralegh, Poems 32; ll. 43-48).

13 Physicke: medicine or, more generally, natural philosophy. The “Answer” focuses on the former meaning.

14 skill: the human capacity to reason.

15 prevention: anticipation; more specifically action to avoid ill-effects.

16 arts: i.e. the liberal arts.

17 seeminge: appropriate.

18 is: probable scribal error; read “it’s”.

73
19 preferreth: advances, promotes.

20 though: probable scribal error; read “thou”.
A3c Staye Conick soule thy errante

Notes. This is yet another answer to “Goe soule the bodies guest”, rebutting the latter poem almost point by point. It survives in only one known manuscript copy and may not have been widely disseminated. The reference to the “Brave Sovereyne” as “She” confirms that it was written during Elizabeth’s reign. Prominent references to “atheism” and “Fortune” again demonstrate the link which contemporaries made between “Goe soule” and Sir Walter Ralegh. This poem’s awkward syntax makes it less successful as an example of poetic skill than some of the other replies to “Goe soule”, but the author’s scorn for Ralegh is passionate and direct.

Staye Conick soule thy errante
And lett the beste alone
The worst skornes forged warrante
Thy Patron now is gonn
The lyes thou gave so hott
Returns into thy throte.

The Courte hathe settled suernes
In bannishinge sutche bouldnes:
The Churtle reteynes her puernes
Though Atheysts shewe theyr couldnes
The Courte and Churcthe though
Turnes Lyes into thy face

The Potentates reply
Thow base by them advanced
Sinisterly sores yhe
And at theyr actions glanced.
They for this thanck-less parte
Turnes Lyes into thy harte.

States-men seeke common good
And shunn bothe hate and faction
Adventure welthe and blud
To maynteyn cuntryes action
And these with grete detest
Turnes Lyes into thy brest.

The Courtes attending trayne
Brave Sovereynes servyce tender
For vertues worth agayne
She\(^6\) recompence doth tender
The Lyes that these have hearde
They turne into thy bearde

Both zeale and Love thoue slan\(^7\)
With thy envenomed tunge
Tyme motions fleshly dangers
To the thow dust and dunge
And till that thow be deade\(^8\)
Turnes Lyes uppon thy heade.

Age, Honor, Beuty, Favour
As lykes the\(^9\) now thow changest
Thow all of change doest savoure
And in those humors raungest\(^10\)
These for reportes unkyende
Turnes Lyes into thy myende.

Detractor bothe from witt
And wisedoms sacred skill
A Curb\(^11\) and cutting bitt\(^12\)
Must reave\(^13\) thy wrestling will
These lykewyse by assynement
Turnes Lyes into thy judgement
Phisick and Charitye
Wronged by skill-less rayling
Lawe termed enmity
Fyends thy opinions fayling
And for those termes unfitt
Turnes Lyes into thy witt

Fortune was blyende to rayse the
By nature, frendshipps foe
Justice indeed delayse the
From whither thow must goe
And these whome thow doste mayme
Trust lyes into thy name.

Thow art-less, gibes at Art
And scoffes att schooles of lerning
Schollers skorne this prowde parte
And gives thee (witless
And f his sharpe contro
Turne into thy hou

Citty thy faythe hath proved,
Cuntry, glad of thy assence
Mannhoode and vertue moved
To hear thy senseless sentence
They, for thow art prone to stryfe
Gives Lyes to all thy Lyefe.

Now Blabber soone repent the
Of this thy Lyinge vayne
Eatche state wil ells torment the
When thow returnes agayne
Mean whyle unto thy shame
They Bastonade\textsuperscript{21} thy fame.

\textbf{Source.} Bodleian MS Tanner 306*, fol. 188r-v

\textbf{Other known sources.} Ralegh, \textit{Poems} 42

A3c

1 \textit{Staye Conick...alone}: i.e. the “conick” soul should abandon its errand and cease criticizing the high and mighty. Although its general meaning is clear, the word “conick” is somewhat problematic. It may be “conical” (i.e. crooked or irregular in motion and purpose) or perhaps “cunning” (i.e. clever, sly).

2 \textit{The worst...warrante}: even the least honorable members of society (i.e. those most likely to be jealous of “the best” and willing to see them slandered) reject the claim to truth (made in “Goe soule the bodies gueste”) and recognize this criticism as unjustified. The “truth” claimed by the author of “Goe soule” is here described as being exposed as a “forged warrante”—hence “thy Patron” (i.e. the supposed “truth”) is claimed in the following line to be “now...gonn”.

3 \textit{Though Atheysts...couldnes}: another allusion to the “atheism” which was so widely associated with Ralegh and his friends.

4 \textit{The Courte and Churcch though}: this line is marred by a probable scribal error and a missing word at the end of the line, lost due to damage to the manuscript; read “The Courte and Churcch through grace”.

5 \textit{Thow base...glanced}: although potentates advance base men, the actions of those who soar high by indirect means are censured.

6 \textit{She}: i.e. Elizabeth I, the “brave Sovereyne”.

7 \textit{slan}: damaged manuscript; read “slander”.

8 \textit{Tyme motions...deade}: i.e. time brings fleshly dangers closer to thee, thou dust and dung, (and will continue to do so) until thou be dead.

9 \textit{As lyekes the}: i.e. as it pleases thee.

10 \textit{raungest}: ranges, roams about.

11 \textit{Curb}: a strap passing under the jaw of a horse and attaching to the ends of the bit.
cutting bitt: a form of bit which cuts the mouth of an unruly horse.

reave: remove, or take possession of, by force.

skill-less rayling: irrational and baseless criticizing. The use of the word “skill” here also suggests a contrast between the intellectual accomplishments required in medicine and the mere “rayling” of the author of “Goe soule the bodies guest”.

Fortune was blyende to rayse the: another allusion to Ralegh, who was strongly associated with “Fortune”, as the supposed author of “Goe soule the bodies guest”. During the period of his meteoric rise to royal favour in the mid-1580s, the connection between Ralegh and “Fortune” was made by his enemies to suggest that he had won success that was entirely undeserved by birth or honorable conduct. Ralegh’s subsequent career gave his association with “Fortune” even greater piquancy. As Sir Robert Naunton (writing several years after Ralegh’s execution) observed: “Sir Walter Ralegh was one that it seems fortune had picked out of purpose of whom to make an example or to use as a tennis ball thereby to show what she could do, for she tossed him up of nothing, and to and fro, and thence down to little more than wherein she found him, a bare gentleman” (71).

Trust: probable scribal error; “Thrust” would be a better reading.

And gives thee (witless: damaged manuscript; a word is missing from the end of this line.

And f his sharpe contro: damaged manuscript.

Turne into thy hou: damaged manuscript.

assence: perhaps the obsolete form of the word “essence”, here meaning “importance”.

Bastonade: bastinado; to thrash with a stick (OED). Cudgeling a gentleman in this manner was an extreme and calculated form of humiliation, reducing him to the level of a servant or child who could be punished in this way.
Notes. This attack on Ralegh is linked with Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, although the case for his authorship is weak, and the attribution to the Earl may simply reflect his notorious hostility towards Ralegh. One manuscript copy suggests that it circulated as early as 1595, predating the second and final rupture between Essex and Ralegh in 1597 (DeVere 107-08). This makes it unlikely that Essex himself wrote this riposte, although it is conceivable that the anonymous circulation of “Goe Soule the bodies guest” provided the Earl with an opportunity to vent his own political frustrations in a way which enabled him to cast himself as the champion of political orthodoxy. Regardless of its authorship, this verse scorns the content and the author of “The Lie” almost stanza by stanza. It is answered in kind in (“Courts commender states mantayner”).

“Another answere thought to bee made by R. Essex”

Courts scorne, states disgracinge
Potentates scoffe, goverments defacinge
Prelates nippe, churches unhallowinge
Artes injurye, vertues debasinge
Ages monster honours wastinge
Beauties blemish, favours blastinge
Witts excremente, wisdoms vomitte
Physickes scorne, lawes commette
Fortunes childe, natures defiler
Justices revenger, frindshippes beguiler

Such is the songe, such is the author
Worthy to bee rewarded with a halter.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 212, fol. 91r

Other known sources. DeVere 60; Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 164; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 172, fol. 13r; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 34
lawes commette: comets were seen as portents of major events. This phrase seems to imply inevitable legal retribution against “the author” rather than disaster for the legal system.

Fortunes childe: Ralegh was often associated with Fortune. To his critics, his success in winning Elizabeth’s favour was otherwise incomprehensible and the fortunate nature of this success was emphasized to indicate that it was undeserved.

halter: a noose for a hanging.
A5 Courts commender states mantayner

Notes. This is a point-for-point answer to “Courts scorne, states disgracing”, reversing the charges made in that poem. In one source it is attributed to Ralegh himself (Bodleian MS Ashmole 781).

“In reprooie of this made by the first”

Courts commender states mantayner
Potentates defender, goverments gayner
Prelats prayser, churches preacher
Arts rayser, vertues teacher,
Ages rewarder, honors strengthener
Witts admirer, wisdoms scholler
Physicks desirer, laws follower
Fortunes blamer, natures observer
Justice proclaymer, friendshippes preserver.

Such is the author, such is the songe
Returninge the halter,¹ contemninge the wronge.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 212, fol. 91r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 164; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 172, fol. 13r

¹ halter: a noose for a hanging.
A6 Go Eccho of the minde

Notes. This is another poem written in answer to Ralegh’s “Goe soule the bodies guest”. Like “Courts scorne, states disgracinge”, it has occasionally been attributed to Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex. Although May has noted that this verse has a sing-song metre which is similar to a poem written by Essex (DeVere 106-08), the case for this attribution is weak, and its authorship remains uncertain. Nonetheless, the poem’s target is clearly Ralegh—a point made by the pun in the third line (“so rawe a lye”). Some copies even read this line as “that rude Rawly” (Ralegh, Poems 153).

“Another answere made by an unknowne author”

Go Eccho of the minde
A careles truth protest
Make answere that so rawe a lye
Noe stomacke can disgest

for why the lies discente
Is ever base to tell
To us it came from Italye
To them it came from hell

what reasons prove, confesse
what slander sayth, denye
Lett not untruth with triumphe passe
yett never give the lye.

Confesse in glitteringe courte
All is not gold doth shine
yet say that pure and much fine gold
Growes in that golden clime

Confesse that many tares
May overspread the grownde
Yet saye within the fielde of golde
Pure corne is to bee founde

Confesse some unjust judge
The widdowes right delaye
Yet say there ar some Samuells
That will not say her naye

Admitte some man of state
Doe pitch his thoughts too high
Is that a rule to all the rest
Their loyalty to trye

Your witt is in the wayne
your Autumnne in the budd
you argue from particulars
your reason is not good.

And still that men may see
Lesse reason to commend you
I marvaile much amonge the rest
How schools & arts offend you.

But why pursue I thus
The waigthles woords of winde
The more the Crabb doth seeke to creepe
The more shee is behinde

In courte & commonwealth
In church & countrey both
what? nothinge good, but all so badd
That every man may loath.

The farther that you raunge
your error is the wider
The Bee sometime doth honey sucke
But sure you are the spider.

And this my counsell is
for that you want a name
To seeke some corner in the darke
To hide your selfe from shame.

There wrappe the silly\(^5\) flye
within your spitefull webbe
But courte and church may coante\(^6\) you well
They ar at no such ebbe.

As quarrells once begunne
Ar not so quickly ended
So many faults ar founde
But none so soone amended.

But when you come againe
To give the worlde the lye
I pray you teach them how to live
And tell them how to dye.

\textbf{Source.} Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 212, fols. 90r-91r

\textbf{Other known sources.} DeVere 60; \textit{Dr Farmer Chetham Manuscript} 118; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 172, fol. 13r; Doctor Williams’s Library MS Jones B.60, p. 261; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 67v

\textbf{A6}

\(^1\) from Italye: allusion to the works of Machiavelli, whose association with political dissimulation and irreligion made the term “Machiavel” an Elizabethan synonym for a scheming villain.
2 *tares*: a species of vetch, which occurred in corn-fields as a weed.

3 *Samuells*: reference to Samuel, the Old Testament prophet and law-giver.

4 *Crabb doth seeke to creepe*: like a crab’s sidewise movement, the pen in the writer’s hand moves across the page.

5 *silly*: weak, helpless; deserving of pity.

6 *coante*: a textual problem. This may be “coame”, a verb meaning to split into fissures or gape open; however, some manuscripts read this word as “want” (i.e. court and Church can easily do without him (Ralegh, *Poems* 153)).
Notes. With its pastoral style and focus on rivers, this poem is reminiscent (perhaps consciously) of work by Edmund Spenser, a friend and client of Sir Walter Ralegh who became more closely associated with Essex in the mid-1590s. Spenser’s “Prothalamion” (1596) celebrated the double marriage of the two daughters of the Earl of Worcester, a close ally of Essex, at Essex House on 8 November 1596. It was in this poem that Essex was described as “Great Englands glory and the Worlds wide wonder” (Spenser 602; l. 147). However, the animal fable of “Where Medwaye greetes old Thamesis silver streames” also echoes Spenser’s earlier Prosopapia: or Mother Hubberd’s Tale (written c.1580 and published 1591), whose apparent allusion to William Cecil, Lord Treasurer Burghley, as a deceitful fox (and perhaps also to his son Robert as an ape) was picked up by Catholic polemicists attacking the so-called regnum Cecilianum in 1592. Although many poetic allusions (including those in Spenser’s work) are often difficult to interpret, most of the identifications here are obvious heraldic allusions, and are aided by explicit marginal annotations. Internal evidence suggests that this poem was probably composed in early October 1599, after Essex’s return from Ireland and before his replacement as commander there by Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy. The poem is discussed by Marotti (95-98).

“A dreame alludinge to my L of Essex, and his adversaries”

Where Medwaye greetes old Thamesis silver streames
There did I sleepe, and then my thought did dreame
A stately HART did grase on Northerne shore
of Thamaesis, his head full highe he bore
Of feature comelie, and ofcouradge bold
Sterne was his lookes, yet lov’d of young and old.
The LION helde him deere, and had cause whie
He did the lion’s throne soe fortefie
That neither Romish wolfe nor Spanishe beare
The Lion cold hurte or one poore lambkin teare.
Me thought I sawe a CAMMELS uglie broode
That on the other side of Medwaie stood
He coulde not relishe silver Medwaes foame
A muddye BROOKE⁶ pleas’d better mixt with loame. [m.note: “L. Cobham”]
His meate blood RAWE,⁷ his salletts all were REWE.⁸ [m.note: “Sir Walt Rawleigh”]
Whose Wardes⁹ he swallowe could, and never chewe.
The gorged Camell to the Lion came
God sheilde your Grace, and to your foes bring shame.
The HART is all to great, he beares the swaye
The peoples love he hathe, your loves decay
If a preservative your Grace will take
Il’e make you stronger, Il’e make proude HARTE to quake
Of Camels milke you shall twoe spoonefulles take
Treble as much from fleeringe¹⁰ Brooke his lake
To this yow must ad a stalke of bitter REWE
With sugred lies well altogether brewe
A leafe wee’le have from Co-oake¹¹ old his tree [m.note: “Sir Ed: Coke”]
That planted was of late in Cicelye¹² [m.note: “Sir Ro: Cecyll”]
Should I quoth Lion thinke he meanes me ill
My banners he displaide on Gallian plaine.¹³
And Gerreon foil’d¹⁴ and did us glorie gaine
O quoth the Cammel Hibernia¹⁵ let him swaye
And tame the woolfes which on there foldes doe praie
Me thought he cheerelie went, yet scarce was there
But home bredd wolves, our flockes at home did teare
A thowsand wolves he found and made them stoope
And all he tam’d,¹⁶ whoe sicke and doth not droope
He sicke retir’d, to Lion welcome was
Till Camell brought a poison in a Glass
Which scarce had warm’d the Hart but night was daie
And Lion roard, and th’ Hart was sent awaye¹⁷
O that a Camell should a lion leade
I saide, and thought I dream’d yet did I dreade
Cammell for burthen is, and for the waie
And not for kingdoms sterne and scepters swaye.
By sleight yet Camell swaies, and LION sleepe
And noble Hart in dampie dongeon\(^{18}\) keepes
Wake noble Lion and this Cammell scorne
And teare him that thy Noble Hart hath torne.
Your Grace to Ireland should the Camell send
His backe will beare Tirone\(^{19}\) and never bend
Or him or els white liverd LION\(^{20}\) sende
Poore Hart escape, this Lion soone will mend
To Ireland (generall) thrice renowned swaine
That bravelie triump’t on St. James his plaine.\(^{21}\)
Goodlye thie feature is, thy stature’s talle
Thy couradge foh,\(^{22}\) thie witt God knowes is smalle.
Sterne Yorke in Irishe broiles sometimes did saye
Send Sommerset if yow will loose the daye\(^{23}\)
And send this Lion alwaies pale for dreade
Hee’le take the gold and bless himself from leade
Honor to wynne to Ireland he would faine
But that ould fathers\(^{24}\) Ghost doeth him restreyne
When on his death bedd charaged him eaven soe
To Ireland (sonne) see that thou never goe
Or send him RAWE whose conscience now is seared\(^{25}\)
That knowes not Jove, nor Plato\(^{26}\) ever feared.
For he Pithagoras sowle doeth fast enclose
Within his breast, by Metempsucose\(^{27}\)
But fie he waxeth penitent of late
And sinnes of former daies he now doeth hate
He will noe more in Court faire Ladass\(^{28}\) staine
Nor Chimney money beg to Comons paine\(^{29}\)
Nor cease to be one of the dampted Crewe
Nor paye the score for puddinges that is due
Heele swere by God and worship Devill\textsuperscript{30} for gaine
Tobacco boye or sacke\textsuperscript{31} to swaye his paine

Then I awoke a frighted with the noise
And sawe my frightfull dreames were dreaminge toies.\textsuperscript{32}

\textbf{Source.} Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fols. 19r-20r

\textbf{Other known sources.} BL Add MS 58215, fol. 46v

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Where Medwaye greetes...streames}: the River Medway runs through northern Kent to meet the North Sea at Chatham. Its outflow meets that of the River Thames (“Thamesis”) at a sandbank known as the Nore, just north of Sheerness on the Isle of Sheppey.
\item \textit{HART}: male deer or stag; representing the Earl of Essex, whose crest included a deer. In 1589, George Peele described Essex as “famous by hys Crest: / His Raine Deere racking with proud and stately pace” (\textit{An eclogue gratulory} A2v).
\item \textit{LION}: Queen Elizabeth, whose royal arms as sovereign of England included lions.
\item \textit{neither Romish wolfe nor Spanishe beare}: the twin forces of international Catholicism—the papacy in Rome and the King of Spain—which seemed implacably intent upon the destruction of the Elizabethan regime and the forcible re-Catholicisation of England.
\item \textit{CAMMELS}: Sir Robert Cecil, whose deformed back was often cruelly mocked, as in the marginal note; “crookbackt”, like a camel.
\item \textit{BROOKE}: Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham, Cecil’s brother-in-law.
\item \textit{RAWE}: allusion to the name of Ralegh.
\item \textit{sallets all were REWE}: a sallet was a piece of armour, part of a helmet; “rew” is an old-fashioned variant of “raw”.
\item \textit{Wardes}: Cecil was appointed Master of the Court of Wards in May 1599, succeeding his father Lord Burghley (who had died in August 1598). Cecil’s appointment was an especially bitter blow to Essex, who had long been mooted as Burghley’s successor in the post.
\item \textit{fleeringe}: grinning; laughing scornfully or mockingly.
\end{enumerate}
Co-oake: Sir Edward Coke. As Attorney-General, he led the Crown’s various legal actions against Essex. He also harboured a grudge against the Earl for very publicly (but unsuccessfully) backing Francis Bacon for the post of Attorney-General in 1593.

Cicelye: pun on the name Cecil.

Gallian plaine: Essex commanded an English expeditionary force to France (Gallia) in 1591-92.

Gerreon foil’d: in Greek mythology, Geryon was a triple-bodied, winged giant whose famous herd of red cattle was stolen by Hercules as the tenth of his twelve labours. Geryon supposedly lived in the far west, which suggests that he represents here the King of Spain. This interpretation is especially probable because it seems to embody another allusion to the work of Edmund Spenser. In Spenser’s Faerie Queene, Book 5, Cantos 10-11 (published in 1596), the “fell Tyrant” Geryoneo, the son of Geryon, is described as having seized the lands of Belge (i.e. the embodiment of the Low Countries) and assailing Sir Burbon (i.e. Henri IV of France). This is a clear reference to the forces of Philip II of Spain—“th’armes and legs of three, to succour him in fight” of the three-bodied Geryoneo (5.10.8) seemingly alluding to Philip’s three chief dominions of Spain, Portugal and either Flanders or the New World. “Foil’d” means trampled under foot, defeated. In 1596, Essex and the Lord Admiral, Charles Howard, led a large amphibious force which destroyed a Spanish fleet, stormed the Spanish city of Cadiz (in poetic terms, situated close to the Pillars of Hercules—the Straits of Gibraltar) and carried off a vast quantity of booty, humiliating and enraging Philip.

Hibernia: Ireland. Some of Essex’s supporters believed that his appointment as Lord Lieutenant in Ireland in 1599 was deliberately engineered by his enemies to keep him away from the Queen and make him dependent upon their good will for the provision of fresh supplies.

And tame the woolfes...And all he tam’d: the Camel (Cecil) urges Elizabeth to send Essex to Ireland to end the rebellion that was ravaging that kingdom and threatening the Queen’s authority there (“tame the woolfes...there”). Essex found the task far more demanding than he had been led to believe (encountering “a thowsand wolves” there), but finally brought the Queen’s enemies to heel. However, while Essex was in Ireland, “home bredd wolves” (i.e. Essex’s domestic rivals, led by Cecil himself) had taken advantage of the Earl’s absence to gorge themselves upon “our flockes at home” (i.e. without Essex’s presence to serve as a counterweight, his rivals had been able to amass wealth and authority for themselves, regardless of the harm which this caused to the Queen and her other subjects). In reality, Essex was only able to reimpose a tenuous English authority on the southern half of Ireland and could do no more than arrange a temporary truce with Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone in Ulster. Essex’s domestic rivals certainly seemed to benefit from his absence, with Cecil, for example, being appointed Master of the Court of Wards.

He sicke retir’d...sent awaye: describing Essex’s unexpected return to court from Ireland early in the morning of 28 September 1599. According to one account, the travel-smeared Essex initially found “a sweet calm” with Elizabeth, but after lunch “found her much changed in that small tyme” (Collins
2:127). He was subsequently placed under arrest. The reference to the Camel (i.e. Cecil) bringing poison in a glass is probably not to be taken literally (as in the famous case of Dr. Roderigo Lopez, who was executed in 1594 for allegedly trying to poison the Queen), but in the more general sense that his dissimulation turned the truthfulness associated with glass (or a mirror) on its head, bewitching the Queen into seeing night as day.

18 *dampie dongeon*: Essex was remanded into the custody of Lord Keeper Egerton at York House.

19 *Tirone*: Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone, leader of the Irish confederation in arms against Elizabeth, and allied with Spain. The plea that the Lion (Elizabeth) should allow the Hart (Essex) to finish his work in Ireland seems to suggest that this poem was written before Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, was appointed as his successor in Ireland on 18 October 1599.

20 *white liverd LION*: Charles Howard, Lord Howard of Effingham, Lord Admiral of England and created Earl of Nottingham in 1597. Lord Admiral Nottingham is called a lion because the Howard crest includes “a lion on a chapeau”.

21 *bravelie triump’t...plaine*: Nottingham served as commander of the army raised during August 1599 in expectation of a new Spanish Armada. The mobilisation proved a false alarm (mocked as “the Invisible Armada”), but large numbers of troops briefly massed around London.


23 *Sterne Yorke...loose the daye*: Nottingham is here compared to Edmund Beaufort, 2nd Duke of Somerset (d.1455), who cut a fine figure at the court of Henry VI and was protected by the King, despite consistent military failure and calls that he should face trial for his misdeeds. Somerset was despised as an incompetent coward by Richard, Duke of York (1411-1460), whose own military efforts in France during the early 1440s had been undermined by the diversion of resources to John Beaufort, 1st Duke of Somerset. York subsequently became heir presumptive to Henry VI in 1447, but was forced to serve as Lord Lieutenant in Ireland by his enemies, 1449-1450. This comparison between Nottingham and Somerset implicitly compares Essex to York, who had Somerset arrested during his brief regency in 1453.

24 *ould fathers*: reference to William Howard, Lord Howard of Effingham (1510?-1573).

25 *seared*: dried up, withered, rendered incapable of feeling; a term often applied to the consciences of sinners in religious discourse of this period.

26 *Jove, nor Plato*: Jove, or Jupiter, was king of the gods in the classical pantheon. Plato (427-347 BC) was one of the most famous philosophers of the classical world, but his name here may stand for philosophy itself. Here the author jokingly reverses the fear and knowledge associated with Jove and Plato.
Pythagoras...Metempsucose: Pythagoras (582-500 BC), the classical philosopher and mathematician, was famous for espousing the notion of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, by which the human body was only a temporary vessel for a soul which might be reborn into different bodies time and again.

Ladass: possible scribal error; perhaps read “Ladies”. Ralegh was famously banned from court in 1592 after his secret marriage to the Maid of Honour Elizabeth Throckmorton was revealed when she gave birth to a son.

Chimney...paine: Ralegh was notorious for his willingness to extract money by any means possible.

swere by God and worship Devill: the charge of atheism, commonly levelled against Ralegh.

Tobacco boye or sacke: this should perhaps be read as “Tobacco, boye, or sacke”, thereby listing a series of vices associated with Ralegh. Ralegh was a famous pipe-smoker and supposedly introduced tobacco to England from the New World. The new fashion for smoking was seen by many as dangerously decadent and a sign of sheer hedonism. The mention of “boye” suggests the crime of sodomy, which was often associated with atheism, of which Ralegh was so often accused. “Sacke” is white wine from Spain or the Canary Islands and hence suggests drunkenness. This list of vices is notable for representing un-English (or, in the case of sodomy, unnatural and un-Christian) debauchery supposedly practised by Ralegh and his friends.

toies: tricks; idle fancies.
Notes. This poem on enemies of the Earl of Essex is dated 20 December 1599 in one source (BL Add MS 5956). At this time, the sickness which Essex had suffered in Ireland brought him to the point of death. Much to the consternation of the Queen and Privy Council, the sympathy which many Londoners felt for the Earl and his plight encouraged many city churches to ring their bells when the rumour circulated that he had died. The bitterness which partisans of Essex felt towards his enemies also blighted the grand celebration of Christmas at court, where “upon the very white walls much villany hath been written against Master Secretary” (Collins 2.154). The poem below offers a virtual roll-call of Essex’s enemies.

A8  Admir-all weaknes wronges the right

Admir-all weaknes wronges the right
Honor in generall looseth hir sight
Secrett are ever their designes
through whose desert true honor pynes

Award in worth that is esteem’d
by vertues wrack must be redeem’d.
pryde spight & pollicie taketh place
in steade of conscience honor & grace

Noe Cob am that worketh ill
or frame my tongue to enemies will.
Godes ordinance must governe all.
Lett noe man smile at vertues fall.

Care you that list. For I care not
by crooked waies true worth to blott
Nor will I stand upon the ground
Where such impietie doth abound.

But basely clothed all in Gray
unto the Court I’le take my waie
where though I can no Eagle see
a Cub is good enough for mee.

Whose malice fitting to his mynde
will frame his apish witt\textsuperscript{14} by kynde
and make his use of present tyme
by waies ridiculous to clyme.

There may yow see walk hand in hand
the polititians of our land
that wrong artes glorie with a tongue
dipt in Water from Limbo\textsuperscript{15} spronge

These bussards\textsuperscript{16} bold with eageles plumes
to wrong true noblenes resumes.
Actions factions now wee fynde\textsuperscript{17}
they that see nothing must be blynde.

\textbf{Source.} Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 20v

\textbf{Other known sources.} Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fol. 7r; Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272, p. 41; BL Add. MS 5956, fol. 23r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 81r

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Admir-all weaknes}: Charles Howard, Lord Admiral Nottingham.

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Honor in generall}: one copy has the marginal note here: “Essex lieutenant Generall of England” (Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272).

\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Secrett are}: pun on “secretary” (i.e. Sir Robert Cecil).

\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Award}: allusion to the mastership of the Court of Wards, which was granted to Cecil in May 1599 during Essex’s absence in Ireland. One copy has the marginal note here: “The Court of Wardes promised to Essex, given to Essex” (Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272).

\textsuperscript{5} \textit{wracke}: i.e. “wreck”.

\textsuperscript{6} \textit{Noe Cob am I}: allusion to Lord Cobham. A “cob” is big or great man, a leader.

\textsuperscript{7} \textit{Godes ordinance}: one copy has the marginal note here: “Lieutenant of the Ordnance”; i.e. Sir George Carew, Lieutenant of the Ordnance (Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272). Although Essex was Master of the Ordnance, Carew served as his deputy and was a close friend of Cecil.
Care you: allusion to Sir George Carey, Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain.

list: wishes.

crooked waies: connects Cecil’s “crooked” back with his supposed political methods.


Eagle: unclear. The eagle was the heraldic device associated with the Stanleys, Earls of Derby. William Stanley, Earl of Derby, had staged an expensive play using the boys of St. Paul’s, London, in mid-November 1599, and was tied to Cecil by marriage, but it seems uncertain that a reference to him is intended here. It is possible that “eagle” refers rather to ancient and honourable nobility in a more general sense.

a Cub: allusion to Cecil, emphasizing that his success is based only upon his late father’s efforts.

apish witt: seemingly an allusion to Cecil, perhaps drawing upon Spenser’s notorious fable of the fox (widely interpreted as referring to Lord Treasurer Burghley) and the ape in *Mother Hubberd’s Tale* (1591).

Water from Limbo: water represents Sir Walter Ralegh (from the pronunciation of his first name), while “Limbo” here means hell.

bussards: vultures; i.e. birds that feed on the carrion of more noble animals.

Actions factions now wee fynde: “Factious Action now I finde” is a better reading.
A9 Proude and ambitious wretch that feedest on naught but faction

Notes. This libel includes all the usual themes found in the many attacks on Sir Robert Cecil, including his short stature and hunched back, his supposed monopoly of power (especially at the expense of aristocrats) and Machiavellian dissimulation, by which he allegedly controlled the Queen, dominated the anti-Essex faction and ultimately brought down Essex himself.

“Libell against Sir Robert Cecill”

Proude and ambitious wretch that feedest on naught but faction
Prevaile and fill thy selfe, and burst with vile detraction
Detraction is thy game, and hathe bene since thie youthe
And wilbe to thie dyinge daie, He lies that speakes the truthe
But well I knowe thy bosome is fraught, with naught but scorne
Dissemblinge smothfac’d dwarfe, wold god that’st ne’re bene borne
First did thy Sire and now thy selfe by Machivillian skill
Prevaile, and curbe the Peerages as well befittes your will
Secreat-are I knowe your Crookebacke spider shapen
Poison to the state and Comons, Foe to vertue frend to rapine
Soe farewell I post to hell
To bringe more newes
Good Gentlemen let this bill stand
Till some good bodie have put to his hande
God save the Queene

Source. Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fol. 20r

1 detraction: i.e. presenting the qualities of virtuous men to seem like vices.

2 First did...your will: a principal charge by Catholic polemicists against Cecil’s father (“sire”), William Cecil, Lord Burghley, was that he deliberately worked to “suppress” the political influence of the peerage. Although prominent in the regnum Cecilianum tracts of 1592, this claim was levelled
against Burghley by Catholic critics as early as 1572 (e.g. John Leslie, *A treatise of treasons against Q. Elizabeth and the croune of England* (1572)).

3 *Secreat-are:* pun on “Secretary”.

4 *let this bill stand:* a “bill” is a written document intended for public display. A more specific meaning, which seems to be implied here, is that of a formal set of charges lodged in legal proceedings to open a case. This would make this rhyme literally an indictment of Cecil.

5 *Till some...God save the Queene:* the allusion here seems to be to John Stubbes, who famously published *The discoverie of a gaping gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed* (1579), an explosive book which criticized, in the most scathing terms, Elizabeth’s intention to marry a Catholic French prince, the Duke of Anjou. Elizabeth was so angry at this public intervention in matters of state that Stubbes was punished by having his right hand cut off. Stubbes re-emphasized his patriotism—and further boosted popular support for his stance—by raising his bloody stump and crying “God save the Queene”. Elizabeth subsequently abandoned her plans to marry Anjou. The implication of this allusion seems to be that England now needs another Stubbes-like patriot (“some good bodie”) who is willing to risk the Queen’s anger by publicly denouncing Cecil and urging her to punish him. This would also suggest that Cecil is a new Anjou-like figure, whose ability to deceive the Queen threatens the realm in the most profound manner.
A10 Essex prays, Southampton playes

Notes. This rhyme seems to describe the different behaviour of Essex and his aristocratic followers after the failure of their attempt to rouse the City of London to take up arms on behalf of the Earl on 8 February 1601. The so-called Essex Rising was quickly proclaimed an act of treason by the Privy Council and its participants imprisoned—including Essex, Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, Roger Manners, Earl of Rutland, William Lord Sandys, Edward Lord Cromwell and William Parker, who was known as Lord Mounteagle but not formally recognized in that title by the Crown until 1604. By contrast, William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, was committed to the Fleet prison (where some of Essex’s followers were also housed) a few days before the Rising for the offence of seducing one of the Queen’s maids of honour (this affair is discussed more fully in relation to “Chamberlaine Chamberlaine, one of her graces kinn”). Given its content, this rhyme was written after 8 February and probably before the trial of Essex and Southampton on 19 February. Essex was executed on 25 February 1601, ending his period of prayer and reflection.

Essex prays, Southampton⁵ playes;²
Rutland³ weepes, Sandes⁴ sleepe:
Crumwell quaffes,⁵ Mounteagle⁶ laughs.
   And amongst all this treachery,
   They brought in L. Pembroke for his lechery.⁷

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 2r

Other known sources. BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 142v

A10

¹ Southampton: Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton.
² playes: presumably in the sense of gambling or playing cards.
³ Rutland: Roger Manners, Earl of Rutland.
⁴ Sandes: William Lord Sandys.
⁵ quaffes: drinks.
6 Mounteagle: William Parker, known as Lord Mounteagle.

7 They brought in...lechery: William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, was committed to the Fleet prison a few days before the Rising for the offence of seducing one of the Queen’s maids of honour.
A11  England thy early prime is gone, good Knight

Notes. This poem clearly refers to the execution of the Earl of Essex on 25 February 1601. In addition to the pun on “good knight”/“good night” and its contrast with “prime”, it seems to reflect the blow to England’s aristocracy dealt by the fall of Essex in its truncation of “knight” to “k.”. The reference to “Thy cheife Nobilitie is now a K.” is surely intended to suggest that Cecil—a mere knight—now lords it over the the nobility despite his inferior social status.

“On Essex”

England thy early prime⁴ is gone, good Knight
Thy cheife Nobilitie is now a K.²

Source. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 28

A11

¹ prime: the first hour of the day, usually taken as sunrise or 6 a.m.; more generally, the period of greatest vigour.

² K.: the abbreviation of “knight” here is perhaps intended to imply that Cecil was not even worthy to be called a proper knight. It is also possible that “K.” alludes to “Kay the Jackdaw”, the bird of borrowed feathers (cf. “I.C.U.R.”).
A12 He that in Belgia fought for Englandes Queene

Notes. This libel contrasts the long and heroic military record of Essex with the villainy of “Cankred Cecil”, who supposedly contrived the Earl’s death. While Essex’s battles were “fought for Englandes Queene”, and in every theatre in which English forces were engaged in the war against Spain, Cecil’s triumph is portrayed as that of an evil disease, the very success of which only confirms his malignity. In contrast to Essex’s repeated participation in honourable combat, Cecil “slew” him by means that reflect his own foul and dishonourable nature.

“Of Robert E. of Essex”

He that in Belgia fought for Englandes Queene;¹
   he that soe oft in bloodie-field was seene:
he that did knocke at Lisbone’s statelye gate,²
   He that was fitt’st to give Mars check-mate:³
He that proud Spaine so oft did put in feare:
   He that in Fra: at Roune⁴ brave Armes did beare:
He that did Cales surprise and Captaines wake:⁵
   He that strong seated Flores, and Corves did take⁶
He that did make tyrone to yeald to peace;⁷
   Him Cankred Cecill slew, but not disease.⁸

Source. CUL Add. MS 4138, fol. 49r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 158r

¹ He that in Belgia...Queene: in 1586, Essex served as Lieutenant-General of the cavalry in the Anglo-Dutch army, which was commanded by his step-father, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Essex was subsequently knighted for his bravery at the battle of Zutphen (in which Sir Philip Sidney was mortally wounded) in September 1586.

² he that did knocke...gate: in April 1589, Essex escaped from court to join the expedition which Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake led against Spain and Portugal. When the English army proved
unable to capture the Portuguese capital of Lisbon, Essex thrust his lance into the city gates before he reluctantly joined the retreat. George Peele celebrated this action in his *Eclogue gratulory* (1589), claiming that Essex “brake his Launce, with terror and renowne, / Against the gates of slaughtered Rhemus Towne” (B1r-v).

3 *give Mars check-mate:* Mars was the classical god of war, while “check-mate” alludes to victory in chess. Essex is known to have played chess, but the meaning here is probably that Essex’s expertise in war exceeded even that of Mars himself.

4 *Fra: at Roune:* Essex commanded an English army that was sent to France in 1591 to join the forces of Henri IV of France in besieging the city of Rouen, which was controlled by forces of the Catholic League which were opposed to Henri’s claim to the French Crown. Essex repeatedly joined the frontline fighting in this unsuccessful campaign, despite repeated warnings from Elizabeth not to endanger himself.

5 *He that did Cales surprise...wake:* in 1596, Essex was co-commander (with the Lord Admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham) of an English fleet which launched a surprise attack on the Spanish port of Cadiz (“Cales”) and destroyed a Spanish fleet guarding its harbour. Essex subsequently landed a small number of soldiers and attacked the city so quickly that the Spanish defenders panicked and the Earl and his men were able to capture Cadiz itself.

6 *He that strong seated Flores...take:* in 1597, Essex commanded a major naval expedition which sailed to the Azores Islands (the so-called “Azores” or “Islands” voyage), briefly occupying the islands of Flores and Cuervo.

7 *He that did make tyrone...peace:* a rather optimistic interpretation of Essex’s Irish campaign of 1599. Essex was given an army of unprecedented size and charged with crushing the “rebellion” led by Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone. Despite some initial success in the south, Essex found himself unable to assault Tyrone’s main army in Ulster and consequently agreed a truce with the rebel leader. This truce infuriated Elizabeth and prompted charges of misconduct against Essex after his return to England.

8 *Him Cankred Cecill...disease:* i.e. “Cankred Cecil” contrived Essex’s death, but such great cunning is still insufficient to cure Cecil of his own incurable malignity. The idea that Cecil “slew” Essex refers to the contemporary belief that Cecil either goaded Essex into his fatal mis-step (using Ralegh, Cobham and Grey, in particular, as his cat’s-paws) or was responsible for branding as treason Essex’s effort to rally support within the City of London on 8 February 1601, and ensuring that Essex was undeservedly sentenced to death for this action.
Notes. Internal evidence indicates that this poem was written shortly after the fall of Essex in February 1601. It mocks the behaviour of many courtiers, but directs its most bitter comments at Sir Robert Cecil and Sir Walter Ralegh, who are here presented as the chief beneficiaries of Essex’s death.

Chamberlaine, one of her graces kinn
Foole he hathe ever binn, with his Joane silver pinn
Rawe without and Foule within, she makes his Coxcombe thinn
and shakes in everie Lymm
quicksilver is in his head.
but his witt all is Lead.

Lord for thy pittie

Partie Beard was a feard, when they Ran at the heard
The Raynedeare was Imbost, the white do she was Lost,
Pembrooke he strooke her downe, and tooke her from the Clown,

Lord for thy pittie

Little Cecill tripps up and downe, he Rules bothe Court & Croun
with his great Burghley Clowne, in his Longe fox-furd gowne
with his Longe proclamacion, hee saith hee saved the Towne
is it not Likelie

Little Gray, Litle Gray, made a souldier in the monthe of may
hee made a Ladies Fray, turnd aboute & ran away
he shall be advanced as men say, for to bear some great sway

Lord for thy pittie.

Bedford he ran awaie when wee had lost the day
yet moste his honor pay, so it is assigned
yf his Fyne Dauncing Dame, do not their hard harts tame

1 Chamberlaine
2 Chamberlaine
3 Foole
4 Partie Beard
5 was a feard
6 The Raynedeare
7 was Imbost
8 Pembrooke
9 Little Cecill
10 with his great Burghley Clowne
11 with his Longe proclamacion
12 Little Gray
13 made a Ladies Fray
14 yf his Fyne Dauncing Dame
15 do not their hard harts tame
and say it is a shame, Ffooles should bee Fyned:

Foulke and John, Foulke and John:
Yow two shall rise anon
when wiser men be gonn
Yow two can reache as farre
when honors rifieled are
as the best men, of warr.
yf non your hands doe Barr:
    Lord for thy pittie

Rawley doth tyme bestride
yet uphill he can not ryde
for all his bloooddie pride
he lieth twixt tyme and tyde
sekes Taxes in the Tynn
strips the poore to the skynn,
yet sais it is no synn
    Lord for thy pittie

Source. BL MS Harley 2127, fol. 34r

Other known sources. PRO SP 12/278/23

A13

1 Chamberlaine: George Carey, Lord Hunsdon, Lord Chamberlain and a cousin of the Queen.

2 Joan silver pinn: unclear; probably either an allusion to a mistress of Hunsdon, or to mercury ("quicksilver"), which was used as a treatment for syphilis, but had debilitating and potentially fatal side-effects.

3 Rawe...Lead: description of the physical manifestations of Hunsdon’s syphilis, which brought him close to death in May 1601. A “coxcombe” is a cap worn by a jester in the shape of a cockrel’s comb and symbolic of foolishness. As well as emphasizing his addled wits, the thinning of Hunsdon’s
“coxcombe” may refer to the loss of his hair and/or to sexual impotence.

4 *Partie Beard:* Sir William Knollys, the Comptroller of the Queen’s Household. He was so-called because his beard showed a mix of white, black and fair hair (Haynes 46).

5 *the heard:* the young women at court; perhaps more specifically the Queen’s maids of honour.

6 *Raynedeare:* the Queen. Presumably the reindeer’s large horns represent the Queen’s crown. The reference to the reindeer as “she” and the fact that this verse was apparently written after Essex’s execution mean that this cannot be an allusion to Essex, whose stag crest was sometimes called a reindeer.

7 *Imbost:* foaming at the mouth, driven to exhausted fury; hence an allusion to the Queen’s furious reaction to events.

8 *the white do...the Clown:* the “white do” (i.e. “doe”) is Mary Fitton, a young Maid of Honour who became pregnant to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. On Elizabeth’s orders, Pembroke was sent to the Fleet prison in early February 1601, but refused to marry Mary Fitton. The “Clown” is another reference to Sir William Knollys, who was besotted with Fitton, but trapped in an unhappy marriage and bound by his promise to Fitton’s family to act as her protector at court (Hammer, “Sex and the Virgin Queen” 84, 94, 96; Haynes 44-49).

9 *Little Cecill:* Sir Robert Cecil.

10 *his great Burghley Clowne:* Thomas Cecil, 2nd Lord Burghley, Cecil’s older brother.

11 *Longe proclamacion...Towne:* Essex and his followers were publicly proclaimed as traitors during their attempt to rally armed support in the City of London. The proclamation was read out by Lord Burghley. The government subsequently claimed that Essex had sought to capture London.

12 *Litle Gray...monthe of may:* Thomas Grey, Lord Grey of Wilton, a bitter adversary of Essex and personal enemy of Southampton. In May 1600, he went to fight in the Low Countries where he subsequently took part in the great Dutch victory over the Spanish army at Nieuport.

13 *hee made...ran away:* probably a reference to Grey’s notorious feud with Southampton, which stemmed from the former’s alleged insubordination during Essex’s campaign in Ireland in 1599. Grey repeatedly sought a duel with Southampton, but failed to back his words with action.

14 *Bedford...tame:* comment on Edward Russell, Earl of Bedford, who accompanied Essex on his march into the city on the morning of 8 February 1601, but abandoned Essex’s band when it was clear the Earl’s cause was lost. Although not charged with treason, Bedford was heavily fined for his action. The fines imposed upon Essex’s followers (very few of whom were charged with treason) were levied by special commissioners, some of whom were supposedly prone to favouritism and even susceptible to
bribery. Bedford’s “fyne dauncing dame” is his wife, Lucy Russell (née Harrington), Countess of Bedford, who became one of the leading hostesses in courtly society during the early years of James I’s reign.

15 *Foulke and John:* Fulke Greville, a close friend of Essex who subsequently distanced himself from the Earl and cultivated Cecil’s friendship. The identity of “John” is uncertain; however, this may be Greville’s friend and protege, John Coke. Greville was Treasurer of the Navy and Coke ultimately became Secretary of State under Charles I. Since Coke was not a major figure in the final years of Elizabeth’s reign, this identification would suggest that the author of this poem had a close personal knowledge of the circles in which Coke (and Greville) moved.

16 *riffeled:* rifled, plundered.

17 *yet uphill he can not ryde:* perhaps suggesting that Ralegh could not rise any higher in the social order (i.e. become a peer).

18 *Tynn:* Ralegh was Warden of the Stannaries, which gave him jurisdiction over the tin-mining regions of Cornwall and Devon. This is a biting reference to his efforts to maximize his income from that office.
A14  England men say of late is bankrupt grown

Notes. This is accepted as the work of Sir John Harington. It was copied by Harington at the end of his Tract on the Succession of the Crown, where it is dated 18 December 1602. It depends on the pun in the final line (steward/Stuart): a point not seized by all those who transcribed the poem. The general charge here that the victors in the late-Elizabethan power struggle were corrupt and interested only in personal gain reflects the widespread belief (zealously encouraged by Essexians) that those in positions of authority during the closing years of the reign were bent upon feathering their own nests in anticipation of the Queen’s death, when all royal offices held “during pleasure” would fall vacant and be liable to redistribution by her successor. (For their part, Essex’s enemies claimed that the chief ambition of the Earl’s followers was to “carve for themselves” (James 427n.).) Harington had been a follower of Essex and served in the Earl’s Irish campaign of 1599, but subsequently distanced himself from Essex during the latter’s slow-motion fall into political catastrophe during 1599-1600.

England (Men say) of late is bankrupt grown:
Th’effect is manifest, the Cause unknown.
Rich Treasurers it hath had, and wary Keepers,¹
Fat Judges, Counsellors in Gain no-sleepers,
Auditors, & Surveyors, Receivers many,
Pillers, & pollers too,² All for the penny.
As for the Church, that must both pray, & pay:
For Solvat Ecclesia, the Courtiers say.³
Can Any tell, how to help this Disorder?
Faith, one good STEWARD⁴ would putt All in Order.

Source. Bodleian MS Sancroft 53, p. 47

Other known sources. Harington, Tract 123; Harington, Letters and Epigrams 301; Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 134; Bodleian MS CCC. 327, fol. 24r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 97r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 121; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 212, fol. 87v; Bodleian MS Sancroft 53, p. 57; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 120r; BL Add. MS 22601, fol. 60v; BL Add. MS 39829, fol. 93r
1 *Rich Treasurers*...*wary Keepers*: it is possible that “Rich Treasurers” is a specific allusion to the Lord Treasurer, Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, whose father had been nicknamed “Fill-Sack” while serving as a royal Treasurer. “Wary Keepers” may allude to Sir Thomas Egerton, the Lord Keeper, who sought to avoid factional entanglement and maintained good relations with both Cecil and Essex until the latter’s fall.

2 *Pillers, & pollers too*: to pill is to pillage, plunder, extort; to poll is to fleece, despoil by excessive taxation.

3 *As for...the Courtiers say*: the Church of England was not only the official state Church, but also a ready source of patronage for the Crown. Encouraged by cash-hungry courtiers, Elizabeth regularly used her authority as Supreme Head of the Church to force clerics to surrender Church lands to the Crown or lease them out to favoured courtiers as a condition of their appointment. The phrase “Solvat Ecclesia” means “let the Church pay”.

4 *STEWARD*: the steward/Stuart pun looks forward to the succession of James VI of Scotland, whose accession as James I of England in March 1603 inaugurated the Stuart dynasty in England.
Notes. The precise date and inspiration of this libel is uncertain. The reference to Cecil as a knight and his pairing with Ralegh suggests that it was written before Elizabeth’s death—the accession of James I soon saw Cecil elevated to the peerage as Lord Cecil, while Ralegh’s fortunes took a sharply contrasting path. Ralegh was treated roughly by the new King (much to the glee of former Essexians) and was condemned for treason in November 1603, spending most of the next fifteen years in the Tower before being executed in 1618. However, the reference to election as a Knight of the Garter is hard to reconcile with an Elizabethan provenance. Cecil had to wait until 1606 before he was elected to this august status, while Ralegh never received this supreme accolade. It is possible that the heading connecting this verse to Cecil and Ralegh is an erroneous later addition to the rhyme.

“The day is made Knight of the Garter”

This day is made Knight of the Garter

An honourable Tombler,¹ and a notable Farter

Source. BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 15r

¹ Tombler: an acrobat, swindler; hence an unprincipled political opportunist.
Notes. It seems probable that this epigram was actually written during the reign of James I rather than in Elizabeth’s reign. Essex and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland were brothers-in-law (Northumberland married Essex’s sister Dorothy) and both were ultimately condemned for involvement in treasonous affairs. While Essex’s Rising in February 1601 cost him his life, Northumberland was convicted of complicity in the Gunpowder Plot of 5 November 1605 and spent many years in the Tower. This verse seems to have been written after Northumberland followed his late brother-in-law into misfortune—i.e. no earlier than November 1605. The claim made here is that, even though they behaved in contrary ways, the two earls shared the same fate of being condemned for supposed “plots” simply because their status as leading members of the ancient nobility made them “suspect” to the sovereign and his/her favoured advisors. The clear implication here is the same which had featured in many Catholic political tracts of the 1570s and later—that the sovereign was encouraged to turn against the great noblemen of England because of the “detraction” of low-born advisors, who feared the power and envied the status of the ancient nobility. The common beneficiary of the fall of Essex and Northumberland was Sir Robert Cecil, who became Earl of Salisbury in 1605.

“Epigram”

Essex did spend, Northumberland did spare, ¹
He was free, this close; How shall we live then?
Of Plotts, these courses both suspected are
No: they are not suspected, but great men.

Source. BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 103v

¹ Essex...spare: the meaning here seems to be that Essex spent lavishly (demonstrating traditional aristocratic largesse), while Northumberland concentrated on building up his revenues. The former course of life won Essex many admirers but left him critically dependent upon royal grants, while the latter approach made Northumberland rich and deeply unpopular with many of his tenants.
This section collects the surviving libels written during the first seven or eight years of James I’s reign—the one known poem from this period not in this section, “The Parliament Fart”, appears in Section C. The poems are arranged—with two exceptions—in chronological order, and the one poem that has proved impossible to date precisely has been included at the end of the section.

We begin with some miscellaneous poems from the opening months of the reign, responding to the scramble of English courtiers to greet the new King as he made his way from Scotland; to James’s orders that all men worth forty pounds a year present themselves at his coronation for knighting; and to the King’s promotion to title and high office of the controversial, and supposedly ex-Catholic, Lord Henry Howard.

These are followed by what is probably the most significant cluster of poems from the early part of the reign: the verse written in response to the dramatic fall of Sir Walter Ralegh. James I arrived in England with a low opinion of Ralegh, shaped in part by highly critical assessments sent to him by Robert Cecil and Henry Howard during the last years of Elizabeth’s reign. Soon after a famously awkward first meeting, James stripped Ralegh of his office of Captain of the Guard, his London residence at Durham House, and his lucrative monopoly on the licensing of wine retailing and imports. In mid-July 1603, Ralegh’s close ally Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham, implicated him in two murky Catholic plots against the King. The Bye Plot was an alleged plan to kidnap James and force him to grant toleration to Catholics; the Main Plot supposedly involved designs for a Spanish invasion, the deposition of James and the establishment of his cousin Arabella Stuart as Queen. Ralegh was imprisoned and, in November 1603, tried and convicted as a traitor for his planned role in the Main Plot. Although his life was spared, his lands were confiscated—his chief property, the manor at Sherborne in Dorset was given to James I’s young Scottish favourite Robert Carr—and Ralegh remained in the Tower until radically (if only temporarily) altered political conditions led to his release early in 1616. The poems composed on Ralegh’s fall are uniformly unsympathetic, viewing his ruin as an appropriate punishment for his many sins, moral and political, but in particular for his widely
suspected role in the destruction of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex. By the time of his release in 1616, however, Ralegh’s reputation had changed. The degree of the shift can best be seen in the poems written at the time of his execution in 1618 (Section I), but we include here a poem from 1614 that indicates some of the ways that Ralegh’s rehabilitated reputation could already be used to critique Jacobean court mores.

The last group of poems in this section consists mostly of libellous epitaphs on courtiers and ministers—on Archbishops of Canterbury John Whitgift (d.1604) and Richard Bancroft (d.1610), on Charles Blount, Earl of Devonshire (d.1606) and his wife, Penelope Rich (d.1607), and on Lord Treasurer Thomas Sackville, who was Lord Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset (d.1608). Of these poems, by far the most significant is the libel on Whitgift. The poem itself is a fascinating example of Puritan polemic in the style of the late Elizabethan Marprelate pamphlets, mixing seriously intended attacks on the failings of the English Church—its quality of ministry, its hierarchy, its ceremonial style and its system of ecclesiastical courts—with an artfully crude and “popular” carnivalesque style. More significantly, the Star Chamber prosecution of the alleged author of the poem, Lewis Pickering, helped redefine the law of seditious libel: Edward Coke’s report on the case, “De Libellis Famosis”, became the standard interpretation of the crime. Pickering’s case made it clear that it was possible to libel the dead, that truth or falsehood were legally immaterial to whether a statement was a libel or not, and that, perhaps most importantly, to libel a minister of the Crown was an inherently seditious act (see Bellany, “Poem”).

Although, read as a whole, the libels from this period do not document a growing political crisis in early Jacobean England, a number of these verses do reveal some notable potential political faultlines. One verse, for instance, lampoons what Lawrence Stone called the Jacobean “inflation of honours”, the King’s tendency to grant honours—knighthoods and aristocratic titles—at a far greater rate, at a cash price, and to a socially more diverse group of men, than his predecessor had done (“Come all you Farmers out of the Countrey”). Stone controversially argued that the consequent debasement in the value of honour played an important role in a growing crisis of confidence in monarchy and aristocracy that would seriously undermine traditional authority in the decades before the Civil War (Crisis and Causes). The other interesting faultline is revealed in the libels’ anxiety about crypto-popery in high places,
documented here not only in the libellous epitaphs on Archbishops Whitgift and Bancroft, but also in the 1603 attack on the sincerity of the Earl of Northampton’s conformity to the Church of England, and in the obscure 1606 poem denouncing William Cecil, 3rd Lord Burghley, as a crypto-Catholic and traitor. As we shall see in later sections, by the 1610s and 1620s the fear that popery was nestled within the royal court and political hierarchy became one of the major themes of verse libellers, and a source of more widespread political anxiety and conflict.

B0
B1 Nevil for the protestant, L Thomas for the papist

**Notes.** This couplet lists the men of various religious persuasions who had sped from London at the death of Elizabeth I to greet the new King in Scotland. The diarist John Manningham, who transcribed the fragment in April 1603 after hearing it recited by John Isham of the Middle Temple, noted, “There is a foolish rime runnes up and downe in the Court of Sir H[enry] Bromley, L[ord] Tho[mas] Haward, L[ord] Cobham, and the deane of Canterbury Dr. Nevil, that each should goe to move the K[ing] for what they like”.

Nevil¹ for the protestant, L Thomas² for the papist
Bromley³ for the puritane, L Cobham⁴ for the Atheist.

**Source.** Manningham 235

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¹ *Nevil*: Thomas Neville, Dean of Canterbury, was sent to Scotland on the death of Elizabeth I. Neville was deputed by John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, to present King James with the formal greetings of the English clergy.

² *L Thomas*: Manningham identifies “L[ord] Thomas” as Lord Thomas “Haward” or Howard, who would be created Earl of Suffolk at the start of the new reign by James I. Chamberlain reported that Thomas Howard’s uncle, Lord Henry Howard, later Earl of Northampton, was sent to Scotland “to possesse the Kings eare and countermine the Lord Cobham” (1.192).

³ *Bromley*: Chamberlain reported that Sir Henry Bromley was one of several men who rode post-haste to Scotland on the death of Elizabeth I (1.189).

⁴ *L Cobham*: Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham and Warden of the Cinque Ports. Cobham was a friend of Sir Walter Ralegh and thus is tarred here with the charges of atheism that dogged many in the Ralegh circle during the 1590s. Chamberlain (1.191) reported that Cobham had set off for Scotland to “go toward the kinge and do his wonted goode offices”.

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Notes. This epigram, heavily indebted to late Elizabethan and early Jacobean literary trends, is headed in one source “In Curione” (Huntington MS HM 198). At the beginning of James I’s reign, the Catholic Henry Howard was given the title of Earl of Northampton, the office of Warden of the Cinque Ports, and a place on the Privy Council. He formally conformed to the Protestant Church at this point, but remained widely suspected as a crypto-Catholic. This verse is typical of a broader scepticism about the motivation and sincerity of his “conversion”, a scepticism that was expressed at even higher levels of intensity during the period of Northampton’s greatest influence at court, from around 1612 to the time of his death in 1614.

“Upon Henry Howard Earle of Northampton. 1603”

The great Archpapist Learned Curio

Is nowe perswaded to the Church to goe

Hee nowe discernes their jugling fopperies

Wherewith the Shaveling Antiques’ blear’d his eyes

Hee nowe perceives that Romes Ambition

Is Author of Romes superstition

Thanked be God, and the Basilius

Whose Exhortation hath prevailed thus;

For to thy power full Argumentes alone

Curio attributes his conversion.

He nought respecteth Luther, Zuinglius, Melancthon, Martyr, Oecolampadius, Ursinus, Calvin, Buchanan or Knox

Our English Jewell, Whittaker or Fox

Nor any graybeard prelates of these tymes

Though wee Accompt them reverend divines

Their Argumentes hee saith, are sleight & weake

Onely Basilius cann to purpose speake

True, Curio true, Basilius on this theame
Cann say much more of this, then all of them
For hee hath power to say recant thyne error
And thou shalt be A Privie Counsellour.

**Source.** Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 1

**Other known sources.** BL MS Harley 3910, fol. 11r; Folger MS V.a.339, fols. 189r and 208r; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.164; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 153

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1 *Curio:* the curio was the Roman priest of the curia, a subdivision of the Roman patriciate.

2 *Shaveling Antiques:* i.e. shaveling antics; “mad monks”. “Shaveling” was a derogatory term for a Catholic priest or monk, derived from their distinctive ecclesiastical tonsures.

3 *the Basilius:* the name derives from “basilieus”, the Greek for “king”, and refers here to James I; a variant reads, more pointedly, “and great Bassilius” (Huntington MS HM 198). But there is also perhaps an allusion—made more explicit in the Huntington MS HM 198 reading—to the character Basilius in Sir Philip Sidney’s prose romance *Arcadia.* Sidney’s Basilius, the Duke of Arcadia, is an ineffective, effeminate and foolish ruler, whose flaws constitute a kind of tyranny, “exercised not by the stong but by the weak” (Worden 213). Moreover, there is another layer of implied critique of the King here. The poem explicitly mocks Northampton’s claims that it was James’s arguments that won him from Rome, and this mockery implicitly undercuts James’s own, much cherished, reputation as a Protestant controversialist and intellectual foe of “Romes Ambition”.

4 *Luther:* Martin Luther (1483-1546), the founder of Lutheran Protestantism.

5 *Zuinglius:* Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), Swiss Protestant reformer.

6 *Melancthon:* Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), German Lutheran reformer.

7 *Martyr:* Peter Martyr, or Piermartire Vermigli (1500-1562), Italian Protestant.

8 *Oecolampadius:* Johannes Hussgen, known as Joannes Oecolampadius (1482-1531), Protestant leader in Basle.

9 *Ursinus:* Zacharias Beer, known as Ursinus (1534-1583), German Calvinist theologian.

10 *Calvin:* John Calvin (1509-1564), French Protestant reformer and founder of Calvinism.
11 **Buchanan:** George Buchanan (1506-1582), Scots Calvinist, humanist and former tutor to James I.

12 **Knox:** John Knox (c.1513-1572), Scots Calvinist reformer.

13 **Jewell:** John Jewel (d.1571), English Protestant reformer and Elizabethan Bishop of Salisbury.

14 **Whittaker:** William Whitaker (d.1595), English Protestant theologian, anti-Catholic polemicist and Elizabethan Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge.

15 **Fox:** John Foxe (1516-1587), English Protestant martyrologist and historian of the Church.
B3 Come all you Farmers out of the Countrey

Notes. This poem responds to James I’s July 1603 orders that all those worth £40 per year should present themselves to be knighted at his coronation. The orders prompted bitter comments about the debasement of the title. Sir Thomas Tresham, for instance, feared that some of those who qualified for the title were “landless, many base and dosser headed [i.e. foolish] clowns, and not one among forty worthy of that degree” (qtd. in Stone, Crisis 75).

“Verses upon the Order for making Knights of such Persons who had 40 pounds per annum in King James I. Time.”

Come all you Farmers out of the Countrey,
Carter, Plowmen, Hedgers¹ & all;
Tome, Dick, & Will, Raph, Roger & Humfrey,
Leave of your Gestures rusticall.
Bidd all your Home-sponne Russetts² adue,
And sute yourselves in Fashions new:
Honour invits you to Delights:
Come all to Court, & be made Knights.

He that hath fortie Pounds per Annum,
Shalbe promoted from the Plowe:
His Wife shall take the Wall of her Grannam.³
Honour is sould soe Dog-cheeap now.
Though thow hast neither good Birth nor Breeding,
If thow hast Money, thow art sure of speeding.

Knighthood in old Time was counted an Honour,
Which the best Spiritts did not disdayne:
But now it is us’d in soe base a manner,
That it’s noe Creditt, but rather a Staine.
Tush, it’s noe Matter what People doe say!
The Name of a Knight a whole village will sway.
Sheapherds, leave singing your Pastorall Sonnetts,
And to learne Complements shew your Endeavours:
Cast of for ever your twoe Shillings Bonnetts;
Cover your Coxcombs\(^4\) with three Pounds Beavers.\(^5\)
Sell Carte & Tarrboxe\(^6\) new Coaches to buy:
Then, Good your worshipp, the Vulgar will cry.

And thus unto Worshipp being advanced,
Keepe all your Tenants in Awe with your Frownes;
And lett your Rents be yearly inhaunced,
To buy your new-moulded Maddams new Gownes.
Joan, Sisse, & Nell shalbe all Ladified:
Instead of Hay-Carts, in Coaches shall ryde.

What ever you doe, have a Care of Expenses:
In Hospitality doe not exceed:
Greatnes of Followers belongeth to Princes:
A Coachman & Footman are all that you need:
And still observe this, let your Servants Meate lacke,
To keepe brave Apparell upon your Wives Backe.

Now to conclud, & shute upp my Sonnett:
Leave of your Cartwhipp, Hedgbill & Flayle.\(^7\)
This is my Councell: think well upon it:
Knighthood & Honour are now putt to Saile
Then make Haste quickly, & lett out your Farmes,
And I will hereafter emblazen your Armes.\(^8\)

**Source.** BL Add. MS 5832, fol. 206r-v

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 185r
1 *Hedgers:* men who repair hedges.

2 *Russetts:* plain-coloured clothing typically worn by peasants.

3 *take the Wall of her Grannam:* to take the place of honour ahead of her grandmother.

4 *Coxcombs:* heads (derogatory colloquialism).

5 *Beavers:* hats made of beaver pelts.

6 *Tarrboxe:* tarbox; a container of salve shepherds carried to treat their sheep.

7 *Hedgbill & Flayle:* agricultural tools.

8 *emblazen your Armes:* to emblazon (set-up, or portray) your coat-of-arms.
Notes. Sir Walter Ralegh was arrested in mid-July 1603 on suspicion of involvement in two related plots against James I: the Bye Plot, a plan to kidnap the King to ensure he granted toleration to Catholics; and the Main Plot, a plan to engineer a Spanish invasion, the deposition of James I and his replacement by his cousin Arabella Stuart. Ralegh was tried and convicted for treason at Winchester on 17 November 1603, reprieved from execution on 9 December 1603, and spent the next twelve years or so imprisoned in the Tower. In one source (Folger MS X.d.241), the poem is attributed to Thomas Rogers (c.1573-1610), author of Celestiall elegies of the goddesses and the Muses (1598), and of the poem Leycesters Ghost (written c.1605 printed 1641), an attack on the early Elizabethan favourite Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

Watt I wot well thy overweeninge witt
lead by ambitious humours wrought thy fall
Like Phaeton that did presume to sitt
in Pheebus chaire to guide the golden ball
Which overturn’d did sett the worlde on fire
& burnt him selfe in prime of his desire.

So thou that didst in thought aspire so hie
to manage the affaires for Englands Crowne
And didst like Icarus attempt to flie
beyond thy limitts, now art tumbling downe
Thy waxen winges are melted by the Sunne
& in thy fall the thred of life is spunn.

From thee the Sonne doth turne away his face
from thee the pale facd Moone doth take hir flight
From thee the Starres do fall away a pace
from thee thy freinds are fled & shun thy sight
All fly from thee exceptinge only hope
which yet to breathe sad accents give thee scope.
Thou hast byn counted passinge wise & wittie
hadst thou hast grace high treason to avoyed
Then give me leave dread soveraigne Lord to pittie
so rare a wit should be so ill imployed
    Yea suche a wit as I could praise in reason
    for any point, exceptinge only treason

I pitty that the Sommers Nightingale
immortall Cinthia sometime dere delighte
that us’d to singe so sweete a Madrigale
should like an Owle go wander in the nighte
    Hated of all, but pittied of none
    though Swan-like now he makes his dyeinge mone

Hadst thou continued loyall to the kinge
as to the Queene thou evermore was true
My Muse thy praise might uncontrolled singe
which now is forest thy dismall happ to rue.
    And in this sable Caracters to wrighte
    the downfall of a sometime worthy Knighte.

Ah where is Cinthia now whose golden thred
mighte leade thee from this laborinth of errours
She to hir soliar Celestiall back is fledd
& nothinge lefte for thee but shame & terrours
    Thy Candle is put out, thy glass is ronne
    the grave must be thy Tombe when all is donn

Proude Gaveston & both the Spencers fell
yet theis were sometime favorites of a Kinge
But thou against thy Soveraigne didst rebell
which to thy Conscience needes must be a stinge
Ill was their happ farr worse is thy estate
whom both the Prince doth scorne & People hate.

Humilitie in Statesmen is a praise
yet to imbrace this vertue thou didst scorne,
Supposinge that faire Cinthias golden daies
should still on earth this Iron age adorne

The Common people that did hate thy pride
in chaunge of state thy follies to deride.

Renowned Essex as he past the streets
would vaile his Bonnett to an Oyster wife
And with a kinde of humble Congie greete
the vulger sorte that did admire his life

And now sith he hath spent his livinge breath
they will not cease yet to lament his death

But thou like Midas surfettinge with golde
those gentle salutacions didst reject
And when thou wast in greatest Pompe extolde
not poore Mens love but feare thou didst effect.

This makes those Men whom thou didst lately scorne
Disdaine thee now, & laugh while thou dost moorne.

Perhaps likewise that Essex angrie spirite
pursues thy life & for revenge doth crie
And so the Heavens accordinge to thy merite
in his behalfe do acte this Tragedie.

Essex was made the Prologue to the playe
which thou didst penn in an unluckie daye

Herein the Kinge should play a tragique parte
Graye as a Champion stoutly should have fought
Rawleigh should play the Divell by his Arte,
Cobham\textsuperscript{19} should play the foole as he was taught
Lame Brooke\textsuperscript{20} should holde the booke & sitt him still
to prompt if any mist or Acted ill

This Tragedy was plotted but not acted,
herein was treason cunningly contrived,
By thee o Rawlye was the same compacted
for which of worldly Joye thou art deprived
Thy life, thy wealth thy liberty & lande
only at mercy of the Kinge doth stande.

If please the Kinge to pardon thy offence
no doubt thou maist a faithfull Subject prove
And by thy witt & wisedomes Quintessence
recover to thy selfe thy Soveraignes love,
But little hope remaines when faith is fled
& when thy handes seeke bloud beware thy head

God that foresaw thy treason did reveale it
and blest the Kinge in crossinge thy intent
In vaine could man by policie conceale it
when Heaven against thy purposes is bent.
And Man that unto worldlinges seemeth wise
is but a foole to him that rules the skies.

\textbf{Source.} BL Add. MS 22601, fols. 64r-65v

\textbf{Other known sources.} Ralegh, \textit{Poems} 182-85; Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fol. 9v; Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272, fol. 46v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 172, fol. 14r; BL Add. MS 38139, fol. 192v; BL MS Harley 3910, fol. 14r; BL MS Harley 6947, fol. 212r; BL MS Stowe 962, fol. 84r; Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 211v; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 177; Folger MS X.d.241, fol. 1v
1 *Watt:* common contraction of Walter.

2 *wot:* know; and a pun on Wat/Walter.

3 *overweeninge:* arrogant, presumptuous, conceited.

4 *Like Phaeton...prime of his desire:* allusion to the mythological story of Phaeton, who persuaded his father Phoebus, the sun god, to allow him to drive the chariot of the sun, with disastrous consequences. The myth was widely used in this period to attack courtiers who overstepped the proper bounds of their station.

5 *Icarus:* Icarus, son of Daedalus, escaped from Minos with his father, flying with wings attached by wax; when he flew too near the sun, the wax melted and Icarus plunged to his death.

6 *immortall Cinthia:* Elizabeth I. Poets and painters routinely portrayed the Queen as Cynthia, goddess of the moon.

7 *the kinge:* James I.

8 *Cinthia now...laborinth of errours:* allusion to the myth of Ariadne, whose thread helped Theseus escape from the Labyrinth.

9 *soliar:* Rudick (Ralegh, *Poems* 183), working from Folger MS X.d.241, reads this word as “spheare”.

10 *glass:* i.e. hourglass.

11 *Proude Gaveston...favorites of a Kinge:* allusion to the falls of the favourites of King Edward II (reigned 1307-1327): Piers Gaveston, and the Spensers (or Despensers), Hugh the elder and Hugh the younger.

12 *this Iron age:* in classical mythology, the decayed, present age.

13 *Essex:* Ralegh’s bitter court rival in the 1590s, Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, who was executed for treason in 1601.

14 *vaile his Bonnett:* remove his hat.

15 *Congie:* congee; a bow.

16 *But thou like Midas...golde:* King Midas of Phrygia was granted his wish that all he touched should
turn to gold. This line might refer to the riches Ralegh accumulated as the holder of various lucrative patents and monopolies under Elizabeth I.

17 *Essex angrie spirite...doth crie*: Ralegh was widely suspected of involvement in the alleged plot to destroy Essex. This charge is the main theme of the contemporary verse, “To whome shall cursed I my Case complaine”.

18 *Graye*: Thomas, Lord Grey of Wilton, participant in the Bye Plot.

19 *Cobham*: Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham, implicated in both the Bye and Main Plots, whose evidence was crucial to the prosecution case against Ralegh.

20 *Brooke*: George Brooke, younger brother of Lord Cobham, and participant in the Bye Plot.
B5 Wilye watt, wilie watt

Notes. This poem dates from Ralegh’s dramatic fall from office and arrest for treason in the summer of 1603.

Wilye watt,\(^1\) wilie watt
Wats\(^2\) thou not & know thou what
Looke to thy forme and quat\(^3\)
in towne & Citie

Freshe Houndes\(^4\) are on thy taile
that will pull downe thy saile
and make thy hart & quaile
Lord for the pittie

Lordshipp is flagg’d and fled
Captainshipp newly sped
Dried is the Hogsheads hed\(^5\)
wily watt wilie

Make the best of thy plea
least the rest goe awaie
and thou brought for to saie
wily beguilie

For thy skaunce\(^6\) and pride
thy bloudy minde beside
and thy mouth gaping wide
mischievous machiavell\(^7\)

Essex for vengeance cries\(^8\)
his bloud upon thee lies
mountinge above the skies
damnable fiend of hell
mischievous matchivell

Source. BL Add. MS 22601, fol. 63r

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 186

1 watt: Wat; abbreviated form of Walter.

2 Wats: pun on Wat/Walter, and “wot”, know.

3 quat: squat or crouch; cower.

4 Fresh Houndes: i.e. Ralegh’s prosecutors.

5 Lordship...Hogsheads hed: reference to Ralegh’s dramatic losses at the beginning of James I’s reign. Before his implication in the Bye and Main Plots, Ralegh had lost his office as Captain of the Guard (the “Captainshipp”) and his lucrative monopoly to license wine-sellers and wine imports (“Dried is the Hogsheads [i.e. the wine cask’s] hed”). The flight of “Lordshipp” may refer to Ralegh’s loss of lands as a result of his treason conviction.

6 skaunce: skance; a sidelong glance.

7 machiavell: follower of the supposedly amoral and atheistic creeds of the Italian Niccolò Machiavelli.

8 Essex for vengeance cries: Ralegh was alleged to have engineered the fall and 1601 execution of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex. Ralegh’s plotting against Essex is the main subject of the contemporary poem on Ralegh’s fall, “To whome shall cursed I my Case complaine”.

B6 Water thy plaints with grace divine

Notes. This libel on Ralegh’s 1603 fall and treason trial plays on a shorter, religious poem, attributed posthumously to Ralegh himself. The latter poem reads: “Water thy plants with grace divine, and hope to live for aye / Then to thy saviour Christe incline, in him make stedfast stay / Rawe is the reason that doth lye within an Atheists head / Which saith the soule of man doth dye, when that the boddies dead” (Ralegh, Poems 137).

Water thy plaints with grace divine
    and trust in God for aye
And to thy saviour Christ incline
    in him make stedfast staye.

Rawe is the reason that doth lie,
    within thy treacherous head,
To say the soule of Man doth die
    when that the Corpse is dead.

Nowe may you see the soodaine fall,
    of him that thought to clime full hie,
A man well knowne unto you all
    whose state you see doth stand Rawlie,

Time did he take when time did serve,
    now is his time neare spent,
Even for him selfe he craved still
    and never would relent.

For he hath run a retchless race,
    which now hath brought him to disgrace
You that do see his soodaine fall
    a warninge be it to you all
Source. BL Add. MS 22601, fol. 63v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 187; Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 163; Brotherton MS Lt. q. 9, fol. 17r

B6

1 Water: there is a possible pun here, as “Walter” was often pronounced “Water” or “Watter”.

2 Rawe...lie: punning on Ralegh’s name, typically pronounced “Raw-lee”.

3 To say the soule...Corpse is dead: Ralegh and his circle had been suspected of atheism in the 1590s. A 1594 investigation explored whether they did in fact believe in the mortality of the soul, the atheistical belief alleged by this couplet. The prosecution at Ralegh’s treason trial revived the old suspicions.

4 Rawlie: punning again on the pronunciation of Ralegh’s name.

5retchless: i.e. reckless.
B7 To whome shall cursed I my Case complaine

Notes. Though clearly composed after Ralegh’s fall in 1603, this lengthy poem dwells in great detail on Ralegh’s alleged betrayal of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, offering a detailed “confession” of Ralegh’s plotting against Essex from the late 1590s until the Earl’s disastrous rebellion and execution in 1601. In both known sources, this poem is immediately followed by “I speake to such if any such there bee”.

“The dispairinge Complainte of wretched Rawleigh for his Trecheries wrought against the worthy Essex”

To whome shall cursed I my Case complaine
to move some Pitty of my wretched state
For though no other comforte doth remaine
yet pitty would my greife extenuate
    For I towards God and man my selfe abused
    and therefore am of God and man refused.

To heaven I dare not lifte my wretched eies
nor aske God pardon for my wretched deedes
For I his word and service did despise
esteeminge them of no more worth then weedes
For which most vile conceytes these woes procedes
    For now I find and finding feare to rue
    There is a God who is both just and true

And unto man I likewise am afraide
To make Complainte of this my gnawinge greife
Lest they (as well they may) should me upbraid
With scorne and pride which in mee were most reefe
And therefore man will yeelede me no releife
    Thus wretched I which everie man did scorne
    Am now my selfe of every man forlorne.
What shall I doe in this perplexed plighte
Fearinge to move or God or man for grace
shall I to heavenly Saintes my woes recite
And hope that they will moane my wretched Case
O no it is their office and their place
To judge such guiltie sinfull soules as I
And therfore no releife may come thereby

Yet one there is of that Celestiall sorte
whoe sure I thinke would pitty my distresse
For when he lived heere in earthly Porte
He was the Patterne of all gentlenesse
Ah but gainst him I greatlie did transgresse
Then Traytor vile how canst thou hope for grace
From him whom thou by Treason didst displace

O yes I know his virtues heere were such
he did abhorre to beare revenginge minde
and beinge there they better are by much
Because he lives remote from fleshie kinde
In perfecte joy to blessed Saintes assignde
A Worthy Essex but for feare of shame
I would invoke thy honorable name

But ere I can expect Commiseracion
I must intreate forgivenes hartilie
And ere forgivenes can have Confirmacion
I must Confesse how I have injurde thee
For it with Reason rightly doth agree
That such a wrongfull wicked wretch as I
Should first confesse and then for pardon cry
Wherefore I will my Clogged conscience Cleere
by true confession of my Treachery
That God and Angells Saintes & men may heare
how I thine honor wrongd most shamefullie
which on my selfe is lighted suddenly
    For these my due deserts now falne on mee
    plainly declares my Treason wrought gainst thee

For when thy soveraigne did thee well respecte
As well thou didst deserve to be respected
I then with falshood did thy truth infecte
wherby her princelie judgment was infected
and thou by her most causleslie rejected
    Then I which on occasion did attend
    omitted naught which might thee more offend

For then with open throate I did not spare
To taxe the virtues most reproachfullie
Thy valour was Ambition I would sweare
Thy curteous Bounty hope of Soveraigntie
Thy Justice malice and extremetie
    And thy religious zeale I ofte would call
    Dissimulation to deceave withall

Thus with detraction did I first assaile thee
Whoe did effect what shee did undertake
Then Envy wrought that nothinge might availe thee
Thou Truth thy just Apologie did make
Then framed Treason brought thee to the stake
    Thus to assaile thee with these furies fell
    I pawnd my soule to fetch them out of hell
I also had assistance in this worke
whose helping handes were in as deepe as mine
though some of them aloofe now slylie lurke
as if their Consciences were sole divine
yet in a league with mee they did combine
    Thee to destroy by Treasons pollicy
which wee effected to our infamy

But some of my Confederates in this Acte
whose dates of mischeife did with mine expire
are fallen with me in this pretended facte
prepard to pay our due deserved hier
now if it were not sin I would desier
    That all which wrought with me in thy disgrace
    Might stand with me in this my wretched case

But what should I neede doubt or stand in feare
That they shall scape revenge more cleere then I
Since he whoe hath entrapt me in this snare
Can Traverse them in their owne pollicy
and will no doubt when he due time doth see
    For he will punish every Trecherous case
    either in this or in a worser place

And therefore though they florish for a tyme
in Grace Authoritie and honors greate
which may perswade them they may easilie Climbe
upp to the highest stepp of fortunes seate
yet is there one whoe can their hopes defeate
    For when they thinke themselves in highest respect
    Then suddenlie he can them soone dejecte
Witnesse my selfe who thought my selfe as sure
as any one of my associates all
But now I finde Treason cannot endure
Insultinge Pride shall likewise have a fall
For such Offences doe for vengeance call
   And he which is the Remedier of Wronge
hath said his vengeance shall not tarry longe
Which by experience I have found most true
For in the selfe same kinde that I offended
He justlie hath repaid to me my due
his justice therefore needes must be commended
which hath it selfe so equallie extended
   usinge the meanes of my owne fowle offence
   to give to mee a righteous recompence
For as by letters I procurde thy bane
which of a Perjurde villaine I did buy
who for Commoditie had stolne the same
From her to whom thou sentst them faithfullie
Conteyninge nought but Truth and Modestie
   Yet I which knew they would me much infest
did spare no cost till I had them possest
So I through Letters of Contrary kinde
to those of thine am now adjudgde my meede
For when all other promises did faile
me to offend in this pretended deede
my Opposites more stricklie did proceede
   And then a letter did gainst me produce
   For which my cunninge lackes a cleane excuse
And thus as I by letters thee offended
by letters now my owne offence was provd
vile Traytor I that ill gainst thee intended
who for desert I rather should have lovd
Pride Spight and Mischeife thee unto me movd
    And now methinks Dispayre doth me surprise
    setting thy wronge before my wretched eyes

For when I heard my selfe exclaimde upon
by him whose mouth most mastive like revilde thee
Then thought I how I laughing stood by one
Whose rancorde harte brake out and much defild thee
and still wee laught to thinke how wee beguild thee
    I then did praise the Barkers mouth for spendinge
    But now he hath me plagugd for then offendinge

And now I find it doth my Conscience gall
that wee subbornd a Judas to betray thee
who told thee when the Councell did thee call
that I and Cobham by the way would stay thee
advising thee therfor at home to stay thee
    And thus by fraude we force thee to offend
    by disobeyinge when the Lordes did send

It likewise now doth greive me though too late
that wee procurde the Prince thee to impoy
whilst in thy absence wee might worke thy hate
by urginge: thou didst purpose to annoy
thy lovinge Countrey and thy Prince destroy
    And more to feare her with that foule intent
    we rayesd force thy Comminge to prevent
But well we knew thy meaninge was not such
though wee pretended so thee to abuse
hopinge thereby we might encrease so much
thy soverainges hate that wee should quite refuse
to heare thee speake with truth this to excuse

And sure were wee should our purpose gaine
if from her presence shee would thee restraine

When falsly thus wee had the Queene possest
with this Conceite that thou hadst plotted Treason
we likewise then our pollicies addrest
To traine the over by some subtill reason
wherof our Consultacions were not geason

For I have herd though here it may seeme grosse
holies the Church where Sathan beares the Crosse

Then did we blowe abroad the Prince is dead
thinking therby to further our intente
for then we hopte thou sure wouldst gather head
and come with speede invasion to prevente
For wee before of cunninge purpose sent
That Spanish expedition was in hand
the which we know thou stronglie wouldst withstand

But here our expectacion somwhat faded
because thou didst not come when wee expected
nor in that manner as wee had perswaded
thou mentst to come when first thou wast detected
Yet wee so wrought that quite thou wast rejected
And eke restrained of thy libertie
the which we labourd most incessantlie
Now when wee thus our wishes had obtained
we left noe time nor mischeife to devise
for then false articles wee forgd & fayned
wherewith we dimbd thy soverainges Princelie eies
and then did everie one against thee rise
   Like as a single hound by Curre orematched
   once beinge downe of every Curre is snatched
Then for Starchamber did wee worke apace
pretendinge thou shouldst present there appeare
and there by order answere face to face
such articles as should concerne thee neare
but this was never ment the case is cleare
   For well we knew if thou shouldst there have spoken
   our knott of Treachery might have bin broken
But wee a farr more cleerer shifte devised
then that thou shouldst have answered our objection
For we procurde thy faults to be surmisde
thou being absent (o vile lawes infection)
and Censured as wee have given direction
   for wee so wrought thy Prince by subtle sawes
   that what we wild was of more force then lawes
The yce was broken then wee grew more bold
In Course of violence forward to proceede
For then all offices which thou didst hold
wee purgde thee of as wee before decreede therby more discontent in thee to breede
   Thus when wee had occasion stirde to Ire
   wee gave thee scope that we might kindle fire
But when we saw occasion nought prevailed
with furious blast the fier to inflame
but as the more she wrought the more shee failed
because coole Patience still the heate orecame
For juyce of Herbegrace 27 was on the same
wee then another Strategem devised
by which thou wast most cunninglie surprised

And this was sly and subtle subbornation
with promises of very large extent
which gaind us one with thee in estimacion
and in thy private favour resident
of him we made our working instrument
    Thee to perswade to gaine thy former grace
    by usinge meanes thy hinderers to displace 28

But when hee told us thou wast well contented
to live a private life remote from care
the modell of a projecte we invented
wherin he might his love to thee declare
by givinge helpe thy state for to repaire
    To which when he had gotten thy consent
we had our purpose and our whole intent

For then wee doubted not to pricke thee on
by subtle force of forged instigation
which wee alreadie had resolvde upon
to stirre thee upp to secret consultation
For resolution and determination
    For meanes and times of present execution
Lo thus wee wrought thy utter desolution
Yet this my true detestable confession
Is but the abstracte of my villany
for I have wrought more trecherous transgression
against thy Honnour Truth and Loyaltie
Then now I can recall to memory
    For which with sighes all desperate of releifè
    I cry for pardon to asswage my greife

And as for this offence I now intended
I doe not doubt but I shall favour finde
but what can my estate be thereby mended
For still I shall retaine a guilty minde
From which I can no place of refuge finde
    For every man will kill me with his eie
    and therfore twere more ease for me to dye

For I such Terrou in my Conscience feele
by thought of my most execrable deedes
that though my hart obdurate be as steele
yet when I thinke thereon it quakes and bleedes
such piercing passions from them still procedes
    Ah: since I have confessed now the truth
    Forgive me then and pitty this my ruth

But if thou wilt not deigne to pitty mee
then must I ever pittilesse remaine
for all that live laugh at my misery
except some few and they I thinke doe faine
fearinge I should their falshood vile explaine
    Thus like a Cursed Caitiffe did I live
    and now my cursed case doth no man greive
For I his word...worth them weedes: allusion to the charge of atheism levelled at Ralegh and his circle in the 1590s and revived by the prosecutors at Ralegh’s treason trial in 1603.

reefe: i.e. rife.

thy soveraigne: Elizabeth I.

the: probable scribal error; read “thy”.

Thou: probable scribal error; read “though”.

thy just Apologie: allusion to Essex’s Apologie, a 1598 letter to Anthony Bacon that was circulating in manuscript by 1599, appeared in a rapidly-suppressed printed edition in 1600, and was printed again in 1603.

I also had assistance...infamy: this stanza may refer to the actions of, among others, Robert Cecil. Cecil was in the process of becoming James I’s chief minister and was instrumental in Ralegh’s fall.

some of my Confederates...pretended facte: the key figure who was alleged to have conspired with Ralegh against Essex and who then fell with Ralegh as a result of the Bye and Main Plots was Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham.

he: i.e. God.

though they flourish...honors greate: of all Essex’s enemies, these lines best fit Robert Cecil.

For as by letters...had them possest: this stanza probably refers to the letters written by Essex to his wife, Frances, and purloined by a disgruntled former servant, John Daniell. Daniell apparently doctored the letters to make them more incriminating and then tried to blackmail the Countess of Essex by claiming that Ralegh and Cobham had offered to pay £3000 for them. Essex cited the case at his trial as an example of his enemies’ vicious smear campaign against him. Daniell was eventually tried in Star Chamber in June 1601.

meede: reward.

And then a letter...produce: perhaps a reference to the letter from Cobham used by the prosecution
against Ralegh in his treason trial.

14 mastive: i.e. mastiff; a dog.

15 For when I heard...then offendinge: the general meaning of this stanza is clear enough: the same men who once joined him in attacking Essex, have now attacked Ralegh. The sense of the poem implies this might refer to the Crown’s most strident prosecutor at both treason trials, Sir Edward Coke.

16 And now I find...Lordes did send: on 7 February 1601, the Privy Council summoned Essex to appear before it. The Earl refused, claiming he was ill. The poet implies here that Ralegh had persuaded one of Essex’s friends to lure him into this dangerous act of contempt for royal authority by convincing the Earl that Ralegh and Cobham would attack him on his way to the Council. The identity of the “Judas” here is unclear, but it may be Sir Ferdinando Gorges.

17 wee procurde the Prince...imploy: reference to Elizabeth I’s decision to send Essex to Ireland to quash Tyrone’s rebellion. Essex left London for Ireland in March 1599.

18 And more to feare...thy Comminge to prevent: this couplet may refer to the military mobilization in the summer of 1599, triggered by incorrect reports that a new Spanish Armada was headed to England.

19 To traine the over: allusion to a plot to trick Essex into returning from Ireland.

20 geason: uncommon, infrequent.

21 But here our expectacion...most incessantlie: this stanza alludes to Essex’s unauthorized return from Ireland in September 1599 and his subsequent placement under house arrest at the beginning of October 1599.

22 dimbd: i.e. dimmed.

23 Curres: dogs; often with the implication of “low-born”.

24 Then for Starchamber: reference to the late November 1599 defence of the imprisonment of Essex by several Privy Councillors assembled in the court of Star Chamber. The implication, developed in this and the following stanza, is that the original plan was for Essex to be tried by that court, but that the plan was changed to facilitate a stage-managed series of denunciations of Essex in absentia.

25 wild: i.e. willed.

26 For then all offices...before decreede: Essex was stripped of office after a judicial verdict against him at a York House hearing in June 1600.

27 Herbegrace: herb-of-grace; the herb rue, symbolizing repentance.
28 *And this was sly...to displace:* the allegation introduced in this stanza, and developed in the following stanza, is that Ralegh and Cobham worked to incite Essex to open revolt by suborning one of his trusted friends—perhaps Sir Ferdinando Gorges—and using him to urge on the Earl. Essex rose in armed revolt on 8 February 1601.

29 *this offence I now intended:* reference to the alleged Main Plot.

30 *ruth:* sorrow.

31 *Caitiff:* wretch, villain.
Notes. Presented as a warning to other courtiers, and employing the kind of moral reasoning often found in contemporary works on criminality, this poem follows the interlinked chains of sin—atheism, avarice, oppression, arrogance, sexual excess, falsehood—that had corrupted Ralegh and precipitated God’s just punishment and Ralegh’s ruin. In both known sources this poem follows “To whome shall cursed I my Case complaine”.

“His Caveat to secure Courtiers”

I speake to such if any such there bee
whoe are possessed through their Princes grace
with swellinge pride and scornefull insolencye
haughty disdaining and abuse of place
   To such I say if any such there bee
   come see theise vices punished in mee 5

For I that am now as you see abjected
by just desert of former life ill spent
was somtime of my Prince as well respected
as any now in this new government
   But for I then my favour misymploied
   I now with punishment am much annoyed 10

I then did hold Religion but a Jest¹
farre more esteeminge my owne pollicie
whereby I framde my Actions as a Beast
moved by beastlike sensualitie
   For what my fleshly humor did delight
   that held I lawfull were it wronge or right 15

My whole endeavour was to please my sence
with greedy Avarice and fowle oppression

¹ See note at bottom of page.
divelish disdaine filthie incontinence
and false invention were my cheife profession
  Theise vices were by me still exercised
  as those have caused me to be despised

And well he doth deserve despisde to bee
whose minde with such corruption is infected
Wherefore twere good you should their natures see
that so they may the sooner be rejected
  For any one of them sufficient is
  the soule and body to deprive of Blisse

First looke on Avarice that sencelesse beast
and you shall see no end of greedy scraping
for though her Paunch bee stuft at Middayes feast
her still devouringe mouth continues gapinge
  Most wise was he who did her nature fitt
  comparinge her to the infernall pitt

If you her reason should desier to know
why beyond reason shee doth Riches love
surelie no other reason could shee showe
but covetous desier which doth her move
  The which enforceth her so loud to cry
  For Riches Riches most incessantly

Then Riches come and with her shee doth bringe
her God her Daughters and her Servants three
her Enemies doe alsoc after flinge
who doth her much molest and terrifie
  For Riches never doth approache alone
  but is by furies force attended on
Plutus\(^2\) her God doth guide her by the hand
and doth dispose her where shee best doth please
her daughter Pride doth swellinge by her stand
who with sharpe pricking doth her much disease

Filthy Excesse for More More More still cries
and Ignorance doth blinde her mothers eies

Blinde Chance her Servante somtime doth availe her
and somtimes he by losses sore doth wronge her
but fraud and usurie doth never faile her
but like good servaunts still doth profitt bringe her

suspition feare and greife her enimies
doth wayte advantages her to surprise

Now when vile Avarice is full possessed
of Riches and this train which doth attend
shee doth account herselxe not meanelie blest
and then to gaine a heaven shee will not spend

but still doth seeke her to increase with gaine
by all meanes possible with busie paine

For then Oppression must his Cunninge use
in Monopolyes and in Transportacions
whereby he many thousands doth abuse
by sendinge that away to other Nations

which should be dealt for Gods sake to the poore
who wantinge aske the same from doore to doore\(^3\)

But Avarice for Riches still doth Cry
so strongly that the poore cannot be heard
for shee had rather they should starve & dye
then shee from gettinge Riches should be barrd
such is the nature of the Damned Spright
that Riches onely is her whole delight

To please her then Oppression with his power
of all the meaner sort doth make his prey
like to a wide mouthd Pike which doth devour
the smaller fish which cannot get away

and when the Foxes skin will take no place
then doth Oppression use the Lions case

If he by strength of place doth rule the Lawe
and suites decrees upon longe pleaded Cases
then if a matter have a cracke or flawe
Argentum must annoynt those crazie places

whereby in time it growes sufficient stronge
to passe for currant be it right or wronge

And if he bee in state of government
havinge of meaner places oversight
then such as doe bribes unto him present
are either pentiond or discharged quite

For Avarice doth still cry out for gaine
and the Oppressor doth no wronge refraine

When these vilde vices had my Coffers filld
my minde likewise was then filld with disdaine
by whose approach all virtues quite were spild
which doth in minde of any man remaine

Yet in my minde shee founde but few to spill
for since it was a minde the same was ill

This hellbred Monster of foule Divelish kinde
was gotten by proud scorne of scorneful pride
nurst upp by Envy in a Cankerd minde
which could no other but it selfe abide
deformitie her nature doth expresse
her nature poysons where it doth possesses

Of this her nature was my minde possest
and with her poyson was I all infected
the which by me her furie was exprest
when any but my selfe I saw respected
For were he farr my better in degree
yet I disdainde he should my equall bee

This hatefull vice made me so odious seeme
that for the same I hated was of all
For as none but my selfe I did esteeme
so none there was that did not wish my fall
Wherefore if this in any of you bee
come see the same now punished in mee

I likewise like a Beast much time did spend
in that most beastlike sinne of fleshly pleasure
to which with filthie minde I much did bend
makinge no spare of Body, soule, nor Treasure
For as a Beast is moved still by sence
so was I movd by foule incontinence

And for I would be exquisite herein
I used supernaturall devises
Pouders Perfumes Payntings for filthie skynnes
extractiones distillations Spiritt of Spices
with theise and such like tricks I still was able
To trimme a hakney for the Divells stable

8
And as younge Apes doe learne by imitacion
of elder apes their frisking apish toyes
so many apes and monkeys usde my fashion
and in the same doe place their cheifest joyes
never was beast to Nature soe unjust
as man & woman given to beastly lust

This sinne was my familiar recreacion
wherin I gloried much with shamelesse pride
boastinge my selfe of easie acceptacion
protestinge that I never was denide
    Ah, but if this in any of you bee
come see the same now justly plagued in mee

In false invention likewise I excelde
with which my Princes' eares I much abusde
whereby plaine Truth was often time refelde
and such as did present her were refusde
    This sinne is onely proper to the Divell
    then I which usde the same must needes be evill

Noe Tooth of Beaste or subtle serpents stinge
is halfe so hurtfull as a Liars Tounge
For those but paine to outward parts doe bringe
which may be cured well with Medicines stronge
    But if a Liars Tounge doe make a wounde
    noe salve can heale the same or make it sounde

When smooth toungd Flattery with Falshood joyne
as seldome shall you see them goe aparte
Then what the one in her false hart doth coyne
the other publisheth by subtle Arte
And such a Tincture of the same shee setts
that of the greatest it acceptance getts

Surelie if Princes rightlie would conceave
what daunger lies in fawninge Flattery
how of their Sences shee doth them bereave
and how shee doth impaire their royaltie

    No doubt they would then hold it for good reason
    To punish her as they would punish Treason

For if it be offence deservinge death
to sett the Princes shadow on base coyne
sure he much more offendes whoe with base breath
unto the Princes substance vice doth joyne

    And thus doth he whoe makes an occupacion
    his Prince to honnor with base adulation

These two united sinnes did first advance mee
and by thesie two I still my state sustaine
doing thesese sinne so highly did inhance mee
that for the same this mischeife I have gainde

    wherefore if this in any of you bee
    come see this and the rest now plagued in mee

But doe not come as Idle gazers use
whoe make noe use of that they doe behold
but come & see how God doth me refuse
because my selfe to vice I wholly solde

    soe come & see behold these plagude in mee
    and fly my sinnes least soe you plagued bee

And doe not thinke that earthlie Princes graces
can give protection to a life ill spent
nor do not thinke Authoritie of places
can (for one hower) reverse due punishment
    for neither favour nor Authoritie
    can stay Gods hand from just severitie

Wherefore all you that know your selves infected
with those foule synnes which I have now confessed
see that in time your prayers be directed
and that your wronges committed be redressed
    For if you doe not speedily repent
    be sure you shall receave just punishment

Be not deceavde by vaine imagination
of Gods remisse forgetfullnesse of wronge
For though he somtimes use procrastinacion
yet will he not deferre his comminge longe
    For when mans sinfull measures overfroth
    then powres he forth his measures fild with wrath

Soe measure just for measure shall you have
if still without remorse you doe offend
and therefore if you hope your selves to save
leave off in time and seeke your lives to mend
    But if you still continue in your sinninge
    then shall your endes be worse then your begininge

And doe not hold this my advise for vayne
because you know mee vaine that doth advise you
but rather doe thereby your vice refraine
least for the same both God and Man despise you
    For though my owne Confession prove me evill
    yet truth hath somtymes come even from the Divell
And therefore since with truth you now be warned
though from a mouth that truth hath seldom used
yet speaking truth lett not the same be scornd
but lett the cause therof be well perused
    And you shall finde that God doth so ordaine it
for your beehoofe if you can entertaine it

But if you wilfully advice refuse
and like as I did grow from bad to worse
Then looke what paiment God to mee doth use
such or the like he will to thee disburse
    For if my warninge cannot now advise you
    My punishment shall shortlie then surprise you

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fols. 14r-16r

Other known sources. BL Add. MS 15266, fol. 11v

1  *I then did hold Religion...Jest:* reference to Ralegh’s alleged atheism, a charge investigated in the 1590s and revived during his treason trial.

2  *Plutus:* god of wealth.

3  *For then Oppression...doore to doore:* this stanza adds specificity to the general charge of avarice, alluding to Ralegh’s accumulation of several patents and monopolies from the Crown: a monopoly on the export of broadcloths; a monopoly on the licensing of wine-sellers and wine imports; and, as Warden of the Stanneries, a monopolistic control on English tin production.

4  *and when the Foxes...Lions case:* the fox is an emblem of cunning, the lion of brute force.

5  *Argentum:* silver.

6  *crazie:* unsound.
If he by strength...right or wronge: this stanza concerns the taking of bribes in judicial cases.

To trimme a hakney...Divells stable: to make ready a horse for the devil’s stable. The meaning here is a little obscure, but the stanza seems to argue that Ralegh used magical love potions to pursue his bestial sexual desires. The potions allowed him to seduce his targets, making them fit for the devil.

my Princes: i.e. Elizabeth I’s.

refelde: refuted, rejected.

To sett the Princes...base coyne: i.e. to counterfeit money.

beelhoofe: benefit.
Notes. This couplet makes a sardonic comment on the extent to which the royal favourite Robert Carr benefited from the fall of Ralegh. Late in 1608, James I granted Carr the manor at Sherborne, Dorset, worth about £1000 per annum in rents, that had been confiscated from Ralegh by the Crown upon his 1603 treason conviction.

As Cats over houses do go a catter-walting
So C is over house. he goes a walter-rauling.

Source. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 28
Notes. Ralegh’s History of the World was first printed in 1614. We include this poem, written in the form of a commendatory verse but circulated in manuscript culture, as evidence at once of the rehabilitation of Ralegh’s image during his long imprisonment and of the use of that refurbished image as a weapon to criticize other, unrefomed, courtiers. The most likely author, of a number of known writers bearing the name Thomas Scott, is the man who, in 1616, published the politically charged collection of poetic fables, Philomythie, or, Philomythologie. (He spelled his name “Scot”.)

“Mr Thomas Scott sent these verses, by the hand of Dr John White, to Sir Walter Raleigh; upon the settinge forth of his Booke of the History of the World”

Who doubts of Providence, or God denyes;
Let hym thy Booke read, & thy Life advise.
Thy booke doth shew, nothinge directly can
(Save grace infus’d from heaven) informe a man.
Thy life doth likewise shew, that as the Devill
Drawes bad from good, God still drawes good from evill.
That at his set and fore-appointed tyme;
Hee to our good, t’ his prayse, converts each crime.
That o’re the greatest favorites of Kings
The greatest danger hangs on smallest strings.
In Greatnes thow art lost, as in a wood;
Treadinge the paths of flattery, falshood, blood.
The way to heaven neglected, thow did’st stray
As others now doe in thy Politick way.
But now thow’st found thy selfe; & wee have found
That sicknes taught thee Art to make men sound.
For had’st thow never fall’ne, th’hadst never writt:
Nor hadst thow cleer’d, but clouded us with witt.
But now thy falshood hath the truth so showne,
That a true World from a false World is knowne.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 6v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 188

1 Dr John White: probably the noted contemporary clergyman and preacher.
Notes. A copy of this libellous epitaph was pinned to the ceremonial hearse at the funeral of John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury. Whitgift died in late February 1604 and, although he was buried shortly thereafter in Croydon, the full funeral ceremonies were delayed for several weeks. The poem is clearly a work of Puritan polemic, combining a derogatory, carnivalesque assault on Whitgift with pointed allusions to many of the grievances the Puritans—presented here as “Reformers” and “trew pastors”—had expressed during the decades in which Whitgift had led the polemical, political and legal fights against their campaign for further reform of the Church. A fortuitous set of circumstances allowed the authorities to identify Lewis Pickering, a Northamptonshire Puritan and minor Jacobean courtier, as the author of the poem, and as a result Pickering was tried and convicted in Star Chamber for seditious libel early in 1605. Bellany has explored the ecclesiastical and legal politics of the case (“Poem”), and has analyzed the inversionary power of the poem within its original ritual contexts (“Libels in Action” 102-06). The sole complete copy of the poem survives among the papers of Sir Peter Manwood of Kent.

The prelats Pope, the Canonists trope, Reformers hinderer, trew pastors slanderer, the papists broker, the Atheists Cloker.
The Ceremonyes Procter, the latyn docter, the dumb doggs patron, non residns champion.
A well a daye is dead & gone, and Jockey hath left dumb Dickye alone.

Prelats relent, Courtyers lament, Papists bee sadd, Athiests runn madd.
Grone formalists, mone pluralists frowne yee doctors, mourne yee Proctors.
Begge Registers, starve parators, scowle ye Summoners, howle yee songsters.
Your great Patron is dead & gone, & Jockey hath left dumb Dickye alone.

Popishe Ambition vaine superstition, coulored conformity canckared envye.
Cunninge hipocrisie faigned simplicity, masked ympiety, servile flatterye,
Goe all daunce about his hearse, & for his dierge chaunt this verse,
Our greate Patron is dead and gone, & Jhockey hath left dumb duckye alon.

Yf store of mourners yet there lacke lett Croyden coullers bee more blacke.
And for a Cophin take a sacke bearing the corpes upon their backe.
Dickye more blacke then any one as chief mourner may marche alone 
Singinge this requiem Jhocky is gone, & Dickye hopes to play Jhocky alone

Holla Dickye bee not so bould, to woulve that in Christ Jhesus fould 
as yf to hell thy Soule weare sould, lest as Jhocky was oft foretould 
If thou a persecutor stand, God likewise strike thee with his hand: 
Arankinge thee in the bloudy band of ravening Cleargie woolves in the land

Source. BL Add. MS 38139, fol. 58r

Other known sources. Les Reportes Del Cases in Camera Stellata 223; BL MS Harley 6383, fol. 71r

B11

1 Canonists trope: an abbreviated variant has “Canonists hope”, which perhaps makes better sense (BL MS Harley 6383). The canonists here are ecclesiastical lawyers.

2 virginities spectacle: the spectacles (i.e. a counsellor) for Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen.

3 Ceremonyes Procter: Whitgift had defended the legitimacy of ecclesiastical ceremonies authorized by the Book of Common Prayer against Puritan attacks.

4 dumb doggs: derogative Puritan term for non-preaching clergy.

5 non residns: i.e. non-resident clergy; clergy who held more than one parochial living (pluralists) and thus were not resident in one (or more) of their parishes. Puritans had urged an end to pluralism and non-residence.

6 A well a daye: “Welladay” was a ballad tune often used for songs about death (see Simpson 747-48).

7 Jockey: diminutive nickname for John; i.e. John Whitgift.

8 Dicke: diminutive nickname for Richard; here Whitgift’s successor as Archbishop of Canterbury, Richard Bancroft.

9 formalists: those committed to an overly ceremonious form of religious practice.

10 pluralists: clergy who held more than one parochial living.
11 *Proctors*: several ecclesiastical officials could have this title, including tithe collectors, ecclesiastical court attorneys and representatives of cathedral clergy at convocation.

12 *Registers*: presumably ecclesiastical record keepers.

13 *parators*: i.e. apparitors; officials of the ecclesiastical courts. Church courts were a common focus of Puritan critique.

14 *Summoners*: ecclesiastical court officials.

15 *Croyden coullers*: i.e. Croydon colliers. Croydon was well known for its population of charcoal burners.
Notes. The incident behind this libel remains obscure. The poem was directed at William Cecil, 3rd Lord Burghley (since 1605), and the nephew of James I’s chief minister Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury. During the 1580s, Catholic agents had reported that the young William Cecil, travelling in France and Italy, had been “reconciled” to the Church of Rome (Read 350, 573 n.43), and while Cecil appears to have conformed to the English Church, this libel’s charge of crypto-papery—and thus of disloyalty to the Crown—was particularly explosive in the immediate aftermath of the Catholic Gunpowder Plot to murder the King in November 1605.

“Verses sett up over the Lo: Burgleys pew in newark churche,¹ for which Mr Batts the preacher there was cited up before the ArchB: of Cant.² 1606”

A Romane right, then rotten at the Kore
no loyall love within his brest resides
unto his king faine warning given before
that painted hoodes foule cancred mallice hides,
Their volumes vaunt, but leaden are their reasons
they proffer faire yet would supplant by treasons.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2877, fol. 88v

1 newark churche: probably in Newark, Nottinghamshire. William Cecil married Elizabeth Manners in the chapel at Newark Castle in 1589, and their son William was baptised there in 1590.

2 ArchB: of Cant.: the Archbishop of Canterbury, Richard Bancroft.
Notes. Charles Blount, Earl of Devonshire, died in April 1606. This punning libellous epitaph alludes to Devonshire’s scandalous illegal marriage to his longtime mistress Penelope Rich, wife of Robert, Lord Rich. In 1605 an ecclesiatical court had granted Lord and Lady Rich a formal separation on the grounds of her adultery. Penelope Rich married Devonshire almost immediately thereafter; however, the terms of her separation seem to have given her no legal right to remarry.

“The Divell men say is dead in devonshire late
Of late did devonshire live in rich estate
Till Rich with toyes did devonshire bewitch
That Devonshire died & left the Divell rich

Source. Huntington MS HM 116, p. 65

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 89v; BL Add. MS 21433, fol. 102v; BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 98r; Brotherton MS Lt. 25, fol. 9r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 66v

1 L. Rich: the scribe who added this title has confused Devonshire’s name with that of his wife’s former husband.
Notes. Penelope Rich, separated from Lord Robert Rich and then illegally married to Charles Blount, Earl of Devonshire, died in July 1607. The final two lines of this poem are sometimes found independently, which might suggest that an unspecifically bawdy couplet was appropriated for application to Penelope Rich’s notorious case. One source, however, has only the first couplet (V&A MS D25.F.39). All known variants are listed below.

Here lyes the Lady Penelope Rich
Or the Countess of Devonshire, chuse ye which
One stone contents her, low what death can doe
That in her life was not content with two.

Source. Folger MS V.a.345, p. 28

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 169; Bodleian MS CCC 328, fols. 43r and 76v; Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 15v; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 9r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. d.152, fol. 154v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 94v; Bodleian MS Hearne’s Diaries 30, p. 212; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 5; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 15v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 152, fol. 23r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 67v; Folger MS V.a.97, p. 13; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 21v; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 126; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 116
B15 Heere lye’s a Lord that Wenching thought no sinne

Notes. Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, 1st Earl of Dorset, and Lord Treasurer under James I, died on 19 April 1608 during a meeting at the Privy Council table.

Heere lye’s a Lord that Wenching thought no sinne
and bought his flesh by selling of our skinne
His name was Sackville & so Void of Pitty
as hee did rob the Country with the Citty.

Source. BL MS Harley 3991, fol. 126v

Other known sources. V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 68v

B15
Notes. Copies of this libel typically identify its target as Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, 1st Earl of Dorset, and James I’s Lord Treasurer, who died at the Privy Council table on 19 April 1608. This version of the poem incorporates into a single work two segments—the opening four lines and the concluding six—that also circulated as separate poems. The verse opens by accusing Buckhurst of accepting bribes—the kind of everyday corruption expected of government servants—and then switches to allude to Buckhurst’s bitter and protracted legal battle with Sir John Leveson. (One of the copies of the concluding six lines as a distinct poem is titled “On the L. Treas: Buckhurst, who died at the Counsell Table swearing falsely against Sir J. Luson” (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 96r)). The battle concerned the large estate left by Sir Richard Leveson to Sir John Leveson’s son. Buckhurst connived in the forging of a will that left the estate to one of Sir Richard’s cousins, Mary Curzon, who was married to Buckhurst’s grandson.

“On the Death of the L. Treasurer”

Immodest Death that wouldst not once conferre
Dispute or parle with our L. Treasurer
Had hee bene thee or of thy fatall tribe
He would ha spared thy lyfe & tane a Bribe
He that so often hath with Gold & wit
perverted lawes & almost conjur’d it
He that could lengthen causes & was able
To sterve a suitor at the councell table
At last not having evidence to show
Was faine perforce to take a deadly blow

Source. Huntington MS HM 116, p. 25

Other known sources. Wit Restor’d 65; Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 136; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 97r; Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 18r; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 11r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fols. 95v and 96r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 94; BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 6r; BL MS Cotton App. L, fol. 169r; BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 35v; BL MS Harley 3991, fol. 126v; Brotherton MS Lt. 25, fol. 8r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 67v; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 48; Folger MS V.a.97, p. 153; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 20r; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 33; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 114; Rosenbach MS
**B17 Here Lyes Dick of Canterburie, suspected a Papist**

*Notes. This is one of four extant libellous epitaphs on Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in November 1610.*

Here Lyes Dick of Canterburie, suspected a Papist

who liv’d a Machiavillan,¹ and dyde an Atheist.

**Source.** CUL Add. MS 4138, fol. 49r

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 18r; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 160r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 68r

¹ *Machiavillan*: i.e. Machiavellian; follower of the amoral creeds of the Italian Niccolò Machiavelli.
B18 Here lieth one who if his case be bad

Notes. This epitaph on Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury (d.1610), survives in a number of variants, some more opaque than others. In this version, the scribe has copied the couplet in such a way as to make some sense of its message. The couplet thus appears to depend on a pun on “grace”, as both divine grace and the earthly title given to the Archbishop. Thus if Bancroft is now in hell—“if his case be bad”—it is because he lacked (divine) “grace” even though he had the title “grace” while alive.

“On Badscroft Archbishop of Canterbury”

Here lieth one who if his case be bad ʃ his
It is because he wanted what he had ʃ grace

Source. John Rylands MS Eng. 410, fol. 21r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 18r; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 160r; CUL Add. MS 4138, fol. 49r
B19 Heer lye’s my Lord’s Grace at six & at seaven

Notes. This is one of the four surviving libellous epitaphs on Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in November 1610.

“Epitaphs on Bishop Bancroft”

Heer lye’s my Lord’s Grace at six & at seaven¹
And if I doe not lye his soule is in heaven
I wish with my heart it may bee to his Leeking²
Since all the World know’s it Was never his seeking

Source. BL MS Harley 3991, fol. 126r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 1463, p. 13; BL Add. MS 70454, fol. 21v

¹ at six & at seaven: in confusion.

² Leeking: i.e. liking.
**B20 Bancroft Was for Playes**

**Notes.** *This is perhaps the most clearly Puritan and anti-Catholic of the four libellous epitaphs written on the 1610 death of Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury.*

“Another [epitaph on Archbishop Bancroft]”

Bancroft Was for Playes
Lean Lent and holy-dayes\(^1\)
But now under-goe’s their Doome:\(^2\)
Had English Ladies store
Yet kept open a Back dore
To let in the Strumpet of Rome.

**Source.** BL MS Harley 3991, fol. 126r

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Ashmole 1463, p. 13; BL Add. MS 70454, fol. 22v

\(^1\) *Bancroft Was for Playes...holy-dayes:* Bancroft’s alleged support for stage plays—a frequent object of Puritan censure—is here conflated with his alleged support for Catholic Lenten fasting and the Catholic calendar of holy days.

\(^2\) *But now under-goe's their Doome:* the poet’s apparent perception that plays, Lent and holy-days have suffered a “doom” comparable to that of Bancroft himself is a little baffling. It is possible that he might be referring to a (temporary) closure of the theatres, as occasionally happened in times of plague.
Notes. This poem on James I's Privy Council is very difficult to date with any precision.

Seventh Henryes Counsayle was of great renowne
That joynd the white & red rose\(^1\) in the crowne
And th'eight Henryes Counsayle weare no babies
That supprest popery & put downe the Abbeyes\(^2\)
But King James his counsayle wins the prise
For they make wise men mad, & mad men wise.

Source. V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 82v

\(^1\) *joynd the white & red rose*: Henry VII’s 1486 marriage to Elizabeth of York united the warring Houses of Lancaster (the red rose) and York (the white). The Tudor badge was a pink rose that blended red and white.

\(^2\) *And th’eight Henryes...put downe the Abbeyes*: allusion to Henry VIII’s break with the Church of Rome and his enforced dissolution of the monasteries during the 1530s.
When Sir John Croke came to read his message from the Lords to the Commons on 4 March 1607, during debates on the naturalization of the Scots (the post nati), Henry Ludlow famously farted. At the time, Robert Bowyer noted in his diary that the fart emanated from “the nether end of the House...whereat the Company laughing the Messenger was almost out of Countenance”. He added, however, that it was not done in disgrace since his father, Sir Edward, had also farted during a committee meeting: “So this seemeth Infirmity Naturall, not Malice” (213, n. 1). This event occasioned one of the most popular comic political poems of the early Stuart era, which was still in circulation in the latter half of the seventeenth century. “The Parliament Fart” also proved to be one of the most malleable poems of the period. Couplets were introduced during or after the 1610 and 1614 Parliaments, and numerous variants were circulated during subsequent parliaments in the 1620s. In different manuscript sources, the poem ranges in length from around forty lines to over 225 lines, and couplets refer to at least 113 members of parliament (MPs), of whom approximately 112 sat in James’s first Parliament (in session from 1604 to 1610). (Indeed, given that many of these MPs were dead by 1622, the poem’s popularity in the 1620s is remarkable.) Although it almost invariably opens with the same ten or twelve lines, there is no particular order to subsequent couplets; rather, much of the poem’s popularity appears to have arisen out of its loose, improvisational structure, enabling copyists to personalize their own copies.

Authorship is occasionally attributed to John Hoskyns; however, it was almost certainly a collaborative venture. One source, perhaps most authoritatively, ascribes the poem to a group of wits, Richard Martin, Hoskyns, Christopher Brooke and a “Ned Jones”, most probably Edward Jones, a close friend of John Donne and Martin (BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 17v). This attribution invites comparison with another poem celebrating a gathering at the Mitre tavern, c.1611, at which these men were present, the “Convivium Philosophicum” or “Banquet of Wits”. Moreover, a copy of a ballad in the Conway papers is listed to be sung “to the tune of downe came grave auntient Sergeant Crooke”—a further indication that “The Parliament Fart” itself (to which this note refers) may have been performed at tavern gatherings, or similar occasions (BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 19v). The majority of the Wits were members of the Inns of Court, one of
the centres of early modern literary culture in England. Inns of Court students, such as John Donne, John Marston, John Davies, and Everard Guilpin, were the authors of the vast majority of satires written at the end of the sixteenth century. The “Parliament Fart” is a continuation of this culture.

Fundamentally, the poem is a piece of extempore wit, an extended fart joke. That said, couplets are also often topical, referring to key issues and debates in James’s first Parliament: the Union (of England and Scotland), purveyance (the right of the royal household to buy goods at less than market value), impositions (taxes on imported or exported goods levied without the consent of parliament), the authority of the common law, parliamentary liberties, and freedom of speech. Couplets added in subsequent years, meanwhile, address issues from the Overbury scandal to the 1624 monopolies bill. The poem’s characteristics of wit and parody invite comparison with the law sports of the Inns of Court Christmas revels; in both cases, parody relies on a heightened awareness of the codes and conventions that define an institution. Hence the deliberation on the fart by the assembled House arguably speaks to the institutional self-confidence of the Commons: it could be read as a brazen challenge to the Crown’s ability to manage the Commons, while the metaphor of the body politic humorously confers on the Lower House the central regulatory authority in maintaining the health of the commonwealth. Of course, “The Parliament Fart” was also open to alternative readings, particularly after 1649, when a flatulent Commons could stand for a headless government. The poem’s witty combination of liberty and licence led to its inclusion in the Restoration printed miscellanies, and it was thereby available as a precursor for the libertine wit of the 1660s.

* The source for the following biographies and direct quotations, unless otherwise stated, is the History of Parliament Trust, London, 1604-1629 section, unpublished articles. Michelle O’Callaghan is grateful to the History of Parliament Trust for allowing her to see these articles in draft, and for the assistance of Dr. Andrew Thrush at the Trust.

1  Though it was written in Latin, this poem was also translated into English, probably by John Reynolds (BL MS Harley 4931, p. 22).
C1 Downe came grave auntient Sir John Crooke

Notes. The chosen version of “The Parliament Fart”, in Bodleian MS Malone 23, is one of the longest and most careful copies in circulation. On the whole it lacks the transcription errors frequently found in other copies; the names of members, with one or two possible exceptions, are given correctly; and there is an effort to provide the poem with some regularity (e.g. collating couplets attributed to the same member). The framing verses designate the poem’s value as an artful piece of wit, and hence the product of a sophisticated and urbane political culture. Given its status within parliamentary and legal circles, the notes concentrate on identifying members of parliament to whom the poem refers, and situating them within this context. Moreover, given the way in which the poem accrued substance and meaning into the 1620s, the notes regularly identify dates of death for men mentioned who died in these years. The notes also contain references to important variants.

“The Censure of the Parliament Fart”

Never was bestowed such art
Upon the tuning of a Fart.
Downe came grave auntient Sir John Crooke
And redd his message in his booke.
Fearie well, Quoth Sir William Morris, Soe:
But Henry Ludlowes Tayle cry’d Noe.
Up starts one fuller of devotion
Then Eloquence; and said a very ill motion
Not soe neither quoth Sir Henry Jenkin
The Motion was good; but for the stincking
Well quoth Sir Henry Poole it was a bold tricke
To Fart in the nose of the bodie politique
Indeed I must confesse quoth Sir Edward Grevill
The matter of it selfe was somewhat uncivill
Thanke God quoth Sir Edward Hungerford
That this Fart proved not a Turdd
Quoth Sir Jerome the lesse there was noe such abuse
Ever offer’d in Poland, or Spruce
Quoth Sir Jerome in folio, I swear by the Masse
This Fart was enough to have brooke all my Glasse
Indeed quoth Sir John Trevor, it gave a fowle knocke
As it lanched forth from his stinking Docke.
I (quoth another) it once soe chanced
That a great Man farted as hee danced.
Well then, quoth Sir William Lower
This fart is noe Ordinance fitt for the Tower.
Quoth Sir Richard Houghton, noe Justice of Quorum
But would take it in snuffe to have a fart lett before him.
If it would beare an action quoth Sir Thomas Holcrofte
I would make of this fart a bolt, or a shafte.
Quoth Sir Walter Cope, 'twas a fart rarely lett
I would 'tweere sweet enough for my Cabinett.
Such a Fart was never seen
Quoth the Learned Councell of the Queene.
Noe quoth Mr Pecke I have a President in store
That his Father farted the Session before
Nay then quoth Noy 'twas lawfully done
For this fart was entail'd from father to sonne
Quoth Mr Recorder a word for the cittie
To cutt of the aldermens right weree great pittie.
Well quoth Kitt Brookes wee give you a reason
Though he has right by descent he had not livery & seizin
Ha ha quoth Mr Evans I smell a fee
I'ts a private motion heere's something for mee
Well saith Mr Moore lets this motion repeale
Whats good for the private is oft ill for comonweale
A good yeare on this fart, quoth gentle Sir Harry
He has caus'd such an Earthquake that my colepitts miscarry
'Tis hard to recall a fart when its out
Quoth with a loude shoote
Yes quoth Lawrence Hyde that wee may come by it
Weele make a Proviso tyme it, and tye it.
Quoth Harry the hardie looke well to each clause
As well Englands liberties as lawes
Nowe then, so? the knightly Doctor protestes
This fart shalbe brought into the court of requests
Nay rather saith Sir Edwyn I’le make a digression
And fart him a Project shall last him a Session
Quoth Sir William Wade you may doe as you please
For it hath broken allreadie out of little ease,
Then swore Sir John Hollis by the Masse
Such a fart would not I lett passe
Nor willingly make such a vacuitie
Without some reward or hope of gratuitie
For from the belly to the britch to make such a transition
Is a thriftles example of a frugall position.
Then start upp a fatt one call’d Sir Thomas Shurley
Saying how durst hee crack soe being noe Burley
Quoth Sir John Fortescue this fart was lett fall
Not without great presumption doeing it withall
Quoth Sir John Sheffield in my opinion
’Tweere better leave this fart and fall to the union
Nay quoth Sir Hugh Beeston and swore by the Masse
Its rather the braying of some Puritain Asse
Tushe quoth Ned Hobbie whatso’ere it bee
From Rome or Geneva ’tis all one to mee.
Swooks quoth Sir John Lee is your arse in dottage
Could you not have kept this breath to have cool’d your pottage
Why (quoth Sir Roger Owen) if books be noe lyers
I knewe one fart devided amongst a dozen Fryeres

176
Phillip Gawdie strooke th’old stubble of his face
And said the fart was well penn’d, so squat downe in his place.
The modest Sir John Hollis said, on his word
It was a shoe creek’d on a board.
Not soe quoth Sir John Acklam that cannot be
The place underneath is matted you see.
Before God quoth Mr Brooke to tell you noe lye
This fart by our Law is of the Post-nati
Grave Senate (quoth Duncombe) upon my salvation
This fart wanteth greatly some due reformation.
Quoth the cuntrie courtier upon my conscience
’Twould be well mended with a little frankinsence
Quoth Sir Thomas Challenor I’ le demonstrate this fart
To be the voyce of his belly, noe thought of his hart.
Quoth Sir Hugh Beeston it was a dissembling speach
Our mouth hath priviledge but not our bretch.
Upstart Ned Wymark the Pasquill of Powles
And said it were fitter for the chappell of the Roolles
Then wisely spake Sir Anthony Cope
Pray God it be not a Bull from the Pope.
Not soe saith his brother, words are but wynd
Yet noe man likes of this motion behynd
I said Oxenbridge there is great suspition
That this fart savoreth of popish superstition
Nay quoth Mr Goad and also some other
It should by its Libertie be a reformed brother
Then up start Sir John Young, & swore by Gods nayles
Was never such a fart lett on the borders of Wales
Quoth Sir Roger Aston howe shall I tell it.
A fart hearesay and not see it nor smell it
Againe quoth Sir Roger it would well mend the matter
If this fart were well shav’d and washt with rose water
Quoth Sir Thomas Knevett I feare there may lurke
Under this Vault some more powder worke
No quoth Sir John Parker I sweare by my Rapier
It was a Bombard stopt with vild coppye paper
Then said Mr Moore in his wonted order
I rise but to speake of the howses disorder.
And methinks that motion with noe reason stands
A man should be charg’d with thats not in his hands
In his hands quoth Price noe the fault was in his brich
Some Taylor should have given the hose another stich
As noe talebearer darrs carry to the king
Yes quoth Sir Roger Aston without any paine
My Memorie will serve to report the word againe
Quoth Sir Lewis his brother if it come of ambassage
The maister of Ceremonies must give it passage
I quoth Sir Robert Drury that had bene your part
If it had bene a Forraine fart.
Well quoth a frend ere this be transacted
I feare wee must have this fart enacted
And wee shall have therefore (soe you doe not abhorr it
A fart from Scotland reciprocall for it.
A very good jeast by this light
Quoth little Mr James of the Isle of Wight
Quoth Sir Robert Johnson if you will not laugh
Ile measure this fart with my Jacobs staffe,
And though it be hard, Ile bend myne intentions
To survay it out equall into severall demensions
Noe that must not be said Sir John Bennett
Wee must have a select committee to penn it,
Nay quoth Sir Richard Lovelace to end the difference
It were fitt with the lords to have a conference
Why said Doctor Crompton no man can drawe
This fart within the compasse of the civill lawe
Noe said Doctor Paddy yett darr I assure him
Though it be Præter modestiam its not Præter naturam
Harke harke quoth Sir John Towneshend this fart was of might
To deny his owne master to be dubbed knight.
For had it ambition, or orationis pars
Your Sonne could have told you Quid est Ars
Then So Quoth Sir Richard Gargrave by, and by
This mans ars speakes better then I.
'Tweere noe great grevance quoth Mr Hare
The Surveyor heerein had his share
Be patient gent quoth Sir Francis Bacon
Ther's none of us all but may be thus overtaken
Sylence quoth Bond thoug words be but wynde
Yet I much mislike of this motion behynd
For quoth hee it stincks the more you stirr it
Naturam Expellas surca licet usque recurrit
Then gan sage Mounson silence to breake
And said this fart would make an Image speake
Then quoth Sir Dannett this youth is too bold
The priviledge of farting longs to us that are old
Then said Mr Tolderbury I like not this passage
A fart interlocutory in the midd' st of a message
With all your Eloquence quoth Sir Richard Martin
You cannot find out this figure of farting
Nor what part of speach save an interjection
This fart canne be in gramatique perfection
Up ryseth the speaker that noble Ephestion
And said Gents I'le putt it to the question
The question once made, the yea’s did loose
For the Major part went cleere with the nose
Sir Robert Cotton well redd in old stories
Conferring his notes with good Mr Pories
Can witnes well that these are not fables
And yet it was hard to putt the Fart in his tables.
Quoth Sir Thomas Lake, if this house be not able
To censure this fart I’le have it to the counsell table.
Quoth Sir George Moore I thincke it be fitt
That wee this fart to the Serjant Committ.
Not soe quoth the Serjant lowe on his knees
Farts will breake prison but never pay fees
Why? yet quoth the clerke it is most true
That for a private fart a fee is my due
This scent growes hott quoth Mr Dyett
Lett each man take his share, and be quiett
Looke (quoth Sir William) it had bene noe matter
If this fart weere butter’d & putt in a platter
That these that had not their judgments well spent
Might have of the taste as well as the scent
Then Richard Buckley that angerie ladd
Rose swearing (Goggs wounds) & satt downe halfe madd.
Quoth Sir John Perrot it greives me at the hart
A private Man shold sweare for a publique fart
All of them concluded it was not well
To store upp this fart soe odious in smell
And merry Mr Hoskins swore ’twas but a stale
To putt the plaine Serjant out of his written tale.
Fie, fye, I thinke you never did see
Such a thinge as this quoth Sir John Lee.
With many more whome heere I omitt
In censuring this fart who busied their witt
Come come quoth the King libelling is not safe
Bury you the fart, I’le make the Epitaph. 133

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 2-10

Other known sources. Musarum Deliciae 65; Le Prince d’Amour 93; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 131r; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 94v; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 28r; Bodleian MS North b.24, fol. 28r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 7r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 196v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 157v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 172, fol. 8r; Bodleian MS Sancroft 53, p. 53; Bodleian MS Tanner 306, fol. 254r; BL Add. MS 4149, fol. 213r; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 123r; BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 17v; BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 16r; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 33r; BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 20r; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 19v; BL Add. MS 58215, fol. 190v; BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 25r; BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 45v; BL MS Harley 4931, fol. 10r; BL MS Harley 5191, fol. 17r; BL MS Sloane 1394, fol. 172r; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 25r; BL MS Sloane 1792, fol. 104v; BL MS Sloane 2023, fol. 59r; BL MS Stowe 354, fol. 43r; BL MS Stowe 962, fol. 66v; HRO, Malmesbury Papers, 9M73/G3(b); TCD MS G.2.21, p. 409; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 99; Folger MS J.a.2, fol. 81r; Folger MS V.a.160, p. 79; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 101; Folger MS V.a.322, p. 226; Folger MS V.a.399, fol. 248v; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.3; Rosenbach MS 239/22, fol. 42v; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 109; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 9

C1

1 Sir John Crooke: Croke sat in the 1584, 1597 and 1601 Parliaments. He was the King’s Serjeant in the 1604 Parliament, and thus brought messages and bills from the Lords to the Commons. He died in 1620.

2 Sir William Morris: Maurice, or Morris, sat in the 1593, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. James I referred to him as his godfather, since Maurice hailed James “King of Great Britain” on his accession, in the belief that this fulfilled a Welsh prophecy. He was the most ardent and vocal apologist for the Union of the Kingdoms in the Commons, and the House frequently censured his speeches due to their length or departure from business. In the 1610 Parliament, his two-hour speech on Union was subject to interruption and whistling, and was eventually stopped by the Speaker. He died in 1622.

3 Henry Ludlowes: Ludlow, a member of the Inner Temple, sat in the 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. Ludlow represented Wiltshire with James Kirton, John Hoskyns’ friend from the Middle Temple.

4 one fuller: Nicholas Fuller, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1593, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He was a Puritan lawyer keen to secure ecclesiastical and moral reform, and willing to challenge the royal prerogative in relation to purveyance, the Union, and impositions. Toby Matthews, in a letter to John Donne describing the first Jacobean Parliament, said: “The vild [i.e. wild] Speakers are, Hoskyns, Fuller,
with an &caetera of an hundred men” (Bald 145). Following his zealous opposition to the Crown in the
1606/07 sessions, he was censured over a legal decision by the Lord Chancellor, Thomas Egerton, Lord
Ellesmere, as part of a campaign against those who too zealously studied the royal prerogative in the
Commons (Cuddy 132-33). He died in 1620.

5 Sir Henry Jenkin: Jenkin, a member of Lincoln’s Inn and a Justice of the Peace in Yorkshire, was
elected to parliament in 1604. On 14 April 1604, during the purveyance debates, he cited the Magna
Carta, defended freedom of election, and was called to order by the Speaker; on 20 Feb 1607 he
followed a speech by Sir William Maurice with a prayer “that he might speak nothing impertinently and
that the House would hear him with patience and attention”.

6 Sir Henry Poole: Poole, a member of Lincoln’s Inn, sat in the 1597, 1604, 1610, 1621, 1624 and
1626 Parliaments. He established a reputation as a parliamentary wit in James’s first Parliament; his
brother-in-law was Sir Henry Neville, Earl of Abergavenny, who contributed a panegyric verse to
Coryats Crudities. In November 1606, he spoke against the ruling on the post nati, alongside Richard
Martin.

7 Sir Edward Grevill: Greville sat in the 1593 and 1604 Parliaments.

8 Sir Edward Hungerford: Hungerford sat in the 1614, 1621, 1624, 1625, 1628 and 1640 Parliaments.
A Sir John Hungerford, a kinsman of Sir Henry Poole, sat in the 1604 Parliament. (One source attributes
the couplet to “Sir Tho: Hungerford”, and it is possible that “Tho:” may be a corruption of “John” (BL
Add. MS 34218, fol. 21r).)

9 Sir Jerome the lesse: Sir Jerome Bowes sat in the 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. Bowes was
temporarily banished from court in 1577 for slandering Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. He was
appointed English ambassador to Russia in 1583, and died in 1616.

10 Spruce: Prussia (derived from “Pruce”).

11 Sir Jerome in folio: Sir Jerome Horsey sat in the 1593, 1597, 1601, 1604, 1614 and 1621
Parliaments, and was appointed High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire in 1610. He went to Moscow as clerk
of the Russia Company in 1573, and engaged in trade and diplomatic work until 1587. He was granted a
licence in 1592 to make drinking glasses in England and Ireland for twelve years. Since this and the
preceding couplet are always cited together, “the lesse” and “in folio” function as a means of
distinguishing the two Jeromes, although the contemporary significance of these phrases is now lost.

12 Sir John Trevor: Trevor sat in the 1593, 1597, 1601, 1604, 1614, 1621 and 1625 Parliaments.

13 As it lanched...Docke: aligns the contemporary colloquial meaning of “dock” as “arse” with a
pointed naval metaphor. On 25 February 1606, Bowyer recorded that on the first reading of a bill
“manie cried (away with it) then MR. TREVER of the Inner Temple, being a follower of the Lord
Admyrall [Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham], spake in favor of the bill...but the howse without
farder question threw out the bill, Fearing least it would breade a new office which they though [i.e. ‘through’] some greate man aymed at” (53).

14 a great Man...danced: allusion to Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who famously farted in front of Elizabeth I.

15 Sir William Lower: Lower sat in the 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. In 1614 he sent pursuivants after Sir Henry Goodyer, an act which may explain the couplet attributed to Lower in other copies: “Then all in anger sayd Sir Will: Lower / Wee may by our privilidge Comitt to the Tower” (BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 21r).

16 Sir Richard Houghton: Houghton sat in the 1601 and 1604 Parliaments.

17 Justice of Quorum: a Justice of the Peace whose presence was necessary to constitute a bench.

18 take it in snuffe: take offence.

19 Sir Thomas Holcrofte: Holcrofte sat in the 1593, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He died in 1620.

20 Sir Walter Cope: Cope, a noted antiquary, sat in the 1589, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He was appointed secretary to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, in 1609, and Master of the Wards in 1613. He died in 1615.

21 Learned Councell of the Queene: Sir Robert Hitcham, who attended Gray’s Inn, was appointed Queen Anne’s Attorney-General in 1603, and sat in the 1597, 1604, 1614, 1624, 1625 and 1626 Parliaments.

22 Mr Pecke: Edward Peake sat in the 1576, 1584, 1586, 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He died in July 1607, before the fourth session of this parliament.

23 President: i.e. “precedent”. After members of the House of Lords were outraged by a message from the Commons claiming that some of its members were barons, Richard Martin reported on 5 March 1607 that Peake had a precedent in the description of representatives of the Cinque Ports.

24 Noy: there were three Noyes in Jacobean Parliaments: William Noye sat in the 1604, 1621, 1624, 1626 and 1628 Parliaments; John Noyes sat in the 1604 Parliament; and Peter Noyes sat in the 1614 Parliament. The most likely candidate, however, given the legal tenor of the couplet, was William Noy: a member of Lincoln’s Inn and a highly regarded lawyer. On 14 March 1606, William Noy argued against a higher subsidy to the King, implying that high taxation was the cause of civil war and brought the state into disrepute at home and abroad (Bowyer 80).

25 entail’d: pun on “tail”; to entail is to settle land or an estate on a designated series of possessors, hence from father to son. A joke of this type was made at the time, since Bowyer puts it in his diary (see
above, section Introduction).

26 Mr Recorder: Sir Henry Mountague, Recorder of the City of London, sat in the 1593, 1597, 1603, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments, representing London in the last two of these.

27 To cutt...right: i.e. to deny the powerful City of London representation and a voice in parliament.

28 Kitt Brookes: Christopher Brooke, poet and member of Lincoln’s Inn, sat in the 1604, 1610, 1614, 1621, 1624 and 1628 Parliaments. He was active in opposition to the Union and impositions, and was identified by Francis Bacon as one of the popular or “opposite party” (Works 4.365). Variants on this couplet include: “Wee may be note so severe quoth Christopher Brooke / That it inter orata in the end of the Clarke booke” (BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 17r); “Nay quoth Kitt Brooke, I tooke it in ill part, / And ere I have done Ile abridge the fart” (BL Add. MS 58215, fol. 189r).

29 livery & seizin: livery of seisin refers to the delivery of property into the corporal possession of a person. Since a fart is intangible this cannot be done.

30 Mr Evans: Ralph Ewens, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1597 and 1601 parliaments, and was Clerk of the Commons in the 1604 Parliament. He died in 1611.

31 I smell...for mee: fees were paid to the Speaker, Serjeant and possibly also the Clerk, to put private bills before the House.

32 Mr Moore: Sir Francis Moore, a member of the Middle Temple, sat in the 1589, 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He died in 1621.

33 What's good...comonweale: Moore was known for his opposition to monopolies. In 1606, he denounced a patent for blue starch as a monopoly; and in 1614, in a speech concerning the glass patent, he “declared that it was typical for monopolists to pretend that their patent was for the public good even though they were primarily concerned with private gain”.

34 Sir Harry: Sir Henry Goodyer, a member of the Middle Temple and Gentleman of the Privy Chamber from 1605, sat in the 1604 Parliament. He was a close friend and correspondent of John Donne and the other “wits” credited with the composition of the “Parliaments Fart”.

35 He has caus’d...miscarry: Goodyer held the monopoly on coal.

36 Quoth...shoote: the manuscript leaves a gap here, and of the other versions that include this couplet there is no agreement whose name should appear. Contenders include: “Sir Thomas Holcraft” [i.e. Holcrofte, mentioned earlier in the poem] (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37), “Sir John Frogmorton” (BL MS Stowe 962) [i.e. John Throckmorton, who sat in the 1601 and 1604 Parliaments], and “Mr May” (BL MS Harley 5191) [i.e. Humphrey May, who sat in the 1604, 1614, 1621, 1625, 1624, 1626 and 1628 Parliaments]. A further couplet is attributed to May in other copies: “then spake Mr May this
eloquent speech / would this accident had bin substance in his breech” (Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 57).

37 Lawrence Hyde: Hyde, a member of the Middle Temple, sat in the 1597 and 1604 Parliaments. He was a kinsman of Sir Edwin Sandys, was identified by Bacon as one of the “popular” party affiliated with the Earl of Southampton (Works 4.365), and vigorously defended parliamentary privileges, including freedom of speech. Couplets on Hyde in other versions include: “O wofull tymes, quoth Lawrence Hyde / yf once our freedome of speach be denyed” (BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 16v); “nay quoth Laurence Hyde I like not that fashion / for Monopolies wear forbidden by proclamation” (Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 56). (In March 1621 James I cancelled by proclamation the patents on concealed lands, inns, and gold and silver thread (Stuart Royal Proclamations 1.503-5).)

38 Harry the hardie: possibly Sir Henry Neville, who sat in the 1604 and 1614 Parliaments, and whose red hair and beard resembled those of Henry VIII. Neville was considered to be one of the leaders of the Commons, and at the end of the 1610 sessions was seen by one contemporary to have “ranged himself with those Patriots that were accounted of a contrary faction to the courtiers”. He died in 1615.

39 the knightly Doctor: Sir Daniel Dun, Master of Requests, sat in the 1598, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments, representing Oxford University in the last two of these. He died in 1617.

40 court of requests: court for the recovery of small debts.

41 Sir Edwyn: Sir Edwin Sandys, member of the Middle Temple, sat in the 1589, 1593, 1604, 1614, 1621, 1624, 1625 and 1626 Parliaments. He was active in disputing the prerogative powers of the Crown in relation to the post nati and impositions, and in defending parliamentary privileges. Following the dissolution of the 1614 Parliament, he had his papers on impositions called in and burnt in Whitehall, was examined by the Privy Council, and was held in custody for a month.

42 Project: “a practical scheme for exploiting material things” (Thirsk 1). Projects were controversial at this period because they often involved the granting of monopolies or patents.

43 Sir William Wade: Wade, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1584, 1589, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. Lieutenant of the Tower between 1605 and 1613, he fell into disfavour and lost his post in part because of his failure to guard properly Arabella Stuart, who escaped from the Tower in 1611, and in part (according to a popular conspiracy theory) because he was unwilling to abet the murderers of Sir Thomas Overbury, who was murdered in 1613 (see Sections F and H).

44 little ease: punning on the name given to the dungeon at the Tower of London.

45 Sir John Hollis: Holles, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. Though he increasingly sought patronage at court, and was made Lord Houghton in 1616 and first Earl of Clare in 1624, in the early Jacobean Parliaments Holles was a vocal critic of the Scottish bedchamber, an opponent of the Union, and a supporter of punitive restrictions on office-holding by Scots.
vacuitie: absolute emptiness of space; vacuum.

Nor willingly...gratuitie: Holles was well-known for his frugality, and was petitioning potential patrons in this period.

Sir Thomas Shurley: two Sir Thomas Shirleys sat in James’s Parliaments. Sir Thomas Shirley the elder (1542-1612) sat in the 1572, 1584, 1593, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He raised his own army to follow Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, to the Low Countries, and was made Treasurer-at-War to the English army in 1587, which resulted in massive personal debt, as a result either of his abuse of the office or use of his own funds. He died in great debt in 1612. His son, Sir Thomas Shirley (c.1564-1632), sat in the 1584, 1593, 1601, 1614 and 1621 Parliaments. He was one of the famous Shirley brothers, who engaged in privateering in the Levant until his capture by the Turks in 1603. The placing of the couplet after the “frugall” Sir John Holles suggests the “thriftles” Shirley senior.

Burley: probably intended as a punning reference to the Elizabethan statesman, William Cecil, Lord Burghley.

Sir John Fortescue: Fortescue sat in the 1559, 1572, 1586, 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He was a cousin of Queen Elizabeth, and a close friend of Lord Burghley, Sir Francis Bacon, Sir Walter Ralegh and Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex. He died in December 1607, after the third session of the 1604 Parliament.

Not without...withall: this line may ironically refer to Fortescue’s presumption during elections to the 1604 Parliament. Fortescue lost the initial election to Sir Francis Goodwin; however, he convinced the Privy Council to void Goodwin’s election, and was elected himself at the second election. In turn, the Commons responded by declaring Goodwin elected, and rejecting Fortescue. Both men eventually sat in this Parliament.

Sir John Sheffield: Sheffield sat in the 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. An inactive member of James’s first Parliament, Sheffield accompanied Charles Howard, Lord Admiral Nottingham on his embassy to Spain in 1605, and travelled in France 1607-1610. He is not recorded making any speeches or serving on any committees relating to the Union. He died in 1614. A variant replaces Sheffield with a more likely candidate, Sir John Herbert (BL MS Stowe 354, fol. 43v). Herbert, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1586, 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He was one of two Privy Councillors in the Commons in James’s first Parliament and, somewhat ineffectively, put the Crown’s case for the Union in this Parliament.

fall to the union: i.e. turn (our) attention to the matter of the Union.

Sir Hugh Beeston: there were two Hugh Beestons in this Parliament, though Sir Hugh (c.1547-1627) is the most likely referent. He was a member of Lincoln’s Inn, and sat in the 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. In 1604 he was ordered to prepare for the Hampton Court conference on
religion, in 1606 he attended a conference on ecclesiastical grievances, and in 1610 he was among those appointed to consider a bill imposing the new oath of allegiance. His wife was prosecuted for recusancy later in 1610, and in the 1624 Parliament he was said to be “suspect in religion since ‘his daughter and heir apparent is a recusant’”.

55 *Ned Hobbie:* Sir Edward Hoby sat in the 1580, 1585, 1586, 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He was the author of *A Letter to Mr. T. H.* (1609), which attacked Catholic women on the basis that women should not have religious opinions. Questier argues that this work marks a shift from the “godly” views he expressed in the 1604 Parliament to an anti-Calvinist perspective (“Crypto-Catholicism” 60). He died in 1617.

56 *Sir John Lee:* Sir John Leigh sat in the 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He died in 1612.

57 *dottage:* i.e. dotage.

58 *Sir Roger Owen:* Owen, a member of Lincoln’s Inn, sat in the 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He died in 1617. In variants, another couplet refers to Owen: “Within the Compasse of the earthe 21000 myle aboute / quothe Sir Roger Owen such a Farte was never lett owte” (BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 20r; see also BL Add. MS 58215, fol. 188v).

59 *if books...Fryeres:* the reference is to Chaucer’s “ Summoner’s Tale”; the division of the fart, the scatological centrepiece of the tale, is part of an extended satire on the sophistry and hypocrisy of friars.

60 *Phillip Gawdie:* Gawdie sat in the 1589, 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He died in 1617.

61 *Sir John Hollis:* Holles (the poem’s second reference to him).

62 *Sir John Acklam:* Acland sat in the 1586 Parliament, and in 1607 he replaced Sir Thomas Ridgeway when the latter was appointed Treasurer in Ireland. He died in 1620.

63 *Mr Brooke:* there were a number of Brookes sitting in this Parliament, and this one appears to be distinguished from “Kit Brooke”, even though the jest about the *post nati* is in keeping with Christopher Brooke’s stance on this issue. The other possibilities are Giles Brooke, Thomas Brooke and William Brooke. The scribe, uncertainly, writes “Cooke” above the line, as an alternate reading. Although Sir Edward Coke did not sit in James’s first Parliament, this identification might allude to his status as one of the leading Jacobean judges. Coke sat in the 1589, 1593, 1621, 1624, 1625, 1626 and 1628 Parliaments.

64 *Post-nati:* reference to debates on the mutual naturalization of Scots and English born since James’s accession to the English throne (the *post nati*).

65 *Duncombe:* Edward Duncombe sat in the 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. A different couplet on Duncombe in a variant alludes to “talebearers” reporting speeches to the King: “You did so, quoth
Duncombe, but with an ill intent / you left but the sense precendent & the sense subsequent” (BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 16v).

66 *cuntrie courtier:* one copy identifies the “country courtier” as Sir Robert Wingfield, while another has “Sir R.W.” in the margin (BL Add. MS 23299; Rosenbach MS 1083/15). Wingfield, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1584, 1586, 1589, 1593, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments (the latter until his death in August 1609). Reputed a “grave person, and an ancient Parliament man”, he was very active in James’s first Parliament, and put forward a bill “for the establishment of true religion”.

67 *Sir Thomas Challenor:* Challenor sat in the 1586 and 1604 Parliaments. He died in 1615.

68 *Sir Hugh Beeston:* the poem’s second reference to Beeston.

69 *mouth hath priviledge:* allusion to debates over the parliamentary privilege of freedom of speech.

70 *Ned Wymark...Powles:* Edward Wymark sat in the 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. A well-known Paul’s walker, money-lender and great wit, he compiled a register of concealed tenures, and St. Paul’s became (in the words of a contemporary writer) “his exchange to put out his money for 40 years together”. “Pasquill” refers to his apparent activity writing pasquils: witty, generally libellous verses.

71 *chappell of the Roolles:* Rolls House, Chancery Lane, was the official residence of the Master of the Rolls, Sir Edward Phelips.

72 *Sir Anthony Cope:* Cope, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1571, 1572, 1586, 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He acquired a reputation as one of the “puritan Parliament men”, and during James’s first Parliament he sat on committees to consider bills for ecclesiastical government and for the restoration of deprived ministers, and prepared a petition on ecclesiastical grievances. He died in 1614.

73 *Bull from the Pope:* i.e. a papal bull (decree).

74 *his brother:* the poem’s second reference to Sir Walter Cope. These sentiments are usually attributed to John Bond (who is mentioned again below).

75 *Oxenbridge:* two Sir Robert Oxenbridges sat in the Commons. Sir Robert Oxenbridge the elder (c.1586-1616), a member of the Inner Temple, sat in the 1604 Parliament only; his son (1595-1638), a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1621, 1624, 1625 and 1626 Parliaments. The elder Oxenbridge is the more likely candidate here, particularly as his son was inactive in all four parliaments in which he sat. While the elder Oxenbridge’s brother became a Jesuit, Oxenbridge himself was active on committees on reform of the ministry, and in February 1606, following the Gunpowder Plot, accused Sir William Maurice of attending mass (although, as a contemporary noted, “the House took no hold of that speech”). He died in 1616.
Mr Goad: John Good, a member of Lincoln’s Inn, sat in the 1604 Parliament. Good was a pro-
Scottish Catholic who outwardly conformed, but whose autobiography set out his rejection of the
Anglican Church. He made a speech on the bill “against Puritans” in 1604, and in 1610 he continued to
speak against Puritan ministers and for leniency towards recusants.

reformed brother: derogatory reference to a Puritan.

Sir John Yonge: Yonge, who sat in the 1597 and 1604 Parliaments, was well-known for his
profanities both within and without the Commons. He died around 1614. But the poem’s suggested
connection with Wales would be more appropriate if applied to Richard Younge, a member of Lincoln’s
Inn, who sat in the 1604, 1621 and 1624 Parliaments. The latter was well-known as a Welsh member of
the Commons, and was on the committee for the Welsh government bill. A version of this couplet is
also linked to “Mr. Jones” (e.g. “I am noe teller of tales / the like have I never heard in the marches of
Wales” (BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 20v)). There were at least three Joneses in early Stuart parliaments:
John Jones, who sat in 1604; Richard Jones, who sat in 1628, 1640 and 1647; and Robert Jones, who sat
in 1625 and 1628.

Sir Roger Aston: Aston, a close friend of John Donne and Sir Henry Goodyer, sat in the 1604
Parliament. Bodleian MS Malone 23 appears to be collating two couplets on Aston that appear
separately in other copies. He died in 1612.

well shav’d...rose water: a marginal note in one manuscript describes Aston as “The Kinges Barber
” (Rosenbach MS 1083/15, fol. 55v)

Sir Thomas Knevett: Knyvett sat in the 1572, 1584, 1586, 1589, 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments.
He died in 1622.

I feare...worke: as Justice of the Peace for Westminster, Knyvett discovered the explosives under the
Houses of Parliament in 1605.

Sir John Parker: Parker sat in the 1589, 1593, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He died in 1617.

Bombard: an early cannon; also playing on bombast (overblown, windy speech).

Mr Moore...order: Sir George More, a member of the Inner Temple, sat in the 1584, 1586, 1589,
1593, 1597, 1601, 1604, 1614, 1621, 1624, 1625 and 1626 Parliaments. He was one of the most senior
members of the House, and, famously, John Donne’s father-in-law. More habitually rose in the
Commons “about Eleven of the Clock...[to] make Repetition of all that had been spoken that Day” (Bald
145).

Price: this could be a reference to any one of several early Stuart parliamentarians named Price.
Charles Price sat in the 1621, 1624, 1625, 1626, 1628, 1640 and 1642 Parliaments; James Price I sat in
the 1593, 1597, 1601, 1604, 1614 and 1621 Parliaments; James Price II sat in the 1624, 1625 and 1626
Parliaments; William Price sat in the 1614, 1621, 1624, 1625 and 1626 Parliaments.

87 As noe...king: the first line of a couplet often attributed to Samuel Lewkenor (“I am gladd, quoth Sam: Lewkner, wee have found a thing / Which no talebearer can Cary to the King” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 7v)), the second line of which seems to have been missed by this copyist. Lewkenor sat in the 1584 and 1604 Parliaments. Behind the couplet is a speech Lewkenor delivered on 6 May 1607, which set out a number of concerns about the way the House’s freedom of speech had been compromised by “private suggestions or reports” delivered to the King. He argued that men who had “expressly been blamed and reprehended by his Majesty for their speeches in the House” should be given an opportunity to clear themselves, and that in future the House should be able “with all liberty and freedom and without fear, [to] deliver their opinions in the matter in hand”.

88 Sir Roger Aston: the poem’s second reference to Aston. A variant has Aston jest that he has already carried the House’s message (i.e. the fart) to the King: “naye quoth Sir Roger, I went from this place, / and reported it worde for worde to his grace” (BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 16v).

89 Sir Lewis his brother: Samuel’s brother, Sir Lewis Lewkenor, a member of the Middle Temple, sat in the 1597 and 1604 Parliaments. He was a contributor to Coryats Crudities. Several of his speeches in James’s first Parliament provoked hostile reactions.

90 if it come...passage: Lewis Lewkenor was the Master of Ceremonies. The lines perhaps also allude to the hostile reaction to Lewkenor’s interposed speech of 28 June 1604, in which he claimed “that he was induced by some late conference with a foreign ambassador to put the House in mind of some answer to be made to the King’s late letter, touching subsidy”. Regarded as ardently pro-Spanish from early in James’s reign, Lewkenor was briefly imprisoned in 1625 for presuming to order, without authorization, a ship for the departure of the Spanish ambassador.

91 Sir Robert Drury: Drury sat in the 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. An experienced soldier in the 1590s, he was appointed to an embassy to Spain in 1605. He was also a patron, and later landlord, of John Donne, who travelled with the Druries in Europe 1611-12. He died in 1615.

92 a frend: in one manuscript the “frend” is identified as Sir Edward Hoby (BL Add. MS 23299, fol. 15r).

93 Mr James...Wight: Richard James represented Newport, Isle of Wight, in the 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He died in 1613. When Sir William Maurice on 9 Dec 1606 pressed the House to read a bill for imperial title, Richard James launched into an anti-Scots tirade. A different couplet is attributed to James in a variant: “naye quoth mister James no saieing will serve, / But savinge your reverence yf well observe” (BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 15r).

94 Sir Robert Johnson: Johnson sat in the 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He was appointed Surveyor in the Exchequer under Elizabeth, and prepared a treatise on reform of Crown lands. He was active in matters relating to land reform in James’s first Parliament, partly in order to increase Crown
revenue, drawing on his expertise as a surveyor. He died in 1622.

95 *Jacobs staffe:* surveyor’s tool used for measuring distances and heights.

96 *Sir John Bennett:* Bennet, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1597, 1601, 1604, 1614 and 1621 Parliaments. An ecclesiastical and civil lawyer, he was appointed to twenty-nine committees in the 1606-07 session and thirty-six in 1610. He was impeached in 1621 on corruption charges for accepting bribes in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

97 *Sir Richard Lovelace:* Lovelace, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1601, 1604, 1614 and 1621 Parliaments.

98 *to end...conference:* on 22 January 1606, Lovelace put the motion that a conference be called with the Lords before addressing Thomas Wentworth’s proposal for securing “an able, sufficient and resident ministry”; however, the House instead nominated a committee.

99 *Doctor Crompton:* Thomas Crompton sat in the 1589, 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He died in February 1609, before the fourth session of the 1604 Parliament.

100 *no man...civill lawe:* alludes to a conflict between the civil and common law, which precipitated the attack in the Commons, led by Richard Martin, on *The Interpreter* (1607), by John Cowell, Professor of Civil Law at Cambridge. *The Interpreter* was perceived to undermine the authority of the common law and Parliament, asserting instead the superiority of the royal prerogative. One copy continues: “for well I wott being a Cyvillian doctor / this farte came into Court withoute a Proctor” (BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 20v).

101 *Doctor Paddy:* William Paddy, the King’s physician and President of the College of Physicians, sat in the 1604 Parliament only.

102 *Præter modestiam...naturam:* beyond propriety not beyond nature.

103 *Sir John Towneshend:* Towneshend sat in the 1604 Parliament only.

104 *orationis pars...Quid est Ars:* playing on the titles of the popular school Latin grammar books, Aelius Donatus’ *De partibus orationis ars minor* and *De partibus orationis ars maior*. Literally: “orationis pars” (speaking part); “Quid est ars” (what is art).

105 *Sir Richard Gargrave:* Gargrave sat in 1597, and took his seat in the 1604 Parliament on 7 April 1606.

106 *Mr Hare:* John Hare sat in the 1572, 1584, 1586, 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments.

107 *The Surveyor...share:* the copyist has probably misread “Purveyor” for “Surveyor” (so the line...
could allude to complaints about the avarice of purveyors). A more plausible variant has: “yt wer noe grievance quoth Mr Hare / If this knave Purveyor of this Fart had a share” (Bodleian MS Tanner 306, p. 256). Hare was an effective leader of the Commons in putting the legal case against purveyance in James’s first Parliament (Croft, “Parliament” 13-14, 23-26). He died in 1613.

108 **Sir Francis Bacon**: Bacon, a member of Gray’s Inn, sat in the 1581, 1584, 1586, 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. Bacon’s activities as Attorney-General and a tract he published on duelling, *The charge of Sir Francis Bacon, knight, his Majesties Attorney Generall, touching Duells, upon information in the Star-chamber against Priest and Wright. With the Decree of the Star-Chamber in the same cause* (1614), inform a couplet in a variant: “Quoth fyne fraunces Bacon, yf it were not in this place / this farte maight bee prooved a starr Chamber case ” (BL MS Stowe 354, fol. 43v). Another couplet seems to allude to his fall from grace following his impeachment in 1621: “why what doe you meane so much to take on / he was fedd with swynes flesh quoth sir Frauncis Bacon” (Rosenbach MS 1083/15, fol. 56v).

109 **Bond**: John Bond sat in the 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. A physician and classical scholar, Bond (d. 1612) published commentaries on Horace (1606) and left notes on Persius which were published posthumously in 1614.

110 *Naturam...recurrit*: allusion to Horace, *Epistles* 1.10: “Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurret” (“Drive Nature out with a Pitchfork. She’ll be back again.”).

111 **Mounson**: Sir Thomas Monson sat in the 1597, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He was accused of complicity in the Overbury poisoning in 1615, and remained in the Tower until 1617; however, “sage” Monson did not break his silence over his part in the Overbury murder, and he was eventually released without standing trial (Bellany, *Politics* 77).

112 **Sir Dannett**: Thomas Damett (or Dannett) sat in the 1584, 1586, 1593, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. He died in 1618.

113 **Mr Tolderbury**: Christopher Tolderrey sat in the 1604 Parliament.

114 **Sir Richard Martin**: Martin, a member of the Middle Temple, sat in the 1601 and 1604 Parliaments, and was permitted by the House to make a speech on behalf of the Virginia Company, as the Company’s counsel, in the 1614 Parliament. He was one of the leading wits in a tavern company that met at the Mitre and Mermaid taverns, and was highly regarded for his oratorical skills. After he delivered the oration to James I on his 1603 entrance into London, he was awarded the unofficial title of “London’s Oracle”. He died in 1618.

115 *the speaker...Ephestion*: the Speaker of the Commons, Sir Edward Phelps, a member of the Middle Temple, sat in the 1584, 1586, 1593, 1597, 1601 and 1604 Parliaments. Phelps was the key spokesman for Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, in James’s first Parliament, which led in 1610 to protests over a conflict of interests. He may have acted as a patron of the wits, given his sponsorship of Thomas
Coryate, and close ties with Hoskyns, Brooke, Martin, and William Hakewill, who were frequent guests at his dining table (Coryate, *Traveller* 8-9). He secured a seat for Donne in the 1614 Parliament. The title given to Phelips, “noble Ephestian”, equates the Speaker with the classical orator. He died soon after the dissolution of the 1614 Parliament, having fallen into deep disgrace with the King for the part his son and “one of his cheife consorts and minions”, John Hoskyns, played in the “Addled” parliament of 1614 (Chamberlain, *Letters* 1.540, 556).

116 Sir Robert...stories: Cotton, a member of the Middle Temple, sat in the 1604, 1624, 1626 and 1628 Parliaments. He was a well-known antiquary, a founding member of the Society of Antiquaries, and an advisor to Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton and James I on parliamentary matters. He was a friend of Jonson, Holland, Martin, Brooke, Donne, Goodyer, Jones and Richard James, among others.

117 Mr Pories: John Pory sat in the 1604 Parliament, taking his seat in 1605. He was a close friend of fellow antiquaries Cotton and Sir Walter Cope.

118 putt the Fart...tables: i.e. document the fart in his table book. Many copies of “The Parliament Fart” end either with these couplets, or add the Speaker putting the fart to the vote.

119 Sir Thomas Lake: Lake sat in the 1593, 1601, 1604, 1614 and 1626 Parliaments. He was a member of the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries, and was appointed Latin Secretary to James in 1603, and Keeper of the Records at Whitehall in 1604. After being appointed Secretary of State in 1616, he spectacularly fell from power (see Section J).

120 if this house...table: this reference could allude to events in 1607 or 1614. When Christopher Piggot, the member for Buckinghamshire, made an intemperate speech against the Scots in February 1607, the Commons initially failed to punish him, and he was only sent to the Tower after James I intervened. Some versions of the poem include the following couplet “quoth Sir Edw: Hobbie alleadgd with the spiggot./Sir if you fart at the union remember Kitt Piggott” (Stowe 962, fol. 67r). Lake was made a Privy Councillor in 1614, and this couplet would have gained additional resonance with the Commons’ failure to censure members, including John Hoskyns, for inflammatory speeches made during the 1614 Parliament; hence the need for the Privy Council to intervene, as it did following the 1614 dissolution (see Section G).

121 Sir George Moore: the poem’s second reference to More.


123 Farts...fees: possibly a reference to the fact that prisoners paid fees to their keepers. A related couplet refers to the gratuities that were sometimes paid to the Serjeant and servants by individuals or the city guilds in order to further business in Commons, see C1i note 31.

124 the clerke: the poem’s second reference to Ralph Ewens, Clerk of the Commons.
Mr Dyett: Anthony Dyott, a member of the Inner Temple, sat in the 1601, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He made a “long, learned” speech on the illegality of purveyance in 1606, spoke in support of the Union, and opposed impositions in this Parliament. He died in 1622.

Sir William: there are a number of candidates for “Sir William” in the 1604 Parliament, including those referenced elsewhere in other copies: Sir William Maurice, Sir William Lower, Sir William Waad, Sir William Paddy, and “Sir William Strowde of Sommersetshire” (BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 16v).

If this fart...platter: probably refers to some office held by “Sir William”, possibly within one of the royal households; however, this has not been identified.

Richard Buckley: Sir Richard Bullheley, a member of Lincoln’s Inn, sat in the 1563, 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He died in 1621. “Angerie” might be a mistranscription of “Anglesey”; a variant has, “Then sayed Sir Rich: Buckley that Anglice Ladd / rose upp in a fury and rose upp halfe madd” (BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 21v).

Sir John Perrot: James Perrot, a member of the Middle Temple and friend of John Hoskyns, sat in the 1597, 1604, 1614, 1621, 1624 and 1626 Parliaments. In 1614 he was summoned before the Privy Council after a violent attack on impositions which blamed James’s mismanagement of royal finances, and in 1621 he was outspoken in his attacks on popery and monopolists.

Mr Hoskins: John Hoskyns, a member of the Middle Temple, sat in the 1604 and 1614 Parliaments. He was one of the lawyers in the Commons who studied the prerogative, alongside his friends Brooke, Hakewill, James Whitelocke, Martin, Sir Robert Phelips and others; and he was a vocal critic of James’s Scottish bedchamber in 1610 and 1614 (which led to his imprisonment following the dissolution of the latter Parliament). He was a leading wit in the tavern companies that met at the Mitre and Mermaid, and his poetry circulated widely in manuscript (see Section G). Other couplets on Hoskyns include: “Why quoth Sir John Hoskynes what needes this adoe / If youle bury the Farte I make an Epitaph therto” (BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 21r); “Gentlemen quoth Hoskins, to lible it is not safe, / Let the Fart bee buried, Ile make the Epitaph” (BL Add. MS 58215, fol. 189r); “Well quoth Mr Hoskins, I dare pawne my nose / The gentm: mente it noe farther than his hose / And yet not within that statute de dovis / Because a farte is nulli in bovis” (BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 25r).

stale: lure or trap.


Come...Epitaph: the closing couplet perhaps alludes to James’s poem attacking those who wrote libels ( “O stay your teares yow who complains”); however, other versions attribute the warning to Hoskyns. Endings of the poem are many and varied: some versions put the fart to the vote; another brings the poem back to the issue of the Union which Ludlow’s fart interrupted: “When all had well laughed they Concluded by art / That Parliaments of late wear subject to a fart / Yet they better likte the
tricke of the Chollicke / Then the former blast of the Powder Catholique / And thus the parliament, in mens opinion / Hath turnde to a fart the mater of union!” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 194r; cf. BL MS Sloane 1394, fol. 173v-74r).
Notes. Like “The Parliament Fart” (“Downe came grave auntenant Sir John Crooke”), this poem is occasionally ascribed to John Hoskyns, although generally it is without attribution. Many sources transcribe it immediately after “The Parliament Fart”, but the connection is by no means universal, and numerous sources transcribe one without the other. In some sources, only the first two lines are given. After 1649, the Roman allusions to the assassination of Julius Caesar, Romulus, and Flora would have lent the fart a certain republican cast.

“The Farts Epitaph”

Reader I was borne and cry’d  
Crackt soe, smelt so & so dy’d  
Like Julius Cesar was my Death  
For he in Senate lost his breath

And not unlike Intoom’d doth lye  
The Noble Romulus & I  
And alsoe like to Flora fayer  
I make the Common-wealth mine Heyer

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 306, fol. 256v

Other known sources. Musarum Deliciae 71; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 94v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 71, p. 4; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 158v; Bodleian MS Sancroft 53, p. 56; BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 79v; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 157v; BL MS Egerton 2421, fol. 2v; BL MS Harley 6918, fol. 34v; BL MS Harley 6931, fol. 35v; BL MS Lans. 674, fol. 18v; BL MS Sloane 1792, fol. 95r; BL MS Stowe 962, fol. 219r; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 7r; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 58; Folger MS V.a.97, p. 128; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 86r; Folger MS V.a.170, p. 68; Huntington MS HM 116, p. 11; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 27; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 113

C1b

1 _he in Senate...breath_: Julius Caesar was famously assassinated by the republican Brutus in the Senate.

2 _Noble Romulus_: Romulus, the mythic founder of the Roman Republic, disappeared in a violent storm
and therefore lacked a tomb. It was believed he was taken to heaven by his father, Mars.

Flora fayer...Heyer: the Romans believed Flora was once a wealthy courtesan in the early years of the Roman republic, and left her fortune to the people, making the Republic her heir on the condition they celebrate her birthday with feasts.
D. The Death of Robert Cecil (1612)

Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, James I’s Lord Treasurer, Secretary and most powerful councillor, died on 24 May 1612. His death provoked a voluminous outpouring of libellous epitaphs that were countered by a smaller number of written defences in both verse and prose. The sheer multitude of libels shocked experienced observers like the newsmonger John Chamberlain (1.362, 364-65), while they clearly amused Cecil’s factional enemies at court. Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, sent one “prety Epitaphe” to the royal favourite Robert Carr, Viscount Rochester, commenting that “I have seldome seen the traces of a more unhappy pen and yet to deale plainly with your Lo if I should die in this instant I knowe not what one point to taxe of untruth or fiction” (PRO SP 14/70/21, 1 August 1612). The notoreity of the libellous attacks on Cecil also provoked John Donne into setting down some rather unorthodox thoughts on the poetic and moral utility of verse libels (77-79). These poems have been intelligently analyzed and contextualized by Pauline Croft (“Reputation”) in a pathbreaking essay on Cecil’s reputation. Croft’s analysis draws attention to the set of interconnected and politically resonant charges and images that recur throughout the libellous epitaphs: the allegation, also made at the time of the events in question, that Cecil had engineered the downfall and execution of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, in 1601; his fiscal oppression of the realm as Lord Treasurer and Master of the Wards; his physical deformities (short stature and crooked back); and his alleged sexual corruption, potently symbolised for the libellers by the bodily decay and stench supposedly caused by a fatal dose of syphilis. The selection of poems below gathers together the twenty two surviving libels on Cecil (plus one libellous anagram), and the four extant verse defences that circulated in manuscript.
Notes. This widely circulated poem on the death of Robert Cecil is often attributed to Walter Ralegh (e.g. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26 and Folger MS V.a.345). Croft (“Reputation” 49, 52, 62) discusses the poem and the question of authorship, and McRae discusses its style (Literature 35). The verse makes many of the standard charges against Cecil (e.g. fiscal and sexual corruption), but uniquely presents them in the guise of a sustained Spenserian pastoral conceit.

Heere lies Hobbinoll our Shepheard while ere
Who once a yeere duely our fleeces did sheere,
To please us his curre he chaynde to a clogg
And was himselfe after both Shepheard and dogg
For oblation to Pan his order was thus
Himselfe gave a trifle and sacrifizde us
And so with his wysedome this provident swayne
Kept himselfe on the mountayne and us on the playne
Where many a fine Hornepipe he tund’e to his Phillis
And swetely sunge walsingham to Amarillis
Till Atropos payde him, a pox on the drabbe
In spight of the tarbox, he died of the scabbe.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 34r

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 120; Osborne 89; “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 40; Bodleian MS Aubrey 6, fol. 78v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 79v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 97v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 78r; Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 12v; BL Add. MS 5832, fol. 169r; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 74r; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 18r; BL MS Harley 6947, fol. 11r; NCRO MS IL 4304; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 71r; Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 258r; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 110
1 Hobbinoll: shepherd and friend of Colin Clout in Edmund Spenser’s *Shepheardes Calender* and *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*. The name was increasingly used by this period as a generic name for a shepherd or rustic.

2 Pan: again a Spenserian reference, but here referring to King James.

3 Phillis...walsingham...Amarillis: Phillis and Amarillis are two sisters in Spenser’s *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, and here they stand for Cecil’s two alleged lovers, Audrey, Lady Walsingham, wife of Sir Thomas Walsingham and Mistress of the Robes to Queen Anne (Croft, “Reputation” 58), and Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk, wife of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk. Walsingham here is a pun, referring both to a popular Elizabethan tune and to Cecil’s supposed lover Lady Walsingham.

4 Atropos: the one of the three Fates responsible for cutting the thread that ended men’s lives.

5 drabbe: a slut, dirty woman, or whore.

6 tarbox: a container of salve shepherds carried to treat their sheep; here it alludes to the treatments Cecil was receiving from his doctors.

7 scabbe: a skin disease that commonly afflicts sheep, and here, in Cecil’s case, syphilis.
Advance, advance my ill-disposed Muse

With uncouth stile and ill-disposed verse,
Largly relate the ill-disposed use
Of him that ties thee to bedeck his hearce:
With much evills then I may rehearse,
And leave the rest for circumstance of evills
To be debated not with man but Divells:
It should not be ascribed to his skill
That thorough his grace he gained estimation,
But that it pleased to be his Maysters will
To deeme him fitt a piller for this nation
And so he was but in an evil fashion,
His timber sure was rotten at the first,
And so did make his building be accurst.
His deeds are written with an iron penn
In gods black book the register of greifs,
And sign’d and sealed with ten thousand men
Whom he hath banisht from their good relieves,
Leaving their goods to be the spoile of theives.
By his abusive and ungodlie actions.
His tricks, his plots, his nurceries of factions.
Monster of men, the worst of any evill
Gods by-marke shun’d by admonition.
His privie signat sealed for the divell,
Spyler of orphanes leaft to his tuition.²
And everie good that was in his fruition,
Willing and wold he what he list commit,
Letting his passion overwhelme his witt.
One worke of darknes never be forgotten³
That was effected by a murthrous deed,
But let it live till everie one be rotten
That yet is yongest of his race and seede
For which one strok he caus’d 2000 weepe,
And everie drop that from that number came
Invokes revenge, dispaire, and endlesse shame,
On thee and thine. O were thy blood not mixt
Among the noble, honest, good, and just,
I should not feare what in my heart is fixt,
There dissipations by thy pois’ned dust.
Plowed, sowne, and reaped, in lascivious lust,
Packing and matching to uphold thy endes.
With divells, with anie either foes or freinds.
Still did thy envie waite at honours back
Choking desert with overweenig⁴ pride
And still thy envie shot at honours wrack,
In semblance still that vertue was thy guide,
Forceing the best things to the worser side.
Thyne eye durst look upon the eyes of heaven,
Thy heart was vexed when all things went even.
It is observed in thy generall ends
Thy bad condition in thy best estate,
Thy private treasons to entrap thy freinds,
And malice others even with publick hate
A dangerous pillar in so good a state
Whose over runninge wit and only excellence
Was envie, hate, and poisoned virulence.
The Syre deemed the child of reprobation
Brought a new forme of goverment in the state,
Plotting our peeres for refuse of the nation,
Forcing their vertues to contempt and hate
Their fortune sone was rul’d by evil fate:
That they which had their countries dearest places,
Should so be cheated of their princes graces.
The Arcane plots, and intricate desseignes
Are now in common with the vulgar eares,
Now the nefarious, hellish undermines
Are much bemoaned with a world of tears
Just like the losse of paris-garden beares.\(^5\)
Who being dead uncased of their furrs
Lyes bravely buried mongst the brauling curres.
Well, you are gone, it is no matter whether,
Your freinds may meet in Suffolke or in Kent,
My charitie doth wish you altogether,
That alters honor with so foule intent,
And thus my sprite against you all is bent,
Thinking you worthie of the vilest skernes
That suffred basenesse blow in honours hornes.

Source. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 44-50

Other known sources. BL MS Trumbull Misc. V, fol. 11r

D2
1 *bedeck his hearce*: epitaphs traditionally were pinned to funeral hearses.

2 *orphanes leaff to his tuition*: the orphans in question were under Cecil’s control as Master of the Wards.

3 *worke of darknes*: this refers to the destruction of Essex, epitome of honour, and introduces the theme that dominates the rest of the poem.

4 Scribal error; read “overweening”.

5 *paris-garden beares*: Paris Garden was a bear garden on the bank of the Thames in Southwark, where bears were baited for popular entertainment.
D3 Ah was there nott a time when one man swayed

Notes. If in fact this verse was penned the week after Cecil’s death, we can date it quite precisely to late May or very early June 1612. Although many of the libels discuss the cause of Cecil’s death, this is the only one to note, correctly, that he suffered from scurvy, a disease that was responsible for some of the noxious symptoms that other libellers attributed to syphilis (Croft, “Reputation” 60-61).

Ah was there nott a time when one man swayed
And rulde both king and people topsye-turvye
Lett king and people now bee well apayde
He is gone, but how? he dide last week of the scurvye.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 33v

D3
**Heere lieth Robbin Crookt back, unjustly reckond**

_Notes._ This is one of two poems that develop parallels between the crooked-back Robert Cecil and the crooked-back late medieval tyrant Richard III. Croft ("Reputation" 55-56) discusses the political resonance of the Ricardian comparison. In one source, this libel is accompanied by a Latin translation (Folger MS V.a.103).

Heere lieth Robbin¹ Crookt back, unjustly reckond
A Richard the third, he was Judas²
In their lives they agree, in their deaths somewhat alter,
The more pitty the poxe³ soe cousend the halter.
Richard, or Robert, which is the worse?
A Crookt back great in state is Englands curse.

_Source._ Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 13r

_Other known sources._ Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 4; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 95v; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 37; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 20r; Folger MS V.a.160, p. 2; Huntington MS HM 116, p. 130

¹ _Robbin:_ commonplace contemporary diminutive of Robert.

² _Judas:_ presumably an allusion to Cecil’s alleged betrayal of Essex.

³ _poxe:_ syphilis.
Notes. This is one of two libels that compare the hump-backed Cecil to the hump-backed tyrant Richard III. For a discussion of the Ricardian motif in these libels, see Croft ("Reputation" 55-56).

Two R:R:rs twoe Crookebacks of late ruled Englands helme
The one spilte the Royall bloode,¹ the other Spoylde the Realme.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 69v

Other known sources. PRO SP 14/69/67:1 (transcribed in Chamberlain 1.356 n. 34); Newsletters from the Archpresbyterate of George Birkhead 192

¹ spilte the Royall bloode: allusion to Richard III’s alleged murder of the two princes in the Tower.
**D6 Robert E. of Salisburie. Libellous Anagram on Cecil**

*Notes. This anagram, which presumably circulated in London news circles, was mentioned in passing in a marginal note John Chamberlain added to a copy of the anti-Cecil poem “Two R:R:rs twoe Crookebacks of late ruled Englands helme”. “Burs” probably means “burse”, purse or shop, hence making a reference to Cecil’s role as Lord Treasurer.*

Robert E. of Salisburie. The anagram wherof is a silie burs.¹

*Source. PRO SP 14/69/67:1 (transcribed in Chamberlain 1.356, n. 34)*

¹ ‘Burs’ probably has a double meaning here. Literally it is ‘burse’, purse or shop, and thus a reference to Salisbury’s role as royal treasurer. But ‘burse’ was also contemporary slang for the scrotum.
D7 The old Cicilian fox

Notes. The exact meaning of this short verse is difficult to pin down, though Croft (“Reputation” 57) briefly discusses representations of Cecil as a cunning and corrupt fox. It is probable that the foods mentioned are puns: butterbox was a slang term for a Dutchman (though it is not clear who, in particular, this might refer to); and Bacon may very well refer to Sir Francis Bacon.

The old Cicilian fox¹
Whose faults are yet not shaken
Preferd his flemish butterbox
before his side of Bacon.

Source. Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 202

¹ fox: refers to Cecil’s cunning.
D8 The divell now hath fetcht the Ape

Notes. Parts of this poem are excerpted and discussed by Croft (“Reputation” 55, 60) and McRae (Literature 59-61).

The divell now hath fetcht the Ape
Of crooked manners, crooked shape.¹
Great were his infirmities,
But greater his enormities
Oppression, lechery, blood, & pride
He liv’d in; & like Herod² di’d.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 11r

¹ Crooked shape: Cecil’s crooked back.

² Herod: according to the ancient historian Josephus, Herod the Great died in great agony, suffering grotesque symptoms similar to those that allegedly afflicted Cecil.
D9 This Taper, fedd, & nurst with court-oyle

Notes. This libel is discussed by Croft ("Reputation" 61) and McRae (Literature 69-70).

This Taper,¹ fedd, & nurst with court-oyle,
Made great, & mighty by rapine² & spoile
Of ruined subjects; which did shine of late
And flashed with glorie thorough the state,
Unable now to spredd more light about,
Like a lampe dying, stanke, & went out.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 11r

Other known sources. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 34v

¹ Taper: candle.

² rapine: plunder.
D10  He nowe is deade, from whome men fledd

Notes. The target of this verse is not made fully explicit, but the poem’s allegation that its subject died of syphilis, and its placement in Bodleian MS Tanner 299 in a section dominated by libels on Cecil, suggests the late Lord Treasurer is the intended victim.

He nowe is deade, from whome men fledd
   As from the sickness
But justice lives, and to him gives
   His due with quickness
Pittie his prayse, in these oure dayes
   Shoulde be forgotten
Noe, lett that Jewe, bee still in viewe
   Though he bee rotten,
Lett noe disgrace in any case
   or spight forgett him
That whilst he stood in place so good
   Noe worth could gett him
For all his freinds he had base ends
   To which he usd'e them
And having donne, when they were gone
   He soe abusde them
But yet his wench, gave him the French\(^1\)
   Before the parting
For which he is deade, and wrapt in leade\(^2\)
   To sure for starting.
Now lett the rest, so high he blest
   To have like places
Soe nobly live, that men them give
   Noe such disgraces.
Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fols. 34v-35r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 11v

D10

1 French: common slang term for syphilis in this period.

2 wrapt in leade: the bodies of the rich were encased in lead to contain the stench of decay during funerals that often occurred some time after death.
D11 Falshoods Jewell

Notes. Croft (“Reputation” 49) discusses part of this verse compendium of attacks on Cecil.

Falshoods Jewell,
Mischeifes fewell,
Now is wasted;
Trecheries burden,
Lecheries guerdon¹
Hath he tasted.

Deceits commander,
Abuses defender
Scarsely repented;
Oppressions praiser,
Taxations raiser,
Death hath prævented.

The kings abuser,
The Parliaments misuser
Hath left his plotting:
The Queens deceiver,
The princes bereaver
Is now a rotting

The Counsells curber,
The states disturber
Dyed unwilling;
The Countries scourger,
The Citties Cheator
Of many a shilling.
Bawds best rewarder,  
Queanes\(^2\) most regarder,  
Both did attend him;  
Both laid uppon him,  
Both sett uppon him,  
That soone did end him.

**Source.** Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 11v

D11

1 *Guerdon:* reward.

2 *Queanes:* here means harlots, strumpets, rather than the more literal use of the word in stanza three.
D12 O Ladies, ladies howle & cry

Notes. Croft ("Reputation" 58, 61) quotes from and contextualizes parts of this poem.

“A Song”

O Ladies, ladies howle & cry,
For you have lost your Salisbury.
He that of late was your protection,
He is now dead by your infection.¹
Come with your teares bedew his lockes,
Death kild him not; it was the pockes.²

Lett Suffolke now, & Walsingham.³
Leave their adulterous lives for shame:
Or else their Ladiships must know,
There is noe helpe in Doctor Poe.⁴
For though the man be very cunning,
He canne not stay the poxe⁵ from running.

And now these lecherous wretches all,
Which plotted worthy Essex fall,⁶
May see by this foule loathsome end,
How foulie then they did offend.
And as they all deserv’d this curse,
Oh lett them all die soe, & worse.

And lett all, that abuse the King,
Themselves to greatnes soe to bring,
Be forc’d to travell to the bath,⁷
To purge themselves of filthie froath:
And when they back againe returne,
Then lett the pockes their bowells burne.
Soe shall the King, & state be blest,  
And subjects all shall live in rest,  
All which long time have been abused  
By tricks, which divellish whores have used.  
But now the cheife is gone before,  
I hope to see the end of more.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fols. 11v-12r

Other known sources. Folger MS V.a.345, p. 36 (first stanza only)

D12

1 *infection*: syphilis.

2 *pockes*: syphilis.

3 *Suffolke...Walsingham*: Cecil’s two alleged lovers, Audrey, Lady Walsingham, wife of Sir Thomas Walsingham and Mistress of the Robes to Queen Anne (Croft, “Reputation” 58), and Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk, wife of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk.

4 *Doctor Poe*: Leonard Poe, one of Cecil’s physicians.

5 *poxe*: syphilis.

6 Cecil was frequently accused, both at the time and in the libellous epitaphs, of engineering the fall and 1601 execution of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex

7 *the bath*: Cecil died on his return journey from taking the waters at Bath.
D13 You say that Malefacit was dead:

Notes. Although Cecil is not explicitly identified in the poem, the sole extant copy is transcribed as part of a collection of anti-Cecil verse. The last line’s reference to “stinking evill” also matches the much-repeated and politically resonant allegation that Cecil’s final illness produced a foul bodily stench.

You say that Malefacit\(^1\) was dead:
Some wicked Spirit brake the thread
I sweare thou wert a witty divell,
To flie from such a stinking evill.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 12r

\(^1\) Malefacit: literally The Evil Doer.
D14 Reader, if that desert may make the stay

Notes. Although Cecil is not explicitly identified in this poem, the sole extant copy is transcribed as part of a collection of anti-Cecil verse, and the charges made are common to many attacks on the late Lord Treasurer.

Reader, if that desert may make the stay;
Heere pause awhile, these read, passe on thy way.
This still speaks truth; God & the world doth know,
Hee heere enterr’d was (as these lines doe show)
Monster of nature, earths unhappy treader,
Mens hatred, lawes corrupter, a seducing leader.
Honesters cutthroat, æquities suppressor,
Poore mens undoer, & the widdowes oppressor.

Villanous plotter, & Chaos of evill.
Religions scoffer, Charities foe, mischeifes nurse,
Then whom the world ne’re had a worse.
Bawderies mouth, hells portion: but letting all passe,
Il’e say noe more, but ’s God his belly was.
Impartiall death was heerein just, & true,
In giving at last, though late, the devill his due.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 12v

1 Monster of nature: this refers to Cecil’s physical deformity.

2 God his belly was: i.e. he was a glutton.
Heere lyes interred wormes meate

Robin¹ the little that was so greate
Not Robbin goodfellow,² nor Robbin-hood³
But Robbin the Divell that never did good⁴
He studied nothing but mischevous ends
Trickes for his foes, traynes⁵ for his frends,
A cruell monster sent by fate
To devour both cuntrye, king, and state
I care not, nor I cannott tell
Whether his soule be in heaven or Hell
Butt sure I am they have earthed the foxe⁶
That stunke alive, and dyde of the poxe.⁷

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 33v

Other known sources. Osborne 87; “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 40; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 182; Bodleian MS Ashmole 1463, p. 13; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 97r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 155, p. 70; Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 12r; BL MS Harley 6947, fol. 211r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 71r; NCRO MS IL 4304; Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 258r

¹ Robin: common diminutive or nickname for Robert.
² Robbin goodfellow: the mischeivous goblin of English folklore.
³ Robbin-hood: the legendary English outlaw.
Francis Osborne’s printed version and some earlier manuscript copies have an interesting variant for this line, giving it as “But Robin th’Encloser of Hatfield wood” (Osborne 88; Croft, “Reputation” 52).

5 *traynes:* deceits.

6 *foxe:* referring here to Cecil’s political cunning.

7 *poxe:* syphilis.
D16 Heere sleepes in the Lorde beepepperde with pox

Notes. The sole extant copy of this libel was included in a newsletter sent in August 1612 by Benjamin Norton to Thomas More, the agent in Rome for the English Archpriest, George Birkhead. Norton reported that “there bee a multitude of Epitaphes” attacking Cecil, and claimed this one was “one of the cleaneste” (Newsletters from the Archpresbyterate of George Birkhead 193).

Heere sleepes in the Lorde beepepperde with pox¹
a Ciciliane monster beegott of a fox²
some caulde him crookebacke & some little Robbin³
hee bore on his backe a packe⁴ like ower Dobbin⁵
yett none coulde rule him, ride, or beestride him
butt he beestrid many or els they beelyde him
by crafte hee gott creditt, & honor by moneye
much hee delighted in huntinge the Cunniye⁶
but Rotten with ruttinge like sores in september
hee died as hee lived wth a faulte in one member.⁷

Source. Newsletters from the Archpresbyterate of George Birkhead 193 (from Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminter, Series A, AAW A XI, no. 136, pp. 369-72)

¹ _pox:_ syphilis.

² _fox:_ Robert Cecil’s father, William Cecil, Lord Burghley was also widely credited with the cunning of a fox—he was, for instance, the courtier Fox in Spenser’s *Mother Hubberds Tale*.

³ _Robbin:_ diminutive of Robert.

⁴ _a packe:_ Cecil’s hump on his back.

⁵ _Dobbin:_ a horse, and also a diminutive nickname for Robin/Robert.
6 *huntinge the Cunniye:* a lewd pun, literally meaning rabbit (coney) hunting, but here clearly also meaning sexual pursuit of women.

7 *faulthe in one member:* presumably referring to the syphilitic infection of Cecil’s genitals.
D17 Heere Robbin rousteth in his last neast

Notes. This libel puns on the common contemporary diminutive of Robert, “Robin”, turning the attack on Cecil into an allusive bird and beast fable. Thus the robin’s red breast becomes the “bloody breast” of the man held responsible for the death of the noble Essex; the robin’s mating habits become Cecil’s alleged sexual transgressions; and the robin’s diet becomes symbolic of Cecil’s exactions and oppressions. The same “robin” pun was later used to attack obliquely the royal favourite Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset (see headnote to “The Sommers sun is sett”).

Heere Robbin rousteth in his last neast,
The Robbin with the bloody breast.
Companion he would be to none,
His wont it was to sitt alone.
Still once a yeare he chang’d his henne,
And some accuse him with the Wrenne.¹
The man,² from whom alive he fledd,
With mosse he strove to cover dead.
When crouching he began to sing,
Wee knew the weather, he would bring.
The cunning Spinner haunted hee,
The warie ant, the working bee;
The harmlesse worme he made his meat,
And now the wormes this Robbin eat.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 13r

¹ Wrenne: the extension of the robin’s sexual tastes across the species line may allude to the allegation of Cecil’s sexual relationship with Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk. Although James I had tried to heal the rift by brokering marriage alliances, the Howards and the Cecils had been bitter factional
rivals at court.

2 *The man*: possibly Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex.
Notes. Croft ("Reputation" 53, 55, 59) discusses and contextualizes a number of the charges levied in this libel on Cecil. Many of the charges—physical deformity, political cunning and deception, sexual transgression and loathsome disease—are common to the attacks on Cecil. This poem's damaging charge of religious hypocrisy, however, is less common and deepens the impact of this powerful evocation of court corruption.

At Hattfeilde neere Hartforde there lyes in a coffin
A harte griping Harpie; of shape like a Dolphin
Whose plotts and whose projects did all of them tende
To cousin the king, and the state to offend
His mynes, and his countermynes, and his bravadoes
Were all to endanger by close Ambuscadoes
With tricks and devises of legerdemaine
He playde like a juggler with France England Spayne
He fayne religion and zealous affection
Yet favored the Papists and gave preists protection
By swearing, protesting, and damnable lyes
He stole the kings favour still blinding his eyes
But yet though he had all the slights of a fox
He coulde nott prevent her that gave him the pox
Twixt Suffolk and Walsingham of did he jorney
To tilte att the one place, at the other to tourney
In which hot encounter he gott such a blowe
That he coulde nott be cured by Atkins nor Poe
Noe nor the rare Frenchman that easde his owne maister
Coulde doe him noe good with his bath nor his plaister
For this his disease was given by a freinde
And therefore had reason to keepe itt to his end.
Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 34r-v

Other known sources. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 42; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 156r; Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 11r; Huntington MS HM 198, 2.126

D18

1 Hattfeilde: Hatfield House, Cecil’s grand residence in Hertfordshire, built in the early seventeenth century, and the Lord Treasurer’s final resting place.

2 Harpie: mythological winged monster.

3 Dolphin: Croft (“Reputation” 55) notes that dolphins were “always depicted heraldically as curved”. Thus “Dolphin” here alludes to Cecil’s crooked back.

4 projects: this term may have an additional meaning here. Projects were controversial financial schemes that ceded royal powers to private entrepreneurs who would then supposedly raise revenue for both their own personal profit and the royal coffers. Cecil presided over many such projects as Lord Treasurer.

5 cousin: i.e. cozen.

6 mynes...countermynes: plots and counter-plots.

7 bravadoes: boasts.

8 Ambuscadoes: ambushes.

9 slights of a fox: allusion to Cecil’s cunning.

10 pox: syphilis.

11 of: probable scribal error; read “oft”.

12 Twixt Suffolk...journey: a pun on the names of the English county, Suffolk, and the famous Norfolk pilgrimage site, Walsingham. Cecil had allegedly had affairs with both Audrey, Lady Walsingham, wife of Sir Thomas Walsingham and Mistress of the Robes to Queen Anne (Croft, “Reputation” 58), and Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk, wife of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk.

13 Tilt...tourney: bawdy use of the language of the joust to describe sexual intercourse.
blowe: wound in the joust; and here the syphilitic infection acquired during sexual intercourse.

Atkins nor Poe: Henry Atkins and Leonard Poe were well-known doctors who treated Cecil during his last illness.

de Mayerne: Theodore de Mayerne, a famed Swiss-French court physician who attended James I (Cecil’s “maister”) and examined Cecil in 1611.

bath: Cecil died on his return journey from taking the waters at Bath.
D19 Passer by know heere is interrd

Notes. In a fascinating and politically aggressive appropriation of anti-libel discourse, this verse on Cecil at first seems to diminish the allegations against the Lord Treasurer by repeating the commonplace charge that libellers are “base detractors”. The poem then, however, continues on both to repeat those charges and, in an extended pun at the end, to add a distinctive twist to one of the most commonly made allegations.

Passer by know heere is interrd
The little great\(^1\) that so was feared
who in his life none durst think evill
but being dead is said a divell
And monstrous Crimes laid to his charg
by base detractors, who at larg
did set them forth to his infamy
As a taper\(^2\) of the Comonwealth touchd with sodomy\(^3\)
An usurer, subtle and ful of trechery
And least of al his monstrous lechery
Why put the case twere al as they do say
\([\text{illegible: ms torn}]\) gone the right way
And hath no doubt a place of heaven
at least if penitents may be forgiven
for he oft was knowen with zeal devine
To go a pilgrimag to our ladies shrine
At Walsingham and neare staid by the way
Save nowe and then in Suffolk lay.\(^4\)

Source. BL MS Harley 6947, fol. 211r
the little great: Cecil was both a powerful man ("great") and of small physical stature ("little"). The same juxtaposition is made in the poem "Heere lyes Salisbury that little great comaunder", and more sympathetically in Samuel Daniel’s "If greatnes, wisedome, pollicie of state".

taper: candle. The libel "This Taper, fedd, & nurst with court-oyle" also describes Cecil as a taper.

sodomy: this is the only extant verse on Cecil that explicitly makes this allegation.

And hath...lay: the last six lines of the libel develop a resonant and multi-layered pun to deliver the widely-repeated charge that Cecil had been the lover of both Audrey, Lady Walsingham, and Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk. The pun hints at Cecil’s possible religious unorthodoxy by presenting him as a Catholic penitent who performed penance for his sins by making the pilgrimage to the famous late medieval shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.
Heere lyes Salisbury that little great comander
On whome Mallice it selfe cannot fasten a slander
Though Crookeback the Vulgar did terme him in sight
There weere more beside him that are not upright
Hee was just to king James as hee was to the old queene
Did many good deeds that never were seene
He humbled the rich, made much of the poore
Hee would father the orphanes, and ferritt the whoore
Betweene married folkes if ther fell any strife
To doe for the husband hee dealt with the wife
Thee widdowe hee kept, and oft in the yeare
Good turnes hee did Virgins that cost him full deere
I meane not her honor, for shee was noe mayde
By her wee confesse hee soundly was paid
A gamster hee was their never was fairer
Yet hee plaid most with old cards and had ever a sharer
Hee was bitter foe, but hee was a sweet frend
When any hee loved, hee loved to an end
By way of prevention offences to shunn
Hee would pnish offences before any weere done,
To the good of the state, hee was a mayne stay
Till Poe with his Sirrope did squirt him away
Don Leonard great Scorpio that governs the tayle
The cullions and members both female and male
A sonn\textsuperscript{12} hee hath left us, though noebodie mynd him
And a doughter\textsuperscript{13} for goodnes that comes not behind him
Thus heere lyes his lordship interr’d as you see
And noe doubt but his Soule is where it should bee
If pray for the dead you cannot with hope
Yet say Lord have mercy on Beeston and Cope.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Source.} Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 65-66

\textbf{Other known sources.} Huntington MS HM 198, 2.125

\textsuperscript{1} little great: Cecil was both a powerful man (“great”) and of small physical stature (“little”). The same phrase is used in line 2 of the Cecil libel “Passer by know heere is interrd”, and more affectionately in line 5 of Samuel Daniel’s “If greatnes, wisedome, pollicie of state”.

\textsuperscript{2} old queene: Elizabeth I.

\textsuperscript{3} father the orphanes: alludes to Cecil’s work as Master of the Court of Wards.

\textsuperscript{4} soundly was paid: i.e. contracted syphilis.

\textsuperscript{5} Poe: Leonard Poe, one of Cecil’s physicians.

\textsuperscript{6} Sirrope: syrup; presumably here a medicine. If the syrup is a syphilis treatment then it might refer to the commonly used decoctions of guaiacum wood that could be drunk by the patient.

\textsuperscript{7} Don Leonard: Poe.

\textsuperscript{8} Scorpio: astrological sign, whose application to Poe is unclear.

\textsuperscript{9} tayle: in contemporary bawdy usage, tail can mean either the posterior or both the male and female genitalia.

\textsuperscript{10} cullions: testicles.

\textsuperscript{11} members: genitals.
sonn: William Cecil, created Viscount Cranborne in 1605, succeeded his father as 2nd Earl of Salisbury in 1612.

doughter: Cecil’s daughter Frances, married in 1610 to Henry Clifford, the son of the Earl of Cumberland.

Beeston and Cope: Sir Hugh Beeston and Sir Walter Cope, both members of Cecil’s inner circle. Cope wrote and circulated a manuscript Apology for Cecil that vigorously defended the Lord Treasurer’s reputation (see Croft, “Reputation” 65).
Heere lyes great Salisbury though little of Stature
A Monster of mischeif Ambitious of Nature:
A States man that did Impoverish the Crowne
Sould Mylles & lands & Forrests cut downe.
His care for the commons his country none feeles
With trickes & with traps & with privye Seales
King countrye & commons doe mourne & lamente
For he is gone to hell to raise the devills Rente.

Notes. Croft (“Reputation” 49-50) discusses and contextualizes the charges of financial oppression and mismanagement that are a central feature of this libel.

Heere lyes great Salisbury though little of Stature
A Monster of mischeif Ambitious of Nature:
A States man that did Impoverish the Crowne
Sould Mylles & lands & Forrests cut downe.
His care for the commons his country none feeles
With trickes & with traps & with privye Seales
King countrye & commons doe mourne & lamente
For he is gone to hell to raise the devills Rente.

Source. NCRO MS IL 4304

1 great Salisbury though little of Stature: several poems play on the contrast between Cecil’s political greatness and his small physical stature. See, for instance, line 2 of “Passer by know heere is interrd”, the opening line of “Heere lyes Salisbury that little great comaunder”, and line 5 of Samuel Daniel’s “If greatnes, wisedome, pollicie of state”.

2 Monster: refers to Cecil’s crooked back.

3 Sould...cut downe: this line charges Cecil, somewhat unfairly, with selling off and spoiling the royal lands.

4 privye Seales: a controversial form of prerogative finance that raised revenue by forced loans. Croft (“Reputation” 49-50, n.22) notes that the “collection of privy seals was at the forefront of attention early in 1612”.

D21
**Notes.** This cryptic poem twists on the final half-line, which punctures the official mourning for Cecil’s death. In its only known source, a single manuscript sheet, it is transcribed along with three more straightforward libels.

Heere lyeth our great Lord Treasorer of late
Deere to his Countrye deere to his Kinge:
Quietus est\(^1\) in Heaven we may conceyte,
All things being justly weighed but no such thing:
His friends say most unworthy he doth dye
of this one age, they say so, soe saye I
though they lye

**Source.** NCRO MS IL 4304

\(^1\) *Quietus est*: “he is quit”; legal term, typically used to mark the settling of accounts.
D23 You that reade passing by

Notes. This poem by William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, is one of four extant verses defending Cecil that circulated in manuscript. In both the Chetham and Clifton manuscripts, Pembroke’s poem is transcribed together with another defence of Cecil, Samuel Daniel’s “If greatnes, wisedome, pollicie of state”. Croft (“Reputation” 66) discusses Pembroke’s poem and prints it in full.

“The Earle of Penbrockes Memorialis for the earle of Salsiebury deceased”

You that read in passinge by
Robert Earle of Salisbury
know that in soe short¹ a storie
Thou canst never fyend such glorie
All Statte secretts on him laide
Hee the staff of Treasure² swayd
Gave his maister all the gaine
of the wardes³ reserved the paine
Governd all with so cleare hands
as most mallice silence standes
And who snarles⁴ wilbe soone
founde doggs barekinge att the moone
This Tombe hath his bonnes possest
Heven and frends hould deare the rest

Source. Nottingham, Clifton MS CL LM 24

Other known sources. Dr Farmer Chetham Manuscript 2.188; Pitcher 173; NCRO MS IL 4296;

¹ short: an affectionate allusion to Cecil’s small physical stature.
2 *staff of Treasure*: symbol of the Lord Treasurer’s office.

3 *wardes*: Cecil was Master of the Wards.

4 *And who snarles*: i.e. the libellers.
**Notes.** This is one of four extant poems defending Cecil that circulated in manuscript, and in both the Chetham and Clifton manuscripts it is paired with the Earl of Pembroke’s similarly laudatory piece, “You that reade passing by”. The Chetham manuscript attributes the poem to Samuel Daniel, and on the basis of this ascription, a handful of stylistic parallels, and evidence of a patronage relationship between Cecil and Daniel, John Pitcher has argued compellingly in favour of this attribution (175-7). Croft (“Reputation” 66-67) discusses the politics of the poem, while Pitcher (174) lists and analyses the variants between the Chetham and Clifton copies of the poem, arguing that the Clifton version, which we have reproduced, is “distinctly superior” (173).

“By another his freind”

If greatnes wisedome pollicie of state
or place or riches could preserve from fate
Thou hadst not left the companie of men
who wert both Englands purse & England pen.¹

Greate little lord² whoe only didst inheritt
Thy Fathers³ goodnes honers and his spiritt
But death that equalls Scepters with the spade
the with thy fathers bones to slepp hath layed

In good tyme for thy self tho for the statte
Most wish thy life hath borne thy fathers date⁴
And could the parsea⁵ heare or be prepaird
with prayers unfeyned thy lif had longe been spard

All now wee cann is to bewayle thy herse
not sing thy praise that cannot stand in verse
Twill fill great volumes for thy noble partes
Men writ not in hard stone but in theyr hartes
Source. Nottingham, Clifton MS CL LM 24

Other known sources. Dr Farmer Chetham Manuscript 2.189; Pitcher 173; BL Add. MS 69883B, fol. 66r

D24

1 England purse & England pen: Cecil was both Lord Treasurer and Secretary of State.

2 Greate little Lord: Cecil was both a powerful man ("great") and of small physical stature ("little"). The same phrase is used in line 2 of the Cecil libel "Passer by know heere is interrd", and in the opening line of "Heere lyes Salisbury that little great comaunder". Here the juxtaposition is affectionate.

3 Fathers: William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Elizabeth I’s Secretary, Lord Treasurer and Master of the Wards.

4 thy fathers date: William Cecil, Lord Burghley, lived from 1520 to 1598; Robert Cecil lived a significantly shorter life, from 1563 to 1612.

5 parcea: the Fates.
D25 Oh that such wisdome that could steere a state

Notes. This poem, one of four extant defences of Robert Cecil, is discussed and partly quoted in Croft (“Reputation” 64).

Oh that such wisdome that could steere a state,
Should now bee valued at so cheape a rate!
The burden that this one so easily bore
Was deemed waight enough for thousands more
As Envy blusht in all that understoode
Who from a crime surmised¹ his fame redeemd
So nobly, that it now for vertue seem’d,
Fate of our age! See how this dead man ly’s
Bitten and stung by Court and Cittie flyes²
His wisdomes questioned, and now all can find
And scoff at to greate vices in his mind.

Att this greate Pillars fall when all thus laugh,
Dreads not the whole world the nexte Epitaph

Source. Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 5r-v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 96r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 9

¹ a crime surmised: probably a reference to Cecil’s alleged role in engineering the destruction of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex.

² Court and Cittie flyes: Cecil’s critics and libellers.
D26 When that rich soul of thine (now Sainted) kept

Notes. This poem, one of four extant verses concerned to rebut the libels that circulated after the death of Robert Cecil, is attributed in the only known source to Richard Corbett. Although Corbett wrote several forceful anti-libels in response to subsequent scandals, his modern editors do not include this poem among his works. Like a number of other anti-libels, the poem uses stereotypical images of libellers as base, envious liars with no respect for justice or religion, to magnify the fame and virtue of the libellers’ victim.

“Antidotum Cæcilianum”

When that rich soul of thine (now Sainted) kept
His seate on earth, my humble muse nere slept
Out of the sweet content where in shee dwelt
To sing thy worth, the effects whereof were felt
But now since death hath freedom given to thee
To see thy prayse made others flattery
And that each mouse on the dead lyon leapes
And every riming pen forgd matter heapes
On thy bright fame, casting thereon base durt
Uppon thy honourd herse winding more hurt
To thee then death or Hel could doe, I may
And must be bold (or sin) this truth to say
Each evidence thy foes bring speaks thy prayse
For what can more thy fame and glory rayse?
Then to be raild at by the worst of men?
Such as are outlawes live not in the ken
Of Justice or religion, but base slaves
Whose rimes and sins make their owne nests their graves
Twas meet thy vertues eminent and high
Should not unenvyed live, unslandred dy,
For then we mighte have feared thou hadst not been
So absolute a man, Now it is seen,
Even by those many shaddowes envy throwes,
That thy worth was substantial, not showes.

Source. Folger MS V.a.345, p. 107

D26
D27 Ould Sarum now is dead Younge Salisburie lyves

Notes. In the only known source, this poem immediately follows a text of the Earl of Pembroke’s sympathetic epitaph for Cecil, “You that reade passing by”.

Ould Sarum¹ now is dead Younge Salisburie² lyves
soe Crafte³ to pryde what he enjoyed gyves
interred thone, thother lives in hate
cause thould Foxe⁴ made our hopes unfortunate⁵
Twas his false crafte when nought was done amisse
by him⁶ whose thoughts never dreampte of Fall of his:
But since tis thus our Comforte is this one
nowe all that viperous brood is deade and gone
Salisburye stood in Suffolke⁷ wote ye not whie;
That Suffolke now might stand for Salisburye.⁸

Source. NCRO MS IL 4296

1 Ould Sarum: Robert Cecil. Sarum is the ecclesiastical name for Salisbury.
2 Younge Salisburie: Robert Cecil’s son William Cecil, Viscount Cranborne, succeeded his father as Earl of Salisbury in 1612.
3 Crafte: Cecil’s fox-like cunning.
4 thould Foxe: another reference to Cecil’s cunning.
5 made our hopes unfortunate: although the meaning of this phrase and of the following two lines is not entirely clear, they seem to refer to Cecil’s alleged engineering of the fall and destruction of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex.
6 him: Essex.
stood in Suffolke: a bawdy pun alluding to Cecil’s alleged sexual relationship with Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk.

Suffolke now might stand for Salisbury: the exact meaning of the last line is difficult to pin down, although it is probable that Suffolk here refers to Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, one of the chief courtiers who stood to gain new office from Cecil’s death.
This selection of verse attacks on the Scots who had followed James VI into England documents some of the many anxieties and resentments the king’s countrymen provoked south of the border. As such, the libels provide important evidence of the broader context to the better-known complaints against the Scots aired in the early Jacobean House of Commons during the 1604-10 and 1614 sessions. All the libels, for instance, dwell to a greater or lesser degree on the material rewards that numbers of Scotsmen had reaped by royal gift—and, it seemed to observers, at English expense—since 1603. Two of the longer surviving verses explore this theme through extended satirical accounts of the sartorial transformation of coarsely dressed Scotsmen into silk-bedecked dandies, compellingly illustrating contemporary perceptions of the connections between clothing and national and social distinction. Some of the same sartorially focused ethnic and socio-economic disdain was expressed in a now lost ballad on James I’s coronation which, according to John Aubrey, included the lines, “And at the erse of them marched the Scotish peeres / With lowzie shirts, and mangie wrists, went pricking-up their eares” (2.4). Two other poems—including the widest-copied of the anti-Scots collection—comment on a series of violent clashes between Englishmen and Scots that occurred during the spring and early summer of 1612, and that significantly heightened ethnic tensions both at court and on the London streets. Firth (“Ballads” 113-16, and “Ballad” 22-24) was the first historian to take note of at least some of these anti-Scots verses, and Akrigg (48-55) offers a brief overview of English resentments of “The Hungry Scots” that allows us to put these poems in context. But neither the libels, nor the incidents they document, have yet been analyzed in detail.
Notes. On 13 June 1612 Abraham Williams sent the English diplomat William Trumbull a copy of this “foolish” libel that he had found in circulation in the Dutch town of Middelburg (HMC Downshire 3.315). Williams’s version—and all the others but one—runs to four lines. The exception, which we give below, was transcribed by the newsmonger John Chamberlain on a scrap of paper that also included libellous material on Robert Cecil. The additional two lines in Chamberlain’s version are very similar to lines 5-8 of the nearly contemporaneous libel “Now doe your selves noe more so deck”, which was written during the last week of June. Chamberlain’s scrap of paper cannot be definitively dated, and thus we cannot determine which libeller lifted the lines from the other. The libel, both with and without the final couplet, makes a series of general and specific charges against the Scots. The specific charges refer to four violent clashes between Englishmen and Scots, three of which took place during the spring and early summer of 1612. Most of the incidents quickly became notorious and collectively contributed to a dangerous escalation of ethnic tension at court and in London. Francis Osborne’s 1658 history of the Jacobean court quotes the four-line version of the libel-noting that these “homely verses...were everywhere posted” (70-71)-and then glosses the poem by narrating the events that lay behind it. Three of the incidents are also widely reported in contemporary newsletters. The events, listed in the order they appear in the libel, were as follows: (1) an incident in March 1612 at the races in Croydon in which a Scot, William Ramsay, struck Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, on the face (“They whip our Nobles”); (2) an incident at a feast for the Duc de Bouillon in May 1612 during which the Scots courtier James Maxwell quarrelled with James Hawley of the Temple, yanking at Hawley’s earring and making him bleed (“They pinch our Gentrie”), a slur which almost resulted in a duel (“send for the benchers”); (3) an incident in which a Scotsman, Murray, and his servants killed a London sergeant (“They stab our sergeants”); (4) finally, and most notoriously, in May 1612, the shooting by assassins hired by the Scots Catholic Robert Crichton, Earl of Sanquhar, of John Turner, an English fencing master who, a number of years previously, had poked out Sanquhar’s eye in swordplay (“pistoll our fencers”).

“Upon the Scottes”

They beg our goods, our lands, and our lives,
They whip our Nobles and lie with their wives,
They pinch our Gentrie, and send for the benchers,
They stab our sergeants, and pistoll our fencers.
Leave of proud Scotts thus to undo us,
Least we make you as poore as when you came to us.

Source. Chamberlain 1.356 (from PRO SP 14/69/67:1)

Other known sources. HMC Downshire 3.315; Osborne 70-71; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 4; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 1r; BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 70r; BL MS Harley 3991, fol. 126v

1 *They...lives:* the opening line of the libel focuses on generalized grievances against the Scots, but a contemporary audience could probably have supplied specific examples. The 1608 grant of Sir Walter Ralegh’s lands at Sherborne to the Scots favourite Robert Carr, for instance, was widely known and, thanks to Ralegh’s own semi-public letter on the loss of his estate, widely resented.

2 *whip our Nobles:* William Ramsay’s striking of the Earl of Montgomery at the Croydon races.

3 *lie with their wives:* this does not seem to document a specific incident, but probably registers contemporary gossip as well as conforming to an image of the Scots as rapacious consumers of English property and threats to English honour.

4 *pinch our Gentrie:* James Maxwell’s assault on James Hawley.

5 *send for the benchers:* Maxwell and friends’ calling out of Hawley’s fellow lawyers for a duel to settle their dispute.

6 *stab our sergeants:* Murray’s murder of the London sergeant.

7 *pistoll our fencers:* the murder of the fencer John Turner by assassins in the pay of Lord Sanquhar.
**E2 Now doe your selves noe more so deck**

_Notes._ This poem refers to the Sanquhar-Turner murder case of May-June 1612. On Tuesday, 23 June 1612, Robert Carlyle and James Irwin, the assassins commissioned by Robert Crichton, Earl of Sanquhar to murder the fencer John Turner, were tried and convicted for the crime. They were hanged early in the morning of Thursday 25 June on a gallows in Fleet Street (Chamberlain 1.362). Our poem’s reference to “scotts” (plural) being hanged “Just att Whitefriers gate” (the Whitefriars was just off Fleet Street), indicates that the verse was celebrating Carlyle’s and Irwin’s imminent executions and was probably written sometime between their trial and their hanging. Sanquhar himself was tried on Saturday 27 June and executed “before the coort gates” two days later (Newsletters from the Archpresbyterate of George Birkhead 172). Lines 5-8 of this libel are very similar to the closing couplet in the Chamberlain transcription of the poem “They beg our goods, our lands, and our lives”.

Now doe your selves noe more so deck  
In such greate pompe and state  
For scotts must hanged bee by th’ neck  
Just att Whitefriers gate  
Therefore beeware, and take good heede  
Though you doe thus undoe us  
Least that you live in greater neede  
Then when you first came to us  
God long preserve us, our Royall king  
And grante him long to live  
And save us all from pistoling  
Which Scotts beegin to give:

_Source._ BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 70v

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1 _pistoling:_ Turner was shot to death with a pistol.
Notes. The first lottery run by the Virginia Company to raise money for their fledgling colony was held from March to July 1612 (see Johnson). It is highly probable that this poem was first circulated some time during those few months, a period in which the lottery-and especially its final drawing-commanded significant public attention in London, and in which the wave of Anglo-Scotts violence documented in “They beg our goods, our lands, and our lives” was triggering a spike in anti-Scotts sentiment at court and in the capital. The American colony and anti-Scotts sentiment had been yoked together before. In Jonson, Chapman and Marston’s 1605 Eastward Ho, Captain Seagull wishes that “a hundred thousand” of the Scots were in Virginia, “for we are all one countrymen now, ye know; and we should find ten times more comfort of them than we do here” (3.3.42-45).

“De Scoto-Britannis”

If either lotteryes or lottes
Could rid us of these rascall Scotts;
Who would not venter then with thankes;
Although hee drew nothinge but blankes?¹
But since Virginia made the toombe²
For us, to make these rogues more roome;
Let them be gulld³ that list to bee;
Virginia getts no more of mee.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 1r

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1 blankes: losing lots.

2 Virginia made the toombe: the fledgling settlements in Virginia witnessed high mortality rates during these early years.

3 gulld: deceived.
E4 Myene of Gold some say their’s found

Notes. This short, undated poem may refer to rumours of a gold mine north of the border. The libel’s depiction of Scottish poverty is entirely commonplace—and essential to the charge that the Scots who had accompanied James VI into England had come to plunder English wealth.

A Myene of Gold some say their’s found
In Scotland; that’s a wonder.
To see noe money above ground
And yett to fynde some under.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 120

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 34v; BL Add. MS 22118, fol. 9v; Folger MS V.a.319, fol. 26r
Notes. This undated verse is one of two satirical attacks on the Scots’ alleged consumption of
English wealth that focuses on the sartorial transformation of beggarly Scotsmen into finely dressed
courtiers.

Well met Jockie\(^1\) whether away
Shall we two have a worde or tway\(^2\)
Thow was so lousie the other day
How the devill comes thow so gay
   Ha ha ha by sweet St. An\(^3\)
   Jockie is growne a gentle man.

Thy shoes that thou worst when thow went’st to plow
Were made of the hyde of a Scottish cow
They are turnd into Spanish leather now
Bedeckt with roses\(^4\) I now not how.
   Ha ha ha &c.

Thy stockings that were of a northerne blew
That cost not past 12d\(^5\) when they were new
Are turnd into a silken hew
Most gloriouslye to all mens vew
   Ha ha ha &c

Thy belt that was made of a white leather thonge
Which thow & thy father ware so longe
Are turn’d to hangers\(^6\) of velvet stronge
With golde & pearle embroydred amonge
   Ha ha ha

Thy garters that were of the Spanish say\(^7\)
Which from the taylor thow stollst away

251
Are now quite turnd to silke they say
With great broad laces fayre & gay
Ha ha ha.

Thy doublet & breech that were so playne
On which a louse could scarce remayne
Are turnd to sattin god a mercie brayne
That thou by begging couldst this obtayne
Ha ha ha.

Thy cloake which was made of a home spun thread
Which thou wast wonte to flinge on thy bed
Is turnd into a skarlet red
With golden laces aboute thee spread
Ha ha ha.

Thy bonnet of blew which thou wor’st hether
To keep thy skonce from winde & wether
Is throwne away the devil knowes whether
And turn’d to a bever hat & feather.
Ha ha ha.

Westminster hall was coverd with lead
And so was St. John many a day
The Scotchmen have begd it to buy them bread
The devil take all such Jockies away.
Ha ha ha.

Source. V&A MS D25.F.39, fols. 88v-89r

Other known sources. PRO SP 14/191/6
1 *Jockie:* diminutive of John (Jack)—as in the 1604 libel on John Whitgift “The prelats pope”—and, in this case, an ethnic nickname for a Scotsman.

2 *tway:* two.

3 *St. An:* St. Andrew, patron saint of Scotland.

4 *roses:* a knotted, rose-shaped ribbon worn on the shoe.

5 *12d:* twelve pence (or one shilling).

6 *hangers:* loops on which a sword would hang from a belt.

7 *say:* a fine-textured woollen cloth.

8 *skonce:* head.

9 *Westminster hall...St. John:* these lines possibly refer to an actual case involving the selling off of lead from London buildings. The identity of St. John’s is unclear; however, it could be an allusion to the Priory Church of St. John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell, that had been dismantled in stages since the dissolution of its monastic order in the sixteenth century.
Notes. This is one of two satirical attacks on the Scots that focuses on the sartorial transformation of coarsely dressed Scotsmen into silken-backed courtiers. Although the poem is undated, two allusions help to narrow down, at least provisionally, the earliest date of composition to c.1613-14. Lines 23-24, for instance, closely echo the opening two lines of the summer 1612 libel, “They beg our goods, our lands, and our lives”. There is, however, one significant difference. Here the Scots “begin to get our fair wives”, rather than merely “lie” with Englishmen’s wives. This may allude to the December 1613 marriage of the Scot Robert Carr with Frances Howard who, before her September 1613 annulment, had been married to the English noble Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex. In addition, stanza three of this poem has “Jocky...caper as high as an Earle”, which may allude to the first elevations of Scotsmen to English earldoms late in 1613, when Lodowick Stuart became Earl of Richmond, and Robert Carr Earl of Somerset. Using the poem as a frame through which to explore English attitudes to Carr, Bellany (Politics 70) places the libel's sartorial politics in the context of fears of status transgression and ambition at the Jacobean court.

“On the Scots”

When Scotland was Scotland and England it selfe
Then England was troubled wth no Scottish elfe
But since bonny jocky in England bare sway
The English are vanquisht the Scots goe their way
with begging with begging &c

For now every Scotshman, that was lately wont
To weare the cow hide of an old Scottish runt
His bonny blew bonnet, is now layd aside
In velvet and scarlet proud Jocky must ride
A begging a begging &c

His py’d motly jerkin al threadbare and old
Is now turnd to scarlet and ore lac’t with gold
His straw hat to bever, his hat band to perle
And Jocky can caper as high as an Earle.
A begging. &c

You quarreling gallants looke wel to your hands
Least by fighting and brawling you forfet your lands.
For then be assured as soone as ’tis spyed
To get them, abegging proud Jocky wil ride
A gallop a gallop &c

I think if the divel of hel could be got
That Jocky would beg him or some other Scot,
They beg al our money lands livings & lives
Nay more they beginne to get our fayre wives
With begging &c

Our beggers on ten toes do trot up and downe
From doore to doore begging, in every towne
But jocky wel mounted on horseback on pride
To Court like a courtier a begging must ride
A gallop &c

Theres n’ere an English begger that carryes a scrip
But often for begging tasts wel of the whip
But Jocky for whoring and playing the knave
Nay almost for treason his pardon can have
with begging &c

God save our king James and keep him from evil
And send al such Scotch men away to the devil
Or els into Scotland there stil to remaine
send home with a vengeance these scots men agane
A gallop a gallop a gallop a gallop
1 *jocky:* diminutive of John (Jack)—as in the 1604 libel on John Whitgift “The prelats pope”—and, in this case, an ethnic nickname for a Scotsman.

2 *blew bonnet:* the blue bonnet or cap was a distinctive sartorial marker of Scottishness.

3 *jerkin:* jacket.

4 *forfeit your lands:* lose your lands to the Crown as a penalty, and have those lands then given by the Crown to a Scots courtier. The most famous Englishman to forfeit his lands to the Crown, and subsequently to a Scot, was Walter Ralegh, whose Sherborne estate was granted to Robert Carr late in 1608.

5 *scrip:* small bag carried by beggars.

6 *whip:* beggars and vagrants were routinely whipped as punishment.

7 *his pardon can have:* this may refer to specific cases of Scots pardoned for punishable offences. According to Osborne (82-83), the Scotsman Murray who killed a London sergeant (see “They beg our goods, our lands, and our lives”) was pardoned while his servant accomplices were hanged.
E7 The King hee hawkes, and hunts

Notes. This poem’s complaints are too generalized to allow us to argue a precise date of composition with any confidence. The attack on the Scots in the penultimate line might link the poem to the others from c.1612-1614 collected in this section, but we cannot yet demonstrate that link persuasively.

The King hee hawkes, and hunts;
The lords they gather coyne;
The Judges doe as they weere wont;
The lawyers they purloyne.
The clergie lyes a dyeing;
The commons toll the Bell;
The Scotts gett all by lyeing;
And this is Englands knell.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 121
F. The Essex Nullity, the Somerset Marriage and the Death of Overbury (1613-1614)

The poems in this section react to and re-present some of the most notorious events in the history of the Jacobean court. On 17 May 1613, Frances Howard, daughter of the King’s Lord Chamberlain, Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, and, since 1606, the wife of Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, submitted a formal request (or “libel”) to a specially assembled commission of churchmen and lawyers, in which she asked the commissioners to annul her marriage. Her petition claimed that although the Earl of Essex “hath had, and hath power and ability of body to deal with other women, and to know them carnally”, with her he was unable to “have that copulation in any sort which the married bed alloweth” (qtd. in Lindley 81). The marriage was unconsummated and thus, by ecclesiastical law, was not a marriage at all. As the nullity commissioners weighed the merits of the case, court gossips and London newsmongers discovered that the unhappy Countess was planning a second marriage once the first was broken, a marriage that would have massive political implications for the structure and balance of Jacobean court politics. For the talk was that Frances Howard was to marry Robert Carr, Viscount Rochester and, for several years, the intimate favourite of King James I. This marriage would tie the increasingly politically ambitious favourite to the powerful Howard faction, signalling a shift in Carr’s hitherto anti-Howard political leanings, and providing the Howards with a massively increased opportunity to influence royal policy in both domestic and foreign affairs. These political stakes made the nullity proceedings dangerously controversial, compounding several problematic legal and moral concerns raised by the case. Concerned by the nullity’s political implications, but seizing on plausible legal and moral difficulties, several commissioners, led by Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbot, opposed granting Frances Howard’s petition, threatening to bring the hearings to a halt. To save the process, James himself intervened in late July, postponing the nullity case and then adding bishops to the commission who would break the deadlock in Frances Howard’s favour. When the commission reconvened in September 1613, a positive verdict was virtually guaranteed and, on 25 September, Frances Howard was granted her nullity. In preparation for his marriage to the daughter of one of the great aristocrats of the realm, Robert Carr was elevated in November 1613 to the Earl of Somerset. A few weeks later, on 26 December, the favourite and the former
wife of the Earl of Essex were married in a spectacular and exorbitantly expensive court wedding.

The libels written on and around the nullity and the Carr-Howard marriage compellingly reveal the moralized anger with which many contemporaries greeted the events. In a brilliant, eloquent and detailed reading of these poems, David Lindley has argued that the libels’ vitriolic attacks on Frances Howard—their allegations of whoredom and sexual insatiability, and their intimations of demonic witchcraft—are best understood as projections of commonplace misogynistic stereotypes onto a woman whose decision to seek a nullity of her marriage had so blatantly violated patriarchal ideals of submissive femininity. But these libels and their charges also have broader political resonances: a number implicate royal and episcopal authority in the moral transgressions sanctioned by the nullity verdict; while others lament the symbolic assault on ancient nobility and honour in the nullity’s humiliation of Robert Devereux and consequent elevation of the comparatively socially obscure Robert Carr. The final two poems in this section allude to an event that would in retrospect become an essential part of the nullity story. In mid-September 1613, shortly before the nullity was granted, Sir Thomas Overbury died in the Tower of London. Overbury, once a close friend and advisor to Robert Carr, had quarrelled with the favourite over his relationship with Frances Howard and her family and, for his pains, in April 1613 had been tricked into offending the king and sent to the Tower for contempt of royal authority. At the time, Overbury’s death aroused little pity—one of the poems’ contempt seems to have been a fairly typical reaction and only a few whispers of foul play—some of which are documented in the other Overbury verse included in this section. Two years later, however, evidence emerged to suggest that Overbury had been murdered. The ensuing criminal investigation and murder trials would constitute and generate the most significant court scandal of the age, which would culminate with the trials and convictions of the Earl and the Countess of Somerset as accessories to Overbury’s murder.

Some of the verses in this section (and in section H on the Overbury murder scandal) have been published before—in a small selection of poems edited by Sanderson and in the appendix to Beatrice White’s narrative of the Overbury scandal (220-27). The verses are discussed and contextualized in Lindley’s Trials of Frances Howard, which reads them primarily through the prism of gender, and in Bellany’s Politics of Court Scandal, which reads them in multiple
intersecting moral, social, gender and political contexts.
F1 A page a knight a Vicount, and an Earle [1613 version]

Notes. This poem was written shortly after Frances Howard’s marriage to Robert Carr in December 1613. After the 1615 revelations of the couple’s involvement in the murder of Thomas Overbury, the last line of the poem was adapted to reflect the new charges against the Countess (see ‘A page, a knight, a viscount and an Erle’). The Rawlinson version of the 1613 poem is printed and discussed by Lindley (178), while Bellany (Politics 98, 149) comments briefly on the relationship between the 1613 and 1615 versions.

A page a knight a Vicount, and an Earle

was matched Lately to an English girle

But such A one as nere was seene before

A mayde, a wyfe, a Countesse and A whore

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 116

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 64r

F1

1 A page...an Earle: Robert Carr came to the Court of James I in England as a page to the Earl of Dunbar, was knighted in 1607, made Viscount Rochester in 1611, and Earl of Somerset in 1613.
F2 Letchery did consult with witcherye

Notes. This scathing attack on the Essex nullity brands Robert Carr and Frances Howard as sexual transgressors, suggests Frances Howard might have used witchcraft to render the Earl of Essex impotent, and charges that the commissioners who voted to grant the nullity collaborated in an act of “impietye” in order to win office and favour. Lindley (118) prints and very briefly discusses this poem.

Letchery did consult with witcherye¹
how to procure frygiditye²
upon this ground a course was found
to frame unto a nullatye
And gravitye³ assuming lenytye
gave strength to this impietye
hoping thereby a way to spye
to rise to further dignitye
But whats the end both foe and frend
cry shame on such austeritye

And booke and bell⁴ do dam to Hell
the Lord and Ladyes lecherye

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 64r

Other known sources. Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 187v

¹ witcherye: libellers in both 1613 and 1615 alleged that Frances Howard had caused her husband’s sexual impotence with spells or sorcery. During the first phase of the nullity hearings, the Countess’s supporters had suggested that Essex’s curiously selective impotence—he was supposedly unafflicted in the arms of other women—was the result of a witch’s curse.

² frygiditye: Essex’s impotence.
3 *gravitye*: the lawyers and bishops who voted to grant the nullity.

4 *booke and bell*: here means something like “the Church” or “the Christian religion”. The phrase derives from the traditional ritual of ceremonial excommunication involving the closing of a book, the ringing of a bell and the quenching of a candle (thus the usual phrase “bell, book and candle”).

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263
Notes. This is one of several attacks on Frances Howard, made both in 1613-14 and 1615, which depict the Countess as a wandering ship. The metaphor allowed the libeller not only to play with crude nautical innuendoes (the “straight and long” masts, etc.), but also to pun on the Countess’s sexual wanderings between titled men as voyages to different parts of the English country. Bellany (Politics 155) briefly analyzes the political implications of this poem’s depiction of female sexual insatiability.

Were itt nott a brutish crueltye
To barr a ladye of Anullitye
That can gett nothing of her man
Yet craves as much as two men can
There is a ladye in this land
Because shee was nott truely mand
Would over all the countryes range
To seeke her selfe a better change
When Essex could not give content
To Rochester her course was bent

When shee lett no occasion slipp
To gett a mast unto her shipp
A mast she had both straight and long
Butt when itt prov’d not fully strong
To Sommersett she quicklye hide
To trye what fortune would betyde.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 69v

F3

1 That can...man: allusion to the alleged sexual impotence of Frances Howard’s first husband, Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex.
2 *Essex:* Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex; the pun alludes to the English county of Essex.

3 *Rochester:* Robert Carr was made Viscount Rochester in 1611; the pun alludes to the town of Rochester in Kent.

4 *mast:* clearly here and in the following line a bawdy pun—the question of erection had been central to the nullity commissioners’ discussion of Essex’s impotence.

5 *Sommerset:* Robert Carr was elevated to the Earldom of Somerset the month before he married Frances Howard; the pun alludes to the English county of Somerset.
F4  From Katherins dock there launcht a pinke

Notes. Like “Were itt nott a brutish crueltye”, this libel on Frances Howard frames its vicious attack on the Countess’s sexual transgressions through a series of geographical and bawdy puns worked around the central metaphor of the Countess as a wandering boat. There are two versions of this poem. The shorter version was written around the time of Frances Howard’s second marriage, to the Earl of Somerset, in December 1613. A longer version (‘from Cathernes docke there launcht A pritty Pinke’) was composed during the Overbury murder scandal of 1615-16. Both Lindley (117-18) and Bellany (Politics 154) discuss this 1613-14 version.

From Katherins dock\(^1\) there launcht a pinke\(^2\)
Which sore did leake,\(^3\) yet did nott sinke
Ere while shee lay by Essex\(^4\) shore
Expecting rigging, yards,\(^5\) and store,
Butt all disasters to prevent
With winde in poope\(^6\) shee sayl’d to Kent
Att Rochester\(^7\) shee anchor cast
Which Canterbury\(^8\) did distaste
Butt Winchester with Eelyes\(^9\) helpe
Did hale a shore this Lyons whelpe\(^10\)

Weake was shee sided,\(^11\) and did heele\(^12\)
Butt Sum-ar-sett\(^13\) to mend her keele,\(^14\)
And stopp her leake,\(^15\) and sheath her port\(^16\)
And make her fitt for any sporte:

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 71r

Other known sources. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 60; Dr Farmer Chetham Manuscript 2.121; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, pp. 135 and 136; Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fol. 23r; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 151r; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 94; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 64v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 18r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 163r; BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 165r; BL Add. MS 61944, fol. 77v; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 96v; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 28v; BL MS Harley 6057, fol. 13v; BL MS Harley 7316, fol. 4r; BL MS Sloane 2023, fol. 60v; Nottingham MS
Katherins dock: a multi-layered pun, this refers both to St. Catherine’s dock on the River Thames in London, an area of town that Lindley (118) notes was “notorious for brewhouses and taverns, and therefore a haunt of prostitutes”, and to Frances Howard’s mother, Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk, from whose “dock”, rump or vagina, Frances was born (launched).

pinke: sailing ship.

leake: leakiness was a common metaphor for female sexual insatiability, and lack of bodily control.

Essex: Frances Howard’s first husband, Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex; and the English county.

yards: a bawdy pun, yard being both a spar on a mast and common slang for a penis.

winde in poope: literally with wind blowing astern the boat, but probably with bawdy innuendo here.

Rochester: both the town in Kent, and Robert Carr, Viscount Rochester since 1611.

Canterbury: both the town in Kent, and George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury and an opponent of the Essex nullity.

Winchester...Eelyes: Thomas Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, and Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Ely, both voted to grant Frances Howard a nullity.

Lyons whelpe: literally a lion’s cub, but in this case also having several nautical overtones. A royal ship the “Lion’s Whelp” was in service by at least 1603, and shortly thereafter was seized by its crew in a mutiny led by the future Barbary Coast pirate John Ward (Vitkus 25, 29); a “whelp” is also a nautical term referring to projections attached to the capstan; and, in the 1620s at least, “whelp” was also used as a name for a small boat.

sided: in nautical terms, the boat had weak timbers on its side. The last four lines of this poem describe the refitting of the boat, using language with clear bawdy innuendo that turns the refitting into a marital taming of the sexually loose Countess.

heele: a ship that heels leans to one side.

Sum-ar-sett: “some are set”, and Somerset; both the county and Robert Carr, who was elevated to the Earldom of Somerset shortly before marrying Frances Howard.

keele: the timber on the underside of the boat.
15 *stopp her leake*: plug the leak in the bottom of the boat, and halt the Countess’s leakiness, her sexual wandering and lack of bodily control.

16 *sheath her port*: port has two nautical meanings, the left hand side of a boat (facing forward) or, as better fits the bawdy humour here, a hole in the side of a boat for loading and unloading goods or from which to fire cannon.
F5 Essex bird hath flown hir cage

Notes. A common variant of this bawdy poem includes only the final four lines of this slightly longer version, while one collection includes a version consisting only of the opening couplet. Lindley (117) and Bellany (Politics 169) discuss and contextualize this verse.

Essex bird hath flown hir cage,
And’s gone to Court to ly with a Page.
She was a lady fyne of late,
She could not be entred shee was soe streight:
But now with use she is soe wyde
A Car may enter on every side.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 17v

Other known sources. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 11r; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 50v; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 290; Houghton MS Eng. 686, fol. 34r

1 Essex bird: Frances Howard, wife of Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex.

2 Page: Robert Carr had arrived at the Court of James I in England as a page to the Earl of Dunbar.

3 She...streight: this line refers to Frances Howard’s virginity, that was assessed by the nullity commissioners through a physical examination performed by a panel of matrons. The examination found her still to be a virgin; this poem, along with a number of other commentators at the time, is clearly unconvinced.

4 use: i.e. sexual activity.

5 Car: a carriage; Robert Carr.
Notes. Lindley (116-17) correctly notes that this verse is a relatively sympathetic reflection on the marriage of Frances Howard and Robert Carr. At the very least, the poem appears to concede implicitly both Frances Howard’s allegation that her first husband had in fact been impotent, and her claim that she had remained a virgin. One version of this poem (Folger MS V.a.103) consists of only the last four lines.

Lady changed¹ to Venus Dove²
Gently guid your Car of love³
Lett your sport both night, and day
Be to make your Carr⁴ away
Make it knowne you meet at last
A christmas Car-all⁵ that surpast.
Plants⁶ anough may hence ensue
Some-are-sett⁷ where none ere grewe
Some-are-sett, and some are layd
But if none stand, God morrowe Mayde.⁸

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 10-65

Other known sources. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 58; Bodleian MS Don.c.54, fol. 23r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.37, p. 62; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 18v; BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 162v; BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 69r; Hatfield House, Salisbury MS 140, fol. 123r (transcribed in HMC Salisbury 24, Addenda 1605-1668, 231); Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 142; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 68r; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 139

¹ changed: “chained” is a common variant.
² Venus Dove: the dove was the bird sacred to Venus, goddess of love.
³ guid...love: emblems of Venus sometimes depicted her riding on a chariot (car) pulled by doves. Here
the poet imagines Frances Howard as a dove guiding the chariot of love, an image that, through the pun on car/Robert Carr, clearly refers to her relationship with her new husband.

4 Carr: the pun on Robert Carr and car i.e. carriage or chariot, continues.

5 christmas Car-all: a Christmas carol, and Robert Carr, whose marriage to Frances Howard was performed on 26 December 1613.

6 Plants: the promise of fecundity stands in contrast to the barrenness of Frances Howard’s unconsummated marriage with Essex, “where none ere grewe”.

7 Some-are-sett: “some are set” (i.e. some are ready) and Somerset. The point is that Somerset is ready to perform his sexual and procreative duties as a husband, again in stark implied contrast to Essex.

8 if none stand...Mayde: clearly a bawdy allusion to the problem of male impotence—Carr’s ability to consummate the marriage and to procreate depends on his ability to achieve an erection. If, like Essex, Carr cannot perform, then Frances Howard will awake from her wedding night still a “Mayde”.
**F7 Henrie, raysed Brandon**

*Notes. The one extant copy of this short verse survives in the commonplace book of William Davenport, of Bramhall, Cheshire. Bellany (Politics 177) briefly discusses the poem as one of several contemporary representations of James I’s motivations for the social and political elevation of Robert Carr.*

Henrie, raysed Brandon
James, Carre upon my lyfe
the one maried the Kinges sister
the other Essex wyffe.

**Source.** CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 11r

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1. *Henrie, raysed Brandon:* Henry VIII raised his friend and favourite Charles Brandon to be Duke of Suffolk in February 1514.

2. *James, Carre:* James raised his favourite Robert Carr to Earl of Somerset in November 1613.

3. *maried...sister:* Brandon married Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII and dowager Queen of France, in 1515.

4. *Essex wyffe:* in December 1613, Robert Carr married Frances Howard, whose marriage to Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, had been annulled the previous September.
F8 Brave hardie Carre-man that with thy bastinado

Notes. This short poem addresses a series of potentially troubling ethnic and social inversions and transformations—Robert Carr’s transition from a Scotsman to a titled Englishman, and from a socially obscure “Carre-man” or cart-driver to an Earl; and Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex’s loss of social, aristocratic and masculine symbolic capital in the wake of Carr’s marriage to Essex’s former wife. The one hitherto identified variant of this poem addresses its target as “Brave worthy carter”, making the identification of Robert Carr less certain while at the same time rendering the theme of social transformation more obvious.

Brave hardie Carre-man that with thy bastinado,
Redeemst thy shoulders from the Scottish strappado
Take thow the Earle-dome, give the Earle the carte,
He a dull coward, thow a valliant hearte.

Source. V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 71v

Other known sources. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 69v

F8

1 Carre-man: Robert Carr is here identified as a car-man, or cart-driver, thus typing him (somewhat unfairly) as socially base.

2 bastinado: a cudgel or a cudgelling. In this case, the reference is almost certainly a bawdy allusion to Carr’s sexual prowess.

3 Scottish strappado: the strappado is a form of torture in which the victim is pulled up by a rope around the hands and then let drop, wrenching out the shoulders. Carr’s freeing of his shoulders from the Scottish strappado almost certainly refers to his escape from his merely Scottish identity following the acquisition of an English earldom.

4 Earle-dome: the earldom of Somerset, bestowed on Carr in November 1613.

5 give...the carte: the derogation of the Earl of Essex, whose failings have allowed Carr to displace him, and have forced him to drive or ride in the socially base cart.
The fayre and famous mayde is gone
And stolne a marryage all a lone
Some say that seeme to know the truthe,
   She was ashamed to wedd a youth
For she knew well what did belonage
   Unto a man; els they her wronge
And was Limbde naked to the twist
   I would the paynter there had Kist
    Butt now my Lordes the noble teller
Putts downe their hoers in a seller

Why? you would none; yett loe hee rights her
   In spight of those that most did spight her
see how his thinne nose droppes rose nobles
   What wantes in crownes in wordes hee doubles
The Irish coyne in bagges runnes sweatinge
   To this rich weddinge gott by cheatinge
The Goodly house and landes in Kent
   All to this danty wench is ment
And all his suites worke for his darkinge
   What thinke you his leane chappes starveling?
But soft? we lost the lovely bride
   She and her mate to bed are hied
She in her lovers armes girt round
   Where must bee lost what hee never found
Most happy bee his chance for hee
   Injoyes her now from heddd to knee
from lippe to hippe from side to side
   And that which hee found woman wide
full fruitfull prove Shee as her grandame
   To bring a Sonne though gott at randome
And glory youth that hast pervailed
   Since many mist that were entayled
And when thow art amidst her cranny
   Wish well to Watson and trelany

Source. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 70-2

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1  *Limbed...twist*: painted (limned) naked to the waist (the “twist” is the junction of the thighs with the body).

2  *teller*: counter of money, probably here referring to one of the four Tellers of the Exchequer.

3  *rose nobles*: gold coins issued in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

4  *cranny*: literally, notch or crevice; here clearly a bawdy reference to sexual penetration.

5  *Watson and trelany*: Watson and Trelawney. The allusion here is obscure—Thomas Watson was a Jacobean Teller of the Exchequer, and if this Watson is indeed him, then the allusion would fit with earlier lines on the “noble teller” and on the receipt and spending of money.
Notes. This rich verse from 1613-14 powerfully explores many of the politico-moral anxieties raised by the Essex nullity and the marriage of Frances Howard to Robert Carr. It appears, however, to be the only libel from this period that suggests either that Sir Thomas Overbury’s death was suspicious or that it was closely connected to the events of the Essex nullity. Bellany (Politics 6, 71, 177) and McRae (Literature 48-49) offer differing but essentially complementary readings of the poem.

Tis painefull rowing against the bigg swolne tide
Nor dare wee say why Overburye dide
I dare not marry least when I have layde
Close by my wife seven yeare shee prove a mayde
And that her greatness or the law consent
To prove my weapon insufficient
Some are made greate by birth some have advance
Some clime by witt some are made greate by chance
I know one made a lord for his good face
That had no more witt then would bare the place.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 69r

1 why Overburye dide: Sir Thomas Overbury died a prisoner in the Tower of London in September 1613. At the time, his death was widely attributed to natural causes; two years later, it was determined to have been the result of poison administered by his prison keeper on the orders of Frances Howard and Robert Carr.

2 I dare not...mayde: allusion to the marriage of Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex to Frances Howard, from 1606-1613, which was nullified on the grounds—fraudulent to many observers—that the marriage had never been consummated.

3 prove...insufficient: prove me sexually impotent.
one made...face: Robert Carr, favourite of James I, who was elevated to the earldom of Somerset in November 1613.
John Rous, the Suffolk parson, ardent consumer of news and ambivalent collector of libels, received a copy of this poem in April 1633 with an attribution to “Sir W. R.”, possibly Sir Walter Ralegh (70, 72). The poem’s hostility to Overbury, and lack of any allusion to the charge he had been murdered, fits with a composition date after Overbury’s death in September 1613 but before the September-October 1615 revelations that he had been poisoned.

“Upon Sir Thomas Overburie who dyed in the Tower”

Heere lyes one nowe not worth despising
Who Persian-like worshipt the Sunne ryseing\(^1\)
Who Courtier-like embrac’d the brave
Nowe Lazarus-like lyes in his grave
Who Stoicke-like contemn’d a wife\(^2\)
God sheild heereafter it breed noe strife
Nowe read his fate though hee weere brave & bold
Yet Like a Jewe was bought, and sold\(^3\)
O burie him, burie him quoth the higher power\(^4\)
Least hee poyson court cittie, and tower

And was it not sinne to burie him then
Who liveing stunck\(^5\) in the face of Men.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 6

Other known sources. Rous 72; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 49r

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1 *Persian-like...ryseing:* refers to Overbury’s alliance and friendship with the rising royal favourite (the “Sunne”) Robert Carr.

2 *contemn’d a wife:* Overbury was the author of a stereotypically misogynistic poem against marriage, “A Wife”, first printed early in 1614, but possibly known earlier in manuscript copies. Overbury’s
rejection of marriage is here compared to the philosophical practice of stoicism.

3 Like a Jew...sold: this presumably refers at least in part to Overbury’s alleged fiscal corruption (the taking of bribes, etc.). The Jewish comparison probably works because of the contemporary anti-semitic association between Jews and corrupt fiscal practices.

4 the higher power: could refer either to James I or to divine providence.

5 stunk: this may well simply refer generally to Overbury’s moral corruption, but it may also extend the “jew-like” comparison of an earlier line by deploying the anti-semitic myth that Jews gave off a peculiar and offensive stench (Shapiro 36-7).
G. The Addled Parliament and the Death of Northampton (1614)

The poems in this section all describe or react to the events of June 1614. On Friday 3 June, as a rancorous and unproductive meeting of Parliament drew to its close, John Hoskyns, the lawyer, poet and MP for Hereford, delivered a speech containing highly intemperate remarks against James I’s Scottish courtiers. The speech suggested that a wise king would long since have expelled the Scots from England, and went on, in a reckless allusion to the thirteenth-century Sicilian Vespers revolt against the Angevins, implicitly to threaten an ethnic bloodbath if the Scots remained (Chamberlain 1.538; Jansson 422-23). The King dissolved Parliament on 7 June and, over the next few days, had Hoskyns and several other MPs arrested and imprisoned for this and other potentially seditious speeches made during the parliamentary session. Lionel Sharpe and Sir Charles Cornwallis, from whom Hoskyns claimed he had received his Sicilian Vespers speech, soon joined the MPs in the Tower. Most of the imprisoned were freed over the course of the next few weeks and months, but Hoskyns, Sharpe and Cornwallis remained incarcerated until June 1615. Hoskyns had already played a significant role in Jacobean libellous politics, presiding over the group composition of the infamous “Parliament Fart” libel of 1607 (see Section C); and he would later compose a six-line meditation on the dangers of hearing a “Princes Secrecy” (Colclough 385), and a libel on the fall of Francis Bacon (“Great Verulam is very lame, the gout of goe-out feeling”). During his imprisonment in the Tower, Hoskyns wrote six poems about his plight (Colclough 382). Most are conventionally petitionary or pious, but two contain a sharper political critique of the constraints on free speech in Jacobean England, and have been included in the current selection alongside a mocking verse on the rash of imprisonments in the aftermath of the parliamentary dissolution.

A week after Parliament was dissolved, the influential Privy Councillor and Lord Privy Seal, Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, died. The one extant epitaph on Northampton repeats long-standing rumours of crypto-popery (see “The great Archpapist Learned Curio”) that would be revived again in 1615-16 when the Earl was posthumously implicated in the scandal surrounding the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury.
G1 The Court’s full of newes

Notes. This verse mocks four of the men imprisoned in the Tower of London in the aftermath of the 1614 Parliament: Lionel Sharpe, John Hoskyns and Sir Charles Cornwallis, arrested for their roles in devising and delivering Hoskyns’ 3 June speech in the Commons attacking Scottish courtiers; and Sir Walter Chute, a minor courtier and MP, who had offended the King in a speech of 1 June. In some sources, the final four lines of this poem are transcribed as a discrete text, and headed (in one) “Of 4. clapt up in the Tower” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26). The newsmonger John Chamberlain enclosed a transcription of a variant version of the final six lines of the poem in an October letter to Isaac Wake, noting that “yt is not the least of theyre punishments” that they “are flouted by waggish witts with a rime” (Chamberlain 1.556-57).

The Court’s full of newes,
London’s full of rumours;
Fower men in the tower
Of eight severall humours:
Sharpe the divine is soberly mad
Hoskings the lawyer is merrily sad
Cornewallis the Ledger, popishlie precise,
And Chuit the Carver is foolishlie wise.

Source. BL MS Sloane 2023, fol. 60v

Other known sources. Chamberlain 1.557; “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 26; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 2r

G1

1 Sharpe the divine: Lionel Sharpe, cleric and former chaplain to the late Prince Henry.

2 Hoskings the lawyer: John Hoskyns, lawyer and MP.

3 Cornewallis the Ledger: Sir Charles Cornwallis, former Ambassador to Spain and Treasurer to Prince Henry, and close ally of the suspected crypto-papist Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton.
Chuit the Carver: Sir Walter Chute, Carver to the King, and MP for East Retford, Nottinghamshire.
Notes. This widely-circulated allegorical dream poem by John Hoskyns was written during his year-long imprisonment in the Tower after the dissolution of the 1614 Parliament. Versions of the poem vary in length, up to a maximum of twenty stanzas. The most commonly copied variant, however, is the six-line version “The worst is told the best is hide”, included as a discrete text below. Some copies of both the long and short versions attribute the verse to Hoskyns’ wife. Colclough offers a brief but acute reading of the poem’s politics in his article on Hoskyns and seventeenth-century manuscript culture (382-84). Colclough notes the thinly-veiled allegorical presentation of the “pathetic spectacle of three generations of Hoskyns’s family—his mother, his pregnant wife, and his son—lamenting in front of the cave in which he is kept prisoner”; and draws attention to the “cutting analysis”, articulated in the voice of Hoskyns’ wife, “of the reasons for Hoskyns’s punishment and the problems in the political realm that it reflects” (383).

“A Dreame”

Mee thought I walked in a dreame
betwixt a caves mouth & a streame,
upon whose banckes sate full of ruth,
three as they seem’d, but foure in truth.

For drawing nere I did behold
a Widowe² fourscore winters old,
a wife with childe,³ a little Sonne⁴
but foure yeares old, all foure undone

Out of the caves mouth cutt in stone
a Prisoner lookes, whom they did moane,
he smild (they sigh’d) then smote his brest,
as if hee meant, god knowes the rest.

The widow cry’d, looking to heaven
Oh Phœbus⁵ I thought I had seaven
like Niobe⁶ doe now contest
lend this thy light this sonne my best.

Taught for to speake & live in light
now bound to silence & to night
why is he closed up in this cave
not basely bred, nor borne a slave.

Alas this cave hath tane away
my staffe, & all his brothers stay:
Let that be least, that my gray haires
go to the grave (alas) with tears.

I grieve for thee Daughter, quoth she,
thee & that boy, that babe unborn,
yours though not his, yet others three
he loved as his, but now forlorn.

Tis not the rule of sacred hest\(^\text{7}\)
to kill the old one in the nest;
as good be killed as from them hidd,
they die with grief (ô god forbidd)

True quoth the boy, for Tom my page
did finde a birds nest, & we tried,
& put the old one in a cage,
then my poor birds, poor birds they died.

My Father nere was soe unkinde
Who lett him then to speake his mynde,
to speake to men & not to misse
oh Mother, say, who can doe this?

Then quoth the Wife, tis Cæsar's\(^\text{8}\) will,
Cæsar can hate, Cæsar can kill.
the worst is told, the best is hid:
Kings know not all, oh would they did.

He Cæsars title then proclaymed
undoubtedly, when others aymed
at broken hope of doubtfull state:
soe true a man what King can hate.

Cæsar; in person & in purse,
he serv’d when better men did worse.
he sware men unto Cæsar’s lawes
by thousands, when false hearts did pause.

He fraud & violence did withstand,
& helpt the poore with tongue & hand:
but for the cause he now lies here
the country knowes his soule is cleare.

Why is he now silent & sad
Whose words make & many glad;
well could he love, ill could he fayne,
it was his losse, it is my gaine.

If Kings are men, If Kinges have wives,
& know ones death may cost two lives,
then were it noe unkinglie part
to save two lives in me, poore heart.

What if my husband once have err’d?
men more to blame are more;
he that offends not doth not live;
He errd but once, once king forgive.

Cæsar to thee I will resort,
long be thy life, thy wrath but short:
this prayer good success may take,
if all doe pray for whom he spake.

With that they wept, the waters swelld,
the sunne grew darke, the darke caves yelld,
it brake my sleepe, I did awake,
& thought it was my heart that brake.

Thus I my wofull dreame declare,
hoping that noe such persons are;
I hope none are, but if there be,
god help them pray, pray god with me.

Source. BL Harley MS 6947, fols. 252r-53r

Other known sources. Osborn 206; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 213r; Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 129; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 71; Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151, fol. 103r; BL Add. MS 4130, fol. 92v; BL Add. MS 4149, fol. 211r; BL Add. MS 21433, fol. 145v; BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 162r; BL MS Harley 6947, fol. 252r

G2

1 *caves mouth & a streame*: the cave is the Tower of London; the stream, perhaps, the Thames.

2 *a Widowe*: Hoskyns’ mother.

3 *a wife with childe*: Hoskyns’ pregnant wife.

4 *a little Sonne*: Hoskyns’ son Benedict

5 *Phæbus*: god of the sun.

6 *Niobe*: Niobe’s boasts about the large number of her children (seven sons, seven daughters) provoked Apollo and Artemis into slaughtering them all.

7 *hest*: behest; injunction.
8 Caesar’s: Caesar here is James I.

9 Caesars title then proclaymed: allusion to Hoskyns’ loyalty to the Stuart claim to succession in 1603.

10 he sware men unto Caesar’s lawes: probable allusion to Hoskyns’ duties as a lawyer.

11 make: probable scribal error; read “make me”.

12 men more to blame...preferr’d: in William Davenport’s copy of the six-line version of this poem (which includes this stanza as the last four lines), he inserts a marginal note identifying these “men more to blame” as “Lord Howard chamb: / Lord Somersett et multis aliis” (i.e. Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain (until July 1614), and Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, the royal favourite). We treat the six-line version as a separate poem: see “The worst is tould the best is hide”.
G3 The worst is tould the best is hide

Notes. This six-line extract from “Mee thought I walked in a dreame” was so widely circulated that it deserves to be considered as a separate poem in its own right.

The worst is tould the best is hide
Kyngs know not all I would they did
What if my husband once have erdd,
Men more to blame are more preferrd.¹
He that offends not doth not lyve
Hee erde but once, once Kynge forgive.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 3r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 131; Bodleian MS CCC 327, fol. 23v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 88v; Bodleian MS Malone 16, fol. 20r; Bodleian MS Sancroft 53, p. 52; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 11r

¹ Men more to blame...preferrd: in transcribing the poem, William Davenport inserts here the marginal note: “Lord Howard chamb: / Lord Somersett et multis aliis” (i.e. Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain (until July 1614), and Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, the royal favourite).


G4 Sonne Benjamin, whil’st thou art yong

Notes. As with “Mee thought I walked in a dreame”, John Hoskyns composed this poem during his year-long imprisonment in the Tower following the dissolution of the 1614 Parliament. Addressed to Hoskyns’ son, the poem, like the dream allegory, reflects on the political constraints on free speech that had landed Hoskyns in prison. The poem circulated in both Latin and English versions.

“Hoskins (imprison’d) to his sonne”

Sonne Benjamin, \(^1\) whil’st thou art yong,
And hast not yet use of thy tongue;
Make it thy slave, whil’st thow art free;
Curb it, least it imprison thee.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 2v

Other known sources. Osborn 203; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 213r; Bodleian MS CCC.327, fol. 23v; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 149; Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151, fol. 103r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 727, fol. 94v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 16r; BL Add. MS 4130, fol. 93r; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 148r; BL Add. MS 21433, fol. 147r; BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 163r

\(^1\) Benjamin: other copies read “Benedict”.

Notes. Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, privy councillor and Lord Privy Seal, died 15 June 1614. The charges of corrupt counsel and crypto-popery levelled in this mock epitaph were of long standing and would continue to dog Northampton in the years after his death (see, e.g., “The great Archpapist Learned Curio”, and the discussion of Northampton’s reputation in Bellany, Politics 182-191, 204-06).

Here lyes my Lord of Northampton, his Majestie’s erwigg,¹
With a Papisticall bald crowne, & a Protestant perewigg.²

Source. Dr Farmer Chetham Manuscript 2.196

1  erwigg: earwig; in contemporary usage, an ear whisperer, flatterer, or court parasite.
2  perewigg: periwig; wig.
H. The Overbury Murder Scandal (1615-1616)

The courtier and poet Sir Thomas Overbury died in September 1613, a prisoner in the Tower of London. His death was widely noted but little lamented at the time (see Section F), and was typically attributed to natural causes, though opinion as to the exact cause varied. Two years later, however, in September 1615, King James received information suggesting that Overbury had in fact been poisoned. Genuinely disturbed by the evidence, James authorized a thorough investigation into the circumstances of Overbury’s death. Within weeks, the Overbury murder case had triggered the most sensational court scandal of the age. The opening spate of interrogations had identified Overbury’s keeper Richard Weston as the principal actor in the poisoning, and had connected Weston to a series of accessories, including Sir Gervase Elwes, Lieutenant of the Tower, Sir Thomas Monson, Elwes’s court patron, and Anne Turner, widow of a fashionable London doctor. But, far more sensational, the evidence had also led to the alleged architects of the murder plot, none other than the royal favourite, Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, and his wife Frances Howard, whose marriage late in 1613 had provoked a significant outpouring of libellous scorn (see Section F). Politically weakened by the rise of George Villiers as a new royal favourite, Somerset was unable to stall the murder investigation, and by mid-October 1615 the Somersets were under arrest and widely assumed to be guilty of Overbury’s death. Weston, Turner, Elwes, and an apothecary called James Franklin, were all tried, convicted and hanged for Overbury’s murder between mid-October and early December 1615. Monson was brought to stand trial twice in late November and early December, but on both occasions had his trial postponed. After many delays and complex political manoeuvrings, the Earl and Countess of Somerset were tried and convicted in late May 1616 for their parts in Overbury’s death. Both were sentenced to death, but both were spared by the king, and remained prisoners in the Tower until their release early in 1622.

Reflecting on the affair twenty years later, Sir Simonds D’Ewes noted that “This discontent gave many satirical wits occasion to vent themselves into stingy libels; in which they spared neither the persons, families, nor most secret advowtries of that unfortunate pair”, the Earl and Countess of Somerset (*Autobiography* 1.87). The libels are in fact but one element in a rich array of contemporary comment on the scandal that circulated in manuscript and in print to

292
a geographically broad and socially diverse audience, giving the Overbury affair a publicity that was to prove highly threatening to the moral authority of the court. Most of the libels take as their primary target either Robert Carr or Frances Howard, neither of whom was openly attacked in the printed pamphlets on the scandal. A few poems attack both the Somersets at once, and a few others deal with the scandal as a whole, touching briefly on some of the other alleged murderers. Another small group of poems focuses primarily on Overbury. Some of these poems circulated both scribally and as printed epitaphs published in the front material to successive editions of Overbury’s poem *A Wife*, from 1616 on.

Both Lindley’s and Bellany’s recent scholarly studies of the scandal use libels extensively. Lindley focuses chiefly on the libels against Frances Howard, reading them for the most part in the context of Jacobean gender ideologies as fixated on the Countess’s transgressive womanhood. Bellany (*Politics*) uses libels to explore the mechanisms of early Stuart news culture that helped publicize the Overbury affair, and to describe and interpret the multiple political meanings embedded in contemporary representations of the scandal.

Several of the libels published here were printed in the appendix to White’s narrative history of the Overbury scandal, and in Sanderson’s short collection of “Poems on an Affair of State”.

H0
Notes. This poem is one of two ballads on the Essex divorce and the Overbury affair set to well-known contemporary tunes. While no explicit evidence of musical performance survives, the significant number of variants and corruptions suggest that oral transmission may have played some role in the ballad’s circulation. Both Lindley (99) and Bellany (Politics 103-06, 155-56, 165, 237) discuss various elements of the ballad’s political significance. Knowles (“Crack Kisses” 146) also comments on the depiction of Essex’s sexuality in a segment of the poem.

“A proper new ballett to the tune whwpe doe mee no harme good man or the Cleane Contrary way which you plese as your voice and lyne can best agree”

There was an ould ladd rode on an ould padd

Unto an old Punke a wooinge

Hee layd the ould Punke uppon an ould trunke

O there was a good ould dooinge

There was an ould mayd scarce swete as they sayde

In a place that I dare not to mension

She in an odd humor lay with a presumer

O there was an odd invention

The Punk and the mayd they sunge and they sayd

That marriage was a servility

If marry you must for Change of lust

O well fare a tricke of nullity

There was a Madam a did study to frame a

Devise to draw upp a perpuse

She drew itt so narrow a Carr might go through

O there was a slender sluce.

Her Earle did appoint her they say such a jointure

As was of noe validity
Above twice in a night hee could her noe right
   O ther was a strange frigidity

But when as her Earle had an other girle
   His wimble could pierce her flanke
His nagg proved able by Changing his stable
   O there was a quo ad hanc.

This dame was inspected butt fraud interjected
   A mayd of more perfection
Whome the Midwives dooe handle while the Knight houlds the kandle
   O there was Cleere inspection

Now all forrein writers Cry out of there miters
   That allow this for a virginity
And talke of erection and wante of ejection
   O there was sound divinity

There was a young Lord asumed on his word
   Hee would bee a Parliament maker
Butt see how thinges alter hee feareth the halter
   O ther was an Undertaker

Hee had a swete freind that hee did Commend
   To the keepinge of sweete ser Gervius
They Gavie him a Glister his belly did blister
   O there was a swete peece of service

This freind denyd and Could not abide
   A mach that hee Sayd would Shame us
Betwixt this Matron and this grave pateron
   O Patterne of Ignoramus

Now West and thorne and turner dooe turne
And say that theise plotts were fraudes
They may say ther pleasure toe thinke it hard mesure
O Knaves and Punkes and bawdes

finis quoth Sir Thomas Person Knight of the sonne

Im Printed in Paules Church yard att the signe of the yellow Bande and Cuffies by Adam Arsnik Robart Roseaker and are to bee sould att the signe of Andromada Liberata in Turnebull streete

Source. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 66-68

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 164r; BL Add. MS 15891, fol. 245v; BL Add. MS 74734, item K; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol.14v; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 97v

1 A proper...agree: the two tunes given as options were “Whoop! do me no harm good man” and “The Clean Contrary Way”, both of which were commonly known at the time, and both of which were used for libels written in the 1620s. Simpson (109, 777-780) has transcriptions of both tunes.

2 padd: horse.

3 Punke: whore.

4 presumer: “perfumer” is a variant.

5 nullity: a nullification of a marriage by a church court—referring here to the nullity of the marriage of Frances Howard and Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex in 1613, which enabled Frances Howard to marry Robert Carr.

6 perpuse: BL Add. MS 15891 reads “prepuse” (i.e. prepuce, a term for the foreskin). In this context, however, the term seems more applicable to the female genitalia. One slur on Frances Howard was that she was able to fake the physical symptoms of virginty at the nullity hearing in 1613, despite her assumed adulterous relationship with Carr.

7 Carr: Robert Carr, royal favourite and Earl of Somerset.

8 Her Earle: Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex. Frances Howard’s petition for nullity claimed that Essex was unable to consummate their marriage.

9 jointure: a sexual pun on the settlement made on a wife by a husband to provide for her widowhood.
if she should survive him.

10 *wimble*: a gimlet, boring tool, with an obvious bawdy meaning here.

11 *quo ad hanc*: as a face-saving compromise at the beginning of the nullity proceedings, Essex claimed to be sexually impotent only towards Frances ("quo ad hanc"). Hence his ability to “pierce” the “flanke” of “an other girle”.

12 *This dame...perfection*: as part of the nullity hearings, Frances Howard was inspected by a panel of midwives for the physical evidence of her virginity. Those who could not believe that the Countess was a virgin rumoured that another girl had been fraudulently substituted for the inspection.

13 *Now all forrein...divinity*: this stanza attacks the bishops who sat on the nullity commission: both for finding Frances Howard still a virgin, and for their embarrassing discussion of the mechanics of Essex’s sexual dysfunction.

14 *young Lord*: Carr.

15 *halter*: hangman’s rope.

16 *Parliament maker...Undertaker*: an allusion to Carr’s alleged role in attempting to manipulate the 1614 Parliament ("undertaking", in contemporary parlance).

17 *swete freind*: Overbury, Carr’s longtime political counsellor and freind.

18 *ser Gervius*: Sir Gervase Elwes, Lieutenant of the Tower of London, later convicted as an accessory in Overbury’s murder.

19 *Glister*: clyster; an enema. Overbury was allegedly finished off by a poisoned enema.

20 *This friend...Shame us*: Overbury virulently opposed the Carr-Howard marriage.

21 *Ignoramus*: the verdict returned by a Grand Jury in a case where the evidence is insufficient to support an indictment. The term may refer more specifically to the eponymous lawyer of George Ruggles’ university play, *Ignoramus*, first performed in 1614. As a tale of opposition to marriage (see note 20) and sexual intrigue the allusion to the play may be intended to comment upon the events leading up to Overbury’s murder, or might be intended to shed light upon the case itself, as a satire upon the quiddities of contemporary legalese. The possibility that the play was readily associated with the affair seems strong since “Ignoramus” also makes an appearance in another libel concerning Overbury (see “from Cathernes docke theer launcht A pritty Pinke”).

22 *West and thorne and turner*: this is clearly a scribal corruption; cf. BL Add. MS 15891, which has “Weston and Thorne & Turner”. Weston is Richard Weston, tried and convicted as principal in
Overbury’s murder. Turner is Anne Turner, confidante of Frances Howard, tried and convicted as an accessory to Overbury’s murder. Thorne makes no sense in this context, and is perhaps best read as a corruption of Forman (CCRO MS 63/2/19 has “Weston & Former & Turner”). Forman was Simon Forman, the magician-astrologer to whom Frances Howard and Anne Turner had allegedly turned for love potions and sexual inhibitors. He died in 1612.

23  *Im Printed...streete*: this mock imprint apes those typically found on printed ballads. Aside from “Paules Church yard”, the centre of the London book trade, all the details in the imprint are allusions to elements of the Overbury scandal. The “signe of the yellow Bande and Cuffes” alludes to Anne Turner’s supposed invention of the controversial fashion for starched yellow ruffs; “Arsnik and Roseaker” were two of the poisons allegedly used on Overbury; “Andromeda Liberata” was the title of George Chapman’s poem written in defence of the Somerset marriage; and “Turnebull streete” was a street in London noted for its bawdy houses.
Notes. This poem is one of two surviving libellous ballads on the Essex divorce and Overbury murder. The only known copy of this ballad survives in a manuscript compiled by Nicholas Oldisworth, Overbury’s nephew, which is entirely devoted to the Overbury affair. Oldisworth’s note claims he found his copy among the possessions of Overbury’s father, Sir Nicholas Overbury, in 1640. The ballad is analyzed by Lindley (116), Bellany (Politics 103-06, 162-63, 169-170, 177, 237), and McRae (Literature 63-65).

“A ballad to the tune of O the wind, the winde, and the Raine”¹

In England there lives a jolly Sire,²

Come listen to mee, and you shall heare:

Hee made our King’s³ good grace a fire

To serve’s owne Turne for other guere.⁴

Hee made our king’s, &c. To serve’s own Turn, &c

Hee leapt from the chimney to the chamber,⁵

Come listen to mee, and you shall heare

How this jolly Sire began to clamber,

And serve his Turne for other geare.

How this jolly Sire, &c. And serve his Turne, &c

For a Viscountship⁶ hee hoysed saile:

Come listen to mee, and you shall heare

How the Cowe of fortune fill’d his paile,

To serve his Turne for other gueare.

How the cow of fortune, &c. To serve his &c

The chambelayn’s Office⁷ breaking winde,

Come listen to mee, and you shall heare,

Hee had a Nose, the hole to finde,

To serve his Turne for other geare.
Hee had a nose, &c. To serve his Turne for &c

Somerset’s earldom’s ale drunke out,
Come listen to mee, and you shall heare,
Hee was the malt, that made newe Growt,
To serve that Turne, and other geare.

Hee was a Round in St George’s ladder,
Come listen to mee, and you shall heare,
Yea, hee helpt to blow the Councel’s bladder,
To serve’s owne Turne for other guere.

When hee was at this Huffe of pride,
Come listen to mee, and you shall heare,
Hee wanted a hackney for to ride,
And to serve his Turne for other geare.

Hee lighted upon a lusty filly,
Come listen to mee, and you shall heare,
Shee had a Marke underneath her belly,
That serv’d his Turne with other geare.

This colt came of a kicking race,
Come listen to mee, and you shall heare,
A Cecillian ape taught her damme to pace,
And to serve his Turne for other guere.

A tougher Jade was n’er bestridden,
Come listen to mee, and you shall heare,
Sheel yerk and bound when shee is ridden,
And serve the Turne for other geare.

Yet ever gentle to her rider,
Come listen to mee, and you shall heare:
She was brought to the block before He tryd her,
    And serv’d the Turne for other guere.

Speedy shee is, and of great force,
    Come listen. &c.
Sh ee never mett so stoute a Horse,
    As could serve her Turne for other geare.

But if dispos’d, devoyd of anger,
    Come listen, &c
Shee could make him tame, & ride with a hanger,
    Her Turne unserv’d for other geare.

Though I have praisd Her, shee is faulty
    Come.
Sh ee has some Tricks, are counted naughty,
    Yet serve her Turne, &c.

In her foal-age shee began to wince.
    Come, &c
And hath beene a striker ever since.
    Which serves her Turne, &c.

Resty shee is. Her taile was burn’d.
    Come, &c.
With a hott iron cramm’d, as Butter’s churnd.
    To serve her Turne, &c.

Her dock and heeles have Mangie & scratches,
    Come &c.
Her tinderbox is full of french matches
    To serve to burne some other’s geare.

Her rider, hee prickt her upp & downe.
Come, &c.
To city, sub-urbe, and country-towne,
And serv’d her Turne, &c

from Hammersmith to Pater noster,

Come, &c.
And fryers black black deedes did foster,
To serve their Turnes, &c.

But now they both have caught the crampe.

Com.
And cannot bee currant till Tyburn shall stampe
The print of justice under their Eare.
And cannot bee currant, &c. The print of &c.

This ballad was found in Sir Nic: Overbury’s study, 1640

Source. BL Add. MS 15476, fols. 91r-92r

1 O the winde...the Raine: this tune is not as easy to identify as those for “There was an ould ladd rode on an ould padd”. The refrain suggests that the tune might be the same one used for the song in Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night with the refrain “with hey, ho, the wind and the rain” (5.1.376-395). Duffin (448-450) discusses the Shakespeare song and hazards an informed guess about the tune.

2 jolly Sire: Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset.

3 our King’s: James I’s.

4 guere: gear; genitals.

5 chimney to the chamber: Carr’s ascent from (supposed) social obscurity to a position as a Gentleman of the King’s Bedchamber.

6 Viscountship: Carr was made Viscount Rochester in March 1611.
The chambelayn’s Office: Carr was appointed Lord Chamberlain in the summer of 1614, succeeding his father-in-law, Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk.

Somerset’s earldom’s: Carr was made Earl of Somerset in December 1613.

Growt: grout (“The infusion of malt before it is fermented, and during the process of fermentation” (OED)).

St George’s ladder: Carr was made a Knight of the Garter (the Order of St. George) in May 1611.

the Councl’s: Carr was made a Privy Councillor in April 1612.

hackney: a horse; here, a woman.

lusty filly: i.e. Frances Howard.

A Cecillian ape...pace: alluding to the charge, widely repeated in libels on Robert Cecil’s death (see Section D), that Frances Howard’s mother, Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk, had been Cecil’s lover.

Jade: a worn-out horse, or a lewd woman.

brought to the block: literally referring to the sale of horses, but here alluding to Frances Howard’s alleged sexual adventures before she met Carr.

hanger: loop from which either a sword or riding crop could be hung.

striker: has a double meaning here; a horse that kicks, or a promiscuous woman.

Resty: restive.

taile: the horse’s tail, and Frances Howard’s genitals or buttocks.

dock: rump.

Mangie: mange, a skin disease.

tinderbox...french matches: she has syphilis (“the French pox”).

Hammersmith to Pater noster: alludes to locations either of Carr’s and Frances Howard’s sexual rendezvous or to their sites of plotting against Overbury. Anne Turner had a house on Paternoster Row in the City of London.
25 fryers black: Blackfriars in London. Frances Howard had a residence there.

26 caught the crampe: have been arrested.

27 Tyburn: one of the major sites of public execution in early Stuart London.
H3 From Roberts coach to Robins carr

Notes. Like several poems composed around the time of the Essex nullity and Somerset marriage, this libel from 1615-16 depends on an extended pun on Robert Carr's surname, as a "car", cart or carriage. Other versions of the poem (e.g. Rosenbach MS 1083/16) contain only the first fourteen lines. A variant of lines 13-14 of this version are also appended to the transcription of the libel “I.C.U.R.” in BL Add. MS 30982: “Thou Carr to 4 feirst beasts didst trust / Pride, envie, murther, wanton lust”.

From Roberts coach to Robins carr
Franke, flings, and climes, and travells farr
And Tom attempts the carr to staye
Whom Weston whipps out of the way
Moone, sunne, and many a starr beesyde
Lends Franke there light, her carr to guide
Olde Venus with her borrowed light
Finds beasts, and riders passing right
Att length an Elvish trick is showne
That Franke, and carr, are overthrowne,
The Turner, and then quickly spye
Where coaches creepe and carrs doe flye.
To four fierce beasts this race did trust
Call’d pride, ambition, murder, lust;
Woonder all men, is itt nott strange
Tyme should make so greate a change
Of Gods wrath it is a token
That the greatest Carr is broken
Sinn did loade itt, honnor top’t itt
Tyme disclos’de itt, vengeance cropt itt.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 71v
Other known sources. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 11v; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 98v; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 13

H3

1 From Roberts...carr: Frances Howard’s (perceived) social fall from the wife of Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, to the wife of the (supposedly) low-born Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset. The social derogation is implied by the social distinction between an aristocratic coach and a humbler car, cart or carriage.

2 Franke: Frances Howard.

3 Tom: Sir Thomas Overbury.

4 carr: a continued pun on Robert Carr’s name.

5 Weston: Richard Weston, Overbury’s keeper in the Tower, convicted as the principal in his murder.

6 her carr to guide: the language here and the allusion to Venus in the following line may refer to emblems of Venus that sometimes depicted her riding on a chariot (car) pulled by doves. Frances Howard “guides” the “Car of love” in the 1613-14 libel “Lady changed to Venus Dove”.

7 Venus: goddess of love, the planet also known as the evening and morning star, and a symbol of venery.

8 Elvish: referring to Sir Gervase Elwes, Lieutenant of the Tower of London, convicted as an accessory to Overbury’s murder, and whose initial testimony sparked the investigation into Overbury’s death.

9 Turner: Anne Turner, confidante of Frances Howard, convicted as an accessory to Overbury’s murder.
Robbin of Essex all in a rage

Notes. The last line of this epigram suggests that, despite its similarity to poems on the Essex nullity and Somerset marriage (see Section F), it was probably written after the revelation of the Somersets’ complicity in Overbury’s murder.

Robbin of Essex¹ all in a rage
Turn’d over his wife² to Robin the Page.³
And shee agayne for the pleasant evill,
        Turn’d him over to the devill.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 18r

¹ Robbin of Essex: Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex.
² his wife: Frances Howard.
³ Robin the Page: Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, who came to the Jacobean court in England as a page to George Home, Earl of Dunbar.
H5 A page, a knight, a viscount and an Erle

Notes. This poem is an adaptation of an earlier version written shortly after Frances Howard’s marriage to Robert Carr in December 1613 (“A page a knight a Vicount, and an Earle [1613 version]”). After the 1615 revelations of the couple’s involvement in the murder of Overbury, the last line of the poem was adapted to reflect the new charges against the Countess. The Bodleian MS Rawl. D 1048 version of the 1613 poem is printed and discussed by Lindley (178), while Bellany (Politics 98, 149) comments briefly on the relationship between the 1613 and 1615 versions. In at least two sources this poem is joined (as the second stanza) to “Heere lyes hee that once was poore” (Bodleian MS Malone 23; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19); however, in most cases it is treated as a discrete poem.

A page, a knight, a viscount and an Erle
All foure weare wedded to one lustfull girle
A match well made, for shee was likewise foure
A wife a witch, a murderer, and a whore.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 70v

Other known sources. Cort verhael van het grouwelick (Dutch translation) B3v; “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 62; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 116; Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fol. 23r; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 38; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 7; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 64r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 163r; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 96v; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 40r; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 9v; CCRO MS 63/2/19, fol. 11r; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 62v; Folger MS V.a.262, p. 262

H5

1 A page...an Erle: Robert Carr came to the Court of James I in England as a page to George Home, Earl of Dunbar, was knighted in 1607, made Viscount Rochester in 1611, and Earl of Somerset in 1613.
H6 Heere lyes hee that once was poore

Notes. In at least one source this poem—supposedly an “Epitaph” on Robert Carr, but presumably written in the expectation of his execution in 1615 or 1616 rather than after his death in 1645—is joined (as the first stanza) to “A page, a knight, a viscount and an Erle” (Bodleian MS Malone 23); however, in most cases it is treated as a discrete poem. The poem is analyzed by Lindley (189) and Bellany (Politics 166).

“An Epitaph”

Heere lyes hee that once was poore
Then rich, then great, then lov’d an whore.¹
Hee woed, then wedd: and in conclusion
His love and whore, was his confusion.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 18r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 7; BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 70v; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 11r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 99r

H6

¹ whore: Frances Howard.
H7 When Carr in Court a Page at first began

Notes. This libel, analyzed by Lindley (1601) and Bellany (Politics 169), is an adaptation of Epigram 4, “In Getam”, printed in Book 5 of Thomas Bastard’s Chrestoleros (107). Like the libel, Bastard’s original is in essence an attack on the violation of an ideally static social order by the rise of obscure men—Geta is by origin a weaver—to status and dignity. Knowles (‘Crack Kisses’ 147) argues that “the ‘swelling’ here can be read as sexual as much as titular”.

“When Carr in Court a Page at first began
Hee swell’d into a Gentleman;
And when a Gentleman\(^2\) and bravely dight;
Hee swell’d and swell’d till Hee became a Knight:\(^3\)
At last forgetting what Hee was at first,
Hee swelld into an Earle,\(^4\) and then Hee burst.

Source. Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 68r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 151; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 142; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 63v; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 66

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1 Page: Carr arrived at the Jacobean court in England as a page to George Home, Earl of Dunbar.

2 Gentleman: Carr was appointed Gentleman of the Bedchamber in December 1607.

3 Knight: Carr was knighted in December 1607.

4 Earle: Carr became Earl of Somerset in November 1613.
Notes. This poem is either a revision of a non-political verse, or else an attempt to make that verse more blatant. The more oblique lines (albeit transcribed in a series of poems on Carr and Howard) read: “Our Somer Sun is sett / and winter is come on / The Robin Redbreast leaves to chirpe / because his voice is gone” (Bodleian MS Rawl. D 1048). The poem is briefly discussed by Bellany (Politics 166).

The Sommers sun is sett
And will shyne out noe more
This sommersett did gett
By marryeing of an whore. ¹

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 17v

Other known sources. Cort verhael van het grouwelick (Dutch translation) B3v; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 64v; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 9v

¹ whore: i.e. Frances Howard.
Notes. This poem is occasionally attributed to Sir Walter Ralegh (e.g. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14). In one version two extra lines are appended: “Thou Carr to 4 feirst beasts didst trust / Pride, envie, murther, wanton lust” (BL Add. MS 30982). The poem’s visual gimmic requires the reader to sound out the initials that constitute every third line. Thus I.C.U.R. is “I see you are”. The same technique is used in a 1640 libel against Archbishop William Laud (“U.R.I.C. poore Canterbury, in a tottring state”). The poem is discussed by Bellany (Politics 105, 166).

I.C.U.R

    good monseiur Car
    about to fall

U.R.A.K.

    as most men say
    & thats not all

U.O.Q.P.

    with a nullity
    that shameles packe

S.X.Y.F.

    whose wicked life
    hath broke thy backe.

Source. BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 28r

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 121; Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fol. 22v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 49r; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 152r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 64v; Bodleian MS Sancroft 53, p. 48; BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 42v; BL Add. MS 15476, fol. 1r; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 22r; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 91r; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 9v; CUL Add. MS 4138, fol. 47r; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 13r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 97r; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 35r; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 172

H9

1 I.C.U.R: “I see you are”. 
2 Car: Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset.

3 U.R.A.K.: “You are a kae (i.e. a jackdaw)”. In Aesop’s fables, the jackdaw has borrowed feathers. In this context, the allusion refers to Carr’s acquisition of other men’s fortunes, lands and wife, a charge made more explicitly in the libels “Poore Pilote thou hast lost thy Pinke” and “The wealth he gott to make his meanes greate”.


5 nullity: i.e. the 1613 nullity of the marriage of Frances Howard to Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex.

6 packe: a low person; here Frances Howard.

7 S.X.Y.F.: “Essex’s wife” (i.e. Frances Howard).
Poore Pilote thou hast lost thy Pinke
And by her leake downe to the bottome sinke,
Thy lands bee gone, alass they weare not thyne
Thy house likewise, another sayes is myne
Then wheare’s thy witt, alas tis 2 yeares dead
And wher’s thy wife, another did her wedd.
Art thou a man or butt the simple part
Nothing thyne owne butt thy aspyring hart.
Rawley thy howse, Westmerland thy lands
Overbureye thy witt, Essex thy wife demands,
Like Æsops gey, each bird will pluck a feather
And thou strip’t nak’t exposed to winds an weather
Butt yet thy freinds to keepe thee from the coulde
Have mud’e the upp in London’s strongest houlde.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 72r

Other known sources. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 64; Bodleian MS Don. e.54, fol. 22v; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 6; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 64r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 17v; BL MS Sloane 2023, fol. 58v; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 11r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 98v

1 Pilote...Pinke: the pilot is Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset; the pink, or boat, is Frances Howard, Countess of Somerset.
leake: the pun here depends on the association of “leakiness” with female sexual incontinence.

witt...dead: Carr’s “wit” is Sir Thomas Overbury, murdered in the Tower in 1613.

wife...wedd: refers to Frances Howard’s first marriage to Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex.

Rawley thy howse: Carr had received the house and estate at Sherborne—which had been confiscated from Sir Walter Ralegh after his conviction for treason in 1603—as a royal gift in 1608. Carr sold the estate back to the Crown when James I decided to grant it to his eldest son, Henry. After Henry’s death in 1612, Carr purchased Sherborne back from the Crown.

Westmerland thy lands: late in 1613, James I granted Carr substantial lands in the north-east of England that had been taken by the Crown from the Earls of Westmoreland in 1569.

Æsops gey: an allusion to Aesop’s fable of the jackdaw dressed in borrowed feathers.

mud’e: mewed, confined.

London’s strongest houlde: the Tower of London.
Notes. The sole extant copy of this attack on Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, is in the commonplace book of William Davenport of Bramhall, Cheshire (CCRO MS CR 63/2/19). The poem draws heavily from “Poore Pilote thou hast lost thy Pinke” and alludes to the final line from the 1613 version of “A page, a knight, a viscount and an Erle”. The fact that the libel notes that Carr’s “Ladie” was “before” described as “whore, wyfe, widdowe, wiche”, suggests that Davenport himself might have penned this poem, alluding in the process to the 1613 poem transcribed earlier in his commonplace book. Bellany (Politics 102, 177) discusses this poem’s authorship and its representation of Carr.

The wealth he gott to make his meanes greate
not from his purchase came, but Kingelye seate¹
the land his late made Lordship did possese
was Westmorelands & Rawelyes knowne distress²
the honore that his Lordship did inheritte
was Herefords purchase³ not his proper merritte
the Spouse he had to grace his nuptiall bedd
was Essex wyfe without a maidenhead.⁴
she was the Ladie kyld his leacherouss Iche
before described, whore, wyfe, widdowe, wiche,
the witte whereby he gotte all but his wyffe
was his poore Knight,⁵ whome he bereft of lyffe
this wyfe undide what all those did before
and left him Lorde of nothinge but a whore.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 11v

¹ Kingelye seate: i.e. by the King’s gift.
² Westmorelands & Rawelyes: James I gave Carr land confiscated by the Crown from the Earls of
Westmoreland (in north-east England) and from Sir Walter Ralegh (in Sherborne, Dorset).

3 *Herefords purchase:* the exact meaning of this allusion is unclear. Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, was also 4th Viscount Hereford, and Carr (as the next couplet makes clear) took Essex’s wife. If this couplet also refers to Essex, it is not clear what else Carr was supposed to have taken from him. Another reading, however, would see “Hereford” as a mistake for “Hertford”. Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford (d.1621), was the son of the attainted Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, so this couplet could refer to the Earldom of Somerset granted to Carr in November 1613.

4 *the Spouse...maidenheadd:* referring to Carr’s marriage to Frances Howard after the nullity of her marriage to Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex. During the nullity hearings, Frances Howard had been physically inspected to prove her virginity; few, however, believed her chaste.

5 *poore Knight:* Sir Thomas Overbury.
H12 Why how now Robine? discontented quite

Notes. The sole extant copy of this savagely vitriolic poem on Carr survives in William Davenport’s commonplace book (CCRO MS CR 63/2/19). Lindley (189-190) explores the poem in his analysis of the contemporary images of Frances Howard seducing Robert Carr into corruption and crime, while Bellany (Politics 167, 175, 237) discusses the poem’s depictions of Carr, Overbury, the betrayal of friendship, and the need for violent retribution.

Why how now Robine? discontented quite
hath greatness with the playd the skytishe Jayde
hath fortune kyste thee, & now doth she byte
and of her alter thee her footstoole make
hath she taught thee to shew a tumblinge cast
and rased thee highe to breake thy neck at last.
O noe I wronge her twas not shee that threwe
thee on thy necke or was thy ruins cause
but lustfull leacher twas thy self that drewe
thy selfe into confusions Jawes
when thou didst first touch that vyle castol vyce
thy wronge stylde Countess, Englands Cokeatryce.
what new strange maddness did possese thy mynde
what Frantick humor haunted thee, what fitte?
that thou to launch noe other place could fynd
but there where thou wert shewer thy barke to splytt
had the whole Ocean but one dangerouse shelfe
and wouldst thou neades runn there and ground thy selfe.
did Englands fruitfull bosome yeald such store
of vertuouse plants, and trulye noble stemes
and yett must thou neades coople with a whore
to gaine base dross, despicinge pretiouce Jemes
loosinge thy share in heaven and earth and all
to tast a bitt which tasted was with galle
And yett did honor give the so deare a frend\(^7\)
whose love streames towards thee soe much did flowe
that he foreseinge thy sadd fall, did spend
his braynes deepest dryft to stopp thy overthrowe
O, yett couldst thou conspire to cutt his throate
who was thy greatness, trewest Antydote.\(^8\)
And thorroughe his harte did digge the out awaye
with poysons pickaxe to injoye thy lust
who was a maine cheefe pillar which didde staye
thee on that throwne from which thou now art thrust
And who spent all his wisdome to the dreggs
to keepe thy state upright uppon itt leggs
and yett couldst thou betraye him, O vyle fact
whose horred stayne can never be out worne
how worthie for it arte thou to be ract
and pecemayle in some fearefull Engine torne
that men maye saye behould shuch was his ende
that for his whores sake murthered his derest frend
ye therefore Impe & dyinge lett thy goste
carrie thy Countess with itt quicke to hell
that when shee arivethe at the Sulphrie coste
Shee to the fynds the tragedie maye tell
divills, not men are fitte to heare this murther
it is foule, O then, cease pen and wryte no further.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 12r

\(^1\) Robine: diminutive for Robert.
Jayde: jade; a horse.

castol: unclear.

Countess: Frances Howard.

Cokeatryce: cockatrice; a serpent and/or a whore.

barke: boat.

so deare a frend: Sir Thomas Overbury, who was believed to have opposed Carr’s liaison with Frances Howard.

Antydote: antidote. Here the meaning is that Overbury’s counsel counteracted the dangers inherent in Carr’s ascent to power.
H13 From Car a Carter surely tooke his name

*Notes.* The poem's puns on “Carr” and “car” or “cart” can be found in a number of other libels on Robert Carr composed in 1613-14 and 1615-16. The pun functions in all these poems to mock the favourite’s supposed lowly social origins. Here, however, the pun is also used as a vehicle to imagine the much hoped-for execution of Robert Carr for Overbury’s murder.

From Car a Carter surely tooke his name

Or from a Carter surely Car first came

Sith Car & Carter then soe well agree

Let none them part till they at Tyburne1 bee

Where Car with Carter when you there doe find

Take ter from Carter, but leave Car behind.2

*Source.* Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 13

*Other known sources.* Sanderson 60

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1 *Tyburne:* London’s main venue of public execution, to which the condemned would ride in a cart.

2 *leave Car behind:* i.e. leave him hanging.
Dazal’d thus with hight of place,
Whilst our hopes our witts beguile,
No man marks the narrow space
’Twixt a prison, & a smile.
Then since fortunes favours fade,
You that in her armes doe sleep,
Learn to swimm & not to wade;
For, the hearts of Kings are deep.
But, if greatnes be so blind,
As to trust in tow’rs of aire,
Let it be with goodness lin’d
That, at least the fall be faire.
Then, though darkn’d, you shall say,
When friends fail, & Princes frown,
Vertue is the roughest way,
But proves at night a bed of down.

Source. BL MS Sloane 1925, fols. 30v-29v²

Other known sources. Pebworth; Wotton 522; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 147, p. 97; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 166, p. 83; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 61v; BL Add. MS 25707, fol. 185v; BL Add. MS 69968A, fol. 30v; BL Add. MS 72439, fol. 148r; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 110v; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 44r; BL MS Lans. 777, fol. 64v; BL MS Sloane 1446, fol. 76v; Rosenbach MS 239/23, fol. 95v

H14
1 *Upon Somersets fall:* the poem is not universally linked in contemporary copies to Somerset’s fall.

2 Due to a fault in the binding of this manuscript, the text begins on fol. 30v and ends on fol. 29v.
H15 If ever woe possest a stubbern heart

Notes. This rare poem, written in the voice of the imprisoned Robert Carr, dwells on two widely discussed themes in contemporary discussion of Carr’s spectacular fall from power: his betrayal of his friend, Overbury; and the dangerous consequences of his rapid elevation out of a naturally lowly social status. The collector’s attribution of the verse to Carr himself is almost certainly mistaken. Carr would never have referred to his rank at birth as “meane”; and, unlike the repentant voice in this poem, he stuck fast to his claim of innocence in Overbury’s murder.

“By Ld Carr: Earle of Somersett: his owne verses:”

If ever woe possest a stubbern heart
If punishment bee dew to bad deserte
If ever greife or sorrow man hath croste
Lay all on mee, I have deserv’d the moste

Let all the world complain uppon my name
Let all the world reporte nought but my shame
Let all the world beare these my words in mynde
That to my friend\(^1\) Like Judas proved unkinde

I that on Earth had all I could desire
I that like Phaieton\(^2\) did above all aspire
Have nothinge els to comfort my sad mones
But thus to tell my greife to wrathlesse stones.\(^3\)

Lett all my friends beare theis my words in minde
Bee not like mee to your best friend unkinde
Beare this same proverbe allwayes in your view
for to my greife I finde it to be trewe.

Hee that begins to Clyme & climes but slowe
Can catch small harme though hee fall nere so lowe
But hee that when hee clymes a mayne\(^4\)
Hee fales so lowe hee nere can rise againe

Thus I advertise all before I dye
Hee must needs fall to lowe that clymes to hye.
I that was rich in state though meane in birth
Ame now the meanest creature one the earth.

The world condems mee for my monstrous deed
And that which makes my heart with sorrowe bleed
Is this, that more besides poore wretched I
for this offence in ths strong hold must lye.⁵

Oh had I lyven poorely as at first
But twas for honour that my minde did thirst
Honor I aym’d at and I hitt the white⁶
first from a Page the Kinge made mee a knight

From thence I stept into a Vicounts place
And beinge Earle I reaped this fowle disgrace⁷
Then did I thinke my fate coulde never fall
And like a gamster⁸ then I threw at all

But then the Lord that doth disclose all crimes
That ere hath bin committed in these tymes
Hee did disclose this plott that Hell invented
The which till now my heart hath nere relented

Mercy O Lord I crave for my fowle sinne
A penitent soule I know much mercy wynnes
Let not thy angry browe gainst mee be bent
For with a fervent heart I do repent.

Source. Morgan MS MA 1057, pp. 190-91
1 *my friend*: Sir Thomas Overbury.

2 *Phaeton*: Phaeton, son of the sun-god Phoebus, whose rash request to be allowed to drive the chariot of the sun for a day almost led to disaster. Contemporaries commonly compared James I’s reckless young favourites to Phaeton.

3 *stones*: i.e. the stones of Carr’s cell in the Tower of London.

4 *a mayne*: amain; at full speed, violently.

5 *more besides...must lye*: presumably a reference to Carr’s wife, Frances Howard, imprisoned with him in the Tower of London, but possibly also a reference to the other suspects—Sir Robert Cotton and Sir Thomas and Sir William Monson—still in custody during the spring and early summer of 1616.

6 *the white*: an archery target.

7 *first from a Page...disgrace*: these three lines rehearse Carr’s *cursus honorum*, familiar from many other libels. He arrived at James I’s Court in England as a page to George Home, Earl of Dunbar; was knighted by the king in 1607; made Viscount Rochester in 1611; and elevated as Earl of Somerset in November 1613.

8 *gamster*: gamester; gambler.
H16  A bird ill hatchd, from out a Cuckowes nest

Notes. The final four lines of this poem on Frances Howard are transcribed, in the only known source, as a separate poem, marked off from the preceding lines in the source by a horizontal line. In context, however, they are difficult to read independently, and are almost certainly part of the poem, possibly representing a late addition to an existing text, tacked on in November 1615 when rumours surrounding Frances Howard’s pregnancy were most prevalent. Bellany (Politics 169, 237) contextualizes the poem’s depiction of the social derogation implied by Howard’s second marriage, and its evocation of her execution.

A bird ill hatchd, from out a Cuckowes nest
flew from her mate, unto a pages brest.
Inconstant bird, and moste Adulterous girle
To take a page, and leave a worthye Earle.
But nowe her wings are limed, staied is her flight.
Within a place whilome blackfriers hight.
soe as att Randome, shee noe more muste flie:
Unles ambitiously, she mount on hie,
Some few degrees; and soe against her will
A sodaine full maie chance the bird to kill
But nowe her Courses, Smith doth overlooke
Till shee Receave her sentence from a Cooke
Whoe mortall breakfasts liberally imparts
To such as poyson honest men with tarts.

This bird some saie with yong one is growne bigg
Beleeve whoe list, moste hold it but a figg.
But if it proove and she in Childbed die
Whoe Poysind others, killd her selfe saie I.

Source. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 62
Cuckowes: a cuckoo is noted for laying its eggs in other birds’ nests. This may be an allusion to the poor sexual reputation of Frances Howard’s mother, Catherine, Countess of Suffolk, the rumoured mistress of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury.

_flew...pages brest:_ allusion to the 1613 nullity of Frances Howard’s first marriage to Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, and her subsequent marriage to Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, who had arrived at James I’s English court as a page to George Home, Earl of Dunbar.

_limed:_ covered with birdlime, a sticky substance used to catch small birds. This refers to Frances Howard’s arrest and imprisonment.

_blackfriers:_ Frances Howard was held for a time at a house in Blackfriars.

_full:_ probable scribal error; read “fall”.

_Smith:_ Frances Howard was held in the custody of Sir William Smith.

_Cooke:_ Sir Edward Coke, Lord Chief Justice of the King’s Bench and lead investigator and prosecutor of the Overbury murder case.

_poison...tarts:_ the murderers had allegedly sent Sir Thomas Overbury gifts of tarts, laced with poison.

_with yong one...growne bigg:_ Frances Howard in fact was pregnant at the time of her arrest—her daughter was born in December 1615.

_a figg:_ a lie. All kinds of rumours about the pregnancy—including that it was faked—were rife in London in November 1615.
Notes. This ambitious attack on Frances Howard as the quintessence of darkness, a sorceress and sexual transgressor, borrows the character of the Neapolitan witch and whore Canidia from Horace’s “Epodes” and “Satires”. Bellany explores the poem’s depiction of witchcraft and sexual transgression in his analysis of the Overbury scandal’s multiple political meanings (Politics 150, 176, 230).

“She with whom troops of bustuary slaves
(Like legions) sojourn’d still a mount’st the graves;
And there laid plots which made the silver moone
To fall in labour many times to soone:

Canidia now draws on.

She that in every vice did so excell,
That she could read new principles to hell;
And shew the fiends recorded in her lookes
Such deeds, as were not in their blackest books:

Canidia now draws on.

She that by spells could make a frozen stone,
Melt and dissolve with soft affection:
And in an instant strike the factours dead
That should pay duties to the marriage bedd:

Canidia now draws on.

She that consisted all of borrow’d grace,
Could paint her hart as smoothly as her face;
And when her breath gave wings to silken words,
Poysons in thoughts conceite, and murthering swords:

Canidia now draws on
She that could reeke within the sheets of lust,
And there be searcht, yet passe with out mistrust;
She that could surfe upp the waies of sinne,
And make strait posternes where wide gates had beene:

Canidia now draws on.

She that could cheate the matrimoniall bedd
With a false stampt, adulterate maidenhead;
And make the husband thinke those kisses chast,
Which were stale panders to his spouses wast:

Canidia now draws on.

Whose brest was that Aceldama of bloud,
Whose virtue still became the cankers food;
Whose closet might a Golgotha be stil’d,
Or else a charnell where dead bones are pil’d:

Canidia now draws on.

Whose waxen pictures fram’d by incantation,
Whose Philters, Potions for loves propagation
Count Circe, but a novice in the trade,
And scorne all Drugs that Colchos ever made;

Canidia now draws on.

Oh lett no bells be ever heard to ring,
Lett not a chime the nightly houres sing;
Lett not the lyrik larke salute the day,
Nor Philomele tune the sad darkes away:

Canidia still draws on.

Lett croking ravens, and death boading owles,
Lett groning mandraks and the ghastly howles
Of men unburied bee the fatall knell
To ring Canidia downe from earth to hell;

Canidia still draws on

Let wolves and tygers howle, lett serpents cry,
Let basilisks bedew their poysoning eie;
Let Plutos dogg strengh high his barking note,
And chaunt her dirges with his triple throate:

Canidia still draws on.

Under his burthen lett great Atlas quake,
Lett the fixt earths unmoved center shake;
And the faire heavens wrappt as it were with wonder
That divells dy, speake out their loudest thunder:

Canidia still draws on.

Noe longer shall the pretty marigolds
Ly sepulchred all night in their owne folds;
The rose should florish, and throughout the yeare
No leafe nor plant once blasted would appeare:

Were once Canidia gone.

The strarres wold seeme as glorious as the moone,
And she like Phœbus in his brightest noone;
Mists, clouds, vapours, all would passe a way,
And the whole yeare bee as an Halcyon day:

Oh were Canidia gone.

Source. BL MS Sloane 1792, fols. 2v-4r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 8; BL MS Harley 3910, fol. 26r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 135; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 66r; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.33

H17
bustuary: pertaining to funeral pyres.

She that by spells...affection: some reports alleged that Frances Howard had used love potions to seduce Robert Carr.

strike the factours...bedd: many reports suggested that Frances Howard had used witchcraft to render her first husband, Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, sexually impotent.

searcht: during the 1613 proceedings to nullify her first marriage, Frances Howard was inspected by a panel of midwives to prove that she was still a virgin and that her marriage had never been consummated.

surfte: to cover up, paint over (usually with cosmetics). The implication is that Frances Howard used magical assistance to fake the signs of virginity.

posternes: posterns; private doors.

Aceldama: the field of blood (Acts 1.19).

Golgotha: graveyard.

Circe: a witch in Homer’s Odyssey.

Colchos: Colchis, or Medea; witch, poisoner and murderess.

Philomele: in classical mythology, Philomela was transformed into a nightingale.

mandraks: mandrakes; plants believed to emit a fatal cry when pulled from the ground.

basilisks: serpents whose gaze was fatal.

Plutos dogg: the three-headed Cerberus who guarded Hades.

Atlas: in myth, sentenced to hold up the heavens.

Phœbus: the sun.
Notes. This poem appears to be an adaptation and extension of a libel originally written around the time of the marriage of Robert Carr and Frances Howard in December 1613 (see “From Katherins dock there launcht a pinke”). Like other poems, this libel depicts Frances Howard’s alleged sexual transgressions through an extended series of puns based on the organizing metaphor of the Countess as a leaky, wandering boat. Bellany (Politics 155, 175) discusses this 1615 version of the poem in his analyses of representations of Frances Howard, Robert Carr and Sir Thomas Overbury.

“On the Countess of Sommersett”

from Cathernes docke\textsuperscript{1} theer launcht a pritty Pinke\textsuperscript{2}
Leake\textsuperscript{3} she did often, butt did never sinke,
in falling downe to Essex\textsuperscript{4} pleasant shore
long she exspected rigging, and yards\textsuperscript{5} store
but out of hope theer to obteine content
with wind in Poope,\textsuperscript{6} away she flyes for Kent
and faine she would att Rochester\textsuperscript{7} cast anchor
but hideous dangers, and chill feares much blank her
beside to Cross good Canterburyes\textsuperscript{8} house
and London\textsuperscript{9} too, did cross the Ocean lawes
yet winchester averd she might, and Ely\textsuperscript{10}
by scriptum est\textsuperscript{11} would prove itt, did not he ly
well wheer she would be, they tow tugd her thether
Maugre\textsuperscript{12} the sea, the Tide, the winde, the wether,
them Som-are-sett\textsuperscript{13} to Caulke, and fresh her beake\textsuperscript{14}
make yare\textsuperscript{15} her geare\textsuperscript{16} new yard\textsuperscript{17} her, stop her leake
and bravly furnisht now with all munition
to sea she goes upon an expedition
her Canvas spreading, when she was inclind too
up she would fetch, whome ere she had a mind too
clap him a boord, take the best things he had
and in exchang give him some oreworne bad
Manny a Gallant Top, foreyard, and mast
her rude incounters layde in helpless wast
and now her beake comaunds what ere she please
without controule even over all the seas,
in triumph thus she revels, till debate
arose betweene his master and his mate
the Pinke was tender sided and unsteady
att every Gust to turne her keele up ready
the mate diserning that, did sore distast her
his thoughts, her faults, discovers to the Master
forwarning him such tempest weer a bruings
as not to leave her brought apparant ruine
the master wholly on his Pinke enamour’d
into his head could have no councell hamerd
still he would keepe her, like her, love her best
but doth in hart his honnest Mate detest
consults with his belov’d, a fitt time watches
when by a tricke they clapt him under hatches
wheer fed with art composed Tart he lay
tell att A port hole he was made away
thus, Over-bury-ed head and eares in water
wast not great pitty she should act this slaughter
this Treacherous practise Neptune winnowed out
and vowed Just vengance all the seas aboute
the grudging winds with angry murmer swell
and sad disasters in blacke Stormes fortell
no rest, no refuge the proude Pinke wude have
tost, tumbled, rumbled on the boysterous wave
her ends, her frends prevailes not, nor her prayers
up she was cast att the black fryers stayres
wher in requitall of his former Jadeing
ransackt and rifled, mard & bard from trading
on Ground she sitts, and tho as yett she splitts not
crackt and halfe rackt, for sea againe shees fitt not
nay though her owners safly of should wind her
no man a live would ever venture in her
but her deare master close unto a mountaine
was driven A shore nigh Ignoramus fountaine
from whence the stormes increasing, fury strooke him
downe to a Moore wher now you may goe looke him.

Source. Huntington MS HM 198, 1.19-21

Other known sources. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 74; Bodleian Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 68r

H18

1 Cathernes docke: a multi-layered pun, this refers both to St. Catherine’s dock on the river Thames in London, an area of town Lindley (118) notes was “notorious for brewhouses and taverns, and therefore a haunt of prostitutes”, and to Frances Howard’s mother, Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk, from whose “dock, rump or vagina”, Frances was born (launched).

2 Pinke: sailing ship.

3 Leake: leakiness was a common metaphor for female sexual insatiability, and lack of bodily control.

4 Essex: Frances Howard’s first husband, Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex; and the English county.

5 yards: a bawdy pun, yard being both a spar on a ship’s mast and common slang for penis.

6 wind in Poope: literally with wind blowing astern the boat, but probably with bawdy innuendo here.

7 Rochester: both the town in Kent, and Robert Carr, Viscount Rochester since 1611.

8 Canterburyes: George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, who had opposed the Essex nullity in 1613.
London: John King, Bishop of London, who had opposed the Essex nullity in 1613.

Winchester...Ely: Thomas Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, and Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Ely; both bishops voted to grant Frances Howard a nullity.

Scriptum est: literally, it is written; here refers to the Bishop of Ely’s claim to find legal warrant to justify the nullity.

Maugre: in spite of.

Some-are-sett: some are set; and Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset.

Beake: projection from the prow of a ship.

Make yare: make ready.

Geare: a bawdy pun; gear could mean both equipment and genitals.

Yard: a bawdy pun; yard could mean both a spar for a mast and a penis.

Some oreworne bad: syphilis.

Top, foreyard, and mast: all parts of a ship; all standing in here as bawdy puns for the men Frances Howard has seduced and conquered.

Master and his mate: the master of the ship is Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset; his mate, Sir Thomas Overbury.

tender sided and unsteady: in nautical terms, the boat had weak timbers on its sides and sailed unsteadily; in sexual terms, Frances Howard was promiscuous and uncontrolled.

Keele: in nautical terms, the timber on the underside of a boat; in sexual terms, the underside of Frances Howard’s body.

Tricke...under hatches: Carr was alleged to have engineered Overbury’s imprisonment in 1613 by tricking him into refusing a royal order to assume an ambassadorship.

Art composed Tart: the murderers sent the imprisoned Overbury tarts laced with poison.

Att A port-hole: Overbury was allegedly finished off by a poisoned enema—the port-hole here is his anus.

Over-bury-ed: overburied. This pun on Overbury’s name was quite widely made at the time.
27 Neptune: god of the sea, and here probably flattering James I as the discoverer of the truth surrounding Overbury’s death.

28 black fyers stayres: stairs down to the Thames in London. Before being sent to the Tower, Frances Howard was placed under house arrest in the Blackfriars district.

29 Jadeing: jading, playing the jade; and here probably meaning sexual promiscuity.

30 Ignoramus fountaine: the meaning of this is not entirely clear. After a day confined in his chamber in Whitehall, Carr was moved to house arrest in the residence of the Dean of Westminster, and it may be that the Ignoramus fountain is associated with or near that house. For other possible connotations, however, see “There was an ould ladd rode on an ould padd”, note 21.

31 a Moore: in nautical terms, a mooring place, but alluding here to Carr’s imprisonment in the Tower under the custody of the new Lieutenant, Sir George More.
H19 Me thinks I see a lady sitt and mourn

Notes. This poem, copied in the commonplace book of John Holles, 2nd Earl of Clare (BL MS Harley 6383), invites readers to decode the thinly veiled contemporary identities of its Homeric characters. Lindley (190) prints the poem in full and places it in the context of other attacks on Frances Howard, noting the slight strains of sympathy for the widely calumniated Countess.

“A libell of the Countess of Summersett”

Me thinks I see a lady sitt and mourn
like Hellen,¹ whose hott lust sett fyer on Troy,
Paris² lyeth wounded, Menelaus³ doth scorne
his amorous spouse, and makes her griefe his joy,
ould Tindarus⁴ sitts mourning all in black,
Castor and Pollux⁵ hide their heads with shame
on every side her Trojans go to wrack
and the wide world exclames on Hellens name
eache drunken Greeke makes her his tale of mirth
and with her shame fills every strumpets eares,
whilst shee poore soule sitts cursing of her birth
seasoning each word with sighs, each sighe with teares,
and to oblivious grave would gladly fly,
to steale away from the world’s calumny.

Source. BL MS Harley 6383, fol. 78r-v

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¹ Hellen: wife of the Spartan Menelaus. Helen’s elopement with Paris to Troy sparked the Trojan war. Here she represents Frances Howard, Countess of Somerset.

² Paris: the Trojan prince who stole Helen away; here, Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset.

³ Menelaus: Helen’s husband; here, Frances Howard’s first husband, Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of
Essex.

4 *Tindarus*: Tyndareus, husband of Helen’s mother, Leda; here, Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, Frances’s father.

5 *Castor and Pollux*: Helen’s brothers; here, referring to two of Frances Howard’s brothers, perhaps the eldest brothers Theophilus and Thomas Howard.
**Notes.** These twinned answer-poems stage a debate on whether the king should execute or pardon Frances Howard for her part in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. Howard was convicted and sentenced to death in late May 1616; however, by mid-July James had decided to pardon her, and it is possible to read the “Petitio” as evidence of some of the arguments that might have swayed the king’s judgement. Lindley (187-88) prints the poems in full and briefly explores their arguments, while Bellany (Politics 242-43) explores the poems’ arguments in the context of discourse on justice and mercy during the Overbury affair.

“Petitio”

Looke, and lament, behould a face of Earth,
In bewtie heavenly, great in place, & birth.
Nor is her soule in bewtie less excellinge,
In whome soe manie Vertues have their dwellinge.
Much Noble Nature, Bewtie, Charitie,
Much in goodnes, witt, and pietie,
Nor is the fayrest peece without a staine,
In fayrest peeces spotts appeare most plaine.
Sence of dishonour, in best myndes most stronge,
Made her desire, t’avenge soe vile a wronge\(^1\)
By meanes unlawfull, which have given offence,
To Lawe, to God, to Kinge; In recompence
of one Soule lost, the Lawe hath taken fowre,\(^2\)
And this hath suffer’d much by Legall Powre.

   God doth shew mercie for the fowlest thinge
to penitents.\(^3\) Doe thou see Mightie Kinge.

“Respontio”

It’s strange to se a face soe highe in birth,
And heavenly, to converse soe much with earth,
Naye more with hell; her soule noe less excellinge
In what? In Vice where all these had their dwellinge.
Much brybinge, broakinge, Pride, & Infamie,
Much of her Mother,\(^4\) new adulterie,
This ugly soule hath yet a fouler staine;
Though in foule soules, greate synns appeare least plaine.
Murther a Cryinge sin, in her more stronge,
for drawinge bosome frends,\(^5\) into the wronge.
Then blame not God, nor kinge to take offence,
Nor yet our Lawes to take in recompence.
For owne\(^6\) soule lost, soe lost, wer’t foure tymes foure,
And this of all deserves strickt Legall power.
  The Livinge Lorde still suffers in this thinge
  Were’t but for that. Proceede in Justice Kinge.

**Source.** BL Add. MS 25707, fol. 46r

**Other known sources.** CUL Add. MS 29, fol. 18r

H20

1 *Sence of...wronge:* the argument here is that Overbury’s bitter attacks on Frances Howard wounded her honour and inspired her to kill him to avenge the insult.

2 *the Lawe...fowre:* by May 1616, four conspirators had been hanged for their parts in Overbury’s murder: Richard Weston, Anne Turner, Sir Gervase Elwes and James Franklin.

3 *penitents:* Frances Howard was the only one of the accused murderers to confess her guilt and show penitence during her trial.

4 *Mother:* Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk, widely scorned as a woman of ill-repute, and rumoured to have been the mistress of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury.

5 *bosome frends:* presumably an allusion to Frances Howard’s confidante, Anne Turner, who was hanged for her part in the murder conspiracy.
owne: one.
H21 Anagram on Frances Howard

Notes. Contemporaries enjoyed anagramming, sometimes claiming to find hidden truths buried in the letters of a person’s name. Most early Stuart anagrams tend towards the humorous or complimentary, but several libellous anagrams survive in miscellanies, commonplace books and news diaries: sometimes prefacing or appended to libellous poems; sometimes standing alone (see Bellany, Politics 106-07). The two extant anagrams inspired by the Overbury affair were collected by Sir Simonds D’Ewes, who thought them “not unworthy to be owned by the rarest wits of this age” (Autobiography 1.87).

“Anagram”

Francis Howard: } Car findes a whore.

Source. Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 37v

Other known sources. D’Ewes, Autobiography 1.87; Bodleian Malone MS 19, p. 53; BL Harley MS 646, fol. 26r

H21
H22 Anagram on Sir Thomas Overbury

Notes. In the only known source of this anagram, it is transcribed alongside the more popular “Libellous Anagram on Frances Howard”.

Thomas Overburie - O! O! a busie murther.

Source. BL Harley MS 646, fol. 26r

Other known sources. D’Ewes, Autobiography 1.87

H22
Notes. A number of poems commending Overbury were composed and circulated in 1615 and 1616 in the wake of the scandal surrounding the revelations of the true circumstances of his death. Many of these commendatory epitaphs include libellous attacks on Robert Carr and Frances Howard, but we can also read the idealized Overbury conjured in these verses as a kind of yardstick against which contemporaries measured Carr and found him wanting. Three of the four Overbury poems collected here circulated both in manuscript and in printed form in the 1616 editions of Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife. This poem, however, survives only in this fragmentary transcription that seems unquestionably incomplete.

“To a friend of Sir Tho: Overburyes”

Sir you are one of those, who dare commend
A worthy though a lamentable friend;
Your tongue is so triumphant, when it saies
Any thing in dead Overburyes praise,
That wee could wish you alwayes might survive
If but to keepe his Epitaphe alive.

Oh, you doe nobly to maintaine the Truth:
If second you. Sir Thomas was a youth
That had a Mint of Witt, a mint of money,
And master was of both that gathred honey
From others gall, and made himselfe good sport
To see how he was envyed in the Courte;
That lovd King James, because King James lovd him
And for noe other reason. that sawe dmime
In maters of selfe profitt and selfe honnor,
That where hee mett a whore, cryd out upon her,
Although shee were a Ladie, or a Countesse,
That did not scatter but well place his Counties,
That with his manlike Beauty, as he went,
Ravisht beholders; that held nought mispent
Or to relieve the Poore or grace the Church;
That oft would plundge into a willing lurch
Rather then lett the mighty and the strong
Doe their weake lille\(^6\) harmelesse Neighbours wrong
That knew what twas to bee a favorit,

Source. Folger MS V.a.170, pp. 321-2
H24 Once dead and twice a live; death could not frame

Notes. This poem is one of three commendatory epitaphs on Overbury that circulated simultaneously in print and manuscript. In the printed version, first published in the 1616 edition of Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife, the author is identified as “Jo. Fo.”—perhaps the playwright John Ford, author of a now lost book on the Overbury case.

“On Sir Tho Overbury”

Once dead and twice a live; death could not frame
a death, whose sting could kill his fame
he might have lived, had not the life which gave
life to his life, betrayed him to his grave
if greatnes could consist in being good
his goodnes did add titles to his blood.
only unhappie in his lives last fate,
in that he liv’d so soone and die so late;
alas, where to should men oppressed trust
when innocence cannot protect the Just?
his error was his fault, his truth his end,
noe enemie his ruine but his frend
cold frendshipp, where hott vows are but a breath
to guerdon poore simplicity with death:
was never man that felt the sence of greife
soe Overbury’d in a safe beliefe
belief? o cruell slaughter! tymes unbred
will say, who dies that is untymely dead,
by treachery of lust, or by disgrace
in frendship twas but Overburyes case,
which shall not more commend his truth then prove
theire guilt whoe were his opposites in love
rest happy men; and in thy sphare of awe
behold how Judgestice swaies the sworde of law

to weed out those whose hands inbrev’d in blood

Cropt off thy youth and flouer in the bud

sleepe in thy peace, thus happie hast thou prov’d

thou might’st dide more knowne, not more belov’d.

Source. Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 14v

Other known sources. Overbury 2¶1v

H24

1 had not...grave: this slightly convoluted passage refers to Overbury’s betrayal by his friend Robert Carr. The theme of false friendship is taken up later in the poem, and is common in writings on the Overbury affair.

2 die: probable scribal error; read “died”.

3 to guerdon: to requite; to reward.

4 Overbury’d: i.e. over buried. This pun on Overbury’s name was quite common.
Notes. This poem is one of three commendatory epitaphs on Overbury that circulated both in manuscript and as part of the prefatory verse printed in the 1616 editions of Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife. The most copied of the three, this piece is accepted as the work of Richard Corbett.

“On Sir Thomas Overbury”

Hadst thou lik other Sirs and knights of worth
Sicknd and died, bene strecht out and laid forth
After thy funerall sermon taken earth
And left noe deed to praise thee, but thy birth
Then Overbury by a pass of the heires
Thou mightst have tyded henc in two-houres teares
Then had we worne thy spring of memorie
Noe longer then thy friend did rosemarie¹
Or when the doale² was dealing for thy sake
And thou hadst sunck in thin owne wine and cake³
But since twas so ordained and thought fitt
By them who knew thy truth and thy witt
Thou shouldst be poysond; death hath don thee grace
Rackt thee above the region of thy place
For none heares poyson nam’d, but makes reply
What Prince was that, what statesman that did die
In this thou hast outliv’d an Elegie
Which were to narrow for posteritie:
And the ranck poyson which did seem to kill
Working afresh in some historians quill
Shall now preserve thee longer ere thou rott
Then could a poeme mixt with Antidote
Now needst thou trust noe herauld with thy name
Thou art the voice of justice and of fame
Whilst som detesting their owne conscience strive
To pay the use and interest of lives
Enough of time and if it pleas the law
Enough of blood\(^d\) for naming bloud I saw
He that writes more of thee must writ of more
Which I affect not, but referre men ore
To Tyburne,\(^5\) wher they may define
What life of man is worth by valing thine

**Source.** Folger MS V.a.97, p. 20

**Other known sources.** Corbett 18; Overbury A2v; Bodleian MS Ashmole 47, fol. 112r; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 138r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 261v; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 152r; BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 72v; BL MS Harley 6931, fol. 65v; BL MS Sloane 1792, fol. 74r; BL MS Stowe 402, fol. 65v; Folger MS V.a.125, fol. 14r; Folger MS V.a.319, fol. 22v; Folger MS V.a.322, p. 49; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 106; Rosenbach MS 239/22, fol. 49v

\(^1\) *spring of memorie…rosemarie:* sprigs of rosemary, the herb of remembrance, were carried by mourners at funerals ("spring" is probably a scribal error).

\(^2\) *doale:* dole; funerary gifts given to the poor.

\(^3\) *wine and cake:* allusion to the funeral meal.

\(^4\) *Enough of blood:* Corbett is suggesting that enough people had already been hanged for Overbury’s murder. This might well be read as an appeal for the King to show mercy towards the Somersets.

\(^5\) *Tyburne:* one of London’s chief sites of execution. Two of the four Overbury murderers to be hanged were executed at Tyburn.
H26  Hesperides, within whose gardens grow

*Notes. This relatively innocuous epitaph on Overbury is one of three that circulated both in manuscript and in the 1616 edition of Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife. In the published version, the author is identified as “R. Ca.”, whom White (221) tentatively identifies as the Cornishman Richard Carew.*

“On Sir Thomas Overbury”

Hesperides,¹ within whose gardens grow
   Apples of gold, may well thy loss deplore,
For in those gardens they could never show
   A tree so faire, and of such fruitfull store.
Grace was the roote, and thou thyself the tree,
   Sweet Councel² were the berries grew on thee.
Wit was the branch that did adorne the stocke
   Reason the leaf upon those branches spred.
Under thy shadow did the Muses flocke,
   And by the as a Mantle covered.
But what befell, O too much out of kinde
   For thou wast blasted by a West-on³ winde.

*Source. BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 27r*

*Other known sources. Overbury 2r*
murder, his keeper Richard Weston.
The house of the Howards

Notes. This poem—which celebrates (somewhat prematurely) the fall of the Howard family at Court—does not explicitly dwell on the Overbury case. William Davenport, however, transcribed the libel as part of his materials on the Overbury affair (CCRO MS CR 63/2/19); and, indeed, there was much talk in 1615-16 that Lord Treasurer Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, consistently rumoured to be complicit in the Overbury murder, would soon follow his daughter, Frances, and his son-in-law, Robert Carr, into disgrace.

The house of the Howards
Is now growing towards

Theire wonted declining

For that generation

Nere had moderation

In theire sunne shining.

For when they are greate

They imprison and beate

To make themselves awfull;

Yet ever and anone

Fate drives them upon

Some instance unlawful;

From whence itt doth arise

That wee see with oure eyes

Theire quick revolution

They wax and they wayne

And that is the payne

Of theire absolution.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 70r
Other known sources. BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 74v; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 18v; BL MS Harley 7316, fol. 5r; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 10v

H27

1 absolution: it is just possible that the choice of a word from the Roman Catholic penitential system is a deliberate allusion to the Howard family’s reputation for crypto-papery.
Notes. The last line of this poem may allude to the Essex nullity of 1613, making it probable that this is an epitaph for Thomas Bilson, Bishop of Worcester (1596-97) and of Winchester (1597-1616), who died in June 1616, and who had been instrumental in securing the nullity of the Essex marriage. Bilson had been closely allied to Robert Carr and, at Carr’s behest, was made a privy councillor in the summer of 1615. His support for the nullity was long remembered—contemporaries mocked his son, for instance, as “Sir Nullity Bilson”. The sole extant copy of this poem is attributed to “RB”.

Here under liyes a Counsellor of State,
   a Deep Divine; a stout & Grave prelate;
   a Bishopp, & an Alchymist; who ist
   He is not, and in him is verefied
   this truth, that all things must be Nullified.

Source. BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 14r
I. The Execution of Ralegh (1618)

Sir Walter Ralegh was beheaded in Westminster Palace Yard on 29 October 1618. Ralegh had been sentenced to death for treason in 1603 (see Section B) but had languished for over a decade in the Tower of London until the temporary reversals in court politics following Somerset’s fall paved the way for his release in March 1616. By August 1616, Ralegh had obtained a royal commission to command an expedition to Guiana and, a year later, he sailed west once again. The voyage, intended to bring riches to the impoverished English Crown, was an unmitigated series of disasters and mis-steps, culminating in an attack on the Spanish settlement at San Tomé. Under pressure from the Spanish ambassador Gondomar, James I had an arrest warrant issued for Ralegh on his return to England in June 1618. Unable to defend himself effectively or to pull off a planned escape to France, Ralegh was escorted back to London and recommitted to the Tower of London in August. The King appointed a six-man commission to investigate whether Ralegh had struck a secret and treasonous deal with the French, and to assess both the charges arising out of the Guiana fiasco and the incriminating reports of his behaviour since his return to England. Having weighed the new charges, the commissioners concluded that the only legal ground for executing Ralegh now was the sentence passed on him in 1603. On 28 October Ralegh was taken to the court of King’s Bench, where the sentence of death was formally reissued. As Lord Chief Justice Montagu asserted, “new offences have stirred up His Majesty’s justice, to remember to revive what the law hath formerly cast upon you” (qtd. in Trevelyan 543).

The following day, before a large crowd gathered to watch him die, Ralegh delivered a spellbinding and transformative final performance. During a brilliantly devised, forty-five-minute long, “last dying speech”, Ralegh successfully repudiated the charge that he had made a deal with France, denied he had ever spoken disloyally of the king, and defended his conduct on the Guiana voyage. He refuted several allegations made by his kinsman Lewis Stukeley, who had escorted him to London after his return from Guiana, but also ostentatiously extended Stukeley his forgiveness. Ralegh also attempted to defuse two long-standing suspicions, asserting that he had neither engineered nor gloated at Essex’s fall and execution in 1601, and insisting, in a compelling display of piety, that he was no atheist. In effect, Ralegh took control
of the meaning of his own execution and the shaping of his posthumous reputation, refusing to play the prescribed role of abject penitent submitting to a blameless royal authority (Beer 82-108). Copies of Ralegh’s final speech and accounts of his scaffold demeanour circulated widely in newsletters and separates, and neither the printing of an official royal declaration on the case, nor the publication of a self-defence by Stukeley, managed to reverse the impact of Ralegh’s vivid self-fashioning.

The poetry composed on Ralegh’s death was profoundly shaped by the brilliance of his scaffold performance. Even those poems that remain critical of Ralegh’s career and refuse to absolve him of all the charges that dogged him are forced to admit that Ralegh had died well. The majority of the poems lean towards a mostly positive assessment of the old Elizabethan and in them we can witness a key stage in Ralegh’s transformation from a complex and controversial figure of dubious repute into the straightforwardly heroic icon of martial Protestantism that he would become in the anti-popish and anti-Spanish underground literature of the 1620s.

Many but not all of the poems collected below have been printed in Michael Rudick’s recent edition of Ralegh’s verse (Ralegh, Poems 181-205). Rudick also includes a number of printed epitaphs and poems copied out in the margins of printed books that we, given our focus on the manuscript culture of early Stuart libels, have chosen not to publish here.
II Raleigh in this thy selfe thy selfe transcends

Notes. A longer version of the title, in another source, states that this is “advise” on the occasion of Ralegh “preparing for Guiana 1617” (BL MS Cotton Titus c.7). Silvanus Scory was a client of Ralegh’s friend and fellow prisoner in the Tower, Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland.

“Sylvanus Scory to Sir Walter Raleigh”

Raleigh in this thy selfe thy selfe transcends.
When howerly tastinge of a bitter Challice.
Sereninge 1 the sad faces of thy frends.
Thou smilest at fortunes minions and her Mallice.

Hold thee firme heere, cast ancor in this port.
Heere art thou safe till death enfranchise thee
Heere neither harme nor feare of harmes resort.
Heere though enchaynd thou livest in liberty.

Nothinge in earth hath permanent abode.
Nothinge shall languish under sorrow still.
The fates have set a Certayne period.
As well to those that doe as suffer ill.

Source. Bodleian MS Smith 17, p. 124

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 189; BL MS Cotton Titus c.7, fol. 94r

1 Sereninge: making calm.
I2 Young witts are soone seduced and alwaies apt

Notes. Internal evidence suggests this verse dates from the period before Ralegh’s return to England from Guiana in 1618. The poem is also one of the first libels to attack the new royal favourite, George Villiers, Marquis of Buckingham, identifying him here with the pro-Spanish, pro-Catholic forces at court.

“The poore soldiers feare turned into policie”

Young witts are soone seduced and alwaies apt
to neglect danger till they be intrapt
Our Phaeton forsakes old Phœbus race¹
Anchises will not tread Eneas² trace
Ah, Ah my hart doth pant to heare and see
The devilish plott of Spanish trechery
Now doth the Buckingham³ with recreation
not affect the nimrodes⁴ of our nation
Our Fauns persued by curr that thirst for blood
Jesuits, Friers, monkes, that damned brood.
Alas poor Watt,⁵ thy hands to short to shunn
by turning them whom thou canst not outrunn
God preserve thee and we to doe thee good
Will trie our strength, and spend our dearest blood
Doe not sacrifice to Baal⁶ nor crave a bull⁷
But scorne the terrors of a Popish gull.
Swime with the Dolphin if thou art soe bent
Our hope is almost with expecting spent
Hast to thy shelter know this thy doome
Few freinds abroade close enemies at home.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. D.1048, fol. 76v
1  *Our Phaeton...race:* Phaeton, the son of Phoebus (Apollo, the sun god), drove the chariot of the sun off its usual course. The story of Phoebus and Phaeton was often used in Jacobean political poetry to depict disorder and misgovernment. It is possible that the allusion refers here to the young favourite Buckingham’s dangerously growing influence on the course of political affairs. For a more certain use of the myth to criticize Buckingham’s power, see “From such a face whose Excellence”.

2  *Anchises...Eneas:* Aeneas, the mythical Trojan founder of Rome, was the son of Anchises. This line may allude to the incident in Book 2 of Virgil’s *Aeneid* in which Anchises at first refuses to abandon Troy, before changing his mind and being carried from the ruined city by his son. The specific political allusion here is harder to grasp, but should generally be taken as a criticism of royal failure to follow the specifically anti-Spanish policies advocated in the poem and personified by Ralegh.

3  *Buckingham:* George Villiers, appointed Earl of Buckingham in 1617, and Marquis of Buckingham early in 1618.

4  *nimrodes:* Genesis 10.9 describes Nimrod as “a mighty hunter before the Lord”. Here Nimrod serves as a figure of Protestant militarism.

5  *Watt:* Walter Ralegh.

6  *sacrifice to Baal:* perform idolatrous worship to a false God (i.e. submit to the false religion of “popery”).

7  *bull:* papal document.
I3 Even such is tyme, which takes in trust

Notes. This poem, accepted as the work of Raleigh, exists in many manuscript sources, and clearly contributed to the vogue for epitaphs on him. This self-penned epitaph is an adaptation of the last stanza of an earlier Raleigh poem, titled in one copy “S.W.R. On his Mistresse Serena” (Raleigh, Poems 112-14; Trevelyan 174, 546).

“Sir Walter Raleigh’s Epitaph on his owne death. Novemb: 1618”

Even such is tyme, which takes in trust
Our youth, our joyes, and all wee have.
And payes us but with age & dust,
Within the darke & silent grave:
When wee have wandred all our wayes,
Shuttes up the story of our dayes.

And from which death, & grave, & dust,
The Lord will rayse mee up I trust.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 2r

Other known sources. Raleigh, Poems 80, 133; Raleigh, Prerogative 66; Trevelyan Papers 3.154; Bodleian MS Ashmole 230, fol. 343v; Bodleian MS Ashmole 1463, p. 13; Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fols. 3v, 11r; Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272, p. 50; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 31v; Bodleian MS Rawl. C. 986, fol. 15r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 383, fol. 140r; Bodleian MS Rawl. 859, fol. 85v; Bodleian MS Rawl. 1334, fol. 29v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 69v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 208, fol. 3r; Bodleian MS Tanner 82, fol. 244r; Bodleian MS Tanner 299, fol. 28v; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 141r; BL Add. MS 18044, fol. 153v; BL Add. MS 30982, fols. 21v, 148v; BL Add. MS 43410, fol. 163v; BL Add. MS 52585, fol. 56v; BL Add. MS 73086, fol. 18r; BL MS Harley 1574, fol. 2r; BL MS Lans. 777, fol. 64r; BL MS Sloane 1842, fol. 117r; Doctor Williams’s Library MS Jones B.60, pp. 267, 282; NLS MS 2060, fol. 2r; NLW MS 5390D, p. 336; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 34v; Folger MS V.a.418, fol. 4v; Houghton MS Eng. 628, p. 385; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 109

I3
Notes. Explicitly sceptical of the stated legal grounds for Ralegh’s execution, this poem nevertheless presents Ralegh’s death, like that of Robert Cecil in 1612, as just punishment for both men's factional pursuit and eventual destruction of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex.

“On Sir Walter Rawleigh”

Essex’s thy death’s reveng’d, Lo here I lie
Att whose blood shed thy innocence may cry,
Now Rawlegh quitts, I died not (as all see)
So much to satisfy the law, as thee.
Thou hadst an other foe, hee went before,
The French undid us both, but him the whore.
    My soules just greife is this; The world will please
    To say wee two died of the same disease.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 95v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 20; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 37; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 20v

1 Essex: Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, executed for treason in 1601.

2 an other foe: Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, widely assumed to have engineered Essex’s fall and execution (see Sections A and D).

3 The French undid us both: Ralegh was investigated in 1618 for supposed treasonous ties to the French; Cecil was alleged to have died of syphilis, colloquially known as the “French” or “French pox” (see Section D). The pun on “French” governs the last three lines of the poem.
I5 Heere lyes the man whose death and life

Notes. This poem’s ambivalence is shared by many other contemporary assessments of Ralegh and, like many of them, registers the positive impact of Ralegh’s scaffold performance.

Heere lyes the man whose death and life
Left in the world an endles strife
Twixt Shame & Honor, Hate & Love
Which of their Powers should greatest prove
In Rawleighs Name each had his turne
That in his life, this in his Urne.

Source. Doctor Williams’s Library MS Jones B.60, p. 274

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 195
Notes. This epitaph is best read as another essentially ambivalent assessment of Ralegh that nevertheless registers the impact of his good death on the scaffold.

“An Epitaph on Sir Walter Raleigh”

Heare heedlesse heedlesse matchlesse Rawly lies
who by deaths stroke gott life, that never dies
his body was the store house of good parts
and quintessence he was of armes and artes
Time wronged him but he more wronged time
His right for wronge payes the deserts of crime.

Source. Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 252v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 195; Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 151; Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272, p. 51

1 Time...time: this somewhat opaque line captures the ambivalent tone of the poem. Ralegh was both a victim and a villain; his death may have been for the wrong reasons, but it was nevertheless deserved (‘Essex thy death’s reveng’d, Lo here I lie’).
I7 Of Raleighes life and death the sum of all to tell

Notes. In one source, the scribe transcribes this ambivalent poem as the final two lines of the far more positive "Beholde Brave Raleigh here interr’d" (BL MS Cotton Titus c.7).

Of Raleighes life and death the sum of all to tell
none ever livde so ill, that seem’d to dye so well.

Source. Folger MS V.a.418, fol. 5v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 191; BL MS Cotton Titus c.7, fol. 93r

I7
I8 Who best did Calculate the life of man

Notes. This curious epigram is built upon an error. Although Ralegh’s exact date of birth has not been established, biographers typically date it sometime between 1552 and 1554, which would mean that Ralegh was, at the most, only sixty-six years of age at the time of his execution.

“An Epigram of Sr Walter Rawely beheaded at 74 years of his age”

Who best did Calculate the life of man
found threscore & ten years made up his span
If more then to survive, be, to be dead
Life lost not Raweley when he lost his head

Source. PRO SP 14/103/61x (fol. 99r)

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 192
19 Hope flattered thee though lawes did life convince

**Notes.** In its only known source, this poem follows “Who best did Calculate the life of man”.

“An other”

Hope flattered thee though lawes did life convince
Yet thou might’st dy in favour of thy prince
His mercy & thy liberty at last
did sealle beleife, and make opinion fast
In truth, when time had puld thee out of jayle
And newe hopes had sett againe newe saille
As many of this world as held free will
Thought thou wert safe, & had’st escapt thy ill
But nowe wee see, that thou wert bay’ld by fate
To live or dy, as thou could’st serve our state
And then wert lost, when it was understood
Thou might’st doe harme, but could’st not doe more good.

**Source.** PRO SP 14/103/61x (fol. 99r)

**Other known sources.** Ralegh, *Poems* 192

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1  *lawes did life convince*: allusion to Ralegh’s sentence of death for treason in 1603.

2  *thy liberty*: Ralegh’s release from the Tower in 1616.
I10 Heere lyes a treasure in this pitte

Notes. This dispassionate assessment is one of several poems on Ralegh to explore the dubious benefits of his reputation for "wit".

Heere lyes a treasure in this pitte
the wonder of his tyme for witte.
but to small purpose did itt serve
his witt could nott his head preserve:
his living was belov’d of none,
yett most men did his death bemone:
heaven hath his soule, the world his fame,
the grave his corps, stukelye\(^1\) his shame.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272, p. 51

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 197; Bodleian MS Aubrey 6, fol. 79r; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 10

\(^1\) stukelye: Lewis Stukeley, the Vice-Admiral of Devon and Ralegh’s kinsman, who escorted Ralegh to London after his return from Guiana and who then gave evidence against him on their arrival. Stukeley was widely attacked at the time for betraying his kinsman.
I11  O had thy name bene causer of thy death

Notes. The only extant copy of this verse is in the commonplace book of William Davenport of Bramhall, Cheshire, where it is one of a handful of libels attributed to “E.K.” or “Ed. Kel.”. The poem was transcribed by Davenport alongside other news items on Ralegh’s Guiana voyage and execution.

“Off the Lyffe & Death of Sir Waterr Rawleye Knight. made by Ed. Kel. 1618”

O had thy name\(^1\) bene causer of thy death
or had thy harte growne aged with thy yeares
then had thou yett injoyed now wished breath
or drencht in honor wee had spared these teares
but Neptunes\(^2\) feare, thou wouldst with him contend
agreed with Ulcanne\(^3\) he should be thyne Ende
Once livedst thou great, beloved but small
yet great ones did thee greatlye use
now greatlye loved, beinge not at all
who cann thy fates in this excuse
fortune then used thee as her game
beinge as unconstant as thy name\(^4\)
Some men mistaken, cald the Machevylle\(^5\)
it was thy witt that that suspicion bredd
some demed thee Atheist, childe of wordlye wille
which now good Cristian calle thee beinge dead
thy last confession\(^6\) made them trulye sorrie
wich earst desired to have reade thy fatall storie.
Englands great Generall,\(^7\) gave thee lyffe
which thou injoyedst to see him deade,
Croakte Lorde of factions, bread that stryffe\(^8\)
havinge thee & others, then misledd
tow thinges thou didste, now causers off thy ruthe\(^9\)
against thy Kinge, thy wisdome & thy truth
to world, to witt, to valoure, & to welth
thou badest farewell, as vaine & transitorie
on Earth thou foundste noe harborrowghe of healthe
havinge bent thy course unto a higher glorie
the gracious porte thou choiose for glorious gaine
was trust in him, who for thy soule was slayne.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 14v

1 thy name: perhaps an allusion to the frequent puns on Ralegh’s name as “Raw Lie” (see Section A).

2 Neptunes: god of the sea; but potentially also an allusion to a contemporary figure threatened by Ralegh’s power.

3 Ulcanne: Vulcan, god of fire; possibly an allusion to a contemporary plotting Ralegh’s destruction.

4 unconstant as thy name: again, probably referring either to the “Raw Lie” pun on Ralegh’s surname, or to the pun on his first name as “Water”.

5 Machevylle: Machiavel; a follower of Machiavelli’s amoral political counsel. One poet had branded Ralegh a “Machiavell” for his plotting to bring down Essex in 1601 (Trevelyan 338).

6 last confession: Ralegh’s reputation-restoring scaffold-speech, which repudiated the charges of Machiavellism and atheism.

7 Englands great Generall: Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex.

8 Croakte Lorde...stryffe: in transcribing the poem, William Davenport inserts here a marginal note identifying the crooked lord of factions as “Lord of Salisburie” (Robert Cecil), who was widely alleged to have manipulated Essex’s enemies in order to destroy him.

9 tow thinges...thy ruthe: in transcribing the poem, William Davenport inserts here the marginal note, “his conspiracie against the Kinge with Cobbam & Graye and uppon the Iland voaydge for not [illegible word] upp to his generall with his shippinge. the Earle of Essex beinge generall”. The “conspiracie against the Kinge” was the offence for which Ralegh was convicted of treason in 1603 (see Section B). Ralegh’s conduct during Essex’s 1597 “Islands Voyage” infuriated many of Essex’s commanders, some
of whom demanded that Ralegh be executed for contravening the chain of command. These disputes are described by Trevelyan (296-309).

10 *him*: Christ.
I12 What Worlds of people hath death conquered

Notes. This relatively rare epitaph on Raleigh is collected, in each known manuscript source, with other pieces on the same subject.

What Worlds of people hath death conquered
Since he first aymd to take away thy head?
And yet, for all his toyle, & Broken strength,
he gloryes to have gotten thee at length,
more then all them; his wonted Sythe & dart,
because thou knewst them well, he layd apart;
and with a Battell Axe,¹ on purpose edgd,
he steales behind, and Cheates thee of thy head.
A Coward Conquest, to redeeme thy shame,
If thou be’st valiant, come, & meete his fame.

Source. BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 96v

Other known sources. Raleigh, Poems 198; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 31v

¹ Battell Axe: i.e. the executioner’s axe.
I13 Beholde Brave Raleigh here interr’d

Notes. This poem is transcribed in a manuscript collection devoted to Ralegh’s life and death, where it is attributed to “Sir A[rthur] Thr[ockmorton]”, Ralegh’s brother-in-law. In another source, the scribe combines this poem with the ambivalent couplet “Of Raleighes life and death the sum of all to tell” (BL MS Cotton Titus c.7).

“An Epitaphe by Sir A. Thr:”

Beholde Brave Raleigh here interr’d
Whose Virtue, Vallor, Learning, Witt
Our greate rare Queene\(^1\) raysde and preservde
All buryed in a place unfitt\(^2\)
which earth nor envie can make die
but live with all eternity
take this remembrance from thy Brother\(^3\)
Sith he may give thee now no other.

Source. Folger MS V.a.418, fol. 5r

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 191; BL MS Cotton Titus c.7, fol. 93r

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1 *Queene*: Elizabeth I.

2 *buried in a place unfitt*: Ralegh was bured in St. Margaret’s Church, Westminster, close to the site of his execution.

3 *Brother*: i.e. brother-in-law.
I14 The Divell longe deceaved hath, Watt Raleighs wit with evell

Notes. This poem is one of a series of laudatory epitaphs on Ralegh, in a volume devoted to accounts of his life and death.

The Divell longe deceaved hath, Watt Raleighs wit with evell
yet at his death it seems to me, he hath deceavd the divell

Source. Folger MS V.a.418, fol. 5v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 191
This stone can not inclose thy fame
but hence twill break forth like a flame
and light the world with thy great deeds
some cald thee Atheist in there Creeds
whose sayings all proove most untrue
saint like from earth thy spirrit flew
into the hands of glorious Tryne
more bright then lampe thou there dost shine
and for thy name twill live in spight
of envious tongues and all there might

Then cease brave Raleigh to deprave
and let him have a quiet grave.

Source. Folger MS V.a.418, fol. 5v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 192

Tryne: Trine; the Trinity.
I16 Thou seest my tombe, Grey haires lye in this grave

Notes. This poem adopts Ralegh’s voice and, unlike most of the epitaphs, engages with the circumstances of the failed Guiana expedition of 1617-18.

“Upon Sir Walter Rawleigh”

Thou seest my tombe, Grey haires lye in this grave
first a Comannder in my end a slave
to unhappy mens base Butcher,\(^1\) to that wretch
eyes saw my one much honer’d body stretch.\(^2\)

My thoughts perswaded mee Mars Larum bell\(^3\)
his sword should mount mee, by the Axe I fell
wast for grand treason, neere demand for what
for my division hath decided that

Yet while I liv’d I prayd till that dire stroake
the passage of my breath and Conditt\(^4\) broake
God save the Kinge if I wrongd Spanish lawes\(^5\)
with them, Right and religion pleade my cause

Lett not falce malice my true project spott
some have adventur’d (was not blanke their lott)\(^6\)
for the weste Indies from the highest Kinge\(^7\)
not from the west, all rich promotions springe

Companions, of Sticks you gott a towne\(^8\)
I gott a blocke,\(^9\) and therewith gott a Crowne
of purest gould\(^10\) (was the whole voyage lost)
No twas to my preferment to your Cost

Kicke not my urne heele Judge mee thats most just

376
Adventurers take my dust
the Lord will reunite, this earth doth keepe
mee slumbringe, dreame yee that my name doth sleepe

Source. BL MS Harley 6057, fol. 50v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 196

1 base Butcher: the executioner.

2 body stretch: reference to the posture of the body before beheading.

3 Mars Larum bell: the god of war’s alarm bell.

4 Conditt: conduit; i.e. the neck and throat.

5 Spanish lawes: referring to Ralegh’s alleged offences against the Spanish on the Guiana expedition.

6 some have adventur’d...weste Indies: allusion to the fact that the adventurers who accompanied Ralegh to Guiana contributed £30 to £50 each to the costs of the expedition. In effect, therefore, they invested in the voyage’s financial success (i.e. the discovery of gold). Since the voyage failed to find gold, the adventurers’ investment was like a “blanke...lott” in a lottery.

7 highest Kinge: God.

8 a towne: perhaps an allusion to the capture of the town of San Tomé in Guiana, which had been a mere stockade twenty years earlier.

9 a blocke: i.e. the executioner’s block.

10 Crowne of purest gould: the crown of salvation and, perhaps, more daringly, a martyr’s crown.

11 oare: ore; i.e. the precious metals that the voyagers had hoped to find.
Notes. In one source this epitaph on Ralegh is attributed to “Mr Cicill” (Beinecke MS Osborn b.197); in another, to “A. B.” (NLS MS 2060); in another, to “Captaine Kinge” (i.e. Samuel King) (Bod. MS Eng Hist c.272); and in one more to John Hoskyns (e.g. WCRO 865/500). (On its authorship, see Ralegh, Poems 193).

“Upon Sir Walter Rauleigh’s Death”

Great heart, who taught thee so to dye,
Death yielding thee the Victory?
Where tookst thou leave of life? If there,
how couldst thou be so free from feare?
But sure thou dyedst & quitt’dst the state
of flesh & Bloud, before that fate?
I saw in every stander by
pale death, life onely in thy Eye;
Farewell, Truth shall thy story say,
We dyed, thou onely liv’dst, that day.

Source. BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 96v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 193; Bodleian MS Eng. Hist. c.272, p. 51; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 98v; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 954, fol. 35r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 69v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 209, fol. 10r; Bodleian MS Tanner 306, fol. 251r; BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 96v; BL Add. MS 58215, fol. 42r; BL MS Cotton Titus c.7, fol. 95r; BL MS Harley 791, fol. 49r; BL MS Harley 7332, fol. 215r; BL MS Lans. 777, fol. 64r; NLS MS 2060, fol. 2r; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 40v; WCRO MS 865/500; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 47; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 3v; Folger MS V.a.125, fol. 7v; Folger MS V.a.262, p. 55; Folger MS V.a.308, fol. 128v; Folger MS V.a.418, fol. 5r; Folger MS V.b.43, fol. 32r; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 10; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 357; Rosenbach MS 1083/17, fol. 71v
Two kinsmen wrastlinge, who shold have the fall

the state stood by, threw up the foote ball

Both mett, tooke hold, one coller thinkes to slipp
the other silye gott him on the hipp

Ne’re foyld him, but ere he came to ground
to save him selfe & foyle his freind meanes found

Whil’st one cleane strength to fetch him o’er did lacke
the other footes him & layes him on his backe

O for a righteous Judge, peoples good voice
and after age sentence; t’is better choice

To dye with glorye, then to live with shame
Rawleigh hath lost his head, and Stukeley his fame

Source. Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 6r

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 194
Fly Fame, report, that all the world may knowe,
England hath loste a freind, esteemed a foe.
For as some would it, but alack they fayld;
Faythfull he prooved, yet faithlesse they prevayled.
They wisht they sayd him false, and falsely proov’d
Their ground was hate: Spayne and the devill moov’d

Tell where thow comest, Raleigh my freind is dead:
Not myne alone, but all true English bredd.
But how deservedly, lett wise men judge.
And sure hee’le fynde desert much lesse then grudge
His well-wisht welfare to his natyve soyle,
Wofull destrucion to him did recoyle.

A Knight, a Captaine, and a souldyer bould,
as Hee by treacherie never soe was sould.
A Judas wish, ¹ not kisse, did him betray:
Butt cursed hee, that could not say him nay.
Whoe thoughe offended, might hee still have lyved
In sovereigne favor, nowe of life bereaved.

But being deade, thy fame shall never dy:
But Raleigh’s name shall lyve eternally.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 70r

Notes. Aligning Ralegh with the English nation against a diabolic Spanish enemy, this poem is a good example of the posthumous reinvention of Ralegh as a Protestant “Patriot” hero, that would become standard in much 1620s’ anti-Spanish polemic.
Other known sources. Ralegh, *Poems* 198

1 *A Judas wish:* probably a reference to Stukeley’s betrayal of Ralegh.
I will not weepe for twere as great a sin
To shed a teare for thee, as to have binne
An Actor in thy death: thy life and age
Was but a various scene on fortunes stage.
With whom thou tugg’st and strov’st even out of breath.
In thy longe toyle nere master’d untill death.
And thou despight of traynes\(^1\) and cruell witt
Thou didst at once subdue malice and it.
I doe not then so blacke thy memorie
To say I doe lament or pitty thee.
Were I to choose a subject to bestow
My pitty on, he should be one as low
In spirit as desert, that durst not dye,
But rather were content by slaverie
To purchase life; or would I pitty those
Thy most industrious and freindly foes,
That when they thought to make thee scandalls story
Wing’d thee with swifter flight for heaven and glory:
They that by cuttinge of some wither’d dayes
Which thou couldst spare, for to ecclipse thy prayse
Yet gave it brighter, made thy aged fame
Appeare more white and fayre, then foule thy shame;
And did promote an Execution
Which but for them, Nature and age had donne.
Such poore cheape thinges as these were onely borne
To live on Pittyes Almes to meane for scorne.

**Source.** BL Add. MS 22603, fols. 49v-50r

**Other known sources.** King 66; Ralegh, Poems 202; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 63r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.30, fol. 25r; Bodleian MS Malone 22, fol. 16r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D 954, fol. 35r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 209, fol. 9v; BL Add. MS 58215, fol. 24r; BL Add. MS 62134, fol. 12r; BL MS Harley 3910, fol. 28r; BL MS Harley 6057, fol. 35r; BL MS Lans. 777, fol. 65v; Folger MS V.a.125, fol. 7r; Folger MS V.a.319, fol. 23v; Folger MS V.a.322, p. 50; Rosenbach MS 239/22, fol. 50v

1 *traynes*: trains, plots.
I21 Cease booteless teares, weepe not for him whose Death

Notes. Although the allusion to Samson in the final couplet positions Ralegh in the increasingly familiar role of militant Protestant hero, this poem, like “I knew thee but by fame and thy brave deedes” makes a claim to Ralegh’s significance as a writer.

Cease booteless teares, weepe not for him whose Death
made way to Heaven; for her that sent him breath,
Long liv’d hee Captive; now at Libertie
this world of wooes turnd to felicitie
What, is hee gon: No, wee enioye him still
That learned worke,\(^1\) (the Laurell of his quill)
shall live and blaze his fame, those only dye
That have no record to posteritie.
The end, the Life, the Evenige crownes the Day
his Night surpast his morning every way,
For Samson like,\(^2\) Dyinge hee vanguisht more
then all his life time hee had done before:

Source. Morgan MS MA 1057, p. 94

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 194; PRO SP 46/64, fol. 163

I21

1 That learned worke: Ralegh’s The History of the World (1614).

2 Samson like: Samson died as he pulled down a building upon himself, slaughtering numerous Philistines in the process. “And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life” (Judges 16.30).
Notes. This poem’s depiction of Ralegh’s destruction as a cause solely for the satisfaction of spite, malice and envy, implicitly challenges the official justification for Ralegh’s execution.

“Another on his Death”

If spite be pleas’d, when that her object dead
or mallice pleas’d when it hath bruisd the head
or envie pleas’d when it hath what it would
Then all her pleas’d for Raleighs blood is coold
    Which were it warme & active would orecome
    And strike the first two blind the other dombe.

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 151

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 196

I22
I23 Once he was Grace it selfe

Notes. This poem survives in the news diary of William Whiteway of Dorchester. He ascribes it to a local man, the “Poet Laureate of Dorchester”, R[ichard] Beech.

Once he was Grace it selfe
And could make others gratious.
Envie that crooked Elfe\(^1\)
Thought that life was to spatious.

And therefore did confine him
Into a narrower place\(^2\)
Where she meant to assigne him
The dregs of all disgrace.

But vertue then provided
Sorting his Fortunes so
That they should be divided,
Some good with bad to goe.
And in despight of Envies face,
To live and dy, grac’t in disgrace.

Source. BL MS Egerton 784, fol. 5v

Other known sources. Whiteway 23

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\(^1\) crooked Elfe: possibly an allusion to the crook-backed Robert Cecil, blamed here for engineering Ralegh’s fall in 1603.

\(^2\) confine...narrower place: reference to Ralegh’s imprisonment in the Tower in 1603.
I knew thee but by fame and thy brave deeds,
Those spoke thee loud; for where true worth exceedes,
It can not sleepe in Lethe.\(^2\) Who could but know
Thee for the Muses Freind, and Spaines Arch Foe?
Mee thinkes the old Heroes weighed with thee,
Homer\(^3\) was out or they of meane degree;
Of witt and, Valour, Hee to patternes sett;
In thee both weare, and both more strongly mett:
Thou sham’dst his art, and spite of Rule or Fashion
Mad’st practise out goe speculation.
   And yett thou hadst so much Mortalletye
To dy; though not with out a prodegy.\(^4\)
For thou (our Sunn) being sett, and darke Night come
An upstart starr would needes supply thy roome,
And lende that light wee mist; yet ’twould not bee,
It shone bright, but not halfe so bright as thee:
It shone, but being outvied, itt streight was done,
As though a Meteor could out shine the Sunne.
Oh that I could tune out so full a straine,
As might become thy Ellegy. In vaine
   I wishe itt. Engelandes Muse Raleigh is deade
   And blow spilt the balme of that rare heade.
Source. Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 6v

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 200; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 14

I24

1 Commett: Halley’s comet was visible in English skies in November 1618, indeed not long after Ralegh’s execution.

2 Lethe: the river of hell whose waters induce forgetfulness.

3 Homer: the ancient Greek epic poet. The libel is comparing Ralegh favourably to the heroes depicted in Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey.

4 prodegy: prodigy; i.e. the comet.
I25 All earthlie things by Water knowe

Notes. This poem's connection to Ralegh depends on the probable contemporary pronunciation of Walter as "Water".

All earthlie things by Water knowe
    All earthlie things do ebb and flowe
This my end; all ages after
    may learne to live and die by water.

Source. PRO SP 46/64, fol. 163

Other known sources. Ralegh, Poems 195
These five poems arise from the series of tawdry scandals surrounding Lady Mary Lake (née Ryder), her husband, the royal Secretary Sir Thomas Lake, and their daughter Anne, wife of William Cecil, Lord Roos. The scandals were the consequence of the February 1616 marriage between Anne Lake and William Cecil, a match that began badly and never recovered. Within months of the wedding, the bride and her mother were rumoured to be blackmailing Roos into signing over property to his in-laws. Reports suggested that the two women threatened to charge Roos with impotence and then sue for an embarrassing nullity of the marriage. Late in 1617, after Roos had cut his losses and decamped abroad, Anne and her mother charged that Frances Cecil, Countess of Exeter, the youthful bride of Roos’s grandfather Thomas Cecil, Earl of Exeter, had carried on an affair with Roos and had attempted to poison his aggrieved wife. The Earl and Countess of Exeter appealed to the King who, in the spring of 1618, sent the case to the Star Chamber. Nearly a year later, in February 1619, Star Chamber found Sir Thomas and Lady Mary Lake, Anne, and her brothers guilty of defaming the Earl and Countess of Exeter and of suborning witnesses and forging evidence. All were sent to the Tower and heavily fined. Anne confessed her crime in late June 1619 and was released early the following month. Her mother was more stubborn: she was finally released from the Tower during the following year, but not until May 1621 did she make her formal confession and submission in Star Chamber. Both women were widely vilified at the time—joining Frances Howard and Anne Turner as Jacobean icons of monstrous femininity—and many of the charges lodged in the libels are repeated in contemporary correspondence on the case. The scandal has not been systematically investigated, but Gardiner (3.189-194) provides a generally reliable narrative overview, while the articles in the 2004 edition of the *DNB* on Lord and Lady Roos and on the Countess of Exeter offer fresh perspectives on the affair. Bellany (*Politics* 252-54) considers the political significance of the scandal as a replay of some of the themes of the Overbury affair and offers brief analyses of the surviving libels.
Notes. The single surviving copy of this obscene attack on Anne Cecil, Lady Roos, survives in the commonplace book of William Davenport of Bramhall, Cheshire. The charge that Lady Roos wore fake pudenda or pubic hair is repeated in Francis Osborne’s unpublished 1650s’ play The True Tragicomedy Formerly Acted at Court (see Bellany, Politics 275).

“A Lybell uppon the Ladie Rosse”

Waste not a signe that courtlye Rosse should fall
when that her Mirkine\(^1\) lost his Coronall\(^2\)
what tricke in dancinge could the devill produce
to fitte her too a haire and make it loose
Twas no Caper.\(^3\) for she hath ofte bene boulder
when she advancet her legge on one mans shoulder
Sure some crosse poynte:\(^4\) for in open waye\(^5\)
her Mirkine nere was foundered or made straye
who had the harder chance I praye you reade
the Page that founde or she that lost her bearde.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 20r

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1 *Mirkine*: merkin. The exact meaning of the term is a little vague here; in contemporary usage, a merkin could be the female pudenda, a fake vagina, or fake pubic hair.

2 *Coronall*: crown; here, presumably, pubic hair.

3 *Caper*: an energetic type of dance.

4 *crosse poynte*: a dance step.

5 *in open waye*: here implying sexual intercourse.
J2 There is a close Prisoner in the Tower

Notes. This rare poem mixes topical allusions with conventional strains of misogyny.

“Of the Lady Lake”

There is a close Prisoner in the Tower
A woe-to-man\(^1\) who brought him to a bower.
Of sinnes deep Lake to droune in gulph of fraud
A caterpiller\(^2\) with fell-foule venome daub’d
de That cropps the fruite of blooming faire delight
Of falce worlds witt, gott by wealth meritts spight
She Rideing loves for Ryder\(^3\) was her name
Her horse Arme-strider metteld\(^4\) for the same
But now saies Fate wee have orday’nd it soe
For Rydeing fast, a foote pace she shall goe.

Source. Bodleian MS Smith 17, p. 113

\(^1\) A woe-to-man: a woman and a trouble to man. This and the following line repeat James I’s assessment that Lady Lake had been the fount of the conspiracy against Roos and the Exeters. According to the King, Lady Lake was the serpent in the Garden who first seduced Eve (Lady Roos) into sin, and then dragged Adam (Sir Thomas Lake) into the mire (Birch 2.136).

\(^2\) caterpiller: common term for a corrupt and rapacious person.

\(^3\) Ryder: Mary Lake was the daughter of William Ryder, a former Alderman and Lord Mayor of London.

\(^4\) metteld: metalled; shod.
Notes. William Davenport’s copy of this stinging attack on the imprisoned Lady Mary Lake is headed “An Ephitaphе put uppon the Ladie Lakes Dore” (CCRO MS CR 63/2/19).

“Heere lyes the breife of badnes vices nurse
The badge of usurie the clergies curse,
The staine of weomen kind, tradsmens decay
The patroness of prid, Extortions highway
The forge of slander, and each vile action
Frend to Romes whore, Spy to the Spanish faction
A bitch of Court, a comon stincking snake
Worse then all these, Heere Lyes the Ladie Lake.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 5

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 70r and 145v; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 153r; Bodleian MS Smith 17, p. 113; BL MS Harley 791, fol. 59r; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 20r; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 285; Huntington MS HM 116, p. 174

1 *Encomium...ignote:* In praise of a certain unknown, infamous, unspeakable woman.

2 *breife:* variants include “breast”, “bride” and “prize”.

3 *Romes whore:* the Church of Rome, identified in Protestant polemic as the Whore of Babylon.

4 *Spy to the Spanish faction:* Sir Thomas Lake was often linked at this time with the pro-Spanish Court faction.

5 *snake:* James I compared Lady Lake to the serpent in the Garden of Eden (Birch 2.136).
J4 Greedie, Envious, malitious proud unstable

Notes. In the only known source, this poem immediately follows a copy of the more widely circulated “Heere lyes the breife of badnes vices nurse”.

Greedie, Envious, malitious proud unstable
Suborner, Plotter, no waies tractable¹
Forger of Mischeifes, vertues onely Foe
Usurers Mynion Contriver of woe
The nurse of vice, I will not say a whore
Lyes nowe demancd² confin’d with in the tower³
A place too good for such a one to take
Who list to knowe her, tis the Ladie Lake.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 5-6

¹ tractable: the scribe also inserts “warrantable”, as though considering an alternative reading.
² demancd: not in the OED, but perhaps an anglicized version of the French verb demancher, to dislocate.
³ tower: Mary Lake was imprisoned in the Tower of London from 1619 to 1620.
**J5 Say, no man living would vouchsafe a verse**

*Notes. In the only known source, this poem immediately follows “Heere lyes the breife of badnes vices nurse”, and, as the pun in the last line makes clear, it is evidently on the same subject.*

Say, no man living would vouchsafe a verse
when thou art dead, to hang upon thy hearse.\(^1\)
or that the Tyburne poet\(^2\) should refuse
in thy bad cause, to interest his muse.
thinking, thy bawdy story in a Ballet
would be distastfull to ech herbwives pallet.
yet sure on earth, thy fame should longer dwell
then that of scoares of women that live well
now you came you are in that place\(^3\)
I wish for more imbellishing your raise\(^4\)
You match with her, that lyke hath never met
till you came there, to find out S.\(^5\)
who had the reputation, to be worst
er this came from hells lake where she was nurst.

**Source.** Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 70r

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1. *hang upon thy heirse:* epitaphs were commonly pinned to funeral hearse.
2. *Tyburne poet:* allusion to ballad makers who churned out poems and songs on criminals.
3. *that place:* the Tower of London.
4. *raise:* race.
5. *S.:* Probably Somerset; hence a reference to the murderess Frances Howard, Countess of Somerset, still imprisoned in the Tower (see Sections F and H).
K. “Fortune’s wheel”: Reflections on the Jacobean Era

The poems in this section are unusual in the context of this edition, and in many respects stretch the generic category of “libel”. Both are relatively long—the first just under 500 lines—and unfocused. Moreover, they lack the personal vitriol that we generally associate with the libel, just as they lack the epigrammatic form which the libel most commonly adopts. Indeed it is significant that the second of the two is labelled “A Satire”, since it attempts to apply the practices and structures of Elizabethan verse satire, rather than those of the libel, to the representation of Jacobean politics. Given these points of difference, it is perhaps significant that both poems exist only in one (and the same) manuscript. Hence these poems did not achieve anything like the wide circulation enjoyed by many early Stuart libels; in fact, given their length and the associated difficulties involved in dissemination, we might fairly assume that this was never the intention of their respective authors.

Yet these points of difference also make the poems particularly interesting. Unlike most other libels, these poems have a sense of history unfolding across a period of years, and as a result offer valuable reflections on the notable developments of the Jacobean era. Not only do they plot the era’s spectacular rises and falls, they also attempt to make sense of these facts of history: invoking codes of morality and speculating on matters of political causation. The first of the poems, “Fortunes wheele. or Rota fortunæ in gyro”, is particularly interesting in this regard. Here, the complex machinations of Jacobean politics consistently frustrate any efforts to derive order and structure out of the facts of history. The neat medieval model of the wheel of fortune is simply inadequate as an explanatory tool. And the poet seems well aware of this; indeed the poem combines discourses of sin and anti-Catholicism with a consistently knowing and ironic tone.

K0
Notes. This poem presents a survey of Jacobean politics that is more detailed and thorough than any other piece in this edition. Written towards the end of James’s reign (probably early in 1623), it looks back across the era, narrating the rises and falls of individuals and factions. Although it is not a straightforward polemic, in the manner adopted by most libels, the writer is clearly influenced by the events surrounding the 1621 Parliament, and the poem makes some pointed references to the sufferings of the “Countrie”. The poem is discussed in McRae, “Political Satire”.

“Fortunes wheele. or Rota fortunæ in gyro”

Some would complaine of Fortune & blinde chance
that durst their handes to heaven up advance
and cry, O God, which madest the glorious sunn
What hath poore England against Religion done?
That all her goodnes topsie turvie lies
derided geerde att, wrong’de by Contraries.
That such a mightie learned Prince¹ should see
how grossely men of honor blinded bee.
That persons mounted upp to greatnes durst,
unto their wealth & Princes favour trust:
Abuseinge both with pride and wantonnes,
which makes them stupid in forgetfullnes.
For though they sawe the downefall of the rest,
Yet worse and worse continued they unblest.
I saie, some would complaine of Fortune nowe
but I will plainer be, & tell you howe
this wheele of Fortune is turn’d round aboute
and soe the cause shall put you out of doubte.

As when the Prophett Balaam² did strive
to make proud moab\textsuperscript{3} against Judah thrive
And soe by God was curste for such a deede\textsuperscript{4}
Which meerelie did from avarice procee\_de
He yet desisted not,\textsuperscript{5} but founde away
their soules to sinne, as captive to betray
And unto Baal peor\textsuperscript{6} did them bringe
to bee a wonder, and a ravishinge.
The beautie of the Lande came naked to them
and with their false embraces did undoe them.
Thus plaid the devill with our English courte
for firste he to the Romanes made resorte.
I meane the Pope & conclave of that sect
who soon a hellish stratagem\textsuperscript{7} project.
Grudginge that our Religion shoulde soe flourish
or England constantlie the truth to nourish.
Thus they contrive with some strange powder blowe
into the aire, the Parliamente to throwe;
That with a whirlewinde, terror might appall
Gods worde professed, Courtlie state, & all.
But faileinge with base Balaam in this\textsuperscript{8}
and fretted in blinde rage his ayme to misse,
He falls to contraries, readeinge a booke
from whence he strange alluringe lessons tooke
of pride, luste, avarice, & wretched hate
Which in fewe yeares dismembred Englands state.
For presentlie the kinge affects his peace\textsuperscript{9}
proposinge nothinge but delights increase,
And as the kinge gives way, each one pretends
to honor him, though out of private endes.
Thus swarmes the Courte with youthfull gallants brave
and happie he, who can the kings love have.
The kinge againe remembers Daniells storie and such admitts of, as becomes his glorie. Yet all they doe is to resolve this doubt that Fortune’s wheele is quicklie turn’d aboute.

Monntgomory ledd this dance of greatnes firste but wiselie fearinge with the same to burste, He gave it over, & with true reclayme tooke out a shaft at honestie to ayme. For when the frye of Scotts had turn’d their capps to goulden bonnetts, and outfac’d mishapps with outward bravery by makeinge knights and grewe to Courte it in the statelie sightes, Then with the rest some English had the grace in the kings chamber to receave a place. But some have blamed Fortune for his sake that he the time of Fortune did not take. I might have nam’d Lorde Cobham, litle Gray, Raleighe and others, who contriv’d the waye of Essex fall–: For after all those smiles See, see, howe Fortunes hate, their trust beguiles They as delinquents by the law are founde and in the tower caste upon good grounde, And in the Tower dye: but Raleighs fate makes us amased, him unfortunate. For after fowerteene yeares, release he had, but see, his libertie prov’d too too badd. For in a voyage all his hopes miscarried and Gondonmars complaint him stranglie married to ougsome death whereby he lost his head, bewailed of his foes that sawe him dead.
Thus Contraries doe still resolve this doubte
that Fortune’s wheele is quicklie turnde aboute.

Northumberland? Northumberland was greate,
by native excellence, and honors seate
And yet the kinge, from whom greatnes doth flowe
most willinglie him greater made then soe.
For first he sitts at that high sacred table
where, to advise the Councell, he is able.
Then of East Marches is Lorde Waden still
tho nowe the kingdome feares noe forraine ill.
In the third place, he many places guides
Haveinge the Cuntrey at Commande besides.
And last of all the Captaine of the bande
of Pentioners, before the kinge doth stande
But somethinge blocked upp his hansome walke
and men at randon durste against him talke.
Till in the tower he as prisoner lyes
and many yeares greate affliccion tryes:
Yet out att last he comes, confyn’de to places
where he must nowe expecte more princelie graces.
unconstant tymes, what contraries bee these?
but sure it shewes, that men did God displease;
And God doth showe, for to resolve this doubte
that Fortunes wheele is quickly turn’d aboute.

Nowe little Cecill, too too greate doth growe
rydinge to Windsore with a pompous showe:
He workes himselfe an Earle, with some smale charge
and doth his house and famylie enlarge.
He rules the state, makinge the king beleev
he can his wants and greevances releive:
Thus he invents a newe device of honor,
Yet not soe greate, as when the Prince his Banner
advanced is within a martiall feilde
a Baronett, to Bannerett doth yeilde.
But after all this flourish:- to accompt
he suddenlie is called, wich doth surmounte
his former Items: soe, he somms the rest
and findes a call for mercie is the best
Thus death cleers his greate scoore, but men growe wilde,
and with uncertaine rumors are beguilde.
As if he amy’d at pollicies of state,
and still to be reputed fortunate,
without a thought of faire Religions corse
Soe they, cry’d out, Badd liefe, hath death farre worse
Oh God: if this the end of greatnes bee,
God send me honest liefe, with povertie:
But all wee talke of still, resolves this doubt
that Fortunes wheele is quicklie turn’d aboute.

Nowe steppes a faction upp, through princelie grace
which they with manglinge doe almost deface,
Convertinge it to theire owne state and pride
with many foule enormities beside.
Thus Suffolke bringeth in our hansom Carr
and he uprightlie doth walke, but went to farr
For after Suffolk, honors did obtaine
with the Courte-title of Lorde Chamberlaine:
And that Northampton was Lord Privie seale
thus with the state they presentlie doe deale.
Lorde Walden (Suffolks sonne) must Captaine bee
Of Pentioners, and their attendance see.
His other sonnes unto the Prince resorte
and many are his favorites in Courte.
Northampton liveth Lorde of all the Portes
and chief Commander of the Princes fortes.
The yonger Mounson is vice-admirall;
the elder they did, master Falkoner call.
A Dallison the ordinance doth keepe:
and Ellois cannot long in quiet sleepe
untill he paie 2000 pound at least
to have the Towers high Comand increaste:
wich made suspension many doubts to caste
as if their greatnes they woulde holde so fast,
That nether Queene, nor any of her freindes
should once prevent them in their private endes.
But Suffolke moveinge in a proper sphere
is not contente soe fairlie to appeare:
But will have Somersett Lor Chamberlaine
and he himselfe in office of more gaine,
Great Englanedes Treasuror and thus they live
to have both Court and Citie honor give.
By this tyme, Cooke (from the Attorney) growes
to be chiefe Justice: thus he proudlie showes
himselfe at last a Councellor of state
till Fortune made them all unfortunate:
I think of purpose to resolve this doubt
that Fortunes wheele is quicklie turn’d aboue.
For Sommersett must love Essex faire wife
by wich his deerest servant lost his life.
losse upon losse, all things grow cleane contrary
and thus our sinfull times themselves doe vary.
Northampton still suspected, stranglie dies and in his passion, to our Ladie cryes, Because he had contriv’d the wanton meane wich made brave Somersett act such a sceane But he is youthfull, pardon him in this for woemens love, goe many thinges amisse. Amisse said I? yea luste doth soe exceede, that it doth death to Overbury breede. For wich (by way of true digression) nothinge succeedes but strange confusion. The Lorde and Ladie are by equall Peers founde guiltie and condemn’de: (lawe nothinge cleers) And soe comitted to the towers charge as interdicted not to goe at large. Thire ministers and panders hanged dye; and knighted Ellwis, the like doome doth trye. The Munsons likewise are to Tower sent, but at their fall men made a merrymente. When all is done, Suffolke & Suffolks wife disgraced live for this their daughters life: And from disgrace, doe to more mischiefe fall for suddenlie, the kinges accompts him call unto a reckoninge, which he cannot finde and so arrerages caste him behinde. untill a prisoner he is likewise caste and in the tower with the other faste. The use of all is to resolve this doubt that Fortunes wheele is quicklie turnde aboute. For after thies affrightinge tymes of bloode even such as in the Courte more firmelie stoode
subjected were to ruinous extremes,
and accidents: which like a Rivers streames
runne ore his banke.- The Queene did sober sitt
markeinge the course of Fortunes wanton Fitt,
untill she dyed, lamented of us all.
(thus Princes answere muste, when god doth call.)
For soe she sawe the Prince her eldest sonne
pluckt like untimelie fruite, wich newe begunn
to apple on the tree. Oh fearefull storie
that we so suddenlie should loose our glory.
But blessed might, where Hymen did soe shine
and brought such honor to the Palatine.
yet see, what times have done? the crowned Queene
besides her lives escape hath changes seene.
Then by mischance doth Arabella flye,
and sent a prisoner in the Tower doth dye:
Att wich her cousen Shrewsbury doth storme
and for undecencies (wich wrought her harme)
must to the Tower goe, and their is still:
for such greate women talke at randome will.
Then falls Lord Cooke out with his wife; or shee
cannot soe well with his lawe talke agree:
But howsoe’re, from the Tribunall seate
He quicklie is throwne downe: not halfe soe greate
as once he was. O wondrous change of times
unfitt (indeede) for thies poore idle rymes.
Then comes a Secretarie to the stake
I neede not name him: yet Sir Thomas Lake
muste with the rest, the curse of Fortune trye
For, for his daughter he contriv’d a lye.
But when the reckoninge is up better caste
all men exclayme; sayinge, what soe is paste
Upon thies Lordes, be dangerous woemens sinne
whoe still unto the men, theire woe begin.
But I doe saie, T’is to resolve this doubte
that Fortunes wheele, is quicklie turnde aboute.

Our noble James sitts wondringe at thies things
Yet with the constancie of other kinges
derides them all: and soe at further leasure
inventes devices to mainteyne his pleasure.
But firste he stepps to act a monaches parte
and to the Comforte of each English harte
In the Starrchamber sitts in supreame sight
and like a sun, dispelling vapours quite
prevents the babblinge lawier, where he stands
keepeinge the Judge from fowleinge of his hands.
he still preserves the Statutes of the crowne
preserves the weaker from the greatter frowne:
yea, to the Contrys honor, and faire joy,
doeth punish all who durst her peace annoy.
But yet he must his favorites embrace
supposeinge still to alter soe the case:
noe question he doth meane, that all were well,
did not the issue, the Contrarie tell.
As I suppose still, to resolve this doubt
that Fortunes wheele, is quicklie turnde aboute.

Young Villiers nowe stepps forth, awhile obscur’de,
but at the last, is of the kinge assur’de:
whoe thus farre did him love, that for his porte
the people as peticioners resorte,
thronginge aboute his dore in everie place
yea, noble men are glad to have the grace
of faire admittance; but a thousand moe
returne unspoken with, & homewarde goe.
within three yeares, wee Marquess him salute,
and noe man dare the matter so dispute.
But hee, two greatest offices doth keepe,
and many times in the kings chamber sleepe.
Hee still, the glorious starr of England shines
resemblinge splendant gould, wich fire refines
And Commett like appeares with wondrous streames,
yea as a Commett spreadeth forth his beames.
For with himselfe, he bringes his mother in
his brothers, sisters, cousins; who begins
to shewe themselves advanc’d soe well, soe soone
as this their sun affordes light to the moone
yea, for his sake, and for the Princes pleasure
the alteracion doth exceed all measure:
Yet all the doe, is to resolve this doubt
that Fortunes wheele, is quicklie turn’d aboute.

Oulde Egerton, surrender must the Seale,
and the noe other reason will reveale
but the kings pleasure; yet they promise faire
to leave an Earledome, to his onelie heire.
Oulde Admirall must goe noe more to Sea;
nor Cooke (as Justice) heare the lawiers plea.
Suffolke must not sitt as Lorde Treasurer
but all the right, unto the kinge transferr:
Worcester, though that he boast of princlie bloode
noe longer maister of the Stable stoode,
but must resigne, the king doth thinke it meete,
and soe Lorde privie seale, they doe him greete.  
Lorde Wallingford must maister be noe more  
of that high Courte of wardes; nor stand before  
the Prince in office of soe greate accounte  
wich soone is knowne his reckoninge to surmount.  
The Secretaries they are changed too,  
and all thinges turn’d de aboute with much adoe  
For Bacon (but Attorney) steppeth in & doth his greatnes with such grace begin 
that quicklie he is keeper, Chancellor,  
a viscount statelie, & high Councellor.  
The maister of the horse is Buckingham  
& Englands Lord high Admirall by name, 
yea named is the kings delight and joy  
how o’er his mother, like a Countess coye doth with the rest abandon whom shee knew  
before, shee to such supreame greatnes grewe.  
Lord Chamberlaine the noble Pembroke is,  
& to his greife sees manie things a misse.  
for presentlie doth Montague stepp upp  
and with the rest, tastes of ambitions cupp:  
for, from Recorder, he chiefe Justice sitts & highlie lookes with strange and loftie fitts.  
Then from the Citie Cranfielde changeth aire  
and to the Courte doth handsomelie repaire:  
yea is soe well accepted for his skill  
that the kinge grace him, in his fortunes will;  
yet all this change, is to resolve this doubt  
that Fortunes wheele is quicklie turn’d de aboute.  
O God, what mixtures are amongst us wrought?
& men of honor topsie turvie brought:
Her’s griefe that any should deserve soe ill,
Hers gladnes, that the kinge suppress them will,
but of their faults I will not speake at all,
I onelie knowe, who prosper did, or fall.
Cranfeild is maister of the wardes, & brings
a just accomte; with manie other things
Fulk Grevill is Lorde Brooke, & soe it stands
his office is transposde to others hands.
Naunton, & Calvert, Secretaries bee
but somethinge is amisse; for wee doe see
Naunton suspended, which makes manie sore
but kinges (with God) doe in their mercy glory.
The Kings Attorney Yelverton did prove
worthie the Cities, and the Contries love,
yet he is tardie founde: for he doth trye
a sentence in Starrchamber, & doth lie
a Tower prisoner close, & close againe.
For all’s not well when kings doe once complaine,
of faulty subiects, yet be not mistaken
that honest men should alwaies be forsaken.
Not an inferior officer I name
who changed are for somethinge worthie blame.
nor how the kinge is not soe pleas’d, but may
condemne the rest, who dare his will gainsay.
my poore pretences still resolve this doubt
that Fortunes wheele is quicklie turn’de aboute.

By this tyme Europe hurried is in armes,
but what have I to doe with warrs alarmes,
I homeward came unto our contrey peace
& finde a Spanish faction to increase.
for great king James, would not have us complaine
that he intendes to match the Prince with Spaine
Thus Buckingham, & Arundell combyne
and manie others to the secte incline.
The kinge Earl Marshall Arundell doth make
and welcomes all who doe him not mistake.
Thus Gundomar doth boast himselfe what he hath done
and how the Lordes unto his side are wonne.
Thus doe the papists moste presumptuous growe
not doubtinge of Religions overthowe.
But that the kinge doth love his god indeede
and will by noe meanes such suspicion breede
Thus doe the Cuntries all amased stande,
& hearts are fearefull made throughout the lande
Thus manie foule enormities creepe in
and men without impunitie doe sinne.
For under couler of the kinges displeasure
noe man dares talke of things above their measure.
Yet when the Prince perceivde this discontente
he cheeres them upp with name of parliamente,
wich giveth warmth unto their frozen joyntes
as if, our God the remedie appointes.
For soberlie doe men express their minde
against the Spanish match, in manie a kinde.
one of incestuous mariages doth write
& would gainsay the Pope to his despite.
Another preacheth against the unequall yoake
with Infidell. another strikes a stroocke
at Spanish crueltie, from that true tale
wherein a Friar could noe whit prevaile
with a poore Indian; who deneyd to goe
to heaven, if Spaniards thither went alsoe.

Another would not bee to England debter
but to the marquesse writes a prettie letter.\textsuperscript{104}

Another (to mocke Gondymar) doth crye
to reade, & hearken to Vox Populi.\textsuperscript{105}

Another makes, some thinke with English boaste
a book the call Sir Walter Rawleighs ghoste.\textsuperscript{106}

Another: yea, a many others saye
o fearefull tymes, that ere wee sawe this daie
But all is done for to resolve this doubt
that Fortunes wheele is quickly turnde aboute.

Yet God be thanked, nobly at the laste
the kinge remembers what is done & paste
And he doth call a Parliament\textsuperscript{107} indeede,
at wich, a many storme, & many bleede.

For Monoples are rent in sunder quite,\textsuperscript{108}
and Francis Mitchell is noe more a knight\textsuperscript{109}
Mompesson flyes,\textsuperscript{110} and manie Pattents fall
and true complaints are heard amongst them all.

A manie foule enormities are righted
and blinded Justice is made nowe quickesighted.
For Englands loftie Chancellor is founde
a foule delinquent,\textsuperscript{111} and on speciall grounde
Is to the Tower as a prisoner sente:
nor cares the state, who showe their discontente.
And yet he scapes not soe. for some sharpe witts
(in their full charged & disordered fitts)
observe it thus. that once a Clergie man
(when Queene Elizabeth her raigne began)
kept the greate seale (one Doctor Heath by name) and gives it unto Bacon of good fame.\textsuperscript{112}

But wise kinge James, from Bacon takes the same, of purpose to prevent all future shame, and to a Clergie man gives it againe\textsuperscript{113} regardinge not who murmur or Complaine: And they do reason yeelde. & with a trice that the greate Seale, is a pure pearle of price which in a supreame throne must dailie shine, and therefore is not fitt to be lefte with swine;\textsuperscript{114} Well, let them passe: But god shall have the praise whoe such a Daniell for us all did raise; to vexe the Judges, who meant to beguile, and would Susanna’s chastitie defile.\textsuperscript{115} But all concludes, solucion of this doubt that Fortunes wheele is quicklie turn’de aboute.

Yet for all this men will noe warninge take, nor naturall infirmities forsake.

The kinges chiefe Justice must a Courtier bee and Montague doth to the same agree:\textsuperscript{116} But will not change, except supreamely seated, and soe he is Lorde Treasurer created: with character of Vicounte in greate state supposinge that his honors breed noe hate. But some doe laugh outright, and some doe smile to marke how Fortune doth this man beguile. For whie? before he warme is in his seate, faults are founde out intollerably greate, and he deposed is:\textsuperscript{117} yet doth the kinge another way unto him Comforte bringe:
and of the Councell makes him Præsident 118

wich diverse Courtiers thought a merryment.

For Cranfeilde presentlie stepps in the place 119

not careinge for the others strange disgrace

soe that the kinge be pleas’d. But nether he,

nor yet the kinge, can nowe well pleased bee.

For whie? the busines of the Parliamente

doth his greate majestie much discontente,

And therefore like a kinge of worthie glorie

scornes to insert itt, in heareafter storry

that he affronted was: 120 Thus he resolves
to Crosse them all; and soe the same dissolves. 121

Then like poore deare, unheard from the rest

some fewe are chased, as he thinketh best:

Cooke is to prison sente, 122 in pitteous case

and quite undone, without a speciall grace.

Phillips and Marlory, 123 with diverse other

who could not their true zeale to England smother

ar singled out, to beare affliccions crosse

thus all things turne unto the Countries losse.

For still the kinge doth want; must be supplide

and sends unto the rich on everie side, 124

going greate sommes: and greater then is thought
could ever by such pollicie be wrought.

But whether this doth out of kindnes growe

I may not, will not, dare not, cannot showe.

All yet concludes solucion of this doubt

that Fortunes wheele is quicklie turn’de aboute.

Oh wondrous world: a mapp of inconstante fashions;

O tymes of sinne, soe full of frantike passions?
O strange unheard-of changes in a state,
Soe full of pride, lust, avarice, and hate.
where is Religions puritie? where is
Gods worde? a touchstone to trye what’s is amisse.
But triall is soone made: For all can say
the people (as the Jewes) nowe runn astraye:
yet noe man is reform’d; who lives upright
is ether foole, or mad man in despight.
This makes a sadd collection of thinges
wich as ill newes terror and sorrowe bringes.
For in one yeare, to add unto the rest
thies accidents noe good harte can digest.
The Kinges Embassadors retorn in vaine,
and may without their remedie complaine.
a hopefull yeare is turn’d to death and wante
and country blessings fall out verie scante.
The voyage of Argier did badly thrive,
and yet the soldiers doe retorn alive.
Our great Archbishop kills a man by chance
and many censures, att the mischiefes glance.
A battaile by the staars is fought at Corck
and setteth superstitious witts on worke.
The Crowes of Barkshire doe likewise the same
and men run forward with prodigious fame.
Great fiers, Court, and Citie doe affright
and in the Contrey makes a piteous sight.
The kinge himselfe doth scape a dangerous fall
and strange mishapps: yet blesseth God for all.
The heavens doe three sunnes at one time showe
yet who the secretts of the heavens knowe?
The Earl of Barkeshire doth as desperate dye
as he a Crossebowes strength would foundlie trye.  
I could saie more: but men besotted are  
and for the particulars doe search too farre  
to lay some imputacion on another,  
but their own sinnes the caste behinde and smother  
Thus dare the saie, the Clergie are soe badd  
from whom all good example should be hadd.  
That other men be Covetous and proude  
as if to live like worldlinges were allowde.  
But I doe saie, Tis to resolve this doubt  
that Fortunes wheele is quicklie turn’d de aboute.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fols. 1r-7r

K1

1 mightie learned Prince: James VI and I.

2 Balaam: Balaam was hired by the King of the Moabites, Balak, to curse the Israelites; however, his oracles in fact blessed Israel and cursed its enemies (Numbers 22-24).

3 proud moab: probably Balak, ruler of the Moabites, who is referred to as “Moab” in Numbers 22.3-4.

4 And soe...deede: presumably again referring to Balak rather than (as the syntax suggests) Balaam.

5 He yet desisted not: presumably referring to the Moabites’ continued efforts to undermine Israel; as narrated in Numbers 25.1-5, the Israelites mixed sexually and spiritually with the Moabites, thus provoking the wrath of God.

6 Baal peor: false god of the Moabites (Numbers 25.3).

7 hellish stratagem: introducing a narrative of the Gunpowder Plot, 1605.

8 But faileinge...in this: presumably referring back to Balak’s, and the Moabites’, unsuccessful reliance on Balaam; the latter is probably described as “base” because he lacked the spiritual insight of his ass (Numbers 23.22-34).
For presentlie...peace: in 1604 James declared an end to the long-running war with Spain.

The kinge...glorie: probably an allusion to Daniel 1, in which King Nebuchadnezzar, having conquered Israel, commands that the most handsome and talented youths of the nobility be brought to his court. Daniel is one of these, and after being educated in court ways he and his Israelite companions prove to be the wisest and best informed among the courtiers.

Monntgomory: Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, one of James’s early favourites.

turn’d...bonnetts: cf. the charges of sartorial transformation in “Well met Jockie whether away”.

in the kinges...place: Herbert became a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber in 1603.

the time...take: while the poet tries to represent his career as a failure, Herbert in fact remained in favour throughout James’s reign (though he was never as prominent as some subsequent favourites).

Lorde Cobham: Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham, implicated in the 1603 “Main” or “Cobham’s” Plot to overthrow James and place Arabella Stuart on the throne.

Gray: Thomas Grey, involved in the 1603 “Bye” or “Priest’s” Plot against James.

Raleighe: Sir Walter Ralegh, arrested with Brooke in 1603 for suspected conspiracy.

others...Essex fall: while Brooke, Grey and Ralegh all opposed Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, the poem gestures here towards a wider conspiracy (see Section A).

For after...release he had: Ralegh was eventually released in 1616.

Gondomars complaint: Don Diego Sarmiento, Count of Gondomar, the powerful Spanish ambassador in London, reputedly obtained James’s promise that if Ralegh attacked Spaniards on his final voyage to America, James would ensure his execution.

ougsome: ugly.

lost his head: Ralegh was executed in 1618 (for poems on his death, see Section I).

Northumberland: Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland.

that high sacred table: i.e. the Privy Council.

Waden: i.e. “warden”.

Captaine...Pentioners: Percy was made a privy councillor and Captain of the Band of Gentlemen
Pensioners in 1603.

27 Till...lyes: though he protested his innocence, Percy was implicated in the Gunpowder Plot, tried in the Star Chamber in 1606, fined £30,000 and imprisoned indefinitely in the Tower.

28 Yet out...he comes: Henry Percy was released from the Tower in 1621.

29 little Cecill: Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury (see Section D).

30 workes himselfe an Earle: Cecil became Earl of Salisbury in 1605.

31 newe device of honor: the Order of Baronets was instituted in 1611.

32 a Baronett...yeilde: a banneret was an ancient title conferred for valiant deeds done in the King’s presence on the field of battle; on the institution of the Order of Baronets, precedence was given to these over bannerets.

33 but men...beguilde: reference to the libelling that followed Cecil’s death (see Section D).

34 Suffolke: Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk.

35 Carr: Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, Jacobean favourite c.1607-c.1616.

36 Lorde Chamberlaine: Thomas Howard was appointed Lord Chamberlain at the beginning of James’s reign, and held the position until his appointment as Lord High Treasurer of England in 1614.

37 Northampton...seale: Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, was appointed Lord Privy Seal in 1608.

38 Lorde Walden...Pentioners: Theophilus Howard, 2nd Earl of Suffolk and 2nd Baron Howard de Walden, succeeded his father as Captain of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners.

39 Northampton...Portes: Henry Howard was appointed Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in 1604.

40 and chief...fortes: probably still referring to Howard’s role as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, since this office included responsibility for garrisons and soldiers within the ports.

41 The yonger...vice-admirall: Sir William Monson, younger brother of Sir Thomas Monson, was appointed Admiral of the Narrow Seas in 1604. An associate of the Howards, Monson was briefly imprisoned on suspicion of involvement in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury.

42 the elder...Falkoner call: Sir Thomas Monson, Master Falconer to James.

43 A Dallison...keepe: Sir Roger Dalyson, Master of the Ordnance.
Sir Gervase Elwes, an associate of Henry Howard and Sir Thomas Monson, paid £1400 in 1613 to secure the position of Lieutenant of the Tower. He was later executed for his role in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury.

Queen Anne consistently opposed the Howard faction, but with limited effect.

Carr was appointed Lord Chamberlain in 1614.

Thomas Howard was appointed Lord High Treasurer of England in 1614.

Sir Edward Coke was reappointed Attorney-General in 1603, promoted to Chief Justice of Common Pleas in 1606, and transferred (unwillingly) from Common Pleas to become Chief Justice of King’s Bench in 1613.

introducing a narrative of the scandal surrounding the Essex nullity (see Section F).

reference to Sir Thomas Overbury, friend and counsellor of Carr, who opposed Carr’s proposed marriage to Frances Howard, and was murdered in the Tower at Howard’s behest (see Section H).

Henry Howard died in June 1614 after a botched operation on a tumour in his thigh, still suspected (as he had been throughout his life) of Catholicism.

Henry Howard acknowledged his Catholic faith in his will.

Carr and Frances Howard were tried and convicted in May 1616 by the Peers of England convened as a special court of the Lord High Steward. Both were sentenced to die, but both were spared.

reference to three people executed for their roles in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury: James Franklin, a cunning-man and apothecary who helped procure the fatal poisons; Anne Turner, a friend and confidante of Frances Howard; and Richard Weston, Overbury’s keeper in the Tower. Like much contemporary comment, the poem suggests that the agents are paying for the sins of their patrons.

Sir Gervase Elwes, also executed for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury.

both Thomas and William Monson were imprisoned on suspicion of involvement in the murder of Overbury; however, both were eventually released without a completed
In 1618 Thomas Howard was suspended from his office as Lord High Treasurer and accused of embezzling state funds.

Howard and his wife, Catherine, were briefly imprisoned in the Tower.

Queen Anne died in 1619.

Prince Henry died in 1612.

allusion to the 1613 marriage of Princess Elizabeth to Frederick, Elector Palatine of the Rhine.

Arabella Stuart, cousin of James, was imprisoned in the Tower in 1611 after her marriage to William Seymour, to which the King objected. She died in 1615.

Mary Cavendish, Countess of Shrewsbury, aunt of Arabella Stuart.

Mary Cavendish was committed to the Tower on suspicion of having aided Arabella Stuart in her flight after her marriage, charges which Cavendish refused to answer. Contrary to the poem’s claims, however, she was free by the time of her husband’s death in 1616.

Coke and his wife, Lady Hatton, had a notoriously stormy relationship. Their most public confrontation came in 1616-17, when Coke tried to marry their fourteen-year-old daughter to John Villiers, the elder brother of George Villiers, future Duke of Buckingham, without the consent of either the daughter or her mother.

Coke fell from favour in the summer of 1616, after a series of political missteps and legal quarrels with both the King and the Lord Chancellor, Thomas Egerton, and was dismissed from the office of Lord Chief Justice later in the year.

Sir Thomas Lake, appointed Secretary of State in 1616.

when Lake’s daughter was involved in a bitter property dispute with the family of her deceased (and, at the time of his death, estranged) husband, Lake was implicated with her in a defamation case, which brought about his imprisonment and political downfall (see Section J).

probably an ironic reference to James’s 1616 Star Chamber speech, in which he rebutted Coke’s ideas on the relation between royal power and the law.

George Villiers, royal favourite from c.1616, and Duke of Buckingham from 1623.

Villiers was created Earl of Buckingham in 1617 and Marquis of Buckingham
in 1619.

72 two greatest...keepe: presumably the offices of Lord High Admiral (held from 1619) and Master of the Horse (held from 1616).

73 many times...sleepe: reference to Buckingham’s position (from 1615) as a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and possibly also alluding to rumours of a sexual relationship between the King and his favourite.

74 he brings...cousins: cf. libels on Buckingham’s family (see Section L.).

75 Oulde Egerton...Seale: Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Ellesmere, the long-serving Lord Keeper, retired from that office in March 1617, shortly before his death.

76 the: read “they”.

77 leave an Earledome...heire: Egerton was promised an earldom while on his deathbed; his only son, John, was created Earl of Bridgewater shortly afterwards.

78 Oulde Admirall...Sea: Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, retired as Lord High Admiral in 1619, aged 83, to make way for Buckingham.

79 nor Cooke...plea: as noted above, Coke lost his position as Chief Justice in 1616 and did not regain it after his September 1617 restoration to the Council.

80 Suffolke...Treasurer: Thomas Howard was suspended from his office in 1618. (This repeats material from earlier in the poem.)

81 Worcester...greete: Edward Somerset, Earl of Worcester, served as Master of the Horse from 1601, and became Lord Privy Seal in 1616.

82 Lorde Wallingford...wardes: William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford (and, from 1626, Earl of Banbury), suffered due to his connections with the Howards, and was forced to resign the mastership of the Court of Wards in 1618.

83 The Secretaries...too: there were two secretaries of state. In 1618, Sir Robert Naunton succeeded Sir Ralph Winwood, who died in office; in 1619, Sir George Calvert replaced Sir Thomas Lake, after the latter’s fall from power.

84 Bacon...steppeth in: Francis Bacon, appointed Attorney-General in 1613, rose rapidly under Buckingham’s patronage.

85 keeper, Councellor: Bacon was appointed to the Privy Council in 1616, Lord Keeper in 1617, Lord
Chancellor in 1618, and Viscount St. Albans in 1621.

86  *The maister...name:* Buckingham became Master of the Horse in 1616 and Lord High Admiral in 1619.

87  *his mother...coye:* Buckingham’s mother, Mary Villiers, was created Countess of Buckingham in 1618.

88  *Lord Chamberlaine...Pembroke is:* William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, was Lord Chamberlain from 1615 to 1628.

89  *for presentlie...sitts:* Sir Henry Montagu (Earl of Manchester from 1626) resigned his position as Recorder of the City of London in 1616 in order to succeed Sir Edward Coke as Chief Justice of the King’s Bench.

90  *from the Citie...repaire:* Lionel Cranfield, a successful London merchant, was appointed Lord Treasurer and Earl of Middlesex in 1622.

91  *Cranfeild...wardes:* Cranfield rose under Buckingham’s patronage. He was appointed Master of the Court of Wards in 1619 and held that position at the time this poem was written; however, he was impeached, and fell from power, in 1624.

92  *Fulk Grevill...hands:* Sir Fulke Greville was made Baron Brooke in 1621, shortly after resigning his position as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

93  *Naunton...Secretaries bee:* in 1618, Sir Robert Naunton succeeded Sir Ralph Winwood, who died in office; in 1619, Sir George Calvert replaced Sir Thomas Lake, after the latter’s fall from power. (This repeats material from earlier in the poem.)

94  *Naunton suspended...sorie:* Naunton, who presumably appealed to the poet on account of his reputation for anti-Catholicism, was removed from his post early in 1623.

95  *The Kings Attorney...close againe:* Sir Henry Yelverton, Attorney-General from 1617, was brought down by his ambivalent stance on monopolies. His failure to defend monopolies with the full rigour of the law might in part explain the poem’s comment that he is “worthie the Cities, and the Contries love”; however, his lenience also led to his own 1620 Star Chamber trial on the grounds of having passed a charter to the City of London containing unauthorized provisions. In a subsequent House of Lords examination Yelverton, summoned from the Tower, confirmed his status as an anti-Buckingham hero by launching a scathing attack on the favourite, comparing his relationship with James to that between Hugh Spencer and Edward II. He was fined heavily for this outburst.

96  *Europe hurried is in armes:* the Thirty Years’ War began in 1618.
he intendes...Spaine: reference to the planned Spanish match (see Section N).

Arundell: Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel.

The kinge...make: Arundel was appointed Earl-Marshal of England in 1621.

Gundomar: Count of Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, widely feared for his influence at court at the time of the Spanish match negotiations.

under couler...measure: allusion to two royal proclamations “against excess of Lavish and Licentious Speech of matters of State”, issued in 1620 and 1621 (Stuart Royal Proclamations 1.495-6, 1.519-21).

he cheeres...parliamente: the much-anticipated parliament of 1621, discussed in the poem’s following stanza, was the first since the Addled Parliament of 1614.

For soberlie...kinde: although not all of the three individuals referred to in the following lines are traceable, they are clearly among the numerous preachers and polemicists who risked imprisonment by speaking out against the Spanish Match c.1620-22.

Another...letter: reference to Thomas Alured’s letter of advice to Buckingham, that circulated widely as a manuscript separate in the early 1620s, and was printed in 1642 as The coppie of a letter written to the Duke of Buckingham concerning the match with Spaine.

Another...Vox Populi: reference to Thomas Scott’s pamphlet Vox populi, or Newes from Spayne (1620).

Another...ghoste: reference to “Vox Spiritus or Sir Walter Rawleighs Ghost”, an anti-Spanish tract written by Thomas Gainsford which was circulating in manuscript from 1621.


For Monoples...quite: attacks on monopolies and patents dominated the 1621 parliament (see Section M).

Francis Mitchell...knight: Sir Francis Michell, appointed in 1618 to a commission intended to uphold a patent on gold and silver thread, became a target of the 1621 parliament on account of his perceived harshness and corruption. In 1621 he was tried in the House of Lords and was subsequently degraded from knighthood.

Mompesson flies: Sir Giles Mompesson, a commissioner for gold and silver thread and also for licensing inns, fled the country in order to avoid facing charges in the 1621 Parliament.
Chancellor...delinquent: Bacon was impeached by the Parliament for accepting bribes from suitors.

once a Clergie man...fame: although Queen Elizabeth kept the great seal herself on her accession, the duties of the office were performed by Sir Nicholas Bacon, who assumed the post of Lord Keeper in place of the existing Lord Chancellor and Archbishop of York, Nicholas Heath.

But wise...againe: after confessing to corruption, the great seal was taken from Francis Bacon, and he was succeeded as Lord Keeper by Bishop John Williams.

lefte with swine: i.e. punning, like many contemporary poems, on Bacon’s name.

such a Daniell...defile: allusion to a story from Daniel 13 (placed in the Apocrypha in the Authorized Version). When Susanna rejects the advances of two elders, they accuse her of illicit relations with a young man. The young Daniel saves her by exposing discrepancies in the men’s testimony.

The kinges...agree: Sir Henry Montagu, previously Chief Justice of the King’s Bench, became Lord High Treasurer (a court position), and Viscount Mandeville, in 1620.

before he warme...deposed is: at Buckingham’s insistence, Montagu resigned the lord-treasurership in 1621, to make way for Lionel Cranfield.

of the Councell...Præsident: Montagu was made President of the Council soon after resigning the lord-treasurership.

Cranfeilde...the place: Lionel Cranfield replaced Montagu as Lord Treasurer.

scornes...affronted was: on 30 December 1621 James tore from the journals of the House of Commons the controversial Protestation, concerning the liberties and rights of parliament.

the same disolves: in the first week of 1622 James dissolved parliament.

Cooke...sente: Coke, who emerged as a key intellectual spokesman for the Commons in the 1621 session, was punished more severely than any other parliamentarian, spending nearly seven months of 1622 in the Tower.

Phillips and Marlory: William Mallory and Sir Robert Phelips were among those members of the 1621 Parliament who were sent to the Tower after the dissolution. Phelips had been vocal in attacks on Spain.

For still...everie side: as no subsidy had been voted in the 1621 Parliament, James immediately called for a benevolence (a kind of forced loan).
The Kinges...in vaine: though James employed ambassadors to sue for peace on the continent on numerous occasions, this probably refers to his failed attempts in early 1622 to secure toleration for the French Protestant Huguenot communities.

a hopefull yeare...wante: the harvest of 1622 was poor.

The voyage...thrive: in 1620 a fleet sailed to Algiers, seeking restitution of English ships and sailors taken by pirates. The voyage was largely unsuccessful.

Our great...chance: George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, killed a gamekeeper in a hunting accident in 1621.

A battaile...Corck: reference to a much-commented upon portentous event from the autumn of 1621, in which flocks of starlings fought around the Irish city of Cork.

The Crowes...same: presumably another event in which a bird-battle was interpreted as a portent.

Great fiers: bird portents were connected by some to the outbreak of fires. A significant fire occurred in Chancery Lane in December 1621.

The kinge...fall: James fell from his horse in January 1622.

The heavens...sunnes: Simonds D’Ewes notes in his diary entry for 13 February 1622 that three suns were seen in the sky in Shropshire, “the like of which was in Richard the seconds time. God forbid the like consequents as succeeded them” (Diary 65).

The Earl...foundlie trye: Francis Norris, Earl of Berkshire, committed suicide early in 1622 by shooting himself with a crossbow (i.e. “fondly”, or foolishly, testing the strength of the weapon).
K2 Bridewell I come be valient muse and strip

Notes. This poem adapts existing conventions of satiric poetry for the purposes of political comment. It constructs a socially-coded voice at the outset, the speaker positioned as one looking up at those in the court, and risking the whips of Bridewell for his efforts. Thereafter, it assumes a heavily ironic tone, considering the corruptions that could never possibly stain England. Although it lacks the detail and specificity of the preceding poem, it valuably articulates general concerns of the time, especially those affecting the Church.

“A Satire”

Bridewell I come be valient muse and strip
ride naked in despite of Bridewells whip.
Goe to the Court let those above us knowe
they have there faults as well as we belowe.
Goe tell the great ons, there are greatnes of blood
is but false greatnes, their greatnes understood.
The Noble are the virtuous, honour from mudd
and clay is base, those greatest that are good.
Some have heigh place by birth, some lands advance
Some climbe by witt, some are made great by chance
I know a man made lord for his good face
whoe scarce had witt for to supplie that place.
another loth that name to undertake
must needs be lorded for his ladies sake.
a third that could not such promotion gett
a thousand find to be a Baronett.
a fourth not mov’d with an ambitious spright
was well content to be a common knight.
Honors a hackney, offices for gould
like common jades in faires are bought and sould.
Let none despaire. asses and fooles inheritt
Fortune advanceth more then witt or meritt
all this in forraine states I see, with us
none are advanced but the virtuous.
England thou art not soyld with spotts like these
thou art not given to flattery, pride, nor ease
Thy Ladies there with there one lords doe lie
thy Court is chaster then a nunnery.
mariage is there not made a slipperie knott
of fast and loose, but in the generall lott
she that doth draw a blank, an eunuch wedd
is as well pleas’d to keepe her meaden head
as if she had mett with Hercules stronge flame
as a lawfull prize to rob her of the same
She dares not blase her lust to breath the fame
She had rather loose her pleasure then her name.
There is noe fashion? all with them is union
they speake one truth and are of one religion
Theire foxes suck not out the poore lambs blood
nor private ends are made the publick good.
But all are for the generall all agree
like bells and bagpipes in one hermonie.
The sacred seate of justice Joves Rare throne
is not infected with corruption.
The judges cannot err nor slip aside
where righteous angells are their daylie guide.
the seales are just, noe bribes corrupt the lawes
justice eies noe man but lookes on the cause.
Has’t thou a suite requireth equitie?
Committ it to the righteous Chancery.
Thou shal’t not find it there last halfe soe longe
as thy Buffe Jerkin that is tough and stronge.
Nor shall find alminacks\textsuperscript{10} weare out of date before that courte doe sentence thy debate
thy beard shall not turne gray nor state be reard or gag’d or spent before thy cause be heard.
Ther’s noe such triflinge, these dispatches goe faster then mills, when stubborne winds doe blow.
The racks ride not soe fast as doth the cause\textsuperscript{11} pegasus\textsuperscript{12} goes slowlie to the swift paced lawes.
Conscience provokes their speed, before thou spend a double fee thy cause is at an end.
Looke heigher muse & cast a modest eie into the Churche and veiwe her puretie is she defil’d with superstition\textsuperscript{13}
or antique shapes of old devotion is ceremonie impos’d to sanctetie or onely urg’d to teach conformitie
doe any climbe up to the pulpitts steares more by theire purse then by theire zealous prayers
O god forbidd but pulpitts should be free from flatteringe falshood, pride and simony\textsuperscript{14}
dare any bribe the usher or the page for the next advowson\textsuperscript{15} of a vicarage: dares any preach against a vitious life
and be the first will kis his neighbours wife
Does profitt at a Bishops conscience knock and bidd him sheere the sheepe and pine the flock.
whoe flatters less; Doe cleargie men agree? to make a baude of theire devinetie?
ah noe o noe our reverend Churchmen dare boldly tell absalon of his longe haire\textsuperscript{16}
These tent\textsuperscript{17} the wounds like Surgeons to the quick
not skinn it ore to gett a Bishoprick
michah dares tell Samaria of her crimes
what plagues shall follow these Idolatrous times
the mountaines cleane & rocks melt with fier
Sion thy shames are like a purple flood
for thou wert Built on ruine and on blood.
thy head and rulers for reward doe judge
michah saith clients doe for justice trudge
and unregarded pas salem shall be
a chaos made of all deformatie.
and Sion that did once all pleasure yeald
shall be plowed up and made a desart feild.
I know our michah would say more then this
But what needs michah when noe sion is.
The sonne doth teach the lesser lamps to shine
and from his flame the drawe a soule devine.
Our torches and our candles doe shine bright
because the doe pertake of phoebus light.
veiw you our lesser lamps & doe not cease
till thou hast prest our justices of peace.
the common people feare these mightie men
that will not sell a statute for a hen
nor from the right and truth one jott decline
for a fatt capon or a bottle of wine.
a loade of coale will starte his conscience warme
for two hee’le keepe his neighbours from all harme.
theise are just magistrates for if they know
a robbery that was done a yeare agoe
by one that had a horse of colour gray
if you and I doe chance to ride that way
upon like colourd steeds the yeare after day
the felonie was donne and this foule fact
it will be made to appeere to be our act
and by the wisdome of the bench decreed
we were the men did act this wicked deed.
here is true justice, theise are happie states
that governed are by such wise magistrates
Il’e leave them now & if my sonne & heire
by chance doe slip into a justice chaire
this precept from his father let him marke
a foolish justice needs a cunninge cleark.
when that the bodie of the tree doth grow
straight & upward the branches still are soe
England thy head and members all are straight
though all things ballanast by uneven waigate.
mercie and peace in thee togaither kisse
let all the world envie thy happie blisse
and let those better witts envie my layes
thatt had the fortune to singe Englands praise
judge right for if you judge amisse the blame
is not the writers but the readers shame.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fols. 30r-31r

K2

1 Bridewell: London prison for whores and vagabonds, to which a commoner might expect to be committed for unlawful criticism of the state.

2 Some have...that place: these lines are copied directly from a poem on the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury (“Tis painefull rowing gaingst the bigg swolne tide”). The second couplet, in both poems, refers to Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset.

3 another...ladies sake: this reference is unclear.

4 a third...Baronet: possibly John Holles, who became Baron Holles of Haughton in 1616 after
making a payment to the Crown of £10,000 (ten times what the poem suggests). He became first Earl of Clare in 1624, after paying a further £5000.

5 *a fourth...common knight:* this reference is unclear.

6 *hackney:* presumably meant here in the sense of a “horse kept for hire” (OED I.2).

7 *she that doth...wedd:* allusion to the case of Frances Howard, who sued for a nullity of her marriage in 1613, claiming that her husband, Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, was impotent (see Section F).

8 *Has’t thou...Chancery:* the Court of Chancery was supposed to operate on laws of conscience and equity, thereby moderating the rigour of the common law.

9 *Buffe Jerkin:* a military jerkin (jacket) of buff-leather.

10 *alminacks:* annual books of tables, containing a range of information and forecasts.

11 *The racks...cause:* unclear; possibly using “rack” in the now obsolete sense of a horse’s gait, in which the two feet on each side are lifted almost simultaneously, and the horse is left entirely without support between the lifting of one pair and the landing of the other (*OED*).

12 *pegasus:* winged horse of classical mythology.

13 *defil’d with superstition:* like much religious critique of the times, the poem here identifies elements of popery infiltrating the English Church.

14 *simony:* the buying or selling of ecclesiastical preferments; or, more generally, traffic in sacred things.

15 *advowson:* right of presentation (to an ecclesiastical office).

16 *absalon...haire:* Absalom’s luxurious growth of hair, cut annually, is mentioned in 2 Samuel 14.26; here it serves as an image of unchecked pride.

17 *tent:* probe (surgically).

18 *michah...crimes:* the prophet Micah railed against the sins of Samaria, the ancient capital of Israel.

19 *fier:* a gap in the manuscript perhaps indicates the scribe’s recognition of a missing line.

20 *Sion:* Zion, the hill in Jerusalem which became the centre of Jewish life and worship; here, continues the poem’s alignment of Israel and England.
21 *pas:* probably read “pass.”

22 *salem:* another name for Jerusalem.

23 *phoebus:* the god of the sun, or the sun personified; here used as an image of the King.
King James I met George Villiers, the younger son of a minor Leicestershire gentleman, during the royal summer progress of 1614. The King was quickly entranced and, by the end of the year, the court newsmongers had acknowledged Villiers as one of the King’s new favourites. Villiers’s rise at court was orchestrated in part by a loose coalition of courtiers resentful at the personal and political dominance of James’s chief favourite Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset. By the end of 1614, Villiers had received court office as a “cupbearer” to the King—a position without formal power but with tremendous potential for the wielding of informal power through guaranteed access to the royal person. In April 1615, Villiers was knighted and created a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, one of the most critical court offices for controlling access to and patronage from the King. Through the spring and summer of 1615, Somerset and his supporters struggled fiercely to shore up their influence with the King against Villiers and his backers. But when Somerset was implicated in the Overbury murder in the autumn of 1615 (see Section H), Villiers’s triumph as favourite seemed assured.

George Villiers would remain, until his murder in 1628, the preeminently powerful courtier of the age, exercising increasing and unparralled formal and informal political influence. One measure of his power can be seen in his rapid accumulation of titles, honours and offices. In January 1616, he became Master of the Horse; in April 1616, a Knight of the Garter, and in August 1616, Viscount Villiers and Baron Whaddon. In January 1617, Villiers was created Earl of Buckingham, and the following month he was formally admitted to the King’s Privy Council. In January 1618, he was elevated again, this time to Marquess of Buckingham, and a year later he replaced Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, as Lord Admiral. In May 1620, he concluded a spectacular marriage with Katherine Manners, daughter of the Earl of Rutland, and, finally, in May 1623 he was elevated to the highest ranks of the English peerage as Duke of Buckingham.

Yet this dizzying accumulation of title and office tells only a fraction of the story. The years from 1616 to 1628 were the Buckingham era: no area of royal policy, domestic or foreign, was untouched by his influence; court politics and court patronage were firmly, if never
uncontestedly, under his control; and, most remarkably, he established and maintained strong emotional bonds and close working relationships not only with James I, but also with James’s son and heir Charles, allowing Buckingham to become favourite to not one but two English kings. Unsurprisingly, Buckingham also became a centre of political controversy, both at court and in parliament. The favourite was a subject of widespread popular debate, fascination and speculation, acquiring over the years a distorted but potent reputation as a cynosure of corruption and vice. This reputation was created in and shaped by the news media of the day, and especially by the escalating numbers of verse libels that, by the mid- and later-1620s, increasingly came to focus on the favourite’s sins as an explanation for the troubles of the age.

This section collects a series of verses written c.1617-1623 that focus on two of the most troubling aspects of the Buckingham ascendancy: his personal relationship with King James I, the very foundation of his power; and the rewards reaped by his extended family as a result of his relationship with the King. Historians continue to debate the exact nature of James I’s emotional ties to his favourites, agreeing on little else beside the evident fact of his intense love for, and passionate relationships with, both Buckingham and his predecessor Somerset. While Buckingham’s most learned recent biographer has little doubt that the relationship between King and favourite was sexually consummated (Lockyer 22), other scholars remain unconvinced. The libel evidence does not allow us to resolve these knotty and crucial biographical problems, but it does allow us to track contemporary perceptions of the relationship between King and favourite, and to attempt to gauge the political significance of the anxieties that the relationship raised. This section includes the most widely-circulated royal statement on Buckingham’s worth—three distinct English translations of James I’s Latin poem celebrating (and defending) Buckingham’s appointment as Lord Admiral—and the two verses that most explicitly alleged a homosexual relationship between the King and his “Ganymede” favourite. Both “Ganymede” poems date from the early 1620s, a period in which anxiety and speculation about the possibly sexual relationship between James and Buckingham may have become widespread for the first time. (A verse rebutting these and other libels—"Withold thy fiery steeds great God of light"—is included in Section N.) In addition to these two poems, we include a related poem adapted from the same source as one of the “Ganymede” verses, a
widely-circulated, somewhat cryptic, epigram on the hunter King’s love for “Buck-in-game”, and a song that focuses less on James’s immoral relationship with his favourite, than on his morally questionable relationships with some of the young men surrounding Buckingham at his court.

The remaining two poems in this section focus on the second troubling aspect of the Buckingham ascendancy: the largesse, in titles, offices, advantageous marriages, lands and gifts, doled out to Buckingham’s kindred by a besotted monarch.
Notes. John Chamberlain, our only source for this verse, included a transcription in his 8 February 1617 newsletter to Sir Dudley Carleton. Having noted Buckingham’s recent appointment as a Privy Councillor, and the talk that, “His brother Christofer is come to be of the bed-chamber”, Chamberlain commented that, “I cannot but commend that Lords goode disposition in dooing goode to his kindred and frends: though some riming companions do not forbeare to taxe him for it, as one by way of a prognostication sayes” (2.52).

Above in the skies shall Gemini rise,
And Twins the court shall pester,
George shall call up his brother Jacke
And Jacke his brother Kester.

Source. Chamberlain 2.52

1 Gemini: the constellation of the twins, Castor and Pollux.
2 George: George Villiers, Earl of Buckingham, royal favourite.
3 Jacke: John Villiers, Buckingham’s older brother, later elevated as Viscount Purbeck, was appointed a Groom of the Bedchamber and Master of the Robes to Prince Charles in 1616.
4 Kester: presumably an abbreviated version of Christopher Villiers’s name. Christopher—often referred to as Kit—Villiers was Buckingham’s younger brother, and was later created Earl of Anglesey. His appointment to a Bedchamber office, reported in Chamberlain’s letter, was perhaps the occasion for the libel.
Notes. This poem is one of three circulating translations of James I’s Latin verse on Buckingham’s appointment as Lord Admiral, “Buckinghamus (Io) maris est praefectus et idem” (James VI and I 2.176). Buckingham was originally appointed in October 1618, as a partner to the current Lord Admiral, Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, but assumed sole responsibility as Lord Admiral in January 1619. As the poem notes, Buckingham already held the position of Master of the Horse, to which he had been appointed in 1616. In manuscript sources the poem is occasionally transcribed in both Latin and English versions, and is occasionally (but not always) attributed to James. The other translations are “O Joyfull newse for Buckingham is nowe” and “Io to Buckingham great Admiral”.

Now let us rejoyce sing Peans all
For Buckingham is now made Admirall
And he that rules the horse our strength by land
Our strength by sea the Navy doth command:
Soe in the heavenly Courte that selfe same God
   Neptune I meane that with his three tooth’d Rod
Brought forth the horse doth with the same appease
   The raging fury of the boysterous seas
Why then should any grudge that favour graces
   The merritt of one person with two places
Since it is soe amongst the states of heaven
   Where none dare doubt but things are carried even.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 37v

Other known sources. James VI and I 2.176; BL MS Harley 791, fol. 49r; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 74v; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 18v; BL MS Harley 7316, fol. 6v; John Rylands MS Eng. 410, fol. 27v; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 10
1 *Pean*ː paeans; songs of praise (originally hymns to Apollo, “Io paean”).

2 *he that rules the horse*: referring to Buckingham’s office as Master of the Horse.

3 *Neptune*: god of the sea.

4 *three tooth’d Rod*: Neptune’s three-pointed spear or trident.

5 *Brought forth the horse*: in myth, Neptune was the creator of the first horse.

6 *with the same appease...boysterous seas*: Neptune calmed the sea as his horses pulled his chariot across the waves.
L3  O Joyfull newse for Buckingham is nowe

Notes. This poem is one of three scribally-circulating translations of James I’s Latin Poem on Buckingham’s 1618-19 appointment as Lord Admiral, “Buckinghamus (Io) maris est praefectus et idem” (James VI and I 2.176). In the chosen source, the heading appears to have been cropped; however, a date, “December 1618”, survives. Like the other two translations—“Now let us rejoyce sing Peans all” and “Io to Buckingham great Admiral”—this verse alludes to the fact that Buckingham was already Master of the Horse (appointed 1616) at the time he was created Lord Admiral.

O Joyfull newse for Buckingham is nowe
both maister of the horse and frothie mayne
soe Neptune¹ is to whome the Trytons² blowe
both master of the horse, & wavie plaine³
to Jove⁴ the great thus earthly Kinges you see
in goverment Joves mutators⁵ bee.

Noe sure this dubble office is but one
for as at spurres the horse doth rune apace
soe hoyse the seales⁶ the shippe is quicklye gonn
& ferret lyke performes a spedie race
& as the Ryder by his awfull bitte⁷
commands the coursers⁸ motions at his will
soe doth the stereman at the Rudder sitte
& guide the shipp by Mathematicke skill
A horse is but a shipp on solyddf grounde
& beares his maister where he list him guide
A shippe is but a horse on seas profondue
her maister beringe where he makes her slyde
and though that this a duble office bee
the Owners harte & tounge in one agree.
Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 18r

Other known sources. BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 2r

L3

1 *Neptune*: god of the sea.

2 *Trytons*: mythic sea creatures whose trumpets calm the sea.

3 *both master...wavie plaine*: Neptune was both god of the sea and god of horses—he was held to have created the first horse, for instance.

4 *Jove*: king of the gods.

5 *mutators*: probable scribal error; read “imitators”.

6 *hoyse the seales*: i.e. hoist the sails.

7 *bitte*: bit; “mouthpiece of a horse’s bridle” (*OED*).

8 *coursers*: horse’s.
**L4 Io to Buckingham great Admiral**

*Notes.* This poem is another of the three circulating translations of James I’s Latin poem on Buckingham’s appointment in 1618-19 as Admiral of the Fleet, “Buckinghamus (Io) maris est praefectus et idem” (James VI and I 2.176). (The other two are “Now let us rejoyce sing Peans all” and “O Joyfull newse for Buckingham is nowe”.) As the poem notes, Buckingham already held the position of Master of the Horse, to which he had been appointed in 1616. Whereas the translation “Now let us rejoyce sing Peans all” is attributed in more than one source to James, it is perhaps more likely that this version is the work of another, unknown translator. The version in Bodleian MS Douce f.5 omits the final couplet, but is otherwise essentially the same.

Io¹ to Buckingham great Admiral,
Io to Buckingham the man
That rules the horse, now rules the ocean.
Nor is it fitt, but hee that rules the deepes
 Should rayne and checke the foaminge steedes he keeps.²
   Nor let this doubled power cloud any browe
   Since the hie powers this president³ allowe.

**Source.** “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 84

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 36v

1 *Io:* an exclamation of praise or thanksgiving, used in James I’s Latin original.

2 *hee that rules...steedes he keeps:* i.e. like the sea god Neptune, who ruled the sea and a team of horses.

3 *president:* precedent.
L5 Listen jolly gentlemen

Notes. We cannot yet establish an exact composition date for this song about King James I and his merry men. Anthony Weldon (84-85), writing in the 1640s, dates the beginning of the King’s fondness for court fooleries performed by some of the men mentioned in this libel—Finet, Zouche, Goring and Milliscent—to the period of Villiers’s first ascent at court (early 1615). Other details in the libel—particularly allusions to masquing—and the continued presence of these men both as participants in court entertainments and as members of the Buckingham circle, suggest a plausible composition date of some time around 1619 or 1620. Knowles (“To ‘scourge the arse’” 82-83) comments tellingly both on the poem’s depiction of the “court masque as a homosocial if not homoerotic form”, and on the possibility that the musical performance of the song might possibly “undermine the satiric potency”. See, too, McRae (Literature 45-46) and P. Hammond (140).

Listen jolly gentlemen
Listen and be merrie
A word, or two faine would I speake
To the praise of old king harry
But hee would sware, and he would stare
And lay hand on his dagger
And would swive while hee was a live
From the Queene unto the begger
Then lett him alone he’s dead and gone
And wee have in his place
Our noble king of him letts sing
God save King James his grace
With hey derrie downe downe &c

King James hath meat, king James hath men
King James loves to be merry
King James too is angrie nowe and then
But it makes him quickly wearie
hee dwells at Court where hee hath good sport
Att Christmas hee hath danceing
In the summer tyde abrode will hee ryde
With a guard about him pranceing
    With a hey downe downe &c.

Att Royston and newmarkett hele hunt till he be leane
But hee hath merry boys that with masks, and toyes
Can make him fatt againe
Nedd Zouch, Harrie Riche, Tom Badger
George Goring, and Jacke Finett
Will dance a heate till they stincke of sweat
As if the devill were in it.
    With a hey downe &c.

But Jacke Maynard Jacke Milliscent
Two Joviall boyes of the Rout
For a maske or play beare the bell away
If Jacke Millisent be not out
Alas poore Jacke money didst thou lacke
When thou wert out at Saxum
Thou wer’t wont to have boldnes
A pox on thy coldnes
Was cause that thou did’st lacke some
    With a hey downe downe &c

There are Lords too cann daintely doe
But they must have a wench by the hand
And then they will too’t, and lustily foot
As long as they cann stand
’Tis a lovely grace to dance with a lasse
When a man may kisse, and court
But to dance with A man like a puritan
Tis a drie and ugly sport
   With a hey downe downe &c.

And nowe that you\textsuperscript{17} who the madd boyes bee
That make King James soe merry
Why keeps his grace such a foole, or an asse
As Archie or Tom Derrie\textsuperscript{18}
But fooles are things for the pastime of kings
Fooles still must be about them
Soe must Knaves too, where ever the goe
They seldom goe without them
   With a hey downe downe &c.

Of the graver sort, I will make noe report
Theire Noses abide noe Jeast
With poore officers too, Ile have nothing to doe
Onely one among the rest
’Tis the brave Knight Marshall,\textsuperscript{19} hee is not partiall
In the place bestowed on him
For your whores and your knaves
And your merry drunken slaves
Cry a plague, and a pox upon him
   With a hey downe downe &c.

Before I have done, of the kings brave sonne\textsuperscript{20}
I should sett forth the praise
England never had a more likelyer ladd
To prolonge our happie daies.
But I made this songe
And it must not be longe
For good king James his sake
God blesse King James his kingdome, and Realme
And soe an end Ile make
With a hey downe downe &c.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 19-22

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 87; BL Add. MS 29879, fol. 26r

1 old king harry: King Henry VIII.

2 swive: have sex.

3 With hey derrie downe down: by the eighteenth century at least, this refrain was in common ballad usage. Simpson (172-76) prints and discusses the late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century tune “Derry Down” that probably accompanied ballads with this refrain.

4 Att Christmes...danceing: alluding to the dancing and masquing held at court during the Christmas season.

5 summer tyde...hee ryde: James and the court would usually progress out of London during the hotter summer months.

6 Royston and newmarkett: James had hunting lodges at Royston and Newmarket.

7 Nedd Zouch: Sir Edward Zouche, Knight Marshall. Weldon (84-85) alleges that Zouche used “to sing bawdy songs, and tell bawdy tales” to the King. Chamberlain (2.129) reports that Zouche performed in a play for James at Theobalds in January 1618.

8 Harrie Riche: Sir Henry Rich, Viscount Kensington and later Earl of Holland, appointed Captain of the Guard in 1617. Chamberlain has reports of Rich’s masquing activities from February 1617 and January 1620 (2.56, 2.282).

9 Tom Badger: Sir Thomas Badger. Chamberlain has reports of his masquing and other court theatrical performances in February 1617, January 1618, and January 1620 (2.56, 2.129, 2.282).

10 George Goring: Sir George Goring, client of the favourite Buckingham. Chamberlain has reports of his masquing and other court theatrical performances in February 1617, January 1618, and January 1620 (2.56, 2.29, 2.282). Weldon (84-85) lists Goring with Zouche and Finet as one of the “chiefe and Master Fools” at James’s court; he was the “master of the game for Fooleries” who staged mock piggy-back
tilts and “antick dances” for the King’s delectation.

11 *Jacke Finett*: Sir John Finet, assistant Master of Ceremonies at James I’s court. Weldon (84-85) asserts that Finet, one of James’s “chiefe and Master Fools”, composed the “bawdy songs” that Edward Zouche would sing to the king. Chamberlain (2.131) reports in January 1618 that Finet had spoiled an interlude at James’s palace at Theobalds by singing “a certain song...of such scurrilous and base stuffe that it put the King out of his goode humor, and all the rest that heard it”.

12 *Jacke Maynard*: John Maynard, who was noted for his dancing in the Twelfth Night masque for January 1619, performed in a masque for the French ambassador a year later, and actually composed at least two masques in 1623-24 (Chamberlain 2.200, 2.282, 2.527, 2.577). Chamberlain thought him “a very proper man but that he is extreme poreblind” (2.200).

13 *Jacke Milliscent*: Sir John Milliscent. In his bitter assessment of James I’s taste for fooleries and the men who satisfied it, Anthony Weldon noted that “Sir John Milliscent (who was never known before) was commended for notable fooling, and so was he indeed the best extemporary foole of them all” (85).

14 *beare the bell away*: to be the best. Chamberlain’s report on the 1619 Twelfth Night masque noted that John Maynard “beares away the bell for dauncing” (2.200).

15 *Saxum*: probably an allusion to Sir John Crofts’ house at Saxham Parva, close to James’s hunting retreat at Newmarket, and a site of frequent court visits (see, e.g., Chamberlain 2.288, 2.417, 2.424).

16 *puritan*: term for the “hotter sort of Protestant”, here used in its original pejorative sense.

17 *you*: “you see” is a better reading.

18 *Archie or Tom Derrie*: Archie Armstrong was a well-known court jester or fool; Tom Derry was presumably another “professional” fool.


20 *kings brave sonne*: Prince Charles.
L6 The Kinge loves you, you him

Notes. This undated epigram exists in a number of different forms, each of which varies in satiric force. While one compiler, in fact, appears to have read the poem as panegyric, and attributed it to Buckingham’s client Richard Corbett (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e. 97), another version focuses the hints of sodomy in the “buck-in-game” pun by proclaiming at the end of the poem that the king loves the favourite “Solely, for your looke” (Bodleian MS Ashmole 47). McRae (Literature 170-71) discusses the Corbett attribution and the variant readings of the poem, while P. Hammond (148) analyzes the poem in the context of other allegations concerning James and Buckingham’s homosexual relationship, noting contemporary usage of hunt imagery as sexual metaphor.

“To Buckinghame”

The Kinge loves you, you him
    Both love the same
You love the kinge, hee you
    Both buck-in-game.
In game the king loves sport
    Of sports the buck
But off all men why you,
    Why see the luck.

Source. Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 35v

Other known sources. Wit Restor’d 58; Bodleian MS Ashmole 47, fol. 53r; Bodleian MS CCC 328, fol. 47v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 92; Bodleian MS Hearne’s Diaries 66, p. 164; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 37; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 7v; NLW MS 5390D, p. 162; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 35v; Folger MS V.a.170, p. 248; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 194; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 246
L7 Arme, arme, in heaven there is a faction

**Notes.** This poem depicts the moral and political disorder that plagues the court of Jove, king of the gods, as a result of the King’s sexual infatuation with the Trojan boy Ganymede. According to the Greco-Roman myth, Jove, obsessed with the boy’s beauty, had assumed the form of an eagle and stolen Ganymede up to Olympus where he made the boy his cupbearer. The poem’s reimagining of the myth is in fact a coded depiction of the consequences of James I’s rumoured homosexual relationship with his youthful favourite Buckingham, who had held his first court office as royal cupbearer. Neither internal evidence nor copyists’ annotations allow us to date the poem with absolute precision, but c.1619-1622 is probably about right. The sexual and court politics of the poem have been discussed by a number of critics and historians: B. Smith (202-03), Perry (1075-77), Knowles (“To ‘scourge the arse’” 85-86), P. Hammond (143-46), and Bellany (Politics 255-57). One copy of the poem (Rosenbach MS 239/27) describes it as a “song”, but there is no evidence either of an assigned tune or of actual musical performance.

“The Warres of the Gods”

Arme, arme, in heaven there is a faction
  And the Demy-Gods
Now are bent for Action;
  They are at Odds
With him that rules the Thunder
  And will destroy
His white fac’t Boy
Or rend the heavens asunder.

Great Jove that swaies the emperiall Scepter
  With’s upstart Love
That makes him drunke with Nectar
  They will remove;
Harke how the Cyclops labour,
  See Vulcan sweates
That gives the heates
And forges Mars his Armour.

Marke how the glorious starry Border
That the heavens hath worn,
Till of late in Order
See how they turne
Each Planets course doth alter,
The sun and moone
Are out of Tune
The spheres begin to faulter.

See how each petty starre stands gazing
And would fayne provoke
By theyr often blazinge
Flame to this smoke:
The dogge starre burnes with ire,
And Charles his Wayne
Would wondrous fayne
Bringe fuell to this fire.

Loves Queene stood disaffected
To what shee had seene
Or to what suspected
As shee in spleene
To Juno hath protested
Her servant Mars
Should scourge the Arse,
Jove’s marrow so had wasted.

The chast Diana by her Quiver
And ten thousand maydes
Have sworn, that they will never
Sporte in the shades,
Untill the heavens Creator
Be quite displac’t
Or else disgrac’t
For loyinge so ’gainst nature.

The fayre Proserpine\textsuperscript{15} next whurryes
In fiery Coach
Drawne by twelve blacke furies;
As they approach
They threaten without mercy
To have him burn’d
That thus hath turn’d
Love’s pleasures Arse Verse.\textsuperscript{16}

Slow pac’d Diana\textsuperscript{17} he doth follow
Hermes\textsuperscript{18} will make one
So will bright Apollo,\textsuperscript{19}
Thetis\textsuperscript{20} hath wonne
Rough Neptune\textsuperscript{21} to this action
Æolus\textsuperscript{22} huffes,
And Boreas\textsuperscript{23} puffs
To see the Fates\textsuperscript{24} protraction.

Still Jove with Ganymed lyes playinge,
Here’s no Tritans\textsuperscript{25} sound
Nor yet horses neighinge
His Eares are bound,
The fidlinge God\textsuperscript{26} doth lull him
Bacchus\textsuperscript{27} quaffes
And Momus\textsuperscript{28} laughs
To see how they can gull him
L7

1 *him that rules the Thunder*: i.e. Jove, king of the gods; and, by implication, James I.

2 *white fac’t Boy*: Ganymede; and, by implication, Buckingham. The adjective “white-fac’t” may imply the use of cosmetics.

3 *upstart*: alluding to Buckingham’s relatively low social status.

4 *Nectar*: P. Hammond (144) glosses nectar as semen.

5 *Cyclops*: assistants in Vulcan’s workshop.

6 *Vulcan*: god of fire whose workshop forges metal.

7 *Mars*: god of war.

8 *Charles his Wayne*: a cart-shaped group of seven stars in the Great Bear constellation. “Charles”, the name of James I’s son, might have provoked certain political readings for contemporaries.

9 *Loves Queene*: Venus, goddess of love.

10 *in spleene*: in anger.

11 *Juno*: queen of the gods.

12 *scourge the Arse*: the poem here makes explicit its allegation of sodomy between King and favourite.

13 *marrow*: P. Hammond (145) glosses “marrow” as either semen or general sexual capacity. Marrow can also have the sense of vitality and bodily strength.

14 *Diana*: chaste goddess of the hunt, armed with bow and arrows.

15 *Proserpine*: Proserpina, queen of Hades.
16 *Arse Verse:* upside down.

17 *Diana:* a variant, “Saturne”, is perhaps a better reading (“Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript”).

18 *Hermes:* Roman Mercury, messenger of the gods.

19 *Apollo:* god of the sun.

20 *Thetis:* a sea goddess.

21 *Neptune:* god of the sea.

22 *Æolus:* ruler of the winds.

23 *Boreas:* the North Wind.

24 *Fates:* the three Fates, who were believed to enforce the fate of both men and gods.

25 *Tritans:* mythic sea creatures whose trumpets calmed the waves. It might be possible to read this and the following line in the context of early 1620s’ anxieties that James I was neglecting naval and military readiness.

26 *The fidlinge God:* unclear; both Hermes and Apollo were associated with the lyre, but seem unlikely candidates given their roles earlier in the poem.

27 *Bacchus:* god of wine.

28 *Momus:* god of mockery.
Notes. This widely read, politically daring poem is an adaptation of the song “From a gypsy in the morning” performed towards the end of Ben Jonson’s masque The Gypsies Metamorphosed (Jonson 367-69). Jonson’s masque was first staged in the summer of 1621, and the libel was thus composed some time between then and, at the very latest, the early summer of 1623, when John Rous secured a copy having heared talk of the poem beforehand (BL Add. MS 28640). The authorship of this poem is uncertain. Various critics have attributed it to Alexander Gill, Ben Jonson himself, and William Drummond (to whom the verse is attributed in one source (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50)). Although there seems good cause to take Drummond’s candidacy very seriously, critical opinion is generally against it. The poem’s skilled and potent articulation of contemporary anxieties—about the possible homosexual relationship between James I and Buckingham; about the infiltration of the court by the dark forces of “popery” and Hispanophilia during a time of heightened concern about royal foreign policy towards Spain; and about the prevalence of fiscal and judicial corruption and general monarchical neglect—has attracted a significant body of critical and historical analysis. Important readings of the poem can be found in, P. Hammond (141-43); Bellany (Politics 258-260; and McRae (Literature 75-82).

“The Five Senses”

1. Seeinge

From such a face whose Excellence
May Captivate my Soveraignes sence
And make him Phæbus like his throne
Resigne to him younge Phaëton
Whose skillesse and unsteaddie hand
May prove the ruine of a land
Unlesse great Jove downe from the skye
Beholding Earthes Calamitie
Strike with his hand that cannot err
The proud Usurping Charioter
And cure though Phæbus greive our woe
From such a face that cann worke soe
Wheresoere thou hast a being
Blesse my Soveraigne, and his seeing.

2. Heareinge

From Jeasts prophane, from flattering tongues
From bawdy tales from beastly soungs
From after supper suits that feare
A Parliament or Councells eare
From Spanish treaties$^3$ that may wound
Our Countries peace the gospell sound$^4$
From Jobs false frends$^5$ that would entice
My Soveraigne from Heavens paradise
From Prophetts such as Ahabs weere$^6$
Whose flatterings sooth my soveraignes eare
His frownes more then his makers fearing
Blesse my soveraigne, and his heareing.

3. Tastinge

From all fruite that is forbidden
Such for which old Eve$^7$ was chidden
From bread of Laborers sweat, and toyle
From the widdowes meale, and oyle
From the Canded$^8$ poysong’d baites
Of Jesuites$^9$ and their deceipts
Italian Salletts,$^{10}$ Romish druggs
The milke of Babells proud whore$^{11}$ duggs
From wyne that can destroye the braine
And from the daingerous figg of Spaine$^{12}$
Att all banquetts, and all feasting
Blesse my Soveraigne, and his tasting.
4. Feelinge
From prick of Conscience such a sting
As staines the Soule, heavens blesse my King
From such a tribe\textsuperscript{13} as may with drawe
His thoughts from equitie, and lawe
From such a smooth, and beardlesse Chinn
As may provoke, or tempt to sinn
From such a hand whose moyst palme may
My soveraigne lead out of the way
From things polluted, and uncleane
From all thats beastly, and obsceane
From what may sett his Soule a reeling
Blesse my Soveraigne, and his feeling.

5. Smellinge
Where Mirrhe, and frankinsence is throwne
The altars built to Gods unknowne\textsuperscript{14}
Oh lett my Soveraigne never smell
Such damn’d perfumes are fitt for hell
Let noe such scent his nostrills staine
From smells that poyson may the braine
Heavens still preserve him, Next I crave
Thou wilt be pleas’d great God to save
My Soveraigne from a Ganimede\textsuperscript{15}
Whose whoreish breath hath power to lead
His excellence which way it list
O lett such lipps be never kist
From a breath soe farr excelling
Blesse my Soveraigne and his smelling.
On all the Sences

And just God I humblie pray
That thou wilt take the Filme away
That keepes my Soveraignes eyes from vieweing
The things that wilbe our undoeing
Then lett him Heare good God the sounds
Aswell of Men, as of his hounds
Give him a Taste and tymely too
Of what his Subjects undergoe
Give him a Feelinge of there woes
And noe doubt his royall nose
Will quickly Smell those rascalls forth
Whose blacke deeds have ecclips’t his worth.
These found, and scourg’d for their offences
Heavens blesse my Soveraigne, and his sences.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 28-31

Other known sources. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 136; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 25r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.37, p. 72; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 72r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 23v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 14v; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 97r; BL Add. MS 22640, fol. 105r;BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 99r; BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 133r; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 30r; BL MS Harley 367, fol. 153r; BL MS Stowe 962, fol. 144v; Brotherton MS Lt. q. 44, fol. 1r; NLS MS Advocates 19.3.8, fol. 47r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 197; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 31r; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 175;Folger MS V.a.276, part 2, fol. 40v; Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 25v; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 59; Folger MS X.d.235; Houghton MS Eng. 686, fol. 59v; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.30; Morgan MS MA 1057, p. 80; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 58; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 85

Phæbus like...younge Phaëton: when Phoebus (Apollo), god of the sun, allowed his son Phaeton to drive the chariot of the sun for a day, the inexperienced Phaeton drove the chariot towards the earth before being struck dead by Jove. The myth was used commonly to articulate fears of the consequences
of King James placing power in the hands of youthful favourites.

2 And cure...our woe: “And cure (though Phœbus greive) our woe” is a better reading.

3 Spanish treaties: alluding, in particular, to the ongoing negotiations for a marriage alliance between England and Spain (see Section N).

4 the gospell sound: the sound of preaching; i.e. Protestantism.

5 Jobs false frends: Job’s three friends Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, who, in the biblical Book of Job, fail to comprehend the reasons for Job’s misfortunes.

6 Prophetts...Ahabs weere: Ahab, the idolatrous King of Israel, took counsel from false prophets who promised him success in a campaign to take Ramoth-Gilead, while ignoring the warnings of the true prophet Micaiah (see 1 Kings 22; 2 Chronicles 18).

7 Eve: who tasted of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden.

8 Canded: candied.

9 Jesuites: the militant Roman Catholic order of the Society of Jesus, widely feared in Protestant circles as the agents of Counter Reformation.

10 Italian Salletts: Italian salads; here meaning popish “poisons”. Italy was widely associated with poisoning in this period.

11 Babells proud whore: the whore of Babylon, widely identified in Protestant polemic with the papacy.

12 figg of Spaine: literally, a fig grown in Spain; here implying both Catholic and Spanish poison, and Catholic and Spanish influence.

13 tribe: “bribe” is a better reading.

14 altars...Gods unnowne: altars built to false gods; here implying Catholicism.

15 Ganimede: the Trojan boy loved by Jove, king of the gods, and a common term in this period for a sodomite.
On all the Sences

And just God I humblie pray
That thou wilt take the Filme away
That keepes my Soveraignes eyes from vieweing
The things that wilbe our undoeing
Then lett him Heare good God the sounds
Aswell of Men, as of his hounds
Give him a Taste and tymely too
Of what his Subjects undergoe
Give him a Feelinge of there woes
And noe doubt his royall nose
Will quickly Smell those rascalls forth
Whose blacke deeds have ecclips’t his worth.
These found, and scourg’d for their offences
Heavens blesse my Soveraigne, and his sences.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 28-31

Other known sources. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 136; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 25r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.37, p. 72; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 72r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 23v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 14v; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 97r; BL Add. MS 22640, fol. 105r;BL Add. MS 23229, fol. 99r; BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 133r; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 30r; BL MS Harley 367, fol. 153r; BL MS Stowe 962, fol. 144v; Brotherton MS Lt. q. 44, fol. 1r; NLS MS Advocates 19.3.8, fol. 47r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 197; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 31r; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 175;Folger MS V.a.276, part 2, fol. 40v; Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 25v; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 59;Folger MS X.d.235; Houghton MS Eng. 686, fol. 59v; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.30; Morgan MS MA 1057, p. 80; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 58; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 85

L8

1 Phæbus like...younge Phaëton: when Phoebus (Apollo), god of the sun, allowed his son Phaeton to drive the chariot of the sun for a day, the inexperienced Phaeton drove the chariot towards the earth before being struck dead by Jove. The myth was used commonly to articulate fears of the consequences
of King James placing power in the hands of youthful favourites.

2  *And cure...our woe*: “And cure (though Phœbus greive) our woe” is a better reading.

3  *Spanish treaties*: alluding, in particular, to the ongoing negotiations for a marriage alliance between England and Spain (see Section N).

4  *the gospell sound*: the sound of preaching; i.e. Protestantism.

5  *Jobs false frends*: Job’s three friends Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, who, in the biblical Book of Job, fail to comprehend the reasons for Job’s misfortunes.

6  *Prophetts...Ahabs weere*: Ahab, the idolatrous King of Israel, took counsel from false prophets who promised him success in a campaign to take Ramoth-Gilead, while ignoring the warnings of the true prophet Micaiah (see 1 Kings 22; 2 Chronicles 18).

7  *Eve*: who tasted of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden.

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10  *Italian Salletts*: Italian salads; here meaning popish “poisons”. Italy was widely associated with poisoning in this period.

11  *Babells proud whore*: the whore of Babylon, widely identified in Protestant polemic with the papacy.

12  *figg of Spaine*: literally, a fig grown in Spain; here implying both Catholic and Spanish poison, and Catholic and Spanish influence.

13  *tribe*: “bribe” is a better reading.

14  *altars...Gods unknowne*: altars built to false gods; here implying Catholicism.

15  *Ganimede*: the Trojan boy loved by Jove, king of the gods, and a common term in this period for a sodomite.
I.9 From a Gipsie in the morneing

Notes. In the only known source of this poem, it is attributed to “B. Johnson”. While it is heavily based on a song in Jonson’s masque, The Gypsis Metamorphosed (Jonson 367-69), the poem translates Jonson’s prayer for the wellbeing of “our sovereign” into a prayer for “great Buckingham”. The poem’s tone is inscrutable: it may be read as a sincere panegyric on Buckingham, or it may instead be taken as an ironic comment on the increasingly monarchical status assumed by the Duke (who had sponsored Jonson’s masque). The scribe’s appreciation of satire is evident throughout the manuscript in which this piece is found. Notably, a few pages after this poem there is a copy of the more popular appropriation of Jonson’s song, “From such a face whose Excellence”.

From a Gipsie in the morneing
or a paire of Squirt\(^1\) eyes turneing
From the goblyn & the Specter
From a drunckard though with Nectar
From a rampant smocke that itches
To bee puting on the breeches
Wheresoe’re they have a beinge
Blesse great Buckingham & his seeing

From ymproper serious toyes
From a Lawyers three part noies
From ympertinence lyke a drumme
Beate att dynner in the roome
From a tonge without a Fyle
All of phrases and noe style
From a Fiddle out of tune
As a Cuckoe is in June
From the Candlesticks of Loathburie\(^2\)
or the lewd pure wines\(^3\) of banbury\(^4\)
Both the tymes & yeares out weareing
Blesse great Buckingham his heareing

From brydlime tarre & from all pitch [m. note: “Feeling”]
From dyrtie doxes & theire ytch
From the bristles of a hogge
From the Ringworme of a dogge
From the Court-shippe of a bryer
From St Anthonies old fyre
From a nedle pin or thorne
From bad even or bad morne
If hee bee druncke & a reelinge
Blesse great Buckingham his feeleing

From a lousie tynkers sheete [m. note: “Smelling”]
From stinking toes of Carriers Feete
From a lady that doth breath
worse above then underneath
From the dyet & the knowledge
of the Studients in beares Colledge
From Tobacco with the type
of the devills glister pipe
Or a stinke or stinkes excelling
A Fishmonger and his dwelling
Blesse great Buckingham & his smelling

From gapeing oysters & fryed fishe [m. note: “Tasteing”]
From a Sowes baby in a dish
From any portion of Swine
From bad venison, & worse wine
From Ling what Cooke soe ere yt boyle
Or what else may keepe man fasteing
Blesse great Buckingham his tasteing
A recapitulacion
Blesse him to from all offences
in his sporte & in his sences
From a hare to crosse his waye
From a fall, or fowle day
Blesse him heaven, and grant him longe
To be the burthen of my songe

Source. St. John’s MS S.32, fols. 27v-28v

1 Squirt: probable scribal error; read “squint”.
2 Loathburie: Lothbury; area of London associated with iron foundries.
3 wines: probable scribal error; read “wives”.
4 banbury: town in Oxfordshire known for Puritanism.
5 St Anthonies old fyre: St. Anthony’s Fire is a term for erysipelas, a disease with symptoms including skin inflammation.
6 the Studients...Colledge: i.e. the bears in the bear-garden.
7 glister pipe: a tube for the delivery of an enema (“glister”).
8 Ling: a kind of fish.
L10 Heaven blesse King James our joy

Notes. In the chosen source, this scabrous poetic assault on the favourite and his much-rewarded kindred is dated 1623. Knowles ("To 'scourge the arse'" 77-78) analyzes the poem’s use of images of sodomy to “figure the profligate acquisition of rich matches and office”, while Cogswell (Blessed Revolution 47-48) contextualizes the poem’s bitter attack on Buckingham’s kin as evidence of the hatred the favourite’s pro-Spanish policies had aroused. This particular copy of the poem includes marginal notes identifying some, but not all, of the personages targeted by the libeller.

Heaven blesse King James our joy,
   And charles his baby.                [m.note: “The prince”]
Great George our brave viceroy
   And his fayre Lady.¹
Old Bedlame buckingame,²
   With her Lord Keeper.³           [m.note: “George his mother”]
Shee loves the fucking game
   Hee’s her cunt creeper.
      Thees bee they goe so gay,
         In court and citty,
         Yett no man cares for them,
         Is not this pitty.

Thee fayre young Marchionesse,⁴
   And Lady Feildinge,⁵
Kate for her worth heavens blesse
   Su:⁶ for her yeildinge.
Ned Villers hath a wife⁷
   And shee’s a good one,
Buttlér⁸ leads an ill life,
   Yett’s of the blood one
      Theese be they, goe so gay

¹ Heaven blesse King James our joy
² Great George our brave viceroy
³ And his fayre Lady.
⁴ Old Bedlame buckingame
⁵ With her Lord Keeper.
⁶ Thee fayre young Marchionesse,
⁷ And Lady Feildinge,
⁸ Kate for her worth heavens blesse
⁹ Ned Villers hath a wife
¹⁰ Buttlér leads an ill life,
In court & citty,
And find grace in each place,
Or else t’were pitty.

Cranefeild\textsuperscript{9} I make a vow;
Not to bee partiall,
Nan\textsuperscript{10} was us’d you know how,
By the earle Marshall,\textsuperscript{11} Thy horne of honour\textsuperscript{12} foole
Hee hath exalted
Tell no tales out of scoole
Least thou bee palted,\textsuperscript{13}
These bee they, goe so gay
And keepe the mony,
Which hee can better keepe
Then his wifes cunny.

Old Abbott Anthony \textsuperscript{[m.note: “Sir Anthony Ashley”]}
I thinke hath well done,
Since hee left sodomy,
To marry Sheldon.\textsuperscript{14}
Shee hath a buttocke plumpe,
Keepe but thy tarse\textsuperscript{15} whole,
And shee’le hold up her rumpe,
With her black arse hole.
These bee they, goe so gay,
In court & citty,
Yett the next spring, they must singe,
Thee Cookeoes ditty.\textsuperscript{16}

And Vicecount Feildinge\textsuperscript{17} too \textsuperscript{[m.note: “Sir Wllm Feildinge”]}
Is a good fellowe
But indeed Tom Comptons\textsuperscript{18} blew
Nose, doth looke yellowe
Will\textsuperscript{19} hath the better way
Hee can indure all,
What need Tom care a straw?
Lincolne\textsuperscript{20} can cure all.
These bee they, drinke & play,
In court still busy
They will supp at the cupp,
Till there braynes dizy.

Young Compton\textsuperscript{21} might have had,
Wives by the dozen,
And yet the foole was madd
For George\textsuperscript{22} his cosen
Maxwell\textsuperscript{23} swares by his sale
Hee’s not bee hindred,
They gett the divell & all,
That swive\textsuperscript{24} the kindred.
Thes be they, goe so gay,
All the Ile over.
There is no greater foole,
Then the fond lover.

Kitt\textsuperscript{25} was allmost forgott,
[m.note: “Kitt Villers”]
Damport\textsuperscript{26} had hid him,
They two were at the pott,
While Wray out ridd him\textsuperscript{27}
For at his elbowe stood
Bulching\textsuperscript{28} with sherry
[m.note: “The drawer”]\textsuperscript{29}
Cryng this breeds good blood
Hang wives, bee, merry.
Thes be they spend the day,
    I drinke & swivinge
Gentle Kitt learne more witt
    Then goe a wifinge.

Thee fidler was an asse,
    Hee liv’d by scraping,
His lusty kindred was,
    Not worth the japing.
Nor yett in number sure
    Could they come neere us,
Wee are the chast & pure,
    Hell need not feare us.
    These bee they, goe so gay
        In court & citty,
        Yett but few love us,
    Thee more is the pitty.

Harke how the wagons crack
    With there rich ladinge
Doll comes up with her packe,
    Su’s fitt for tradinge.
Phill will no longer stay,
    With her base baby
What dare the people say
    When shees a lady
    Thes be they, goe so gay
        In court & citty
Would you have an office pray
    You must bee thiss witty.
his fayre Lady: in 1620, Buckingham married Katherine (Kate) Manners, daughter of the Earl of Rutland.

Bedlame buckingame: the favourite’s mother, Mary Villiers, who was created Countess of Buckingham in her own right in 1618. “Bedlame” here means “bedlam” or mad-woman. Other copies, however, have “bel-dame”, which could mean either “old woman”, or “hag” and “witch”.

her Lord Keeper: John Williams, who had been a chaplain to the Countess of Buckingham, was created Lord Keeper and Bishop of Lincoln in the summer of 1621.

fayre young Marchionesses: the favourite’s wife, Katherine (Kate) Villiers.

Lady Feildinge: Susan Villiers, the favourite’s older sister, had married William Feilding, Earl of Denbigh.

Su: i.e. Susan Feilding.

Ned Villers hath a wife: Sir Edward Villiers, the favourite’s half-brother by his father’s first marriage, married Barbara St. John.

Buttler: Elizabeth Villiers, the favourite’s half-sister by his father’s first marriage, married Sir John Boteler.

Cranefield: Sir Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex and, from 1621 to 1624, Lord Treasurer.

Nan: Cranfield married as his second wife Anne Brett, the favourite’s cousin on his mother’s side.


horne of honour: Cranfield’s cuckold horns.

palted: hit with missiles.

Sheldon: Philippa Sheldon, who married the aged Sir Anthony Ashley in January 1622. Philippa was
the sister of Elizabeth Sheldon, who was married to Buckingham’s brother Christopher (Kit) Villiers.

15 *tarse:* penis.

16 *Thee Cokeoes ditty:* the cuckoo was notorious for laying its eggs in other birds’ nests; hence “cuckoo” was a term for “cuckold”. Perhaps the implication is that, married to the aged sodomite Ashley, Philippa Sheldon was likely to stray, and any child she might conceive would thus be illegitimate.

17 *Vicecount Feildinge:* Sir William Feilding, appointed Earl of Denbigh in September 1622, husband of the favourite’s sister Susan.

18 *Tom Comptons:* the favourite’s step-father, Sir Thomas Compton, who married Mary Villiers c.1609.

19 *Will:* either Sir William Feilding or, perhaps, Thomas Compton’s brother, William Compton, Earl of Northampton.

20 *Lincolne:* John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln and Lord Keeper, and alleged lover of Thomas Compton’s wife, the Countess of Buckingham.

21 *Young Compton:* probably Spencer Compton, son of William Compton, Earl of Northampton, and the favourite’s cousin by marriage.

22 *George:* i.e. the favourite Buckingham.

23 *Maxwell:* perhaps Buckingham’s friend Robert Maxwell, Earl of Nithsdale.

24 *swive:* have sex with.

25 *Kitt:* Sir Christopher Villiers, Buckingham’s brother, created Earl of Anglesey in 1623.

26 *Damport:* probably a contraction of Davenport; which Davenport, however, is unknown. It is possible that it could be the lawyer Humphrey Davenport, who was at this time connected with Henry de Vere, Earl of Oxford, later blamed for facilitating Edward Wray’s elopement with Lady Elizabeth Norris.

27 *Wray out ridd him:* Edward Wray, a Groom of the Bedchamber, eloped with Lady Elizabeth Norris in March 1622. Lady Norris, the daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, had, as Chamberlain reported, been “designed to Kit Villers” (2.429). Wray lost his court position as a result.

28 *Bulching:* swelling, bulging.
drawer: the server at the bar.

swivinge: having sex.

japing: to jape had a number of meanings that are plausible in this context, including “to deceive” and “to copulate”.

rich ladinge: i.e. the wealth and lands the Villiers extended kindred has amassed thanks to George’s position at court.

Doll: a nickname for Dorothy. The only plausible candidate among the Villiers extended kindred would be the favourite’s aunt on his mother’s side, Dorothy Beaumont, wife of John Hill, whose daughter Susan married Sir Edward Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, early in 1623.

Su’s: either Susan Feilding or (more likely if Doll is Dorothy Beaumont) Buckingham’s cousin Susan Hill, who married Sir Edward Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, early in 1623.

Phill: possibly Philippa Sheldon/Ashley, although the reference to her “base baby” is unclear.
The two sessions of the 1621 Parliament, the first for seven years, spanned a period of just under twelve months, from 30 January 1621 to 6 January 1622. One of the principal motivations behind James’s decision to summon the Parliament, his desire to raise the funds necessary for a war that the King saw as possible but avoidable, proved relatively unproblematic. Indeed, many of the debates throughout the sessions were peaceable, and many of the proceedings routine. Yet there were also undeniable tensions throughout. Debates on freedom of speech strained relations between the King and Parliament, while a number of controversial parliamentary initiatives challenged policies and individuals associated with the monarch. As the libels concerned with this year demonstrate, many observers were fascinated by the apparent challenges posed by the Parliament to the King and his court. The spectacular falls of particular statesmen, such as Francis Bacon, might therefore be interpreted as signal instances of a righteous Parliament purging the nation of courtly corruption.

The single issue that most preoccupied newsmongers and libellers was the status of patents and monopolies. The use of patents had escalated throughout James’s reign, providing the King with a convenient alternative to taxation, and an easy means of rewarding royal servants. In general, patents involved the farming out of certain judicial functions previously performed by state officials, such as the licensing of inns and alehouses. Patentees would typically pay the Crown for their patent, and levy licences and fines in order to profit from the arrangement. More specifically, patents of monopoly involved the grant, in exchange for a cash payment to the Crown, of a protected right to pursue a particular form or method of trade or industry. They became intertwined with the development of particular “projects”, at a time when the English economy was diversifying rapidly (Thirsk). Arguably, the 1621 Parliament was prompted to pursue this issue as a result of a frustrating incapacity to comprehend economic conditions characterized by a scarcity of coinage (Russell 98-111). Once the matter had been raised, however, it led parliamentarians not only to tackle some crucial constitutional issues, but also to stretch the powers of parliament by reviving the process of impeachment. The pursuit of certain prominent monopolists stirred a frenzy of parliamentary activity and popular interest. Most notably, Sir Giles Mompesson had made many enemies through his energetic manipulation of
patents and monopolies. He was a commissioner for the licensing of inns; he was authorized to sell decayed timber from royal forests; and he was also engaged in the enforcement of a law that prevented any person from manufacturing gold and silver thread without a special licence. Another target of the parliamentarians, Sir Francis Michell, was also involved in enforcing the licences for gold and silver thread, as well as being a commissioner for the licensing of alehouses. The connections of such men with the court, and particularly with the leading dispenser of court patronage, George Villiers, Marquis (and future Duke) of Buckingham, informed much of the vitriol directed against them in popular political discourse.

In due course, the parliamentary investigations led to a man much more highly placed in the state, the Lord Keeper, Sir Francis Bacon. Though not directly involved in patents and monopolies, Bacon was implicated since he had acted as a legal referee, certifying the controversial patents for the licensing of gold and silver thread. To this alleged instance of corruption was added unrelated claims that he had accepted bribes in the course of his judicial work. While he appealed to his long-time patron, Buckingham, and also to James himself, Bacon found himself increasingly isolated as the Parliament employed the obsolete procedure of impeachment in order to bring about his downfall. The case provoked numerous libels. Some poems do little more than play on his name, exploiting the obvious potential for puns on hogs and preserved meat. Others target Bacon’s relations with members of his household, interpreting his reputation for excessive generosity in political terms, and bringing into the public domain apparently longstanding rumours of homosexuality. Most interestingly, a number of the poems position the fallen Lord Keeper, either explicitly or implicitly, as an example of more widespread, even systemic, corruption. In this context, a long poem written in support of Bacon (“When you awake, dull Brittons, and behould”) and the two responses it elicited (“What hatfull fury dipt thy raging Quill”, “Blame not the Poet though he make such moane”), are particularly illuminating.

While the parameters of the first two subsections below are relatively transparent, the final subsection includes five somewhat miscellaneous poems under the heading “The Aftermath: reflections and assessments”. These poems appear to date from late in 1621 (technically, therefore, while the Parliament was still in session), or from shortly afterwards, and in general adopt a detached and reflective stance towards the “rowlinge tumblinge Age” (“One worthy
Chancellor renned up his place”). Some focus on John Williams, who replaced Bacon as Lord Keeper; others glance towards the projected Spanish Match, parliamentary discussion of which finally convinced James to dissolve the 1621 Parliament; one simply represents the life of the court, and the associated business of patronage, continuing apace (“The Kinge & the court desyrous of sport’’). While these poems do not necessarily document a desire for an ongoing programme of reform, they articulate underlying tensions and concerns, which would surface more insistently in debate about the Spanish Match, and also in recurrent attacks on Buckingham.

M0
Mi Attacks on Monopolists

Mi1 You Justices & men of myghte

Notes. This is the only known libel entirely devoted to the monopolist Sir Francis Michell. The poem's form—an admonitory lament in the voice of a fallen sinner—was popular in contemporary ballad literature. Like many libels written in song or ballad form, it is possible that this was sung, though evidence of performance is impossible to trace.

“A lamentable newe Ballade expressing the Complaynte of Sir Frances Michell Knighte dwellinge in Pickthatche1 lately Justice of Peace. To a scurvey tune.”

You Justices & men of myghte
You Constables that walke by nyghte
And all you officers more lowe
But marke my sudden overthrowe

And then by mee Example make
How you get goods, how bribes you take
For that has bine my discontente
And for like Acts you shall be shente2

Before this Parlamente I myghte
Have done all this, & yet no knighte3
But they are nowe so busy growne
Alas ouer Faults must all be knowne

No place nor hower can preserve
theyer lives from them that ill deserve
and this my storey may asseuer yee
If you bee badde theyle not endeuer yee

For though the kinge mee knyghthood gave
yet they presumed, to call me knave
and sayd that I deserved to dye
For begginge a monopolie

Sir Giles Mompessone though hee were
a kinsman to the Marques neere
was for this cause thrust out and chide
Sum say shall hange but god forbidd

For if yee should bee trussed upp
I am certeyne I shall tast that Cupe
For I alas that discord bredd
I put this sute into his heade

when firste this course was scand & tried
and my faulte could not be denied
with Lord have merceye on mee they
did to the Tower mee streighte convey

On Foote I then adjudged was
alonge the streets with shame to passe
moore favor they the Serjeants did
For whilste I walkt, those Rascalls ridd

In this sorte as I walkte a longe
those people all, which I did wronge
Came laughing oute at my disgrace
and yet I must not hide my face

A Fatt Alewife that had beefore
in full 7 yeares not stired to dooer
with kitchin curtss did mee Followe
as if like ale shee would mee swallowe

An Inkeeper that solde his haye
the fine I call for to paye
with a pitchforke did at mee thruste
as if my harte hee would have burste

Twoe caryers nexte with yawlinge throtes
raylde at mee for the price of oats
and sayd aloude through my deceyte
Theyer horses travell withoute bayte

When through those scornes at laste I came
unto the Tower with spite & shame
my Judgmente yet beehould was more
And Fare worse followed then beefore

That place they esteemed to good
Both for my cause & for my blood
and unto Newgate I must goe
a stinkinge prisone, God doth knowe

A Baude in seethinge Lane mee spied
One that for 10 yeares space mee bribd
that for herselffe & all her whoores
no warrant entred att her doores

Shee ruthfull woman oneley wept
To see my fall such coyle was kept
with her and hers since I departed
Herselffe att leste had twise bene carted

Not farre from her a younge whore stands
sighinge and wringinge of her hands
Pickthatch (quoth shee) can nowe no more
bee a proteccon for a whoore
But that which greives & vext mee worse
the nexte I sawe was a cutpurse
whome I as Hickes his Hall can tell\textsuperscript{20}
both saved from newgate & Bridewell\textsuperscript{21}

And yet this Rouge amongst the rest
did laugh att mee & make a jeste
and swore my worship tooke a Fee
to set his heeles at libertey
The bauds and whoores of Turball\textsuperscript{22} all
cam laughinge by to see my fall
and followinge by mee 3 whoores tripte
whome I had caused to bee whipte

Another did a halter shake
of hempe & Flaxe herselffe did make
when I in newe bridewell did putte
For juste ofence that rampant slutt

Nor is this end of all my payne
from worse I feare theyle not refrayne
my cause alas is come to that
They meane to do the Lord knows what

Yet still I wish health to the Kinge
whoe gratious is in everey thinge
and ene on the howses highe & lowe\textsuperscript{23}
I pray to God his grace bestowe

For they are like if they goe on
to leave noe faulte unthaught uppon
and then Ime suer howere I bee
I shall have still more companey.
Pickthatche: i.e. Pickt-Hatch, a resort of thieves and prostitutes in London; “picked-hatch” was also a contemporary term for a brothel.

shente: disgraced; ruined.

& yet no knighte: Michell was knighted in December 1620.

Sir Giles...Marques neere: Mompesson, accused as a monopolist alongside Michell, was related by marriage to George Villiers, who was at this time Marquis of Buckingham.

Sum say...forbidd: other evidence in the poem indicates that it was written after Mompesson’s flight from England, in March 1621; however, his whereabouts may well have been unclear to the poet.

trussed upp: strung up; hanged.

did to the Tower...convey: Michell was committed to the Tower in February 1621.

On Foote...to passe: Michell travelled to the Tower on foot and bare-headed.

Serjeants: judicial officers (escorting Michell).

kitchin curtes: unclear; possibly read “kitchen curses”, but possibly “kitchen curtsies” (the latter to be taken ironically).

An Inkeeper...to paye: Michell was accused of abusing his powers in administering the patent for alehouses, which involved the extortion of fines from alehouse-keepers; however, it is not clear whether he had a role in the separate patent for inns.

price of oats: patents did not directly affect the price of oats; however, the costs of fines borne by innkeepers were inevitably passed on to customers (such as carriers), and the poem perhaps acknowledges this fact here.

bayte: feed; refreshment.

That place...God doth knowe: though initially committed to the Tower, Michell was subsequently moved, because the Tower was considered to be too good for him. Although the DNB states that he was moved to Finsbury jail, there is some evidence to support the claims of libellers that his destination was
in fact Newgate, a prison from which he had previously received a salary, as a Middlesex Justice of the Peace, on condition of sending all his prisoners there.

15 *seethinge Lane*: Seething Lane, near the corn market in Fenchurch Street.

16 *One...mee bribd*: presumably a reference to Michell’s activities as Justice of the Peace for Middlesex.

17 *coyle*: tumult.

18 *carted*: i.e. carried in a cart through the streets; traditional punishment for a whore.

19 *Pickthatch...whoore*: i.e. Pickt-Hatch, a resort of thieves and prostitutes in London, may now be exposed to the law (since its protector has been removed from power).

20 *as Hickes...tell*: although the specific reference is unclear, the meaning is obvious (i.e. “I can see this as clearly as I can recognize Hicks’s hall”).

21 *newgate & Bridewell*: prisons for common offenders.

22 *Turball*: i.e. Turnball Street, perhaps the most disreputable street in London.

23 *the howses highe &...lowe*: i.e. the high and low houses of parliament (the Lords and the Commons).
Mi2  The tottering state of transitory things

**Notes.** This is one of three known libels entirely devoted to the monopolist Sir Giles Mompesson. In their final lines, there is some commonality between this poem and “Pervertinge of the lawes makes justice blind”.

“On Sir Giles Mumperson”

The tottering state of transitory things
Like to a Jade\(^1\) man's fortune kicks and flings
That hee that now is Dominus-fac-totum\(^2\)
May the next day be thought a man of Gotam\(^3\)
Oprression hath like an impostume\(^4\) beene
With inward putrefaction, all unseen
Till ripenes burst it, and good time aplies
Good conscionable lawfull remedies
It is not bands of men or regiments
Or troops or squadrons, that will finde contents,
Tis no small army, that doe share these joyes
Nor is it fabulous or frivilous toyes,
But real contemplations through our coasts
Not of an host of men, but of Man of Hosts\(^5\)
You Host of Hosts\(^6\) that happy day is come
Person\(^7\) is not respected Giles is mum,
Drink healths, make bonfires, wash your merry throats
Mourne al in sack, and give your horse more oates.
Sir Giles did thinkt no wisdom, to abide
As fearing by St Giles’s church to ride\(^8\)
Brave Hosts your general\(^9\)
Who mighte have staid and took a hangman heare.

    The Proverb of lame Giles,\(^10\) is prov’d a ly
    For if Sir Giles were lame, how could hee fly.

\(^1\) Jade: a fortune
\(^2\) Dominus-fac-totum: Latin for “let it be done”
\(^3\) Gotam: a city
\(^4\) Impostume: impostor
\(^5\) Man of Hosts: God
\(^6\) Host of Hosts
\(^7\) Person
\(^8\) St Giles’s church
\(^9\) General
\(^10\) Lame Giles
**Source.** Folger MS V.a.345, p. 126

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151, fol. 102v; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 151

Mi2

1 *Jade:* worthless, ill-tempered horse.

2 *Dominus-fac-totum:* “one who controls everything”.

3 *a man of Gotam:* a madman (a term based on the proverbial folly of the men of the village of Gotham).

4 *impostume:* abscess or cyst.

5 *Not...of Hosts:* this line is unclear (and the meaning is undermined by at least one probable scribal error); however, it appears to pun on a “man of hosts” (i.e. military man; man of valour) and the “host” of an inn (hence an allusion to Mompesson’s patent for inns). A variant text reads “Not of an host of men, but Man of hosts” (Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151).

6 *You Host of Hosts:* probably Christ (often referred to as “host”, in the word’s sense as a victim for sacrifice); however, a variant text is less specific, reading “So, gentle Hosts” (Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151).

7 *Person:* a variant text has “Michel” (i.e. Sir Francis Michell) (Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151).

8 *by St Giles’s...ride:* i.e. on the way to execution at Tyburn (cf. the final line of “Pervertinge of the lawes makes justice blind”).

9 *general:* a variant text has “Lord of Hosts” (Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151). is fled for feare

10 *Proverb of lame Giles:* probably “lame Giles has played the man” (Tilley 115).
Notes. There is only one known version of this poem on the monopolist Sir Giles Mompesson in this form; however, as listed below, three known sources preserve the final stanza as a discrete piece. In their final lines, there is some commonality between this poem and “The tottering state of transitory things”.

“On Sir Giles Mumpesson”

Pervertinge of the lawes makes justice blind
Converted lawes makes her, her eyes to find
Whilst now God present is, & president
Of our thrice noble, happy Parliament.

The Cobweb law¹ that did our small theeves spoyle
Hath catcht our great ones in his hanginge toyle
The earth growes happy & the heaven smiles
Theres noe respect of Persons. Mum Sir Giles.²

The proverbe of lame Giles³ is false I say
Had Giles beeene lame hee had not runne away
Sir Giles thought fitt noe longer time to ’bide
For feare hee by Saint Giles his Church should ride⁴

Source. Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 53r

Known sources of the shorter version. Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 36v; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 73r; Folger MS V.a.262, p. 132

¹ Cobweb law: the prosecution of Mompesson depended on the revival of a medieval procedure of impeachment.
2 *Mum Sir Giles*: i.e. silent Sir Giles (in the context of the whole line, a strained play on his name).

3 *proverbe of lame Giles*: probably “lame Giles has played the man” (Tilley G115).

4 *For feare...ride*: the scribe adds here an explanatory marginal note: “To Tyburne”.
“Uppon Mompesson orerunning the parlament”

Fly not Mompesson sins thear is no inn
By thy foul rapin robd will hide thy head,¹
No spittell² will conceale thy impious sine,
That left in them for piety noe bed
The royall woods, the standards of ould age,
By thee dispoild,³ yelde thee noe shady tree
In vaine thou fliest of thine own guilt the rage
For more thow fliest, the more it follows thee
   Turne than again, and thy bad corses alter
   Or chaing thy threds of gould⁴ into a halter.

Source. BL MS Harley 3910, fol. 60r

¹ *sins thear is...head*: allusion to Mompesson’s patent for licensing inns.

² *spittell*: hospital; house for the indigent and diseased, especially those of low social status.

³ *The royall woods...dispoild*: Mompesson held a grant which authorized him to sell decayed woods in royal forests.

⁴ *thy threds of gould*: allusion to Mompesson’s notorious patent for gold thread.
Mi5 Oyes

Notes. This poem, which adapts the conventions of official news distribution (via royal proclamation), targets in turn four of the monopolists pursued in the 1621 Parliament. One version (BL Add. MS 33998) names them in marginal notes: Mompesson, Michell, Sir Robert Flood, and Bacon. The stanza on Bacon was occasionally transcribed as a separate poem, and was in some cases extended into a longer version (see “Stand fast thou shaking quaking keeper”). The poem is discussed in McRae, Literature 38-40.

“A Proclamation”

Oyes,

Can any tell true tideings
of a Monopolist
Knight of the Post for rideing

'cause hee wist,

It argue’d no small cunning
To make his leggs the instruments
To save his necke by running.

Come forth
Thou bawdy house Protector
Pattentee of froth
Of signe posts the Erector

Our true worth,
Thy Quorum shall not checke,
For thou shalt unto Newgate ryde,
With Canns about thy necke.

Stand by
Thou faire ingross’d transcription
Your Fludd is very high
But sluces of reversion
drawe it dry,
So crost by just opinions
Our Cossen must be forc’t to walke
To Walls to feed on Onyons.  

Sitt sure,
Thou quakeing quivering Keeper,
A tent thou must indure,
Least thy wounds grow deeper,
    and past the cure,
For if thy faults prove common
Thou soone shalt feele a Nimble Coke
Slice collops from thy Gammon.

Source. BL MS Harley 4955, fol. 86r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 124; BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 65r

Known sources of the shorter version. BL Add. MS 22118, fol. 38v; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 182

Mi5

1 Knight...for rideing: unclear; possibly describing Mompesson as a “Knight of the Post” (i.e. notorious perjurer) because he has cheated justice by “rideing” (i.e. fleeing).

2 wist: knew.

3 bawdy house Protector: Francis Michell; the impropriety alleged in his capacity as a Justice of the Peace for Middlesex.

4 Pattentee of froth: allusion to Michell’s patent for alehouses.

5 signe posts the Erector: unclear; perhaps also linked to the patent for licensing alehouses (which would lead to the erection of alehouse signs).

6 Thy Quorum...checke: unclear; perhaps a reference to Michell’s position as one of the justices of the peace whose presence was necessary to constitute a bench (literally, the “quorum”).
Newgate: i.e. Newgate prison.

Thou...high: heavily punning allusion to Sir Robert Flood, clerk of the office of the patent for wills. The patent involved charge for the engrossing (i.e. formal legal preparation) of all wills and inventories.

But sluces...dry: the patent of sole engrossing of wills and inventories was suspended 18 July 1621.

Our Cossen...Onyons: unclear; presumably referring to Flood’s lack of income after the suspension of the patent, and/or his expulsion from the House of Commons, 21 March 1621.

Thou...Keeper: i.e. Francis Bacon, Lord Keeper.

tent: surgical probe.

Coke: i.e. Sir Edward Coke, a leading figure in the Commons and long-time rival of Bacon.

collops: slices, rashers.
Mii The Fall of Bacon

Mii1 The measled Boare is frankt I tell noe fable

Notes. This neat epigram connects the impeachment of Bacon with a number of other instances of corruption at court. The ironic closing couplet suggests that the movement towards reform will be short-lived.

The measled Boare\(^1\) is frankt\(^2\) I tell noe fable

The Headstrong horse\(^3\) is shut up in the stable

The Kings whilome Atturney now condemned\(^4\)

And A prime Pen of state his place suspended\(^5\)

Bennet\(^6\) is sicke for feare, the Chancellor craddocke\(^7\)

And Lambe\(^8\) Stinkes worse than Mackerell or Haddocke

Nor place but Innocence now keepes me safe

The Almanacke foretells this storme must cleere

Or offices will beare no price this yeare.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 7r

Mii1

1 measled Boare: i.e. Bacon (Bacon’s crest, worn on his servants’ liveries, was of a boar).

2 frankt: shut up in a frank (an enclosure for feeding swine).

3 Headstrong horse: unclear; possibly another reference to Bacon, but more likely a coded reference to another man.

4 The Kings...condemned: Sir Henry Yelverton, Attorney-General from 1617, fell from power in 1620, when he was found guilty in a Star Chamber trial of having passed a charter to the city of London containing unauthorized provisions.

5 A prime...suspended: possibly a reference to Sir Robert Naunton, Secretary of State, who was reprimanded and threatened with dismissal (though not suspended) early in 1621, for opening negotiations with the French, without the consent of James, for a possible marriage between Charles and
Henrietta Maria.

6 *Bennet*: Sir John Bennet, Judge of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, impeached for a range of corrupt practices in the 1621 Parliament. His case was seen by many as a signal instance of corruption within the judiciary.

7 *Chancellor craddocke*: probably John Cradocke, Chancellor of Durham from 1619.

8 *Lambe*: probably John Lambe, an ecclesiastical lawyer who used the full rigour of the law to compel Church conformity in Northamptonshire. In 1621 the mayor and corporation of Northamptonshire presented a petition to parliament complaining about him; however, the king remained supportive, and knighted him in July of the same year.
Mii2  Stand fast thou shaking quaking keeper

**Notes.** This poem on Bacon takes a stanza from “Oyes” and extends it in a similar style, expanding in particular on the pun on Bacon’s name.

“On Fran. Ld. Verulam Keeper of greate seale”

Stand fast thou shaking quaking Keeper

A tent\(^1\) thou must endure,

For feare in time thy wounds grow deeper,

And so become past cure.

Into thy past life see thou looke,

For if thy faults grow common,

Thou soone wilt find a nimble Cooke\(^2\)

Slice rathers\(^3\) from thy gammon.

Patient hee is like Job, I wis

And poore, you need not doubt him,

Butt most of all like Job in this

Hee hath such scabbs about him.\(^4\)

Meazly Bacon is quite forsaken

And none thats heere care for it,

The Parliament with one consent

I oft have heard it spoke

Hath made a law to singe it with straw

And hange it up in smoake.

**Source.** BL Add. MS 22118, fol. 42v

**Other known sources.** Trevelyan Papers 3.163; BL Add. MS 61481, fol. 99r; TCD MS 806, fol. 577r; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 182

Mii2
1 *tent:* surgical probe.

2 *Cooke:* i.e. Sir Edward Coke, a leading figure in the Commons and long-time rival of Bacon.

3 *rathers:* i.e. “rashers”.

4 *like Job...about him:* “So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown” (Job 2.7). The line probably refers to Bacon’s struggles with gout and other illnesses, which he used to delay proceedings and again to defer his imprisonment; however, it is also possible that Bacon’s “scabbs” are metaphorical (i.e. scurvy fellows, rascals). Bacon compared himself to Job more favourably in his speech to the House of Lords on 22 April 1621, stating: “I hope I may say and justify with Job in these words: *I have not hid my sin as did Adam, nor concealed my faults in my bosom*” (*Works* 14.243; cf. Job 31.33).
Notes. This poem, the most densely topical and allusive of all the libels on Bacon, is almost certainly the work of John Hoskyns. It raises the suggestion that Bacon was effectively sacrificed to the political interests of his otherwise loyal patron, the Duke of Buckingham, and hints scurrilously about his relationships with his servants. The poem is discussed in Jardine and Stewart 465.

“Vpon the fall of Sir Francis Bacon Lo: Verulam & Viscount St. Alban Lo: Chancellor”

Great Verulam is very lame,¹ the gout of goe-out feeling²
Hee humbly beggs the crutch of state with falling sicknes³ reeling
Disease, displeased & greved sore, that stately fate shold perish
Unhappie that noe helpe can cure nor high protection cherish.
Yet cannot I but marvell much, and that in common reason
That Bacon should neglected be, when it is most in season
Perhaps the Game of Buck hath villifi’d the Bore⁴
Or els the Crescent in the wayne that hee can hunt no more
Be what it will the Relative the antecedent moveing
Declines to case accusative, the dative soe much loveing⁵
Young⁶ this greife will make the old, for care with youth ill matches
Sorrowe makes Mute⁷ to muse, that Hatche’s⁸ under hatches
Bushells⁹ want by halfe a peck the measure of such tares
Because his Lords posteriors, makes buttons which hee weares¹⁰
Tho Edney¹¹ nowe be cleane cassher’d, greife moves him to compassion
To thinke that fates should bring soe lowe, the wheele of his Ambition.
Had Butler¹² liv’d had¹³ vex’d & grev’d so suddaine for to see
The hogsh’d that soe late was brocht to run soe neere the Lee¹⁴
Fletcher¹⁵ may goe & feather bolts¹⁶, for such as quickly shoot them
Nowe Cockens¹⁷ combe is newly¹⁸ a man may soone confute them
The Red-rose house¹⁹ lamenteth much, that this soe fatall day
Should bring the fall of Leafe in March before the spring in May
Albons condole their suddaine losse, their greatest Viscount Charter²⁰
Who suffering for his Conscience sake, is turn’d Franciscan Martyr.\(^{21}\)

**Source.** Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 23

**Other known sources.** Osborn 210; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 37v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 32v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 96r; Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151, fol. 102v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 22v; BL MS Harley 367, fol. 187r; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 80v; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 27r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 152; Folger MS V.a.192, part 2 fol. 7r; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 127

1. *Great Verulam is very lame:* this limping pun on Bacon’s title is noted by Sir Simonds D’Ewes as the invention of men mocking Bacon’s shortage of money: “So as men raised very bitter sarcasms or jests of him; as that he lately was very lame, alluding to his barony of Verulam, but now having fallen into a consumption of purse, without all question he was become All-bones, alluding to his new honour of St. Alban” (qtd. in Jardine and Stewart 443).

2. *gout of goe-out feeling:* punning on Bacon’s fall from power and his struggles with gout.

3. *falling sicknes:* epilepsy; here the use is entirely figurative.

4. *Perhaps the Game...Bore:* the suggestion here, raised at the time by some people close to Bacon, though without any apparent foundation, is that Buckingham turned against Bacon, in order to protect his own position (Jardine and Stewart 455-56).

5. *Be what...loveing:* an intricate and barely penetrable mesh of puns on grammatical terms. “[D]ative” can mean “disposed to give”, and thus probably alludes to the bribery allegations; “accusative” might carry legal connotations; “Relative” may refer to a particular person, unidentifiable at this point.

6. *Young:* John Young, one of Bacon’s secretaries.

7. *Mute:* i.e. Thomas Meautys, another of Bacon’s secretaries; or Edmund Meautys, Bacon’s gentleman of the horse.

8. *Hatche’s:* i.e. Hatcher, Bacon’s seal-bearer.

9. *Bushells:* Thomas Bushell, one of Bacon’s gentleman ushers.

10. *Because his Lords...weares:* “Aubrey explains the lewd reference to Bacon’s backside and buttons: ‘Twas the fashion in those days for gentlemen to have their suits of clothes garnished with buttons. My Lord Bacon was then in disgrace, and his man Bushell having more buttons than usual on his cloak, they
said that his Lord’s breech made buttons and Bushell wore them: from whence he was called “buttoned Bushell.” Aubrey can only be suggesting that it was maliciously put about that Bushell’s ostentatious dress had been earned by sexual services to his master” (Jardine and Stewart 465).

11 *Edney*: Francis Edney, Bacon’s chamber-man.

12 *Butler*: Mr. Butler, one of Bacon’s gentleman ushers.

13 *had*: probable scribal error; read “he had”.

14 *Lee*: possibly either Mr. Leigh, Bacon’s sergeant-at-arms, or Humphrey Leigh, one of Bacon’s yeoman ushers presumably punning on the River Lea.

15 *Fletcher*: Mr. Fletcher, Bacon’s gentleman waiter.

16 *feather bolts*: punning on the name Fletcher, as a maker of arrows. To feather bolts is to attach feathers to arrows.

17 *Cockens*: Mr. Cockaine, Bacon’s page.

18 *is newly*: probable scribal error; read “is newly cut”.

19 *Red-rose house*: the allusion here is clearly to Bacon’s home, York House (a point made in a marginal note in one source (Bodleian Eng. Poet. c.50). Although the red rose was actually associated with the House of Lancaster most sources of the poem are consistent with this historical error. Only one known source prefers the historically correct “whit Rose” (BL MS Harley 367).

20 *Albons condole...Charter*: punning on Bacon’s title, Viscount St. Alban’s.

21 *Who suffering...Martyr*: the image of martyrdom ( punning on the Catholic Franciscan order), though obviously couched in heavy irony, echoes the poem’s earlier suggestion that Bacon has been sacrificed in the political interests of Buckingham.
Why shoulde poore chauncelour be condemned by a cry

Notes. This poem on Bacon is unusual in its focus on his alleged homosexual relationship with his servant(s). To “go behind” becomes a combined allusion to bribery and sodomy. In the only known version of the poem, it is presented as the beginning of “Great Verulam is very lame the gout of go-out feeling”; however, since the latter poem is otherwise relatively stable, and widely circulated, the following lines are best considered as a discrete text.

Why shoulde poore chauncelour be condemned by a cry
Who tooke from few yett gave to many
He strove to make his Lady\(^1\) rich we finde
He lov’d her well but alas he went behinde
God knowes he husband’ not his store\(^2\)
He should have done his youth less: his Lady more
But now’s the time all freely speake theire minde
Thy judgments are he wente too much behinde.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 96r

Mii4

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1 *his Lady*: i.e. his wife, Lady Alice Bacon.

2 *God knowes...store*: presumably a reference to the fact that Bacon had no children.
Notes. This poem on Bacon takes the popular libellous punning on his name to an extreme, as it develops a narrative of the parliament’s attack on him. Much of the humour depends on a correlation between political corruption and the physical corruption of a piece of bacon.

“On Sir Francis Bacons Lord Chanceler of Eng:”

The greate assemblie of the parliamente
Had thought farewell this fastinge time of Lente
All though it had bin sometimes to theire coste
and to that end they gott the cheifest hoste.
That might be founde, graund-senior of those hostes
which ar so many in our English coasts.
But he did feare he should not give contente
& therefore in greate policie he hence wente
By wich they greatly disappointed were
& faine to fall unto their lenten fare.
’till att the laste one speake, what naught but fish?
methinks this time we might have some choise dish
What say you to a daintie bitt of bacon
which if I be not suerly mistaken
It’s stately, fine, & most franke & free
By a kind Freind lately bestowd on me.
Where is’t quoth all? We would we had it here
For sure good bacon now is daintie cheare.
They all desir’d it & was brought in hast
But when it came it greatly did distast
Theire palletts & disliked much theire minde
The reason was some thought ’thad taken winde
Others did say ’thad hunge too neere the pinn
And was corrupte & putrified within

493
'tould never smell so else in each mans nose
The Cooke was bidd the reason to disclose
Who tould them that he thought the faulte
Had bin especially for wante of salte
But that I knew quoth he it had greate store
I seldome knew that any flesh had more
this is the cause as I have heard it sayd
Some cankerd mettall was upon it laid
which stayned it, besides twas hunge so high
& that so soone before 'twas through drie
yet great men in nae there faulte was none
I meddled not but made lett all alone
now how to remedy this rustie bacon
I doe not know unless it be downe taken.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fols. 95v-96r

1 Lente: some of the proceedings against Bacon took place in the period of Lent.

2 the cheifest hoste: i.e. Mompesson, holder of the patent for licensing inns.

3 in greate...wente: reference to Sir Giles Mompesson’s flight from England, in March 1621.

4 taken winde: to “take wind” is to be divulged; here there is a pun on meat that has decayed.

5 hunge...pinn: unclear; presumably punning on meat corroded by the metal on which it is hung, and a statesman corrupted by his proximity to a source of power.

6 Cooke: i.e. Sir Edward Coke, a leading figure in the Commons and long-time rival of Bacon.

7 for wante of salte: possibly punning on “salt” in the figurative sense, meaning that which gives freshness to a person’s character.

8 cankerd mettall: punning reference to the bribes Bacon accepted.
9 *hunge so high:* punning reference to Bacon’s political and judicial elevation.

10 *rustie:* rancid.
Heer is Francis Verulam Lord Chancelour God save him,
What man in this kingdom durst hitherto out brave\(^1\) him
But now he is content his motto for to have it
Fransiscus de Verulam non sic cogitavit.\(^2\)

**Notes.** This poem on Bacon assumes the form of an epitaph; however, it is clear that it was written before the man’s actual death, and charts rather his political demise.

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\(^1\) *out brave:* face with show of defiance; or surpass.

\(^2\) *Fransiscus...cogitavit:* “Francis of Verulam did not think thus” (playing on the epigraph—or “motto”—to Bacon’s *Novum Organum* (1620): “Franciscus de Verulamio sic cogitavit”).
Mii7 Within this sty heer now doth ly

*Notes.* Though it assumes the form of an epitaph, this poem was written during Bacon’s life. An unpublished section of Sir Simonds D’Ewes’s *Autobiography* records that a more pointed variant (“Within this sty a hog doth ly,/ That must be hang’d for sodomy”) was left on a sheet of paper within Bacon’s residence, York House (BL Add. MS 47128, fol 63r; BL MS Harley 646, fol. 59r-v).

“Upon Sir F. Ba.”

Within this sty heer now doth ly
A hog wel fed with bribery
A pig, a hog, a boare, a bacon
Whom God hath left, and the Divel taken

*Source.* Folger MS V.a.345, p. 25

*Other known sources.* Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 16r

Mii7
Notes. This poem in support of Francis Bacon, written after his impeachment, is attributed in more than one source to William Lewis, provost of Oriel College, Oxford, and Bacon’s former chaplain (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10; BL Add. MS 25303; BL MS Stowe 962), and in one source is dated June 1621 (Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151). It takes the form of an anti-libel, directly responding to attacks on its subject, and adopts throughout an elegiac tone. Readers were not generous in their responses. In at least two instances it is titled a “foolish invective” (BL Add. MS 25303; BL MS Harley 3910), and at least one source appends a poem written in response (BL Add. MS 25303; see “Blame not the Poet though he make such moane”).

When you awake, dull Brittons, and behould
What treasure you have throwne into your mould;
Your ignorance in pruning of a state;
You shall confesse, and shall your rashnes hate:
For in a senseles furie you have slaine
A man, as farre beyond your spungie braine
Of common knowledge, as if\(^1\) heaven from hell:
And yet you triumph, thinke you have done well.
Oh, that the monster multitude should sit
In place of justice, reason, conscience, witte,
Nay in a throne or sphære above them all!
For tis a supreme power\(^2\) that can call
All these to barre\(^3\) and with a frowning brow,
Make Senatours, nay mightie Counsellors bow.
Bould Plebeans the day will come I know
When such as Cato, such as Cicero\(^4\)
Shalbe more worth then the firste borne can be,
Of all your auncestours, or posterie.
But hees not dead you say: oh, that the soule
Once checkt, controwld, that once used to controwle
Cowcheth her downie wings! and scornes to flye
At any game, but faire eternitie.
Each spirit is retir'd to a roome,
And makes his living body but a toombe;
On which such Epitaphes may well be read
As would the gazer strike with sorrow dead.
Oh that I could but give his worth a name
That if not you, your sonne may blush for shame!
Who in arithmatick hath greatest skill
His good partes cannot number, yet his ill
Cannot be call'd a number; since tis knowne
He had but few that could be call'd his owne:
And those in other men (even in these times)
Are often praisd, and vertues call'd, not crimes.
But as in purest thinges the smallest spott
Is sooner found, then either staine or blott
In baser stuff; even so his chance was such
To have of faults to few, of worth to much.
So by the brightnes of his owne cleare light
The moates\(^5\) he had lay even to each sight.
If yee would have a man in all points good
You must not have him made of flesh and bloud:
An act of Parliament you first must settle
And force dame Nature worke in better mettle.
Some faults he had no more then serve to proove
He drew his line from Adam not from Jove.
And those small staines nature for its offence,
Like moones in armorie\(^6\) made a difference
Twixt him and angells; beeing sure noe other
Then markes to know him for their younger brother.
Such spotts remooved (not to prophane) he then
Might well be call'd a demieGod mongst men.
A diamond flawed, saphyers and rubies stained
But undervalewed are not quite disdained;
Which by a file recoverd they become
As worthie of esteeme, yeeld no lesse summe.
The gardner finding once a cankar growne
Upon a tree, that hee hath frutefull knowne,
Grubs it not up; but with a carefull hand
Opens the roote, remoovs the clay or sand
That cawsd the cancar, or with cunning arte
Pares of some rynde, but comes not nere the harte:
Only such trees the axes adge endure
As nere bare fruite, or else are past all cure.
The prudent husbandman thrusts not his sheare
Into his corne because some weeds are there,
But takes his hooke and gently as he may
Walke through the field and takes them all away.
A house of many roomes one may command,
But yet it shall require many a hand
To keepe it cleane: and if some filth be found
Crope in by negligence, is’t cast toth grownde?
Fie no; but first the supreame owner comes,
Examines everie office, views the roomes,
Makes them be cleans’d, and on some certaine paine
Commands they never be found so againe.
The temple else should overthrowne have bin,
Because some money-brokers were therin.\(^7\)
The arke\(^8\) had sunke and perisht in the floud,
Because some beasts crope in that were not good.
Adam had with a thunderbolt bin strooke,
When he from Eve the golden apple tooke.
But should the maker of mankinde doe soe
Whoe should write Man? who should to mans state grow?
Shall he be then put to th’extreame of law,
Because his conscience had a little flaw?
Will ye want conscience cleane, because that he
Stumbled or tript but in a small degree?
No; first looke back to all your owne past acts
Then passe your censure, punish all the facts
By him committed: Then Ile sweare he shall
Confesse that you are upright Chancellors all:
And for the time to come with all his might
Strive to out doo you all in doeing right.
Oh could his predessours goast appealere,
And tell how foule his master left the chaire!
How each feather that he satt upon
Infectious was, and that ther was no stone
On which some contract was not made to fright
The fatherlesse and widdow from their right.
No stoole, no boord, no rush, no bench, on which
The poore man was not sould unto the rich.
It would have longer time the roome to aire
And what yee now call foule yee would thinke faire.
He tooke to keepe, (tis knowne) this but to live
He robd to purchase land and this to give.
And had this beene so blest in his owne treasure
He would have given much more with much more pleasure.
The nights greate lampe from the rich sea will take
To lend the thirstie earth and from each lake
That hath an overplus borrow a share
Not to its proper use, but to repair
The rivers of some parcht and updried hill:
So this unconstant planet (for more ill
Envie cannot speake of him) took from some floud
Not for’s owne use, but to doe others good.
But such misfortune dogg’d his honest will
That what he tooke by wrong he gave as ill.
For those his bountie nurst, as all suppose
(Not those he injured) proov’d his greatest foes.
So foolish mothers from their wiser mates
Oft filch and steale, weaken their owne estates
To feede the humor of some wanton boy;
They sillie women hoping to have joy
Of this ranke plant when they are saplesse growne
But seld or never hath it yet bin knowne
That pamperd youth gave parents more releefe
Then what increaste their age with care and greefe
These oversights of Nature former times,
Have rather pittied, then condemn’d as crimes.
Then wher is charitie become of late
Is her place beggd? her office given state?
Is their a pattent got for her restrainte
Or monopoly gain’d by false complaint?
If so? pursue the patentees, for sure
Falce information did the writt procure:
The seale is counterfeict, the referrees
Have taken bribes: then first examine these,
Restore faire Charitie to her place againe,
And he that suffers now may then complaine:
Set her at Justice feete, then let the poize\textsuperscript{11}
By them directed be, and not by noise.
Let them his merrits weigh with his offence,
And you shall finde a mightie difference.
Race not a goodly buildinge for a toy:\textsuperscript{12}
Tis better to repaire then to destroy.
You will not force his ashes to the urne,
Tush, thats not it; himselfe, himselfe will burne.
When he but findes his honours sound retreate,
Like a cag’d foule, himselfe to death will beate;
And leave the world, when thers no healpe at all
To sight and greeve for his untimely fall.
The skilfull surgeon cutts not of a limme
Whilst there is hope: oh deale you so with him!
He wants not fortitude but can endure
Cutting, incision, so they promise cure:
Nay more, shew him but where the ey-sore stands,
And he will search and drest with his owne hands.
Would yee anatomize? would you desect
For your experience? oh, yee may elect
Out of that house, where yee as Judges sit,
Diverse for execution far more fitt.
And when ye finde a monster overgrowne
With foule corruption, oh let him be throwne
At Justice feete, let him be sacrific’d
And let new tortures new plagues be devised:
Such as may fright the living from their crimes,
And be a president to after times.
Which long-liv’d records to enseuinge daies
Shall still proclaime, to your eternall praise.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 4r-6v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 10; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 104r; Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151, fol. 101r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 101r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 64v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 25r; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 128v; BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 83r; BL Add. MS 29303, fol. 3v; BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 43r; BL MS Harley 3910, fol. 8r; BL MS Harley 6917, fol. 101r; BL MS Sloane 1792, fol. 109r; BL MS Stowe 962, fol. 52v; Brotherton MS
if: probable scribal error, read “is”.

supreme power: i.e. the King.

call...to barre: bring to court; also, more generally, “bring to justice” or “call to account”.

Cato...Cicero: Roman writers and politicians invoked here, presumably, as men who faced death in preference to recanting views out of line with those of their rulers. Cato defended the Roman republic and bitterly opposed Julius Caesar; Cicero was put to death for a number of speeches he made after the death of Caesar, attacking Mark Antony.

moates: spots, blemishes.

moones in armorie: i.e. like images of moons used in heraldry.

The temple...therin: allusion to Christ driving money-changers out of the temple—although, as the poem suggests, leaving the temple standing (Matthew 25.26-28; Mark 11.14-16; John 2.14-16).

The arke: i.e. Noah’s ark.

his predessours goast: reference to Thomas Egerton, Lord Ellesmere, who died in 1617.

his master: presumably the “master” is Egerton himself, as opposed to the spirit.

poize: balance (of justice).

Race not...toy: do not demolish (“rase”) a fine building for mere sport.

sight: probable scribal error; read “sigh”.

that house: the House of Commons.

president: i.e. precedent.
Notes. This poem responds to “When you awake, dull Brittons, and behold”, defending the parliament’s treatment of Bacon. In the process, it develops a trenchant argument, with some republican undertones, in support of the role of parliament.

“A defence to the Answer made for the Lord Bacon”

What hatfull fury dipt thy raging Quill
in deadly Acconite that thow doest fill
each Line with slander and invective spight
against a Sennate whose grave Doome can fright
the most out daring Insolence! fond elfe
to vallew worth by thine unworthy selfe
no monster multitude (ill tutord mate)
censur’d thy faulty Lord butt such a state
as verry hardly parraleld may bee
for wisedome Courage & Integrety
Athens Rome Vennice yeild preheminence
to theyr farr more admired excellence
butt weer our Comons of a Common merritt
none butt a mallepert oreweneing spirritt
durst tax theyse brave Heroes of the state
and Reverend Clergy as inordinate
in theyr first sentence, was it not theyr power
that curbed & crusht your famous Chancellour
and this fayre act which you doe brand with shame
shall add renoune to theyr thrice honoured name
what if defrauding none of that is dew
we graunt that many praysfull parts are trew
which you invest him with, be he a Jemm
fitt to adorne a Royall dyadem
for abstruse knowledg, though the quintessence of arts in him keepe private residence beyond all Common streyn, lett us agree [gap in the ms: suggesting a missing line] that he’s the only Phenix of the time yet this most salvage & inhumane Crime of foule extortion soe doth stayne the rest that whome we most admire, we most detest oh thow misterious deepe Philosophy o thow a kingdomes Pillar Pollecy o filed Phrase, inchaunting eloquence why are yee thus estrang’d from innocence o wretched time; O world of wofull case wheer wismen studdy Nature more then grace if that faire Nimph whose awfull majesty in luster farr surmounts the heavens bright eye devine Astraea⁵ had been harbourd by him no Cicero, no Cato⁶ had come nigh him nor may he now be stild his Country’s father butt both a name a fact aversed⁷ it rather who can with tears bemoane this great mans fall or gild his foule sine like a painted wall who knowing soe much good soe ill did doe selling both right & wrong & conscience too A heynous fault & in him most unjust who had the conscience of a King in trust who with such peccadilloes can dispence I know not what heele call a great offence butt God and his immediate substitute would not permitt him longer to pollute that sacred state but both make ready way
to what he fear’d, as his doomes dreadfull day
thus is he brought to tast corrections rodd
as a vayne man, not as a demmy God
whose property in doing good, butt evell
though joynd with rarest parts befitts a divell
who was an angell alsoe ere he fell
and angell like was made Achitophell\(^8\)
what doe you gaine when with insulting rage
yow bring the dead in scorne upon the stage
if others have done ill, theer’s no defence
found in retorting crimes, but innocence
or what can it prevayle if man pretend
in doeing evell some more specious end
robbing to purchase land, or give away
will find small difference at the reckoning day
a just damnation doth to them belong
who under foule pretence, doe fowlest wrong
since then his fault was of soe high a strayne
tweer great ingratitude should he complaine
of his light censure, when that life and limbe
and Noble titles are preserv’d to him
only the power & wisdome of the land
wrested a weapon from a madd mans hand
had they been more seveer, the Parlament
was nott unfurnisht of a President\(^9\)
Tressilllian learnt a tricke to stretch a string
though by preventing law to please a King\(^10\)
but your inconstant moon as ill hath done
not for a King but for Endimion\(^11\)
your Alban\(^12\) knowes (who knowes much more then I)
how a corrupt Judg was adjudg’d to dye
and his head skin made lining for a chare
wher his suksessor satt, he knowes how fayre
Faine speake Count Holland, who for one poore Cowe 13
condem’d his bailife to the fatall Bough
butt fayrer fall the learned Verrulam
and lett this stayne, that late did stayne his fame
be washt by pennytence; long may he live
and from his unexhausted treasure give
Jewels of witt, art, Language, Polleceye
and teach the world each hidden mistery
of Nature, lett him open all the springs
of Counsell fitt to guide the wisest Kings
for lett oblivion cover former Crimes
and he stand honourd to succeeding times

Source. Huntington MS HM 198, 1.134-36

Mii9

1 Acconite: a poison, derived from a genus of plants of the same name.

2 Athens Rome Vennice: cities associated with republican government, either in ancient or modern times.

3 mallepert: presumptuous, impudent.

4 oreweening: i.e. “overweeing” (having an inflated opinion of oneself).

5 Astraea: in classical mythology, the Just Virgin of the Golden Age; hence a figure representative of justice.

6 no Cicero, no Cato: Roman writers and politicians invoked in “When you awake, dull Brittons, and behould” by way of comparison with Bacon.

7 aversed: averted; opposed. The point is that for Bacon a “fact” of corruption stands in opposition to any “name” of dignity.
Achitophell: i.e. Ahitophel, counsellor of King David who plotted against his master (2 Samuel 15.31, 17.1-23).

President: i.e. precedent.

Tressillian learnt...King: reference to Sir Robert Tressilian, Chief Justice of the King’s Bench under Richard II, who played a critical role in the constitutional crisis of 1386-88. Tressilian co-authored a series of legal statements on the scope of the royal prerogative against the claims of parliament, which effectively accused the parliament of treason. In response, Richard’s baronial enemies accused five of Richard’s advisors of treason, and eventually two (including Tressilian) were executed. Presumably the conviction and execution of Tressilian is the “precedent” to which the poem refers.

but your...Endimion: in classical mythology, Endymion was a mortal who loved the moon, and was either put into a permanent sleep by her, or else chose this condition himself. In the early Stuart period the meaning of the figure is also informed by John Lyly’s Elizabethan allegorical play Endimion, The Man in the Moone, in which Endimion (probably the Earl of Leicester) is in fact released from sleep by Cynthia (the moon; Queen Elizabeth). In the present poem, “Endimion” is almost certainly a figure representative of Buckingham: the suggestion being that Bacon has stretched the law for the favourite’s benefit.

your Alban: i.e. Bacon, Viscount St. Albans.

how a corrupt...Cowe: the details of these precedents, whether factual or mythical, are unclear; however, the poem’s point, about legal corruption and self-interest, is relatively straightforward.
Blame not the Poet though he make such moane
for’s Lord since in his case he pleads his owne
if that his Lord must such sharpe censure have
what then must hee that was soe very a knave
yet as his faultes were more so may we say
his witts weare for he quickly run away¹
Like to the man that saw his Master kisse
thee Poopes foote feard that a worse place was his
may the Lords cure succeede his punishment
and justice him oretake that it ore went
   Though scap’d his first, he stay till the laste doome
   and cry let hir alone till that day come

Source. BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 86r

¹ he quickly run away: William Lewis, the likely author of “When you awake, dull Brittons, and behould”, mysteriously fled to Paris not long after Bacon’s fall.
Miii The Aftermath: reflections and assessments

Miii1 One worthy Chancellour rendred up his place

Notes. In November 1620, John Chamberlain noted that, “It seemes we live of late under some rolling planet for it is observed that in lesse than five yeares most of our principall officers have ben displaced or disgraced, as a Lord Chauncellor, a Lord Treasurer, a Lord Chamberlain, a Lord Admirall, a master of the horse, a secretarie, a master of the wards, a Lord Cheife Justice and an Atturny generall” (2.325). This verse, probably written a year after Chamberlain’s report, in the aftermath of Bacon’s fall and another spate of dismissals and new appointments, offers a similar perspective on the “rowlinge tumblinge Age” for officers of state.

One worthy Chancellour\(^1\) rendred up his place
another was removed with disgrace\(^2\)
Two treasurers\(^3\) a Maister of the Horse\(^4\)
An Admirall\(^5\) all changed for the worse
Two Chequer Chancellors\(^6\) two Cheife Justices\(^7\)
two secretaries\(^8\) sped as ill as these
Maister of the wards\(^9\) domestike officers
And favourites\(^{10}\) herein have had their shares
Of privy Councellours noe lesse then ten
Forbeare the Councell untill god knowes when
Even true Religion that these threescore yeares\(^{11}\)
hath setled beene, an alteration feares\(^{12}\)
And you great lords that yet are on the stage
Stand fast this is a rowlinge tumblinge Age.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 13r

Miii1

\(^1\) One worthy Chancellour: Lord Chancellor Thomas Egerton, Lord Ellesmere, died in March 1617, days after surrendering the Great Seal.
another…disgrace: Ellesmere’s successor, Sir Francis Bacon, impeached by Parliament in 1621.

Two treasurers: Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, charged with gross corruption, was dismissed as Lord Treasurer in July 1618. Sir Henry Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, was Suffolk’s eventual successor (in 1620), but surrendered the office late in 1621 to Sir Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex.

Maister of the Horse: James I appointed his favourite George Villiers (later Duke of Buckingham) as Master of the Horse in January 1616, replacing Edward Somerset, 4th Earl of Worcester, who was appointed, in compensation, Lord Privy Seal.

Admirall: George Villiers, Marquis of Buckingham, replaced Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, as Lord Admiral in January 1619.

Two Chequer Chancellors: turnover in the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer was significantly less pronounced than in other positions. Sir Julius Caesar held the office from 1606 to 1614, and Sir Fulke Greville from 1614 to 1621. In November 1621, Sir Richard Weston replaced Greville.

two Cheife Justices: Sir Edward Coke was dismissed as Lord Chief Justice in 1616; his successor, Sir Henry Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, was replaced in 1620 by Sir James Ley.

two secretaries: one of the two Secretaries is Sir Thomas Lake, who lost office as a result of the scandal that engulfed his family in 1618-19 (see Section J). The other is either Sir Ralph Winwood, who died in office in October 1617, or Sir Robert Naunton, who was threatened with dismissal in 1621 though in fact survived in office until 1623.

Maister of the wards: William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford, son-in-law of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, was dismissed as Master of the Wards in December 1618.

favourites: alluding to the fall of the favourite Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset in 1615-16 (see Section H).

true Religion…threescore yeares: dating the establishment of the “true Religion”—Protestantism—in England to the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558 and to the Elizabethan Church settlement that ensued.

an alteration feares: alluding to the growing fears of a resurgence of Catholicism, possibly to be authorized in the terms for a marriage alliance with Spain.
Notes. Versions of this detailed poem on politics in the early 1620s differ considerably in length, and it seems likely that extra verses were added by different hands in the course of the poem’s circulation. In one source it is dated “March 1621” (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50).

When Charles, hath got the Spanish Gearle
The Puritans will scold & bralle
But Digbie then shall be made an Earle
And Spanish gold shall pay for all

When Suffolke gets the king to frend
& makes his wife to cease to brall
he then may finish Audeley end
& the old accompt shall pay for all

When Sussex cured of the pox yow see
& his whores relived from the hospital
his countesse then will honest be
& the Surgion shalbe payed for all

When Mansfeild taken hath Argires
then paules shall have a steeple tall
the Lord mayor then the churchyard cleares
& the Turkish gold shall pay for all

When Sackfeild Spinola shall take
& Wentworth brings Bucquoy to thrall
then King will then be frends with Lake
& the Lady Rosse shall pay for all

When Cranfeild is Lord Tresorer made
then soope & Candles sure will fall
& all his Soveraignes debts be payd
& thats the day shall pay all

When the Banquetting howse is finishd quite
then Jones Sir Inigo we will call
& Poetts Ben brave masks shall write
& a Parlament shall pay for all

When oxford doth from Weesele come
Then Joy to poore decayed Turnball for up goes every wenches bom
& the ould baude shall paye for all

Sir Gyles is much displeased with king
that he a parlament doth call
but my ast and oastis they doe sing
the day is com shall paye for all

The Scotchmen are but begger yet
although theire begging be not small
but when a parlament doth sitt
the subsidyes shall pay for all

When Buckingham had got his Kate her father seemed to fret his galle
but when the preest concluded her fate
he was contente to paye for all

When purbeck hath recovered his witt & cooke amended his cases all
then hutton house heele get
& the day will come shall paye for all

Greate Edward his is Nowe in print
& thinks to get the divell & all
The Spanish gould come to our minte
then thats the day shall pay for all

When Kitt \(^{35}\) doth leave his healthes to drinke
& take delight in beere but small
a shall be then a lord som thinke
& the London Lasse shall pay for all

When Yelverton \(^{36}\) shalbe releassed
& Buckingham begine to fall
then will the commons be well pleased
& that hath long been wished of all

They say Sejanus \(^{37}\) doth bestowe
what ever offices doe fall
but tis well knowne it is not so
for he is soundly payed for all

Theares none doth nowe so much as name
the Eearle of Somersett \(^{38}\) at all
but suerly he was much to blame
for he should once have hang’d \(^{39}\) for all

When Doncaster \(^{40}\) puts money to use
& Devonshier \(^{41}\) prove a prodigall
& cooke \(^{42}\) leaves of to playe the goose
then thats the day shall paye for all

O Chanclor \(^{43}\) hat bine bribd with plate
to aunswer which they doe him call
Lord Egerton \(^{44}\) he sent too late
for the daye is come shall paye for all
The day that most have wisht to see
is nowe at hand of Bacons fall
but maney men will loosers bee
For he can never pay them all\(^4\)

A countesse\(^4\) doth her husband rebuke
& bids him goe & com at her call
but when her Sonne is created a Duke
the day will com shall pay for all

**Source.** Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, fol. 229r-v

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 108r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 31v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 179v; TCD MS 806, fol. 581v; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 29v; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 66

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1. *When Charles...Gearle: i.e. when Prince Charles has married the Spanish Infanta (see Section N).*

2. *Digbie:* Sir John Digby, later Earl of Bristol, James’s ambassador to Spain to negotiate the Spanish Match.

3. *Suffolke:* Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, who had been dismissed as Lord Treasurer in 1618 for corruption.

4. *his wife:* Catherine Howard, Countess of Suffolk.

5. *Audeley end:* Audley End, Suffolk’s palatial house, construction of which was financed with his profits from office.

6. *Sussex:* Robert Radcliffe, 5th Earl of Sussex. This stanza implies the Earl had a notorious reputation for womanizing. On the death of his wife in December 1623, he was swiftly remarried to a woman Chamberlain reported as “his concubine” (2.533).

7. *pox:* syphilis.

8. *countesse:* Bridget, Countess of Sussex.
Mansfield taken hath Argires: Sir Robert Mansell led an English fleet on an expedition against the Barbary pirates of Algiers, 1620-21.

paules: St. Paul’s Cathedral, London. The Cathedral was in poor physical repair, and an appeal to raise funds had been launched in 1620.

Turkish gold: presumably the wealth taken from the Muslim Barbary pirates based in Algiers.

Sackfield: possibly Sir Edward Sackville, an officer in Sir Horace Vere’s 1620 volunteer force to aid Frederick V, Elector Palatine.

Spinola: Ambrosio Spinola, Spanish general who commanded the conquest of the Palatinate in 1620-21.

Wentworth: Sir John Wentworth, an officer in the English volunteer force commanded by Sir Horace Vere to aid Frederick V, Elector Palatine.

Bucquoy: Charles Bonaventure de Longueval, Count of Bucquoy, commander of Imperial forces against the rebels in Bohemia.

then: probable scribal error; read “the”

Lake: Sir Thomas Lake, former Secretary of State, who fell from office in 1618-19 as a result of a scandal involving defamation, forgery and the suborning of witnesses (see Section J).

Lady Rosse: Anne Cecil, Lady Roos, daughter of Sir Thomas Lake and widow of William Cecil, Lord Roos. Lady Roos was imprisoned in 1619 as a result of the defamation, forgery and suborning charges that also brought down her father (see Section J).

Cranfeild: Sir Lionel Cranfield, who became Lord Treasurer late in 1621.

fall: i.e. fall in price, presumably thanks to Cranfield’s reforms of the monopolies on soap and candles.

Banqueting howse: the new Banqueting House in the palace of Whitehall, designed by Inigo Jones, and completed by March 1622.

Jones Sir Inigo: Inigo Jones, the designer of the Banqueting House at Whitehall. He was never knighted.

Poetts Ben: Ben Jonson. (“Poetts” is a probable scribal error; read “Poet”.)

oxford: Henry de Vere, 19th Earl of Oxford, and a member of Sir Horace Vere’s 1620 expeditionary
force to aid Frederick V, Elector Palatine.

25 Weesele: Wesel, a town in the Rhineland, occupied by the Spanish since 1614. Vere’s force marched through Wesel in 1620.

26 Turnbull: Turnbull Street in London, notorious for its whorehouses. On Oxford’s whoremongering reputation, see “Some say Sir Edward Cecill can”.

27 Sir Gyles: Sir Giles Mompesson, monopolist.

28 ast and oastis: host and hostess; i.e. the proprietors of the inns now freed from Mompesson’s intrusive regulation.

29 Buckingham...Kate: George Villiers, Earl of Buckingham, married Katherine (Kate) Manners, daughter of the Earl of Rutland, in May 1620.

30 her father: Francis Manners, 6th Earl of Rutland, who initially opposed the match with Buckingham because of the amount of dowry demanded and because it would require his daughter to renounce her Catholicism.

31 purbeck...witt: Buckingham’s elder brother, John Villiers, Viscount Purbeck was afflicted with bouts of insanity.

32 cooke: Sir Edward Coke. Coke had fought bitterly with his wife Elizabeth, Lady Hatton, to permit their daughter Frances to marry John Villiers. After an epic feud, Coke got his way and the couple was married late in 1617.

33 hutton house: presumably Hatton House, one of Coke’s wife’s properties that would come to Purbeck as result of his marriage to Frances Coke.

34 Greate Edward...print: unclear; possibly a reference to Sir Edward Coke’s work on successive volumes of his case-law Reports.

35 Kitt: Buckingham’s younger brother, Sir Christopher Villiers.

36 Yelverton: Sir Henry Yelverton, former Attorney-General. Yelverton had been dismissed from office in 1620. In April 1621, testifying to the House of Lords on patents and monopolies, Yelverton launched a blistering attack on Buckingham and his kindred. James ordered Yelverton imprisoned, a sentence that was confirmed by the House of Lords in May 1621.

37 Sejanus: notorious favourite of the Roman Emperor Tiberius; here implying Buckingham.

38 Earle of Somersett: Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, Buckingham’s predecessor as favourite, who
was brought down in the Overbury murder scandal of 1615-16 (see Section H).

39  *hang’d:* Somerset was sentenced to die for his role in Overbury’s murder; however, the sentence was never carried out.

40  *Doncaster:* James Hay, Viscount Doncaster, a noted profligate.

41  *Devonshier:* William Cavendish, Earl of Devonshire. Chamberlain reports that at the time of Cavendish’s elevation a “rime” attacking Cavendish and other recently ennobled men, termed the new Earl of Devonshire “a Lombard or usurer”, suggesting he had a reputation for miserliness (2.163).

42  *cooke:* Sir Edward Coke.

43  *Chanclor:* Lord Chancellor, Sir Francis Bacon, impeached for bribery by the 1621 Parliament.

44  *Lord Egerton:* Thomas Egerton, Lord Ellesmere, Bacon’s predecessor as Lord Chancellor.

45  *he can never...all:* Bacon’s debts were notoriously huge, and his means of paying them notoriously limited.

46  *A countesse:* the reference here is unclear, but the likeliest candidate—given that her son was in line to be created a duke—is Mary Villiers, Countess of Buckingham, mother of George Villiers the royal favourite. Her husband was Thomas, Lord Compton.
Notes. In the summer of 1621, James appointed the Dean of Westminster, John Williams, as the new Lord Keeper and Bishop of Lincoln. This poet’s low opinion of Williams’s qualifications for high office is captured in the anagram on Williams’s name that precedes this verse. The anagram also circulated separately (in Huntington MS HM 116, for instance, it is transcribed alongside a second anagram on Williams: see “Anagram on John Williams”); however, here it not only accompanies the libel but also becomes the basis for the final, mocking, verdict on Williams delivered in the last ten lines of the verse.

Anagram:
John Williams
Who I? silly man

Thy followers in hope to flatter thee
Will sweare thou dost deserve this dignity
Of beeing keeper, and thy freinds in love,
Will say as much as may thy faults remove.
truth thou shalt never heare from them, and foes
With too much passions thy name expose,
to all untruth: and strangers of thy worth,
Dare not for fear of punishment speak truth.
But that thou mayest thy owne life character
Discerne¹ and know what thou art & what hereafter,
Time will speake of thee: know within thy name
Thy selfe doth question and resolve the same,
Most just of all sides: let thy name speake then
John Williams, who I? a silly man
Thou well maiest wonder from the keyes of Peter²
That thou should’st rise into the place of keeper
And when in modesty thy name thus courts thee
It speakes but truly what all men report thee.
Source. John Rylands MS Eng. 410, fol. 26v

Other known sources. Huntington MS HM 116, p. 137 (the anagram only)

Mii3

1 But that...Discerne: some contemporaries believed that a person’s true character could be hidden in the letters of his or her name; thus anagramming could stake a claim not only as an exercise in wit, but also as a form of revelation.

2 keyes of Peter: Williams was Dean of Westminster Abbey, the church of St. Peter.
**Miii4 Anagram on John Williams**

*Notes.* In the only known source, this anagram is paired with the similar anagram used at the beginning of “Thy followers in hope to flatter thee”.

Who I silly man
I mis only law

**Source.** Huntington MS HM 116, p. 137

Miii4
Notes. This poem concerns a visit by King James to Oxford in August 1621, for the duration of which he kept his court at Woodstock. The poem clearly became best-known for its final eight lines, which describe a famously disastrous sermon delivered by Richard Corbett, who was at that time Dean of Christ Church. Corbett was evidently distracted from his sermon by a ring which had been given to him by the King, and as a result lost his place in his script. Indeed these lines are commonly transcribed as a discrete poem (see list below), as well as being incorporated into the longer version.

“On the Schollers flocking to Woodstock”

The Kinge & the court desyrous of sport
   Six dayes at Woodstock did lye:¹
The reverend Doctors, & Sattin-sleeved Proctors²
   And rest of the Juvenall frye:
Whose faces did shine, with beere & with wine,
   Soe fatt, that it may be thought,
University cheere, with Colledge stronge beere
   Made them better fedd then taught.

An hundred beside, on horsebacke did ride
   For Schollers were wondrous kind,
And ever more, as they rode before
   They kisse the wenches behind.
A 1000 on foote, without cloake or boote,
   Came hither as good subjects should
And all was to show, how far they would goe
   To do the kings Majesty good.

The Reverend Deane³ with his band starch’d cleane
   Did preach before the kinge
A ringe I espyed, in his bandstrings tyed
Was not that a pretty thing?
The ringe without doubt, was that brought him out
And made him forgett what was next:
For every one there, will say, I dare sweare
Hee handled it more then his text.

Source. Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 40r

Other known sources. Aubrey 167; Wit Restor'd 62; Stoughton Manuscript 62; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 40v; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 31r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 13; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 111; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 73v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 206, p. 72; Bodleian MS Tanner 466, fol. 67r; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 22v; BL Add. MS 70454, fol. 53r; BL Add. MS 70639, fol. 65r; Folger MS V.a.124, fol. 19v; Folger MS V.a.262, p. 60; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 185

Known sources of the shorter version. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 122; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 156r; Bodleian MS Aubrey 6, fol. 106r; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 15v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 81v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 4v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 116, fol. 54r; Bodleian MS Smith 17, p. 111; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 81r; BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 28r; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 36v; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 10v; BL MS Egerton 2026, fol. 66r; BL MS Harley 7316, fol. 17v; BL MS Sloane 1479, fol. 10r; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 12r; BL MS Sloane 1867, fol. 45r; NLS MS 2060, fol. 15v; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 207

1 Six dayes at Woodstock did lye: the visit to Woodstock, near Oxford, took place in the last week of August 1621 (Nichols 4.713-15).

2 Proctors: officers of the university.

3 Reverend Deane: Richard Corbett, Dean of Christ Church.
On 24 December 1620, James I issued a strongly-worded proclamation:

forasmuch as it comes to Our eares, by common report, That there is at this time a more licentious passage of lavish discourse, and bold Censure in matters of State, then hath been heretofore, or is fit to be suffered, Wee have thought it necessary, by the advice of Our Privie Councell, to give forewarning unto Our loving Subjects, of this excesse and presumption; And straitly to command them and evry of them, from the highest to the lowest, to take heede, how they intemeddle by Penne, or Speech, with causes of State, and secrets of Empire, either at home, or abroad, but containe themselves within that modest and reverent regard, of matters, above their reach and calling, that to good and dutifull Subjects appertaineth.

Seven months later, James was forced to reissue the command (Stuart Royal Proclamations 1. 495-96, 519-20). Neither proclamation made any difference—the volume of “lavish and licentious speech” on matters political, both domestic and foreign, continued to escalate. And, howling as loud (and as licentiously) as any other element in this chorus of dangerous political speech, were the “railing rymes and vaunting verse”of the libellers (“O stay your teares yow who complaine”).

The escalation both in the quantity and in the political daring of the verse libels written during the period 1618-1623 was both a direct result of, and a powerful contribution to, the intensity of debate about the course of James I’s foreign policy, in particular his attempts to seek a Spanish bride for his son and heir Prince Charles. Although the ecumenically-minded James had mulled over the benefits of a marriage alliance with Catholic Spain since making peace with the Spanish in 1604, and had actually begun serious negotiations as early as 1614-15, the Match became a real source of public controversy only in the aftermath of the outbreak of confessional warfare on the Continent, triggered by the Bohemian revolt of 1618. The Protestant Bohemians’ deposition of their Catholic Habsburg king, the future Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand of Styria, was of more than passing concern to James and his subjects. For the Bohemian rebels chose in Ferdinand’s stead, James I’s son-in-law Frederick V, Elector Palatine, who had married James’s daughter Elizabeth in 1613. Much to James’s dismay, Frederick accepted the rebels’ offer of the crown. The consequences were disastrous. Frederick and Elizabeth were driven from their new kingdom after a major defeat at the Battle of White Mountain in November 1620. Meanwhile, Frederick’s lands in the Lower Palatinate had been
occupied by Spanish armies under Spinola, who saw these crucial Rhineland territories as strategically indispensable in the war with the United Provinces that would almost inevitably ensue upon the expiration of the Spanish-Dutch twelve-year truce in 1621. Driven from Bohemia, from the Lower Palatinate and, by October 1621, also from the lands of the Upper Palatinate seized by the Catholic Duke of Bavaria, Frederick and Elizabeth became exiles, sheltered by the Dutch government at The Hague.

The Bohemian-Palatinate crisis opened up dangerous divisions of opinion in England. Many called for war—whether a war of religion or a war of dynastic and national honour—to protect the Palatinate, Protestant and Stuart interests against their Catholic foes. James, however, remained embarrassed at his son-in-law’s actions, and committed himself to a diplomatic solution, the cornerstone of which was the long-mooted marriage alliance with Spain. For James, a marriage alliance with Spain offered solutions to many of his problems: in diplomatic terms, an alliance between England and Spain might help collapse the rigid divisions between the confessional camps that were squaring off across the battlefields of Europe; an alliance might also allow James to secure Spanish assistance in returning the Palatinate to Frederick V, or in negotiating some kind of settlement between Frederick and the King of Spain’s understandably irate cousin, the Emperor Ferdinand. A match with Spain also brought both symbolic and material benefits: marrying into the most powerful royal house in Europe would impress upon the world the dynastic status of the House of Stuart; and, in material terms, the marriage offered James the tempting prospect of a massive dowry to replenish his chronically strapped coffers. For many of James’s subjects, however, the pursuit of the Spanish Match threatened to sanction the permanent abandonment of the suffering Palatinate and Protestant cause to the forces of the Habsburg Antichrist. Spain, many believed, was England’s natural enemy, and the marriage alliance but a cunning plan to engineer England’s capitulation to Spanish aspirations for a “universal monarchy” under the political sway of Madrid and the spiritual sway of Rome. Opposition to, and anxiety about, James’s foreign policy, took many forms—from parliamentary agitation during the turbulent 1621 sessions, to the rowdy jeers of London apprentices hurled at the Spanish ambassador, Don Diego de Sarmiento, Count Gondomar. Opposition was also expressed in a variety of polemical writing. Pamphlets attacking the Match and warning of Spain’s sinister ambitions were printed abroad and
smuggled into England to be consumed by a voracious public. Newsletters and printed serial newspapers (corantos) reported in detail the shifting military fortunes of the Protestant cause. Parliamentary speeches, leaked letters of advice, and other critical tracts circulated as manuscript separates. And alongside the pamphlets, copied down next to separates, enclosed in newsletters, were verse libels.

We have chosen to organize our collection of the extant verse libels on the Spanish Match into six interlinked subsections. The first assembles a small group of poems that couched their anxieties and hopes in the form of prophecy, alongside which we have also chosen to include James I’s verses explicitly mocking his contemporaries’ tendency to interpret signs and prodigies as portents of imminent doom. The second subsection collects those poems that deal explicitly or implicitly with the diplomatic and military issues surrounding the Bohemia-Palatinate crisis. The third subsection collects a small group of verses attacking the Spanish ambassador Gondomar, whose second posting to England from 1620 to 1622 coincided with the heightening of anxieties about the Spanish Match. Subsection four publishes two of the most remarkable libels of the age, one framed as the petition of the English common people to the late Queen Elizabeth, and the other purporting to be the Queen’s reply. The paired poems generate a truly radical energy, merging prophetic urgency, providentialism, and scriptural warrant with a markedly anti-Stuart nostalgia for a heavily idealized Elizabethan golden age. The fifth subsection collects the significant mass of politicized manuscript verse triggered by the reckless 1623 journey to Madrid by Prince Charles and the royal favourite Buckingham. The Prince and favourite seem to have imagined the voyage as a romantic attempt to finally secure the marriage alliance through a kind of chivalric coup de théatre. Among their shocked contemporaries, however, the voyage inspired bewildered fear and widespread criticism only partially countered by some impassioned defences. For many, 1623 appeared to promise nothing but catastrophe for both the nation and the True Religion. For several months, the heir to the throne was in Madrid, under Spanish control and surveillance, and prey both to the pressure to convert to Rome, and to the machinations of Spanish diplomats eager to extract religious toleration for English Catholics as the price of a marriage treaty. Back in England, the easing of persecution of Catholics as part of the negotiations with Spain had allowed several openly Catholic peers to achieve prominence and office, and had triggered a wave of high-
profile conversions at court, including the sensational conversion of Buckingham’s mother, Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham. And in Germany, the Palatinate cause seemed more hopeless then ever—in February 1623, the Duke of Bavaria had been appointed the new Elector Palatine, and by May the whole of Frederick’s inheritance was under Habsburg control. Many of the anxieties and debates generated by these events are documented in the libels and counter-libels written during the Prince’s absence from February to October 1623. The libels also document the sheer joy to which these anxieties turned upon the arrival home of the unmarried—and increasingly Hispanophobic—Prince in October 1623.

While the poems in this section form a relatively coherent body of work, they also connect in many ways with poems in other sections. Notably, our final subsection includes two powerful verse commentaries on the frenetic libelling of the early 1620s—one probably written by James I himself, the other by a poet known only as “Wm T.”. Both poems direct their fire at particular charges levelled in the libels of the age, and at the broader political implications of the whole culture of libelling. Wm T.’s anti-libel, for instance, alludes openly to verses (published in Section L) that branded James I’s favourite Buckingham as the king’s homosexual “Ganymede”. Similarly, a number of other verses in Section N allude to grievances connected to the debate on monopolies and corruption that preoccupied the 1621 Parliament (see Section M). Anti-popish and anti-Spanish anxieties that appear throughout Section N can also be found in the major poem in Section K (“Some would complaine of Fortune & blinde chance”), in some of the poems on the execution of Ralegh (Section I), and in some of those on the Roos-Lake scandal (Section J). These overlaps should make clear that our decision to thematically organize the poetry written between 1616 and 1623 into Sections I through N should not preclude attention to the numerous interconnections between the libels composed during this period.

While we note below some of the more interesting scholarly commentary on individual libels, the most important general reconstruction of the politics of the pamphlet, poetic and parliamentary debates on the Spanish Match can be found in the opening chapter of Cogswell’s *Blessed Revolution*. 

N0

528
Ni Prophecy and Portent c.1618-1623

Notes. This poem is accepted as the work of King James. The appearance of a comet in the late autumn skies of 1618 triggered widespread speculation about its possible providential meaning. Was the “blazeing starr” a sign of God’s displeasure, or a portent of disaster to come? Some predicted war, some a crisis in religion or the death of kings. Some, as James’s verse makes clear, connected the comet to divine disapproval of the King’s attempts to seek a marriage alliance with Spain. James’s poem, with its pointed jibes at the Paul’s Walk newsmongers and at popular credulity, registers royal concern at the political implications of the kind of prophetic talk triggered by the comet’s appearance.

“King James on the blazeing starr: Octo: 28: 1618”

You men of Britaine, wherefore gaze yee so
Uppon an Angry starr, whenh as yee know
The sun shall turne to darknesse, the Moon to blood¹
And then twill be to late for to turne good
O be so happy then while time doth last
As to remember Dooms day is not past
And misinterpret not, with vaine Conceit
The Caracter you see on Heaven gate.
Which though it bring the world some news from fate
The letters such as no man can translate
And for to guesse at God Almighty’s minde
Where such a thing might Cozen all mankinde
Wherfore I wish the Curious man to keep
His rash Imaginations till he sleepe
Then let him dreame of Famine plague & war
And thinke the match with spaine hath causd this star
Or let them thinke that if their Prince my Minion²
Will shortly chang, or which is worse religion

¹
²
And that he may have nothing else to fear
Let him walk Pauls, and meet the Devils there
And if he be a Puritan, and escapes
Jesuites, salute them in their proper shapes
These Jealousies I would not have a Treason
In him whose Fancy overrules his Reason
Yet to be sure it did no harm, 'Twere fit
He would be bold to pray for no more wit
But only to conceal his dream, for there
Be those that will believe what he dares fear.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 72r

Other known sources. James VI and I 2.172; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 45; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 77v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 11; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 39; Bodleian MS Smith 17, p. 141; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 81r; BL Add. MS 3910, fol. 29v; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 21r; BL MS Harley 791, fol. 61r; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 75r; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 19r; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 19v; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 174; PRO SP 14/104/16; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 31r; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 143; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.29; Rosenbach MS 239/22, fol. 26v

1. *The sun...Moon to blood:* alluding to other astronomical phenomena—eclipses, for example—interpreted by contemporaries as portents and providential signs.

2. *their Prince my Minion:* the copy in PRO SP 14/104/16 has “theyr Prince, and Mynion”. The line refers to speculation that the comet signalled the fall or death of the King, and the fall of the royal favourite, Buckingham.

3. *walke Pauls:* to walk Paul’s was to haunt the nave and aisles of St. Paul’s Cathedral (Paul’s Walk) in search of news. St. Paul’s was the centre of political newsmongering in early Stuart London.

4. *Puritan:* nickname for the hotter sort of Protestant, used here by the King in its original pejorative sense.

5. *Jesuites:* members of the Catholic order, the Society of Jesus, and widely feared by English Protestants as the most militant arm of the Counter-Reformation.
**Notes.** In the only known source, this obscurely phrased poem follows a statement, in prose, detailing the prophecies of John Williams, of the Middle Temple, who was executed in 1619. Williams evidently interpreted the four Protestant English monarchs in relation to the horses of the book of Revelation, and prophesied that James would die in 1621, and that his death would be followed by confusion in the nation. The poem was presumably written by Williams; however, it may have been penned by another, as a comment on Williams’s prophecies. Although the verse does not comment specifically on the Spanish Match or the renewal of confessional war on the continent, it deserves to be read alongside the other prophetic poetry triggered by the crisis.

These put together, thus they crye:
Alas, ’twas H. E. E. the fourth was J.¹
Fowre letters doe their persons show,
The place, the tyme, & tymes of wooe.

H. Which letter shewes halfe tymes defection.²
E. Which brought the church to lay-protection
E. Which brought t’ a woman lay-subjection
J. Which shewes sin’s ripe and at perfection.

These 4 letters shew the fall,
Of them & of theyr Generall.³

**Source.** Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 88r

¹ *Alas...the fourth was J.*: H. is Henry VIII; E. is Edward VI; E. is Elizabeth I; and J. is James I. Presumably the poet intended this cry, “Alas, ’twas hee the fourth was jay” to have some kind of prophetic meaning, perhaps by taking “jay” in the sense of foolish, chattering person.

² *halfe tymes defection:* possibly an allusion to Henry VIII’s break with Rome in the second half of his reign.
3 fall...theyr Generall: unclear; perhaps the intent is to predict not simply the fall of kings but the fall of all kings.
Notes. This poem on James I, often titled “Merlin’s Prophecy”, had an uncertain status in manuscript culture. John Rous, whose 1622 version is reproduced here, prefaced his copy with some notes about Merlin (“who was famous about the year of Chr. 433”), and speculation that the poem was known to an author in 1588. This suggests that he, if not others, took the poem seriously as prophecy.

Ni3  A Prince out of the North shall come

A Prince out of the North shall come,
King borne, Crownde babe, his brest upon
a lyon rampant strange to see,
& C J S shall cleped be
borne in a Country rude & stony,
yet he Couragious wise & holie.
At beste of strength his Fortunes beste
he shall receive, & then in reste
couche as a Lyon in his denne,
& live in peace so long, till men
shall wonder, & all Christendome
thinke the time long, both all & some.
At last he calleth a Parliament,
& breakes it up in discontent.
And shortlie then shall rowzed be,
by enemie beyonde the sea;
But when in wrath he drawes his sworde,
Woe, that the sleeping Lyon stird’e.
For ere he sheathes the same againe
he putteth his foes to mickle paine
The Valiant acts he then shall doe,
greate Alexanders fame out-goe.
He passeth seas & fame doth winne,
till many Princes joyne with him, & chuse him for their Governor, & crowne him Westerne Emperor. And after a while he shall beguile, the City auncient oulde & greate, which on seaven hilles is scituate, \(^{10}\) till he her walles hath ruinate. Then shall a foe from Easte \(^{11}\) appeere the brinke of one greate river \(^{12}\) neere, The Lyon rampant shall him meete, & if on this side they shall fight the day is loste, but he shall crosse the river greate, & being paste shall in the strength of his greate god, be to his foes a scourging rodd. causing him thence to take his flight of Easterne kings succour to seeke Then shall he be in an hower of East & west crownde Emperour. \(^{13}\) Then shall the foe in fury burne, & from the Easte in haste returne, with aide of Kinges & Princes greate, into the Vale of Jehosaphat. \(^{14}\) There shall he meete the Lyon strong, who in a battaile fierce & long shall foile his foes. Then cruell death shall take away his aged breathe.

**Source.** BL Add. MS 28640, fol. 101r-v

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Ashmole 423, fol. 263r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 26v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 67r; Bodleian MS Tanner 88, fol. 253r; BL Add. MS 27879, fol. 239v;
1. *A Prince out of the North:* i.e. James VI of Scotland, who became James I of England in 1603.

2. *Crownde babe:* James became King of Scotland when he was one year old.

3. *a lyon rampant:* the heraldic badge of the Scottish king.


5. *a Country rude & stony:* Scotland. The English had a low opinion of Scotland’s charms (see Section E).

6. *At beste...receive:* this refers to James’s inheritance of the English throne in 1603.

7. *calles a Parliament...in discontent:* the obvious “prophetic” allusion is to the 1621 Parliament.


10. *the City auncient...scituate:* the city of Rome, seat of the papacy, and built on seven hills.

11. *a foe from Easte:* probably the Turkish Ottoman empire.

12. *one greate river:* the river’s identity is unclear.

13. *of East & west crownde Emperour:* presumably the Lion/James would be crowned Emperor of the East in Constantinople, then under Ottoman Turk control.

14. *Vale of Jehosaphat:* the valley where God will judge the heathen (see Joel 3.2, 3.12).
Notes. This prophetic poem, which sets the Spanish Match crisis within a longer historical context dating back to the English defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, was probably composed in 1623.

“A prophecy found of late in the Abby of Saint Bennets in Norfolke”

If 88 be past then thrive
   Thou maist till 44 or five
After the maid is dead a Scott
   Shall govern them and if a plott
Prevent him not then sure his sway
   Continue shall full many a day
The nynth shall dy and then the first
   Perhapes shall raigne but oh accurst
Shall be the tyme when as you see
   To sixteen joyned twenty three.
For then the eagle shall have help
   By craft to catch the Lyons whelp
And hurt him sore unles the same
   Be cured by one of the maidens name
In July moneth of that same yeare
   Saturne conjoynes with Jupiter
Perhaps false prophets shall aris
   And Mahomet shall shew his priz
But sure much Alteration
   Shall be had in Religion
Believe this trew if then you see
   A Spaniard protestant to bee.

Source. Folger MS V.a.275, p. 176
Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 47, fol. 40r; Bodleian MS Ashmole 423, fol. 265r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 7v; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 398, fol. 162r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1092, fol. 23r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 15v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 169v; BL Add. MS 34217, fol. 41v; BL Add. MS 69883B, fol. 76r; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 31v; BL MS Sloane 292, fol. 2v; BL MS Sloane 1479, fol. 8v; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 9v; BL MS Sloane 1492, fol. 9v; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 72; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 189; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 133

1 44 or five: forty-four or forty-five years after 1588; i.e. 1622-23.

2 the maid: Elizabeth I, who died in March 1603.

3 a Scott: James I.

4 a plott: the Catholic Gunpowder Plot of 1605, which planned to blow up James I as he addressed Parliament.

5 The nth shall dy: James’s eldest son Prince Henry died in November 1612. If Henry had lived to succeed James, he would have ruled as Henry IX.

6 the first...shall raigne: Prince Charles was James’s heir in 1623, and would rule as Charles I.

7 the eagle...Lyons whelp: this most likely alludes to Prince Charles’s voyage to Spain in 1623. The eagle is Spain, the “Lyons whelp” (lion’s cub) is Charles. Contemporaries believed that pro-Spanish agents at the English court had tricked Charles into making his reckless journey to woo the Infanta of Spain.

8 one of the maidens name: James I’s daughter Elizabeth, who shared the name of the “maiden” Queen, Elizabeth I. Princess Elizabeth was married to Frederick V, Elector Palatine, whose failed assumption of the Crown of Bohemia had triggered the outbreak of the Thirty Years’ War and the loss of the Palatinate to Spanish and Bavarian troops.

9 In July...Jupiter: the astrological conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter on 9 July 1623, which had provoked much anxiety and speculation in advance of the event.

10 Mahomet: the prophet Mohammed, founder of Islam. Presumably, the prophecy alludes to possible victories by the Ottoman Turks.

11 Alteration...in Religion: 1623 saw widespread fears that English Protestantism, as a consequence of the Spanish Match, was to be undermined and displaced by Roman Catholicism.
Notes. At the insistence of the Palatinate ambassador—and over the favourite Buckingham’s objections—Sir Horace Vere replaced Sir Edward Cecil as commander of the English volunteer force sent to the Palatinate in 1620. The only known copy of this libel can be found in John Chamberlain’s 4 August 1620 newsletter to Dudley Carleton.

Some say Sir Edward Cecill can,
Do as much as any man,
But I say no, for Sir Horace Vere
Hath caried the earle of Oxford\(^1\) where,
He neither shall have wine nor whore,
Now Hercules\(^2\) himself could do no more.

Source. Chamberlain 2.314-15

\(^1\) the earle of Oxford: Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, who held a military command under Sir Horace Vere in the 1620 English volunteer expeditionary force to assist the Palatinate.

\(^2\) Hercules: Greek mythological hero renowned for his strength.
Notes. This poem is a translation of a Latin poem written by Robert Ayton, and published in Delitiae Poetarum Scotorum 70. Cogswell (Blessed Revolution 24) discusses Ayton’s poem and places it in the broader context of discontent at Jacobean foreign policy.

Whiles thy sonnes rash unluckye armes attempt,
From the Austrian yoake Bohemian necke t’exempt,¹
Thow dost condemne this plott² K. James; & that
The world may thinke thee no confederate,
Thow leavst thy sonne to fates, & wilt not ayd,
Though but with prayers alone his case decayd.
Nay with unwatered, undew’d cheeks canst see,
Throwne out of house & home thy progenye.³
Rare proofe of justice! yet lett me but utter,
With thy good leave what all the world doth mutter.
This way perhapps a just Kinge thou mayst seeme,
But men a cruell Father will thee deeme.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 20

Other known sources. Houghton MS Eng. 686, fol. 17r

¹ Whiles thy sonnes...t’exempt: James I’s son-in-law, Frederick V, Elector Palatine, was elected King of Bohemia in August 1619 after Bohemian rebels had deposed the soon-to-be Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand. Having accepted the Bohemian crown in September 1619, Frederick was driven from Bohemia after the victory of Imperial forces at the Battle of White Mountain in November 1620.

² condemne this plott: James disapproved of Frederick accepting the Bohemian crown from rebels, against legitimate royal authority.

³ Throwne out...thy progenye: Frederick, his wife, James’s daughter Elizabeth, and their children, were forced to seek refuge in the United Provinces after the loss of Bohemia and the occupation of the
Palatinate by Spanish and Bavarian forces.
Notes. In one source this poem is titled “Uppon the French Embassadours entertainment in England at Westminster Hall, Decem. 30. 1620” (Bodleian MS Malone 19). The French ambassador Cadenet, with a large train of followers, arrived in England late in December 1620, and left in mid-January 1621 after a series of negotiations and a succession of lavish feasts and entertainments during the Christmas season, the festive apex of the English court year. Although Chamberlain (2.334) reports widespread speculation that Cadenet had come to discuss a possible French marriage for Prince Charles, and to talk with James about the situation in the Palatinate, this relatively light-hearted libel is far more concerned with the riot of conspicuous consumption surrounding the ambassador’s visit.

The famous Embassadour, brother to the French Favorer

Is traveild to Spayne againe.

Hee was a great guest heere, & had such a feast heere,

Was able to begger halfe Spayne.

All fish were turnd Salmon, all wild foules were common

Each had what his hart could wish

Besides other presents, there were 24 Pheasantes

Twelve in a pye, & twelve in a dish.

And then god be thanked, there was a good banquett

Which through the citty did sound

That of certayne report, both of citty & court

It cost half a thousand pound.

Brave Doncaster vicount, a man of high count

Did feast him 2 or three dayes

All the citty did singe, God save our good Kinge

And blesse the right honorable L. Hayes

The healthes they went roundly, some pates were paid soundly
For wine was as free as a well:
Besides these contents, they had French Complementes
    Wherein my Lord Hayes did excell

The Kinge & the states, opend Westmister gates,
    And filld the hall with good cheere
That all men spake playne, since K. Stephens' raigne
    Such a table was never seene theare.

Lawyers' wise wordes, were turnd to longe boardes
    To dishes the budgetts & Cookes
The seates of their benchers, to napkins & trenchers
    And clientes transformed to Cookes.

There was such a Confusion, causd through intrusion
    To view this brave Westmister guest
That most men affirm’d, all the fees of this terme
    Cannot buy such another feast.

In Denmark’s great pallace, as big as halfe Callice
    Hee lodg’d for a fortnight & more
Abroad his men scatterd, with lackquies halfe tatter’d,
    I never saw footmen soe poore.

They thought to make common, each well favourd woman
    The stone was to small for their stewes
Some purchasd enough, of such pocky-fied stuffe
    That they curst plague of their Carleques.

But now all their forces, uppon english horses,
    Are ridd to the Cinqe port of Dover
The wind that was Eastward, is now turnd Westward
    And god send them good shippinge over.
Source. Folger MS V.a.162, fols. 54v-55r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 78

Nii3

1 The famous Embassador, brother to the French Favorer: the French ambassador was the Marquis de Cadenet, brother of Louis XIII’s favourite, the Duc de Luynes.

2 Doncaster vicount: James Hay, Viscount Doncaster (and later Earl of Carlisle). Doncaster—James’s frequent ambassador to France, and a notorious profligate—feasted the French ambassador at Essex House with what Chamberlain reported was “that sumptuous superfluitie, that the like hath not ben seene nor heard in these parts” (2.333).

3 L. Hayes: i.e. James Hay, Viscount Doncaster.


5 Lawyers: Westminster Hall was the site of several major law courts. The gist of this stanza is that a space typically reserved for the practice of the law was turned into a space for cooking and feasting.

6 Cookes: probable scribal error; read “Bookes”.

7 fees of this terme: fees paid to lawyers during one the three terms for conducting legal business.

8 Denmark’s great pallace: Denmark (formerly Somerset) House in London, formerly a residence of James I’s late queen, Anne of Denmark.

9 Callice: Calais.

10 make common: turn into whores.

11 stewes: brothel.

12 pocky-fied: syphilis-ridden.

13 Carleques: probably curlicues, or fantastic curls; however, the OED’s earliest example of English usage of “curlicue” is from the mid-nineteenth century.

14 Cinge port of Dover: the French took ship at Dover, one of the ancient Cinque Ports.
Notes. This poem—dated 1622 in one source (BL Add. MS 28640)—laments that economic competition (over trade in the East Indies) has divided the Protestant English from their natural confessional allies, the Dutch United Provinces, ceding the advantage to their common enemy, the Spanish.

“Quarrell betweene the Dutch & English”

The Belgick Frogge, out of the bogge,¹ with Brittish mouse doth strive:
The Iberian Kite² meane while by slight, surprizeth both alive.  
While for their shares, of Indian wares, English & Dutch doe brawle;  
The Spanyards watch, advantage catch, to seize on them & all.

Then bee agreed, and take good heed,  
      Make not a needles fray:  
Lest to a third (that ravenous Bird)  
      You both bee made a pray.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 82v

Other known sources. Whiteway 40; BL Add. MS 23723, fol. 22r; BL Add. MS 28640, fol. 103v; BL MS Egerton 784, fol. 22v

Notes. The Belgick Frogge, out of the bogge: i.e. the Dutch. Large areas of land in the United Provinces were reclaimed from the sea by a sophisticated system of walls and drainage—thus the dismissive “bogge”.

Iberian Kite: the Spanish.
Notes. This bellicose poem reflects not only the hyperbole of the growing cult surrounding James I’s daughter Elizabeth, erstwhile Queen of Bohemia and exiled Electress Palatine, but also records the intense frustration some English felt at James I’s refusal to commit to a military solution to the Bohemian and Palatinate crises.

“The Common Peoples Apollegy to the Queene of Bohemia. 1623”

When we but heare that Turkes and Tartars fight
(Thou best of Princes) onely in thy right
That they have tooke up armes, do lay downe lives
Forsake their Countryes fortunes Children wives
Beate up their drummes their bloody Coullers spread
And all to place a Croune upon thy head
When we do heare and see and know all this
Shall not a Brittaine gainst a Brittayne hisse?
Must the pale Turkish moones lend light to thee
Thou glorious starre of Europe? and must wee
So much degenerate from the bravery
of all our Ancestors as to stand by
When Romes bold dareinge Eagles pearch so high
The Phœnix of the world? Can we for shame
See Pagans throw themselves into this flame
opening their veines with zealous true desyre
To Quench with their lost blood seditious fyre?
Are we so stupid growne so dull so Colde
shall it I say to after tymes be tolde
That England Scotland Ireland did give leave
unto the mice to breed spyders to weave
and eateinge rust within their Armes to rest
When their owne best of Princes was distrest?
When the Cheife glory of this brittish ile
lives, though not in thraldome in exile⁷
And must by Turkes and Infidells alone
Without our Ayde be seated in her throne?
Shall not our Soules blush after we are dead
When this unsampled basenes shall be read
in lastinge records? yes our sonnes shall be
asham’d to owne us: and there Pedegree
rather derive from some strange nacion faind
Then with such worthless fathers names be staynd
But oh thou mistress of Each good mans heart
This is our least of Feares our Cares least part,
It is thy frowne (blest soule) or which is worse
It is that foreseene everlastinge Curse
Of all thy Childrens Children, who will shame
To name the nacion whence their Mother Came.
And to their royall Issue will they say
Thou wert let downe from heaven not framd of Clay
For we (brave princess) should have thought no other
Had we not knowne thy father seene thy mother.
For sure a Soule more pure more white more good
As yet was never Cloath’d in Flesh and blood.
On that unshaken rocke of Excellence
Undoubted Charity matchless temperance.
Approved Industry rarest Apprehension
Our hopes firme ground, onely good intencon
We trust (brave princess) shall be receiv’d as fact
And though we do not yet our desires Act
Shall free us from that future infamy
That else would dogge us to eternity
For know (thou glory of thy sexe) in whome
The blotte and Taint of Eve⁸ I dare presume
has lost all force, makeing thy faire Creacion
Above all others worthy admiracion.
Know for a Truth deigne to reporte it soe
Thy Isle had been unpeopled long agoe
If Soveraigne Dignity⁹ and scourge of Lawe
Had not restrayn’d us kept us still in Awe
In Prague¹⁰ we would once more have seeen the Cround
Or with our blood revolting Bohemia drownd
Their Like a Sun whose beames no Eagles eye
For feare of Blastinge should have durst come nigh.
We would have fixed thee no divine Turkish moone
At midnight should have rose much less at noone.
No salvadge Tartar should have had the glory
Once to have mencion in thy lives best story
But all with feare and Tremblinge should have stood
Whilst Brittish Ensignes¹¹ swamme in Spanish blood.
It was not feare then (maddam) kept us thence
Nor want of Love, nor dare I say from whence
This base neglect originally Grewe
You had our hearts what hindred then judge yow.
Yow might have had our hands our blowes our blood
Had not our good intencions been withstood
Had not some power aboue us¹² us restraynd
Yourselfe had been more grac’d we less disdayn’d
The Poorest widdowe Maddam in your Quarrell
With Joy and¹³ Emptyed both her Cruse¹⁴ and barrell.
Nay sacrific’d her sonne without a groane
Proud to have had his tombe but neere your throne.
The Churlish Nabal¹⁵ to a Souldiers pay
A weather¹⁶ would have tend’red every day
Each Country lass her Jette ringe would have broken
And sent the sylver lyneinge for a Token -
unto that Lad that from her Parrish went
And in your Quarrell had the least blood spent
The knotty fistied Ploweman thickeskin’d boore
That greives to leave the least gleaninge for the poore
Or pay to God the Tyth of his encrease
Would gladly give the thirds to buy your peace.
The Toylinge Clowne that eates no other Meate
Then what is dayly basted with his sweat
Would borrow from the night one houre or two
And singe for Joy that then he wrought for you.
The poore mechannicke at whose Elbowe stands
More Mouths then he Hath fingers on his hands
Each suckinge from his labor their repast
Would teach those hungry Infants how to fast
And from their halfe starvd bellyes every day
ravish a meale, that he might so defray
A soldiers Charge. A nurse no sucke would give
Till she had taught her babe to cry long live
Bohemia’s Queene, whilst heaven Confound all those
Profess themselves your opposites your foes.
And thus much Maddam I dare boldly sweare
Each English face doth sacrifice a yeare
and writes in wrinckles, or in white heares more
Some by five some by Ten some by a Score
Since these thy Troubles then they would have done
If these unhappy broyles had nere begun.
For when we did suppose yow sigh’d we wept
And when we dream’d yow wak’d we never slept
And if (as heaven defend) A teare yow shedd
Uppon my soule) each good mans heart then bledd.
Your voyce is lyke an oracle and all
Will hold what yow shall speake Canonically
Proclayme then Maddam to posterity
That Englands Commons Englands Gentery
Did waste more blood in sighes and grones then those
That did encounter with your boldest foes.
    This by yow beleiv’d this by yow proclaym’d
    Our sonnes need never blush when we are nam’d.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 21v-22v

Other known sources. Brotherton MS Lt. q. 44, fol. 13r

1 Turkes and Tartars: probably an allusion to the anti-Habsburg military activities of the Protestant Prince Bethlen Gabor of Transylvania, a close ally of the Ottoman Turks (who supported his military activities because of a common concern to see Austrian power weakened). Turkish military efforts at this time, however, were focused on a war with the Persians.

2 Croune: the crown of Bohemia. Elizabeth’s husband Frederick V had been chosen King of Bohemia by rebellious Bohemian nobles in August 1619, and had accepted the crown the following month. Frederick had been driven from Bohemia by Imperial forces after the Battle of White Mountain in November 1620.

3 Shall not...Brittayne hisse: an allusion perhaps to the “hissing” of the libellers against their monarch.

4 Turkish moones: probably an allusion to the crescent moon symbolism on Islamic battle flags.

5 Romes bold dareinge Eagles: the Catholic military powers of Spain and Austria.

6 The Phenix of the world: meaning here something like the Habsburg “Universal Monarchy”, “the unique supreme power of the world”.

7 in exile: Elizabeth and Frederick, their lands in the Palatinate occupied by Spanish and Bavarian troops, were in exile in the United Provinces.
Eve: Eve’s eating of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden was held to have brought original sin upon mankind. By overcoming the “blot and Taint of Eve”, Elizabeth had also transcended the specifically female weaknesses that Eve was held to embody.

Soveraigne Dignity: i.e. James’s opposition to large-scale military intervention on behalf of Elizabeth and Frederick.

Prague: capital of the kingdom of Bohemia.

Ensignes: battle flags.

some power abouwe us: i.e. King James.

and: probable scribal error; read “had”.

Cruse: jar.

Churlish Nabal: Nabal, a wealthy farmer, refused King David’s request to supply his troops with provisions (see 1 Samuel 25).

weather: wether; a male sheep.

Tyth: tithe; the tenth of a person’s goods or earnings paid to the church.

Clowne: rustic.
Notes. This poem, primarily concerned with the continental wars of religion, and reflecting in its course both on perceived threats to English Protestantism and on the inherent corruption of princely courts, is dated 1623 in one source (BL MS Stowe 962), and stated in another as having been "Writen after the beginning of the Bohemian war" (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50). In the source used here, it is placed between poems on "A Papist" and "A true Puritan without disguise", which are both taken from Leighton(?), The Interpreter.

“Religion”

Religion the most sacred power on earth
reviv’d, and formd in our blest Saviours birth
trew cherrisher of peace why should theys warrs
tearme thee the author of theys civill Jars
whilst under thy white Banner they with blood
pollute those places wheer thine alter stood
O Princes leave to use theyse wicked artes
Religion’s in your eyes not in your harts
yett your high purple Preist bids yow proceede
tis merritorius for the church to bleed
what though tenn thousand perrish, soe you win
a stinking hole to thrust this doctrine in
it is enough, O that this Papall beast
should drive yow thus on slaughter, make a jeast
att your lost lives, laughing to thinke how hee
can make yow runn on danger himselfe fre,
yett safe he is not for the powerfull God
will whipp his pride with his omnipotent rodd
but he doth stay his vengeance & doth cherishe
his proude ambition till hees fitt to perrish
and his deare sone (that Catholicke Monarchie

551
that would grasp all within his empiry)¹
why with intestine arms doth he oppress
the trew religion? when his rich excess
of riott, spoyle, & rapine doe abound
great King beware least thou thy selfe confound
in thy ambitious thoughts; strive to be good
not greater then thou art, tis durt and mudd
make up a vitious Prince, when verteous Kings
are Gods on earth holly & glorious things
enough of this, but, poore religion, thow
that are more happy wheer the labouring plough
doth teare the earth then in great Princes Courts
wheer nought but high impyety imports
wheer vertues never raysd for vertues cause
wheer will & power doth make & forfeit Lawes
wheer flattery rules & pride doth governe all
wheer nothings good, but what is bestiall
wheer wilt thow goe in safty? England, no
Spanyne theer doth plott thy utter overthrowe²
Fraunce will in peces teare the, the Rich states³
will the but coldly use, fly to the Gates
of Heaven & enter: O most wretched times
when wee must loose religion by our Crimes.

Source. Huntington MS HM 198, 1.84-85

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 76v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 29r; BL MS Stowe 962, fol. 142r

¹ His deare sone...his empiry: the King of Spain. Protestant polemicists argued that the Spanish aimed at a “Universal Monarchy”.
2 *Spanyne theer...overthrowe*: allusion to fears that the Spanish planned to overthrow English Protestantism and reestablish Catholicism in the wake of the Spanish Match treaty.

3 *The rich states*: the Dutch United Provinces.
“Upon Heriot the Philosopher, that had a fistula in naso; & Seignior Gundomar, that had a fistula in ano”

Why? what means this? England, & Spaine alike

Diseased? or doth time both Equall strike

With Fistula’s? Noe. difference is disclos’d;

Spaine sett’s a faire face on’t, & England’s nos’d.

Spaines generall actions are like Pedro heere,

Whose sting is in his taile; his forepart’s cleare;

For some thinke ’t hath bin purg’d by fire: & hee

Is sounder for’t as all the world may see.

Or else, when he had like t’ have gott the fall

At court, his carkase would have shattered all

To pieces. yet ’tis a pitty one soe great

Should die, but dropping through his closestoole seate.

His face is England, that’s without a scarre.

Spaine is his heart, treating of peace, for warre

Closely providing: but his heaviest chance
(Poxe on it) is his taile, that Emblems France, 
Never without an issue.\(^5\) ’tis a wonder, 
Did not his litter\(^6\) helpe, hee’d drop asunder. 
This makes him brood thus in his litter’d Denne, 
Pray Heavens he hatch not 88\(^7\) agen, 
Or wesels treacherous winning;\(^8\) for some feare 
The match in Parlee’s\(^9\) not the match in care. 
To seeme, & not to be is Spanish art, 
When England shewes at first her foulest part. 
Witnesse our Heriot, in his nose that beares 
A sore, which noe where but behind appeares 
In Spaines she statist.\(^10\) who the prize hath gott 
For some more manners, ’cause he hides his plott. 
Yett if these two ere meet, least in the close 
Spaines face infected bee with Heriots nose, 
Lett their two sound parts, & their infected kisse; 
Spaine may nose Heriots Podex,\(^11\) Heriot his.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fols. 81v-82r

\(^1\) fistula: a pipe-like, suppurating growth. 

\(^2\) nos’d: nosed; here means either “discovered”, “smelt out”, or “reproached”. 

\(^3\) closestool seate: the seat of his toilet; but also perhaps referring to the special seat made for Gondomar to allow him to sit comfortably without putting pressure on his fistula. A picture of the seat was included on the title page of Thomas Scott’s pamphlet, The Second Part of Vox Populi. 

\(^4\) treating of peace...Closely providing: the charge here is that the Spanish were using the negotiations for a Spanish Match with England—and their concomitant negotiations to bring a peaceful resolution to the Palatinate crisis—as a cover to further their military ambitions for Universal Monarchy. 

\(^5\) Emblems France...without an issue: just as the French supply heirs (royal issue), Gondomar’s fistula
constantly leaks a discharge (issue).

6 litter: Gondomar was carried through the streets of London in a litter to protect him from the jeers and assaults of the populace. The litter is also depicted on the title page of Scott’s *Second Part of Vox Populi*.

7 88: allusion to the Spanish Armada of 1588.

8 wesels treacherous winning: Wesel, a key strategic town on the Rhine, had been taken by the Spanish in 1614.

9 The match in Parlee’s: i.e. the negotiations for the marriage alliance between England and Spain.

10 Spaines she statist: “she” is confusing here; the phrase presumably means “Spaines statist”, i.e. the Spanish ambassador and politician (statist) Count Gondomar.

11 Podex: anus.
Notes. Since this poem is immediately followed in the only known source by “Invectives on Count de Gondomar for brevities sake in Prose”, the “Don” of the poem may probably be identified as the Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, who left England in May 1622. The identity of the “Priest” is more problematic; the best candidate is perhaps Marco Antonio de Dominis, the former Catholic Archbishop of Spalato, who abandoned the Church of Rome and settled in England in 1616 to work for the reunion of the churches. James I shared de Dominis’s ecumenical aspirations and gave him office within the Church of England. In 1622, however, shortly before Gondomar’s departure, de Dominis left England, having repudiated the Church of England. Rome did not take kindly to the double apostate, and de Dominis died in 1624 a prisoner of the Inquisition.

Adew deere Don & Priest for ever
God grant againe we see you never
Unlesse at Tyburne¹ for want of grace
We see you hanged face to face,
which being new was first appointed
For one of yours, the Popes anointed,²
That came from Spaine without Commission
Came hither of the Inquisition,³
And within a little space
Gaind to himselfe & yee this place
For store, amidst his cheifest cares
devisd to leave this to his heires:
Which was in time a deed of meritt
That all of you may well in heritt
And be reported all as martyrs
When in troth yee are hangd for Traytors:⁴

Source. Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 296
1 Tyburne: the chief site of public execution in London.

2 the Popes anointed: a Catholic priest. Although the exact source of the allusion is difficult to pin down, the gist is that a Catholic priest was hanged at Tyburn when the execution site was still new, and thus obtained Tyburn for the Catholics who would follow him.

3 the Inquisition: English Protestant polemicists portrayed the Spanish Inquisition as the quintessential tyrannical agent for the persecution of true believers.

4 And be reported...hangd for Traytors: the missionary priests executed at Tyburn (and elsewhere) by the Elizabethan authorities in the 1580s and 1590s were charged with treason and hanged, drawn and quartered as traitors. Catholic polemicists ardently denied the priests were traitors, and insisted they died solely for their religious beliefs. Catholics venerated the executed missionaries as martyrs.
Notes. In one source, this anagram is attributed to “Mr W. Breton of Emman. Coll.” (Bodleian MS Sancroft 53).

Gondamore

Anag:

Romane Dog.

This Dog can barke, and bite rather then faile;

Yet wants he one Dogs tricke to wag his taile

xx A Fistula

Source. BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 47r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Sancroft 53, p. 8; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 12r; Folger MS E.a.6, fol. 84r

A Fistula: Gondomar was thought to suffer from an anal fistula (a pipe-like, suppurating growth), hence his inability to “wag his taile”.

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Niv Saint Elizabeth

Niv1 If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare

Notes. At least two copies of this poem provide a date. One source states that the poem “was founde in the hand of Queen Elizabets tombe at West[minster] 22 of June 1623” (Folger MS V.a. 275), while the source we have chosen to use confusingly dates it “Anno domini 1621. ultimo Martii. 1623” (that is, either 1621 or the last day of March 1623). Internal evidence in the poem, however, makes it clear that the poem was composed some time in 1623. It is possible to read the section beginning “If bleeding harts dejected soules find grace” as a separate poem, and it was eventually printed in this form, in The Commons Petition of Long Afflicted England (1642). Nonetheless, since the two pieces were almost always transcribed together, and since the opening section here is clearly introductory, we choose to publish it and the following section as a single poem. A third item, “Your bold Petition Mortalls I have seene”, which takes the form of an answer-poem, is found in most of the same sources, and is also printed in The Commons Petition; however, it remains unclear when and by whom it was written.

“The Coppie of a Libell put into the hand of Queene Elizabeths statue\(^1\) in Westminster by an unknowne person Anno domini 1621. ultimo Martii. 1623

To the blessed Saint\(^2\) Elizabeth of most famous memory.

The humble petition of her now most wretched and most Contemptible, the Commons of poore distresseds England.”

If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare
Or help poor Mortalls, O then lend thin eare
Looke downe blest Soule, and heare oh heare us nowe
Whose humble harts lowe as our knees doe bowe
Looke on our sufferings, thinke but on our wrongs
That hardly can be spoke by mortall tongues
O be not nowe lesse gratious then of old:
When each distressed Vassall might be bold
Into thyne open hand to putt his greife
And thence receive tymely and faire releife
Be not lesse good, less gratious then before
In heaven the supplications of the poore
Are heard assoone as suits of greatest kings
If our petitions then blest soule want wings
To mount them to the Judge of Judges throne
O helpe them mightie soveraigne with thine owne
Carry our just complaints since just they are
And make a tender of them at the barr
Where noe corruption, noe fraud, noe bribe
Noe griping lawyer, avaritious scribe
Noe favorite, noe parasite, noe Mynion
Cann lead, or alter the opinion
Of that great Chancellour, their o lay them downe
And merrit praise in heaven, on earth a crowne.
Where to begin (deserver of all glorie)
Or howe to tell our unexampled storie
Heaven knowes we do not knowe, nay which is worst
Thy once best subjects have so oft bene curst
For offering upp Petitions of this kinde
As see wee trimble till wee call to mynde
Thy wonted goodnes that oh that doth cheere us
That onely gives us hope that thou wilt heare us.
When heaven was pleas’d honor’d soule to call thee hence
And soe make wretched for some great offence
This little land. oh then begunn our feares
And had wee then the kingdome drown’d with teares,
And in those floods convey’d our soules to heaven
To waite on thyne, wee had not now bene driven
To cry, and call thee from thy fellowe Saints
To heare and pittie those our just complaints.
O Pardon blest; but that our grosse omission
And daigne to further this our poore petition,
And wee will make the name of blest Eliza
Equall the Avies of that great Maria  
Noe snuffeling rascall through his hornepie nose
Shall tell thy storie in his ill tun’d prose,
Nor shewe thy stature to each princes Groome
The Monuments weele build shall make proud Rome
On pilgrimage to come, and att thy shrine
Offer their guifts as to a thing divine
And on an alter framed of richest stones
Weele daylie tender sighes teares and groanes.
Eternitie shall sleepe and long tongued Fame
Forgett to speake ere we forgett thy name
Read blessed Soul, oh read it and beleive us
Then give it to his hands that cann relieve us.

The faithfull Beadsmen and dayl y oratours the poore distressed Commons of dejected England.

The most humble Petition of the nowe most miserable the Commons of Long afflicted England.

If bleeding harts dejected soules find grace
Then all disposer turne not backe thy face
From us thy Suppliants thrice seaven sonnes have wonne
Their Summer suits since wee begann to mourne
Ægypts tenn plagues wee have endured twice told
Since blest Eliza was with Saints enrowl’d
Thy Messingers of wrath their vialls powre
Each day upon our heads no howre
Plagues begett plagues & vengeance fruitfull growes
As if there were no period for our woes
Have our black sinns great God rais’d such a cloud
Twixt us and heaven as cries though neere soe loud
Can get no passage to thy mearcie seate
Are our iniquities good God soe great
Soe infinite as neither groanes nor teares
Cann entrance gett Remember but the yeares
Of our affliction, then forgett wee crave
Our crying sinnes bury then in the grave
Of darke oblivion thrust them in the syde
Of our Redeemer, oh lett them be tyde
In chaines that they may never rise againe
Lett us noe longer begg and sue in vaine
Lett this our supplication, this complaint
Tendred by our late sovereigne now thy Saint
Att last find grace, was’t not wee humbly pray
Enough that first thou took’st that Queene away
Was not that dove, that lambe of innocence
Sufficient sacrifice for our offence
Oh no! our sins out liv’d her, & our crimes
Did threaten to outlast the last of tymes
Thou did’st remove her that she might not see
The sadd beginning of our miserie.
Then like a showre of hailestones fell thy darts
Oh angrie death how many thousand harts
Weere wounded in one yeare? how many bleed
And wisht to dye when all they lov’d weere dead
Mothers left childlesse children quite bereft
Of carefull parents, Nay there was not left
A paire of frends to comfort one another
Who wanted not a sister or a brother.
Where was the husband, where the wife could say
Wee should not be devour’d this night this day
Death so his rage, and awful power shewed
That men on earth as corne on ground lay strowed
The sadd remembrance of it still remaines
Then thy stretcht arme of Vengeance bound in chaines
The fruitfull fields till birds, beasts, hearbs plants trees
Did famish, faint, dry, droop, yea wither and frees
And nothing issued from the barren earth
But that leane monster, and thinnfaced death
Next inundations rose such as before
Since Noahs flood neere topt ore British shoare
Where men and beasts alike ingrafe their bones
In the moyst waves instead of Marble stones
How often hath the sunn withdrawne his light
And turn’d our day into the shape of night
Had Egipt thicker darknes than had wee
When clearest eyes at midday could not see
Unholesome mists, strange foggs rumors of warrs
Evill portending commets blazing starrs
Prodigious birthes unnaturall sea-seasons
Spurning Philosophers beyond their reason
Frighting the poore, the rich exhorting
From their downe bedds where they do lye snorting
Heaven in combustion seemed the sky in armes
The starrs beat drummes the sphearles did sound alarms
The ayre did often bloodie cullours spread
And all to rouze us from the puft upp bedd
Of base securitie, yet nought would fright us
Till hee had robed us, oh what did delight us
Henry our joy, Henry whose every limbe
Threatned to conquer death and not death him,
Henry our pride even Henry the blest
In whome great Brittaine once sett upp his rest
Who had not in that one, all ample share?
What subject had not rather lost his heire?
What tender mother did not wish that dart
Had glanc’d from him and strooke her darlings hart
All that were vertuous, all that were good
Turn’d their eyes rivers into streames of blood
The Egiptian waters bitter weare,21 but knowe
This toucht the very Soule that did not soe22
O pardon heaven all plagues that went before
Had lost themselves in this and weree noe more
To be remembred, that oh that alone
Might well have made us weepe ourselves to stone23
The spawne of Pharo could their blood bee prized
All the first borne that soe weree sacriefized24
All that base frie compar’d to this our Henry
Deserves noe mention, noe thought, noe memory,
Lusting Sodome25 such hath thy mercie bene
Although it did abound in crying sinne
Could not take fire untill they weree removed26
That thou in mercy like in goodnes loved
And thyne anoyned shee must leave this cittie
Before’t cann be destroyed such was thy pittie
Such thy goodnes: oh is there yet full tenn
Is there great God a number yet of men
Whose innocence may slacke thy kindled Ire
And keep this Sodom-Brittaine from the fire
Of thy just anger, is there yet a soule
Whose vertue power hath but to controule
Thy heav’d upp hand of Justice if there bee
For his, or her sake rouse thy clemencie
Awake thy mercie lett thy Justice slumber
And save the greater by the lesser number
For his or her sake we do humblie pray
Respite of tyme give us a longer day
And then enabled by thy grace and favour
Wele purchase pardon by our good behaviour
Plague, Famine, darknes, inundations
Wee have endured feare of innovations
With expectation of the worst cann followe
Dayly torments us and wee hourly swallowe
Our very spiritts with feare and horror
Wee nightly sleepe in dread awake in terror
Nor are we all this while from Vermyn free
The caterpillers hang on every tree
Lousie Projectors, Monopoly mongers
A crewe of upstart Rascals whose hungers
Cann never be satisfied a sort of slaves
More insatiable farr then whores or graves
Things without soule bredd onely of the slyme
Of this old age this base decrepitt tyme
A crewe of upstart parasites that ryse
And doe more mischiefe then the Egyptan flies
These in our gardens in our houses swarme
One drinks a Mannor another eats a farme
This with a lordshipp warmes his lusting whore
That by the sale of Justice doth procure
A tenantment or two which having gott
By violence hee drownes them in a pott
They enter citties corporations
Worke not, yet live by occupations
They have not trade, and yet thers none are free
From paying them a tax a fyne a fee
Ægipt had skipping grashoppers\textsuperscript{33} I yeild
That eate the herbes and fruits of every feild
And wee have skipjack\textsuperscript{34} courtiers I dare say
That doe devoure farr more in one poore day
Than they in Pharaoas age could ere have done
The boundemen\textsuperscript{35} were paid but from some to some
But these for three apprentishipps\textsuperscript{36} have eate
The fruite of all our labours all our sweet
Have we not froggs\textsuperscript{37} oh yes in every ditch
Devouring poore, impoverishing the rich,
Busie intelligencers\textsuperscript{38} Base informers
Like toades and froggs lye croaking in all corners
Promooting Rascalls whose invenom’d tongues
Have done thy suppliants infinite wrongs
Where they desire to enter theirs noe defence
No antient title noe inheritance
Cann keepe them out, they wrest and strech the lawe
Keepe officers and magistrates in awe
They pluck the ballance from faire justice hand
And make her ministers to their commaunds
The lawefull sceptre of soveraigntie
Is a mercinarie Baude to Villanie
There is noe equitie noe lawe nor right
All causes goe by favour, or by might
O God of mercie, what cann more be said
Justice is bought, and sold become a trade
Honors confirr’d on base unworthie gromes
And clownes for coyne may pearch on highest roomes\textsuperscript{39}
Power Job had many scabbs\textsuperscript{40} yet none soe badd
As wee this one and twentie yeares have had
Ægipt had botches, Murraines sores that smarted\textsuperscript{41}
But yet they lasted not they soone departed
Halfe fortie yeares and more are gone, and past
Since these our vexed Soules tooke light repast
Bowman and Jowler...mate
Compared to us are in a better state
They cann be heard they cann be rewarded
When we are curst, slighted unregarded.
Is a people Heavens falne a degree
Belowe the condition of a dogg but wee
Was there a nation in the Universe
More daring, once more bold, more stout, more fierce
And is there now upon the earths broad face
Any that cann be reckoned halfe soe base
Is there a people soe much scorn’d dispised
Soe laught soe trodd on soe vassaliz’d
Wee that all Europe envy’d, wee even wee
Are slaves to those wee kept in slaverie
Where is our ancient nobilitie become
Alas they are suppresst, and in their roome
Like proud usurping lucifers their sitts
A sort of upstart fawning parasits
Where is the gentrie all supprest disgrac’d
And arrant knight above them nowe are plac’d
Fiddlers, and fooles with dancers, and with rymers
Are nowe in England made the greatest clymers
Wee had a Parliament a salve for soares
A Magna Charta all cast out of doores
The bold and hardie Brittaines conquered are
Without a drumb, a sword or sound of warr
If without cause just heaven wee doe complaine
Then send our supplication backe againe
More could wee say, and much more could wee speake
But with the thought of this our harts doe breake
As humble then as wee began to crave
A gratious answere oh be pleased to save
The remnant of thy people turne thy face
And lett us once more tast thy saveing grace
Forsake us not o Lord but give
Newe life to those that onely wishe to live.
    To approve themselves readie, and faithfully thy Servant and Beadsmen

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 32-14

Other known sources. Commons Petition; “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 150; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 303r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 8r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 107r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 398, fol. 222r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 16r; Bodleian MS Top. Cheshire c.7, fol. 3r; BL Add. MS 5832, fol. 202r; BL Add. MS 25707, fol. 76r; BL Add. MS 34217, fol. 39v; BL MS Sloane 363, fol. 11r; BL MS Sloane 1479, fol. 6r; Brotherton MS Lt. 28, fol. 2r; Brotherton MS Lt. q. 44, fol. 2r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 243; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 59 and no. 60; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 86; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 1; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.62

1 *Queene Elizabeths statue*: the effigy on Elizabeth’s tomb in the Henry VII Chapel in Westminster Abbey.

2 *Saint*: Elizabeth is addressed as a saint throughout the poem, and is assumed to have the intercessionary powers attributed to saints in Catholic tradition.

3 *Noe favorite...noe Mynion*: although the critique is generalized, James’s favourite Buckingham is clearly implied here.

4 *call thee hence*: Elizabeth I died in March 1603.

5 *Avies of that great Maria*: allusion to the Catholic prayer to the Virgin, “Ave Maria” (“Hail Mary”).

6 *Homepie*: probable scribal error; read “hornpipe”.

7 *Beadsmen*: in religious terms, beadsmen were those who were charged with praying for others; the
term was also used as a petitionary salutation from inferiors to superiors.

8 **thrice seaven sonnes**: thrice seven suns; i.e. twenty-one years.

9 **Ægypts tenn plagues**: the story of the plagues sent by God to force the Egyptians to free the enslaved Israelites is told in Exodus 7-12.

10 **the syde / Of our Redeemer**: literally the wound in Christ’s side; theologically, the poem alludes to the idea that Christ’s blood redeemed mankind’s sins.

11 **hailestones**: though used metaphorically here, hail was one of the plagues sent by God to Egypt (Exodus 9.18-34).

12 **angrie death**: the next dozen lines of the poem allude to the severe visitation of plague in England during 1603-04.

13 **bound in chaines / The fruitfull fields**: i.e. created food shortages through bad harvests. Though there were localized crises of dearth in 1608, there were no major harvest disasters between 1598 and 1624.

14 **inundations**: floods. There were severe floods in South Wales, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Norfolk and elsewhere in 1607 (Walsham 118, 120, 124 n.40).

15 **Noahs flood**: see Genesis 6-9.

16 **Had Egipt thicker darknes**: the story of the plague of darkness visited upon the Egyptians is in Exodus 10.21-23.

17 **Evill portending commets blazing starrs**: the most notorious comet of the early Stuart age was the much discussed “blazing star” of 1618; however, this line probably refers to the comet of 1607. Comets were widely believed to be portents of future disaster.

18 **Prodigious birthes**: monstrous births were widely interpreted as providential signs of God’s displeasure.

19 **Heaven in combustion seemed**: this and the following two lines refer to meteorological and astrological phenomena interpreted by contemporaries as prodigies and portents.

20 **Henry**: James I’s eldest son, Henry, who died in November 1612. Henry’s death triggered intense grief among those who saw him as the future hope of a more militant Protestant nation.

21 **The Egyptian waters bitter weare**: perhaps an allusion to Exodus 15.23, where the Israelites in the wilderness “could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter”.

22 **This toucht...did not soe**: this line is a little obscure. One possible reading would repunctuate it as
“This toucht the very Soule, that did not soe”. Thus, Henry’s death was bitter to the soul, unlike the Egyptian waters whose bitterness did not penetrate as deep.

23 *weepe ourselves to stone*: perhaps an allusion to the myth of Niobe, who wept for her lost children even after being turned into a stone.

24 *The spawne...were sacriefized*: allusion to the plague of the deaths of the first-born sons in Egypt (Exodus 11-12).

25 *Sodome*: the city of wickedness, destroyed by God (Genesis 19).

26 *Could not take fire...weere removed*: before destroying Sodom, God had Lot and his family escape (Genesis 19).

27 *caterpillers*: a common term for corrupt courtiers and officials who despoiled the commonweal.

28 *Projectors*: devisers of schemes (“projects”) to raise money for the Crown by delegating enforcement powers to private individuals. Ideally, projects should marry private and public gain; too often, however, they appeared to enable private gain at public expense.

29 *Monopoly mongers*: dealers in monopolies (a common form of project which granted to an individual a monopoly over a manufacturing process or form of economic regulation). Monopolies had been a source of vigorous debate in the Parliament of 1621 (see Section M), and had been used by King and courtiers as rewards to clients and relatives.

30 *upstart*: of low social origins.

31 *Egiptian flies*: allusion to the plague of flies visited upon the Egyptians (Exodus 8.20-31).

32 *A tennement...in a pott*: a little obscure, though perhaps can be read as “exhausts the tenements, corruptly obtained, by wasting resources on riotous consumption (of drink)”.

33 *Ægipt had skipping grashoppers*: for the biblical plague of locusts, see Exodus 10:12-19.

34 *skipjack*: foolish, foppish.

35 *boundemen*: bondmen; serfs or slaves.

36 *for three apprentishipps*: apprenticeships were typically seven years long; thus this phrase is best read as a measure of time, twenty-one years.

37 *froggs*: the plague of frogs that afflicted Egypt is described in Exodus 8.1-14.
38 *intelligencers*: sellers of information.

39 *Honors confirr’d...highest roomes*: this couplet alludes generally to the inflation of honours—the profligate granting and sale of titles—under James, and perhaps more specifically to the promotion of socially obscure favourites at the Jacobean court.

40 *Power Job had many scabbs*: among many other afflictions, God gave “Power” (i.e. “poor”) Job a bad case of boils (Job 2.7).

41 *Egipt had botches...smarted*: God inflicted plagues of boils (“botches”) and cattle disease (“Murraines”) upon the Egyptians (Exodus 9.3-6, 9.8-11).

42 *Bowman and Jowler, Ringwood and his mate*: proverbially-used names of dogs. The allusion here is to James’s well-known love for the hunt—and thus to his care for his hunting dogs, instead of care for his people.

43 *More daring...more ferce*: it was a common lament in the 1620s that English martial vigour had decayed since Elizabeth’s death.

44 *lucifers*: devils.

45 *upstart fawning parasits*: generally speaking, courtiers who have risen to authority from outside the old nobility. In this context, Buckingham and his kindred are clearly implied.

46 *Fiddlers...clymers*: compare this couplet to the libel on James I’s merry fools and courtiers, “Listen jolly gentlemen”. Buckingham was known to have charmed the King with his dancing skills.

47 *Magna Charta*: Magna Carta, the document asserting the “liberties” of “free men”, extracted by baronial rebels from King John in 1215.

48 The order of pages in this manuscript has been disrupted in binding.
Niv2 Your bold Petition Mortalls I have seene

Notes. This poem takes the form of an answer to “If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare” (and/or its second section, “If bleeding harts dejected soules find grace”). It is unclear when and by whom it was written, although one contemporary thought the poet of “If Saints in heaven” had in fact “answer’d it himselfe” (M., T. 66). It was printed, following “If bleeding harts dejected soules find grace”, in The Commons Petition of Long Afflicted England (1642).

“A Gracious answere from that blessed Saint to her whilome Subjects with a divine admonition and a prophetique conclusion.”

Your bold Petition Mortalls I have seene
And finde it full of passion, full of spleene
Prayers that enter Heaven and gaine a heareing
Are wing’d with charity heers noe appearing
For supplications fraught with Ire or gall
I doe confesse poore Soules the truth of all
And wish a period to your miseries
But first your infinite iniquities
Must have an end, alas you must beginn
To love faire vertue as you have lov’d sinne
You must redeeme the tyme thats lost & knowe
As Heaven hath ever bene to vengeance slowe
Soe by degrees is grace and mercie wonne
Eyes that are foule by gazing on the sunne
Increase their greifes, if you wold mercy gaine
From unjust actions you must first refraine
How dare a wicked servant once require
From his just maister either grace or hyre
You must putt of the shoes wherewith you trodd
The wayes of sinne ere you discourse with God
Give mee but ground for commendation
Incouragement, and then your supplication
I shall deliver, I left you rich ’tis true
But proud withall, you fear’d none all fear’d you
You were so far from fear that you deny’d
To pay him fear that gave you cause of pride
You must be humbl’d Heaven ever punish’d yet
All kinde of Rankenes with an opposite
Hee that hath surft err hee gaine his heilth
Must strictly fast, had you satt still in wealth
You never would have bowed your stubborne knee
Either to God, or Saint, to heaven or Mee
I will not grieve your troubled soules too much
Yet gently your ingratitude I’le touch
And that you may better knowe your errors
I shall into your memories call the favours
Are by you forgotten, unthankfully forgotten
Long tymbe before the flesh I wore was rotten
It is noe ostentation to relate
Curtesies done to such as are ingrate.
I found you like a humbled scattered flocke
Your very soules beating against the rocke
Of ignorance and superstition
Just in the way to blacke pardition
I plaid the shephard, and the Pylate too
And yet noe lambe nor fleece more then my due
Was ere exacted from the common store
Wee all alike weere rich alike weere poore
Though thyne and myne, and myne & thine weere things
Not to be knowne twixt subjects and their kings
Princes like the Sunn should from the Earth exhall
That which they raise, then in a showre lett fall
In every place, as they see cause a share,
And not consume it in the wanton ayre
There full Exchequour should like conduits bee
Open to all the rich and poore like free
And subjects should like feilds be full of springs
That naturally fall still towards their kings
The Comon wealth should alwaies be in motion
Seas flowe to brooks & brooks should fall to th’ocean
Such Royall such loyall comunitie
Keepe Kings, and subjects still in unitie
I cannot say I greive this place is free
From passion as from Iniquitie
But yet I muse since Scotland with it joyn’d
Englands Exchequour is no better coyn’d
Sure there is false play I fear the younger brother
Is growne too wise too craftie for the other
It is an ill made marriage where the bride
Spend faster then the husband cann provide
I did mainetaine farr be vaine glorie hence
A well rigg’d Navie still for your defence
A royall fleet that like a Brazen wall
Circl’d this land the armies weere not small
The garrisons and forts I did uphold
Kept you like sheepe in peace within your fold
What welldeserving soldiour went away
Without reward much lesse without a pay.
To neighbour states in amitie wee lent
Money and men what servant ever went
Without his hyre; what pention was denied
From the first houre unto the hower I dyed
In breife I seldome borowed oft did lend
Yet left enough to give enough to spend  
How comes it then since neith fleet nor fort  
Armie, nor garrison, noe house, noe court  
Noe wages, noe debts nothing repair’d nought paid  
Nought purchas’d, nought lent, nought built, nought made  
And yet there nought remaines nought to be found  
All is not perfect sure all is not sound  
I noe lesse muse to see the woods cutt downe  
The antient lands Revenues of the Crowne  
Disposed of soe to favorite to freind  
That should hereditarily discend  
From king to king as doth the diadem  
The land of the crown is the Crowne cheifest geme  
Customes subsedies, fines are accedents  
Enough is substantiall, but the annuall rents  
There are deservers sure that service doe  
That must not be made knowne to heaven or you  
Princes are Gods on earth, and subjects eyes  
Upon their actions must not stand like spies  
It is a daingerous and ungodly thinge  
To prie into the chamber of a Kinge  
The Arke of state is satisfied, and must  
Be onely toucht by those are putt in trust  
But you an answere crave to your petition  
Then knowe poore Soules its given in comission  
From heavens great King to tell you all thats past  
To whats to come, is but a sparke a blast  
Your sorrowes yet alas like womans throwes  
Doe goe and come but there must follow woes  
Ere England be deliver’d that will make  
Your very entralls bleed your soules to quake
The dayes shall come when stowtest men shall mourne
And children wish they never had bene borne
The sword shall eate what plagues have overslipt
And fire consume what famine hath not ript
The Gospell sunne\(^{12}\) shall loose his glorious light
And ignorance\(^{13}\) as black as darkest night
Shall spread her sable wings about this Isle
And Babilons proud whore\(^{14}\) once more defile
Albions white cliffes, the Israelites must double
The bricks they made, yet be allowed noe stubble\(^{15}\)
An Egiptian with an Hebrew must contend
Oh th’Ebrewe wants a Moses\(^{16}\) to his friend
There is an Execrable thing lies hidd
Such a Sinne as modestie doth forbidd
Mee for to name, till that be brought to light
And Achan punisht, be putto flight
Before the men of Ai you shall not stand\(^{17}\)
Nor shall ought prosper that you take in hand
The husband from his wife shalbe divorc’t
And every poore mans Virgin shalbe forced
Uria\(^{18}\) shalbe murthered for his wife
And Naball\(^{19}\) sleepe in dainger of his life
You thirsted for a King, Heavens King releive you
And grant you pardon as I heere forgive you
You tooke a surfett of my happie raigne
And paid my well deservings with disdaine
But oh you cast not Mee away ’twas not I
You slighted ’twas the lord of hoasts most highe
And therefore you shall call and crye in vaine
Unlesse you shall lament, bootles complaine
From forth the North the plague is come at last
The Lyon’s rouzed from’s Denn that shall lye wast
Your townes, and citties, and who stands up at allas 21
To stopp the gapp whereat his wrath shall passe
Hee shall by violence, and craft doe more
Then all the world could ever doe before
Yet know his end and last conclusion
Shalbe in miserie, and confusion 22

Hark hark Heavens organs summons me away
My comission’s ended I dare not stay
The blessed Querresters 23 of heaven I heare
Tuning their voyces to our Soveraignes eare
Farwell poore Soules goe pray repent & fast
The deafe and unjust Judge is wonn at last
By importunitie much more will hee
That is inclin’d and proane to clemency.

I shall attend your prayers every houre
And to the utmost will extend my power
With him that onely cann, and may releive you
Theirs hope of Pardon if hee once reprive you
Greive for what’s past with a resolution
To amend your lives deferr not the’xecution
Unto the hornes of th’altar tymely flye
Tymely repent least you untimely dye.


Other known sources. Commons Petition; “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 162; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 10v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 49v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 111r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 398, fol. 226r and fol. 230r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 18v; Bodleian MS Top. Cheshire c.7, fol. 6r; BL MS Sloane 363, fol. 15r; Brotherton MS Lt. 28, fol. 6r; Brotherton MS Lt. q.44, fol. 6r; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 33r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 249; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 61 and no. 62; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 92; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 8.
whilome: one-time.

You were...cause of pride: i.e. in their arrogance, the English forgot to fear God, the author of their prosperity.

I found you: i.e. at the time of Elizabeth’s accession in 1558.

soules...ignorance and superstition: i.e. at the time of Elizabeth’s succession England had formally been a Catholic country for the previous five years. The theme of the Elizabethan redemption of the nation from the darkness of “popery” was common in the literary, ritual and visual symbolism that comprised the cult of Elizabeth.

since Scotland with it joyn’d: i.e. since the Stuart succession in 1603.

younger brother: Scotland.

the bride...cann provide: the bride is Scotland, the husband England. The charge of Scottish profligacy with English wealth was commonly made (see Section E). Despite James’s best efforts—which often conceived of political union in the language of marital union—England and Scotland were not formally united until 1707.

neighbour states...men: Elizabeth lent (intermittent) financial and military support to Protestants in the Netherlands and France.

woods cutt downe...of the Crowne: the next few lines of the poem lament the felling of trees in the royal forests and the alienation of Crown lands by the Jacobean monarchy.

is but a sparke a blast: i.e. is like a mere spark compared to a blast.

throwes: throes; labour pains.

The Gospell sunne: Protestantism.

ignorance: Catholicism, popery.

Babilons proud whore: the Church of Rome, the Papacy.

the Israelites...noe stubble: allusion to the labours imposed on the enslaved Israelites by the Egyptians (Exodus 1.14), and a prophecy of the enslavement of the English (Israelites, Hebrews) by Catholicism and its worldly champions (the Egyptians). Straw (“stubble”) was used in the making of
bricks.

16 Moses: leader of the Israelites in their liberation from the Egyptians.

17 There is an Execrable thing...not stand: these five lines allude to the story of Achan in Joshua 7. After Joshua’s victory at Jericho, Achan violated God’s command by secretly stealing an “accursed thing” from the ruins of the defeated city. As a punishment for Achan’s hidden sin, God caused Joshua’s armies to be defeated by the men of the City of Ai. After Joshua identified Achan as the thief, exposed the gold and “Babylonish garment” Achan had stolen, and had Achan and his family stoned to death, God was at last appeased. The burning question here is what the “Execrable thing” is that “lies hidd” in England, but which “modestie doth forbid” the Queen to name. One solution would be to follow the clue of the “Babylonish garment”, which might suggest that the hidden thing is “popery”, the religion of the Whore of Babylon. But the Queen’s “modestie” would hardly prevent her from naming this—indeed she has already named it. The obvious alternate reading would be to assume that the sin must be sexual in nature. The most likely candidate here might then be the King’s rumoured homosexual relationship with his favourite, Buckingham.

18 Uria: Uriah, husband of Bathsheba, and sent into mortal danger on the orders of King David to allow the King to marry Bathsheba in Uriah’s stead (2 Samuel 11).

19 Naball: Nabal, a rich farmer who mocked King David’s request that he supply his troops with food, and who was saved from David’s violent reprisal only at the behest of his (Nabal’s) wife Abigail’s petition. God, having prevented David soiling his hands with a vengeance killing, then killed off Nabal Himself (1 Samuel 25).

20 You thirsted for a King: the following lines suggest that the best reading of this phrase is that while Elizabeth was Queen, the English longed for a male ruler, a king, and disdained their female monarch’s achievements. The phrase might also allude to the famous biblical verse, 1 Samuel 8, in which God instructs Samuel to warn the king-hungry Israelites of the drawbacks of monarchical rule.

21 who stands up at allass: possibly should read simply “who stands up, alas,.”.

22 From forth the North...confusion: these eight lines are couched in the language of prophecy, thus making their meaning deliberately slippery. Yet it is clearly possible to read them in a profoundly anti-Stuart light: if the plague comes from Scotland (“the North”), the destructive lion roused from his den is none other than James I. This reading becomes more secure when the prophecy is placed side-by-side with the so-called “Merlin’s Prophecy” verse (“A Prince out of the North shall come”), in which James, as Lion, emerges from his den to lead a Protestant conquest of Catholicism and Islam.

23 Querresters: choristers.

24 The order of pages in this manuscript has been disrupted in binding.
Notes. This poem, written by King James on the occasion of Prince Charles’s and Buckingham’s highly controversial journey to Madrid (February-October 1623), passed into manuscript culture, and contributed to the broader public debate on the Spanish Match. Cogswell (Blessed Revolution 43-44) places James’s poem in context of the wider debates, while Perry (“Late Manuscript Poetry of James I” 217-224) offers a detailed reading of the politics of the poem’s manipulation of the “pastoral idiom” (217).

“A Poeme made by Kinge James, upon the voyage of his sonne Charles & Marquesse Buckingham, into Spayne. March: 1622”¹

What suddayne change hath dark’t of late,
The glory of th’ Arcadian state?²
The fleecy flockes refuse to feede;
The lambes to play, the ewes to breede.

The Altars smoake, the offringes burne,
Till Jack & Tom³ doe safe returne.

The spring neglects his course to keepe,
The ayre with mightie stormes doth weepe;
The pretty birdes disdaine to singe,
The meades to swell, the woodes to springe.

The mountaynes droppe, the fountaynes mourne,
Till Jack and Tom doe safe returne.

What may it bee, that mooves this woe,
Whose want affectes Arcadia soe?
The hope of Greece, the proppe of artes,
Was princely Jacke, the Joy of heartes.

And Tom was to our royall Pan,⁴
The chiepest Swayne, and truest man.
The lofty toppes of Menalus,\textsuperscript{5} 
Did shake with winde from Hesperus,\textsuperscript{6}  
Whose sweete delicious ayre did fly,  
Through all the boundes of Arcadie.  

Which moov’d a vayne in Jacke and Tom,  
To see the coast, it issued from.  

The winde was love; the Princes stout  
To Pages turnes,\textsuperscript{7} but who can doubt,  
(Where equall fortune love procures,  
And æquall love successe assures,)  

But venturous Jacke will bring to Greece,  
The best of price, the Golden fleece.\textsuperscript{8}  

Love is a world of many Spaynes,  
Where coldest hilles and hottest playnes,  
With barren rockes and fertill feelds  
By turne despayre and comfort yeelds.  

But who can doubt of prosperous luck,  
Where love and fortune doth conduct?  

Thy grandsire, godsire, father too,\textsuperscript{9}  
Were thyne examples so to doe.  
Their brave attempts in heate of love,\textsuperscript{10}  
France, Scotland, Denmarke did approve.  

So Jacke and Tom doe nothing new  
When love and fortune they pursue.  

Kinde shepheards\textsuperscript{11} that have lov’d them long,  
Bee not too rashe in censuring wrong:  
Correct your feares, leave of to mourn,  
The heavens shall favour their returne.
Committ the care to Regall Pan,
Of Jack his sonne, and Tom his man.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 21r-v

Other known sources. James VI and I 2.192; “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 124; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 73r; BL Add. MS 28640, fol. 128v; BL MS Harley 837, fol. 74r; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 71; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 104

Nv1

1 March: 1622: i.e. March 1623 (new-style dating).

2 th’ Arcadian state: Arcadia, a mountainous region of Greece, and quintessential pastoral state; here standing for England.

3 Jack & Tom: as they made their way from England, in disguise, Prince Charles and Buckingham had assumed the pseudonyms Jack and Tom Smith. Charles was Jack, Buckingham Tom.

4 royall Pan: the god of shepherds, primarily worshipped in Arcadia; here standing for James.

5 Menalus: a mountain in Greece.

6 Hesperus: the West. For Romans, Hesperus was Spain.

7 Princes stout / To Pages turnes: allusion to Charles and Buckingham’s adoption of servants’ guise as they left England.

8 Golden fleece: in Greek myth, Jason and the Argonauts sailed to Colchis to secure the golden fleece. Here—as in other poems on the 1623 adventure—the fleece is the Infanta of Spain.

9 Thy grandsire, godsire, father too: a better reading—which makes sense of the allusion, and which is found in other copies—has “Thy grandsire great, thy father too”.

10 Their brave...love: allusion to the actions of Charles’s father and great-grandfather in sailing off from Scotland to collect their wives. James VI and I sailed to Denmark in 1589 to marry Anne and bring her home to Scotland. James V of Scotland went to France to woo his wife.

11 Kinde shepheards: English critics of Charles and Buckingham’s voyage to Spain. James’s dismissal of his subjects’ complaints, and insistence they “Committ the care to Regall Pan” links this poem to the
sentiments expressed in a number of royal pronouncements and actions during the debates about the Spanish Match.
From Englands happy & unequall state

Our Charles is gone to trust to Sea & Fate:
Neptune be proud since thou with him art fraught
For Sea had never such a noble weight.
Let not thy Billowes rore, nor surges rise,
Nor a blacke cloud appeare within the Skyes:
Smooth thy rough face, & let the Sunnes bright beames
With a rich mantle cloth thy silver streames.
Let not a wrinkle in thy brow be seen
And be no more as thou to fore hast beene.
Shew all your pastimes, let your watry sport
Resemble to his eyes a Monarches Court.
Cause thy rich woome send forth her plenteous store
That which hath longe beene hidden from the shore.
And in a minute from her bosome cast
Those priceles Gemms that circled with her wast
Send all unto his sight, be proud that yow
Can please his senses with your humble view.
For never did theare on the Ocean swim
A Vesell fraught with whats contaynd in him.
When Princely Charles shall safe arive in Spayne
And their 2 heartes made one, which have bin twayne,
So long tyme joy above all joy will flow
And in no place shall bide a thought of woe.
What will Maria thinke when she shall see
A Prince for her sake of that dignitye
Cast of the robe of majesty & take
A shape so humble\(^4\) for his mistresses sake
Expose his body to laborious toyle
And with long steps measure a strangers soyle.
Forsake his Country, leave his friendes in doubt,
Of what in his long travayles may fall out.
How can they recomence his worthy love
Which by apparant signes he doth approve?
Barre him no longer from the heavenly blisses
But greet his coming with a 1000 kisses.
Then shall you pay the hyre he doth expect
Giving a period to more state neglect
And your affections shall heereafter bee
Left as Examples to posteritye.
And faithfull Buckingame thy love shalbe
Kept from decay unto Eternitye.
For truly waigh what thow hast ventur’d now
Will force thy foes even with a wrinkled browe,
Confes thee noble, & their envy lay,
Fast bound in earth, & nere behold more day.
What though thy Enemyes nere so much do curse
Thy happy fortunes? Thow art nere the worse:
But like the Syrian Wolves that barke all night,
Against the moons transplendent heavenly light,
Count those that envy thy deserved state
Knowing thow standst ‘bove envy or their hate.
For thinke you that your Soveraigne would rayse
Any to honor for the peoples prayse?
No, he did se that in thy inward part,
Was his true faith without dissembling art.
And that a man so form’d by Natures skill,
Had not within his breast a thought of ill.
Love those that love thee: For the rest a strawe
Guilt shunnes the light; Foxes the Lyons pawe.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 19, pp. 35-37

1 unequall: unequalled.

2 Neptune: god of the sea.

3 And their 2 heartes made one: i.e. the marriage of Prince Charles with the Spanish Infanta Maria.

4 Cast of the robe...humble: alluding to Charles’s adoption of a humble disguise as “Jack Smith”.

5 like the Syrian...light: while the specific significance of Syrian wolves is unclear, the image is of foolish and barbarous carping in the face of mysterious regal splendour.
Notes. This poem is accepted as the work of Richard Corbett, and is published in the modern edition of his poems. Since it confronts libellers, and since it also elicited one of the best attacks on Corbett (see “False on his Deanery: false, nay more, I’le say”), it warrants a place in this edition. The poem is discussed by McRae (Literature 167-68).

“Doctor Corbets letter to the D. of Buck: beinge in Spaine”

I’ve read of Ilands flotinge and removed
In Ovids time,¹ but never heard it prov’d
Till now: that fable by the Prince and you
By your transportinge England is made true.
Wee are not where we were, the dogstarre reignes²
No cooler in our climate then in Spaine.
The selfe same ayre, same breath, same heate, & burninge
Is here, as there will be, till your returninge.
Come e’re the Card³ be alter’d, lest perhaps
Your stay may make an errour in the Mapps.
Least England should be found, when you should passe
A thousand times⁴ more southward then it was.
Oh that you were (my Lord) oh that you were
Now in Black-fryers⁵ in a disguis’d hayre,⁶
Or were the smith⁷ againe, two houres to be
In Paules⁸ next Sunday, at full sea at three,
There should heare the Legends on each day
The perils of your June, and of your May,
Your Enterprises, Accidents, untill
You could arrive at Court, and reach Madrill.⁹
There should you heare, how the Grandyes flowte you,
With their twice diligence about you;
How our environ’d Prince walkes with a guard
Of Spanish spyes, and his owne servants barr’d:  
How not a Chaplayne of his owne may stay  
When he would heare a Sermon preacht, or pray.  
You would be hungry having din’d to heare  
The Price of Victualls, and the scar’ty there:  
As if the Prince had venter’d there his life  
To make a famine, not to get a wife.  
Your egges are addle too, and full as deare  
As English Capons, Capons as sheepe here:  
No grasse for horse or Cattle; for they say  
It is not cutt and made; grasse there growes hay.  
And then it is so seethinge hot they sweare,  
They never heard of a raw oyster there.  
Your cold meate comes in reakinge, and your wine  
Is all burnt sack, the fire was in the Vine  
Item your Pullets are distinguisht there  
Into 4 quarters, as wee carve the yeare,  
And are a weeke in wastinge; Munday noone  
A Wing, at supper somewhat with a spoone.  
Tuesday a legge, and so forth, sunday more  
The Livor, and the Gizzard betweene foure.  
As for your Mutton to the best houshoulder  
Tis felony to cheapen a whole shoulder.  
Lord, how our stomachs come to us againe  
When wee conceive what snatchinge is in Spaine.  
I whilst I write, and doe the newes repeate  
Am forc’t to call for Breakefast in, and eate.  
And doe you wonder at this dearth, the while  
The floud that makes it run, the middle Ile  
Poets of Paules, those at D: Humfrey’s messe  
That feede on nought, but Graves and emptinesse.
But harke you (noble Sir) in one crosse weeke
My Lord hath lost 4 thousand pound at Gleeke.  
And though they doe allow you little meate
They are content your losses should be great.
False on my Deanery,  
Or then your difference, with Cond’ Aslivares
Which was reported strongly for one tyde
But after 6 houres flowinge, ebbd and dyde.
If God would not that this designe should be
Perfect and round without some knaverie,
Nor that our Prince should end his enterprize,
But for so many miles, soe many lies:
If for a good event, the heavens doe please
Mens tounges should be come rougher then the seas,
And that the expence of paper shall be such,
We dare not looke on, much lesse presume to touch
Corantoes, dyets, packets, newes, more newes
Which soe innocent whitenes doth abuse.
If first the Belgicke Pismire must be seene
Before the Spanish Lady be our Queene
With that successe, and such an end at last
All’s wellcome, pleasant, gratefull, that is past.
And such an end wee pray, then shall you see,
A type of that which Brother Zebedee,
Wisht for his sonnes in heaven: the Prince & you
Att either hand of James, you neede not sue
He on the right, you on the left, the Kinge
Safe in the best, you both invironinge.
Then shall I tell my Lord, his word and band
Are forfeit, till I kisse the Princes hand.
Then shall I see the Du: your royall freind,
Give you all other honours, this You earn’d:
This you have wrought; for this you hammer’d out
Like a stronge Smith, good workman, and a stout.
In this I have a part, In this I see
Some new addition smilinge upon mee;
Who in an humble distance clayme a share
In all your greaternes whatsoever they are.

Source, BL Add. MS 22603, fols. 39v-41r

Other known sources. Corbett, Poems 76; Bodleian MS Ashmole 47, fol. 83v; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 27; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 51v; BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 8v; BL MS Harley 6931, fol. 6r; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 317; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 65; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 38v; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 119; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 66v; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 135; Rosenbach MS 239/22, fol. 36r; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 11

Nv3

1 I’ve read...time: the Roman poet Ovid describes such floating islands in his Metamorphoses.

2 the dogstarre reignes: the Dog Star (Sirius) was believed to reign during the hot months of July and August.

3 Card: chart or map.

4 times: “miles”, found in other versions, seems a better reading.

5 Black-fryers: an area of London; but, perhaps, given the rest of the line, more specifically an allusion to the theatre at Blackfriars.

6 disguised hayre: Charles and Buckingham reportedly wore false beards as they made their way out of England.

7 smith: Charles and Buckingham used the pseudonyms Jack and Tom Smith as they made their way out of England.

8 Paules: St. Paul’s Cathedral, a centre of political gossip in early Stuart London. The following section of the poem summarizes the talk in Paul’s Walk—the nave and aisles of the Cathedral—about the voyage to Spain. Many of the details Corbett describes can be found in contemporary newsletters,
some of which are cited in Corbett, Poems 147-48.

9 Madrill: i.e. Madrid.

10 middle Ile...messe: allusion to the newsmongers who haunted St. Paul’s—those who troll Paul’s Walk (the “middle Ile” for news), the scribblers of political poetry (“Poets of Paules”), and those of limited means who loiter around the supposed tomb of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester (“to dine with Duke Humphrey” was a colloquial phrase meaning “to go without dinner”).

11 Gleeke: a card game.

12 Deanery: Corbett was Dean of Christ Church, Oxford.

13 Fayries: “fare is” is a better reading.

14 Cond’ Aslivares: Don Gaspar de Guzmán, Count of Olivares, who emerged as the chief minister of the Spanish king, and the chief negotiator with Charles and Buckingham during their stay in Madrid.

15 Corantoes...more newes: a list of various news media circulating in the early 1620s. Corantoes were serial printed news publications on foreign affairs.

16 Belgicke Pismire: a tract by the notorious anti-Spanish pamphleteer Thomas Scott, published in 1622, that urged an English alliance with the Dutch against Spain.

17 Brother Zebedee: a better reading is “Mother Zebedee”. In Matthew 20.20-21, “the mother of Zebedee’s children” asked Christ to “Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom”.

18 his: “her” is a better reading.

19 best: “mid’st” is a better reading.

20 Du: Duke. Buckingham was elevated to a dukedom by James while in Spain.

21 Smith: blacksmith; but also alluding to Buckingham’s “Tom Smith” pseudonym.
False on his Deanrye? false nay more, Ile lay

As many poundes, as he, or-s freinds did pay
greate Phœbus dearling\(^2\) for his dignity,
that noe such thoughtabusd his braine, that he
is grown in witt, as well as beard and place.
Hees left his boyes play: scornes to be soe base
as bow his witts to those forgotten rime,
whose often Birthes endeerd his former time
to Tapsters, Ostlers,\(^3\) and that lovely crew
of soveraigne Bacchus\(^4\) witty mates, tis true
his wanton youth and verse hath made them merry,
and servd to drawe downe white Canary, shery,
And by some was then deemed borne for nought
but to employ some ballad singers throate.
Those tymes are changd: hees greate, and tis the guise
of raysd estates, (though madd men) to grow wise:
One patents power hath changd both mind and bloud
and made him at one clapp soe greate, soe good.
Tis blame to thinke him what he was; his coates
and Cassocks\(^5\) worth hath kild his wilder oates:
His former toyes beleevt heel now disdayne
as much as Calvin or the Puritane.\(^6\)
Sure twas some poetasters hungry braine
whose hucstering rimes prevent the famin of Spayne
In his owne gutts, who hath not what to eate
or weare, buts witts; theres all his cloth and meate,
Some taylour or some Fenner\textsuperscript{7} dare to lye
and clapp his name to their false poetry.
Or els perhaps twas some Satyrick quill
that whip-d and scourgd our woodstock scene,\textsuperscript{8} who still
beare malice in their inke: some such did doe it,
and coynd a Deanry\textsuperscript{9} to steele credit to it.
Beleeve or this or worse, but nere suppose
heele yeeld to owne such flatterys as those:
Such an extortion cannot but undoe
the servilst mind; to pay and flatter too.
Ist probable to thinke that ye should longe
once more to be ground Pygeons songe?
Or that he would provoke Court witts to singe
the second part of th’ bandstrings and the ringe?\textsuperscript{10}
Or letts suppose, that he, which yet my braine
will not admitt, made tryall of that veyne
that earst his muse enricht him with, that he
once more awakd his slumbring facultye,
Yet sure he would provide his verse should be
perfect, and round, without all knavery:
the sacred volume\textsuperscript{11} questionlesse shoulde scape
the violence of a poetick rape.
The nicknamd mother Zebedee\textsuperscript{12} could not
proceede from one engrafft in Levies Lott\textsuperscript{13}
Since each abuse of scriptures purer line
gives stronger proofs of th-athist then divine
In breife, his calling, place, degree disclame
this stupid act, this injury of fame.
Nor will I ere beleve soe rich a Spirit
Should raise it selfe by ballads more then meritt.

**Source.** Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 53r-v

**Other known sources.** “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 176; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 155r; Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 42r; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 30; BL Add. MS 21433, fol. 120v; BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 131r; BL Add. MS 61481, fol. 63r; Brotherton MS Lt. q. 11, no. 47; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 319; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 65; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 133; Rosenbach MS 239/22, fol. 18v

1 *Dr. C. Deane of Ch. Ch.:* Richard Corbett, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford.

2 *greate Phœbus dearling:* i.e. James’s favourite, Buckingham. The charge here is that Corbett had paid Buckingham to secure the appointment at Christ Church.

3 *Tapsters, Ostlers:* those who draw the beer and house the horses at an inn or tavern.

4 *Bacchus:* the god of wine.

5 *Cassocks:* clerical vestments.

6 *disdayne...Calvin or the Puritane:* Corbett was renowned for his satires on Puritans (identified here with one of the leading Reformed theologians, John Calvin).

7 *Some taylour or some Fenner:* allusion to popular poets John Taylor and William Fennor.

8 *Satyrick quill...our woodstock scene:* allusion to the poet of the satire “The Kinge & the court desyrous of sport” which mocked the scholars of Oxford’s attendance on James’s court at Woodstock in the summer of 1621. The last stanza of the poem mocks Corbett’s performance as a preacher before the king.

9 *coynd a Deanry:* i.e. claimed the title of dean.

10 *th’ bandstrings and the ringe:* the last stanza of “The Kinge & the court desyrous of sport” had mocked Corbett for losing his place in his sermon as he became distracted by playing with a ring, given to him by James, that he had tied in his bandstring.

11 *sacred volume:* the Bible.

12 *Nicknamd mother Zebedee:* in Matthew 20-21, “the mother of Zebedee’s children” asked Christ to “Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom”. Corbett alludes to this passage in his poem.
Levies Lott: unclear; perhaps the place of a cleric.
Notes. This riposte to Richard Corbett’s poem “I’ve read of Ilands flotinge and removed” was less well known than “False on his Deanery: false, nay more, I’le say”, but it merits attention not only for its attack on Corbett’s sycophancy towards the royal favourite, but also for its wittily “Catholic” perspective.

“An other by a Catholique gentleman”

Tell mee for Gods sake Christchurch what you meane
to countenance such a mad, vayneglorious deane,
If’s not enough you knowe him proud, deboyst a Parasite a Cicophant, a foyst
Unlearned uncivill, unchast, unholye?
but must both Rome and Spaine witnesse his folly?
what will they thinke of other mens devotion
when deanes dare thus profane to gett promotion
will they not thinke well of our Churches head
when forth the bodie such ill humours spread?
will they not blesse them selves for being devided
from our Christchurch if Christchurch be so guided?
If Christchurch gave noe better pastor, sure
the flocke must needs bee mangey, lowsey, poore.
Well lett thy god the Duke rayse the for this worke
and ere I’le be a protestant, Ile turne Turke.

Source. BL Add. MS 61481, fol. 64r

Other known sources. NCRO MS IL 4278

Nv5

1 Christchurch: Corbett was Dean of Christ Church, Oxford.
2 *deboyst*: debauched.

3 *Parasite*: common term for those (often courtiers) who feed upon the common weal for their private benefit.

4 *foyst*: cheat.

5 *our Churches head*: the monarch—here James I—was head of the Church of England.

6 *from our Christchurch...guided*: punning on the Church of England (“our Christchurch”) and Christ Church in Oxford.

7 *thy God the Duke*: George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the royal favourite and Corbett’s patron.
Notes. This poem was clearly written on the assumption that the Spanish Match would be completed during Prince Charles and Buckingham’s visit to the Spanish Court (February-October 1623), and may well have gained wider currency had this in fact occurred.

“Yes the Princes goeing to Spayne”

The day was turnd to starrelight, & was runne
Where Neptune sate at supper with the sunne.
Queene Thetis askd him of the newes that day,
And busines of the world. Should I bewray
Said hee (and smild) fayre Lady what I spy
I oft might use a nett. Venus satt by
And blushinge thought of Mars. with that one knockt
Aloud at Neptunes gate which shakd & rockd
His castle made with shells. Nereus brought word
Clad in a sea calfes mantle to his Lord.
Without there stood a legate come from Spayne
To crave safe conduct ore his marble playne
Tis true said Sol, for I at noone before,
Observd the navy ready at the shore:
And as I past Parnassus hill, amonge
The nine, sate Hymen with a marriage songe.
For whom I askd and sent him there my Lute,
And Mercury lett Euterpe have his flute.
Then Neptune seald his graunt to him, & swore
Himselfe would bring her to the brittish shore.
The Sunn that best can judge of beauty, said
Shee was a second to his lawrell mayd.
Hee praisd her birth & royall parentage,
How faire, how lovely, wise above her age.
And at her birth, said Venus, Jove\textsuperscript{14} and I
Ore Mars and Saturne\textsuperscript{15} had the victory.\textsuperscript{16}
Neptune extolls the princely match: sure hee
That springes from these must bee some deity
Then Sol recountinge said that hee would bee
Ascendent Lord at her nativity.
The Moone was sportinge with the starres above
Whilst Sol & Neptune thus discoursd with Jove.
The night and banquett was farre spent in talke
And Phœbus\textsuperscript{17} said t’was time for him to walke
Then came Auror\textsuperscript{18} & blushinge told the clocke
Shee was ore clad in scarlett & a Cocke
Stood by her side as herald of the day,
Chasinge the starres unto their watry bay.
Then Phœbus halfe out of the sea was seene
And tooke his leave of Neptune & the Queene.
Nights twinc’linge eyes ’gan blind, while his bright torch
Shin’d to the world from out the Indian porch.
Neptune then calld to Triton\textsuperscript{19} for his coach
And bid him sound his trumpett, and to broach
His comminge towards Spaye; His robe was blew
Spun by a Syren\textsuperscript{20} richly to the view.
Trimmd all with gemms, which Thetis fore had choosd
Out of the Indy shore, where oft shee usd
To play amonge the Nymphs: sixe broad find payre
Of yoked dolphins drew his watry chaire.
Such was his pompe: and as hee rode alonge
The fish him homage did: the scaly thronge
Swam by his chariott, like an harvest hoast
Till shee arrivd uppon the Lysbon coast.\textsuperscript{21}
Hymen was there in consort with the nine
Both Jove & Bacchus there did come to dine
Hymen hee bare the base & lowd did gape,
The golden starre, & fayre Io’s rape.
Neptune then left his coach in Proteus hand
And for to grace the princesse came on land.
The sea Nymphs meete her, & about her skipp
Whilst all the nobles lead her to the shipp.
Noe Nymph soe fayre as this! both Doris gazd
And Nois at her beauty stood amazd.
The flatnose Satyres from the wood that spyed
Her lipps of Currall fell in love & dyed.
Her shipp was chard with thunder: and each sayle
Wrought full of storyes, flourisht with a gale
Of wind, which Jove bespake, who chasd from heaven
The weeping clusters of the Sisters seaven.
The Kidds darest not bee seene, the windy starrs
Now durst not breath! Arcturus oft at warres
With marriners was still. The twins had charge
(Oh happy couple) to attend their barge.
The’Hesperian Lords then tooke their leaves, & shee
At Spayne still lookinge wondred much to see
The shores to fly away: then oft shee thinks
Of golden Tagus, and his yellow brinkes.
There was she wont to bath; there stood a grove
Where oft her with Diana shee usd to rome.
Thus thinkinge wept, & Hymen wip’t her eyes,
O save those pearlee dropps (quoth hee) and prize
Each teare before a gemme. Then straight hee tooke
Apolloes lute: and each Muse sange by booke.
And charm’d all care. Hymen did nere soe move
His learned quill, since Juno married Jove.
The sea nymphs had theyr Consorts & for bells
About theyr Timbrells\textsuperscript{35} range a peale of shells.
Each had her fish shee road on: some bestride
The brideled Conger, some on Sturgeons ride.
Triton hee spurred a dolphin richly trapt
And had about his wreathed trumpett wrapt
A scarfe wherein both Jason\textsuperscript{36} and his shippes
Yet liv’d in needle worke. Then to his lippes
Hee putt his shell, and made the Ocean roare
And blew the fame unto the Brittish shore.
Proteus rode on a Crab, whose oares were clawes
Moving in order kept the shippemens lawes.
The Lady saw him turnd into a Stag
Now like a dragon, then anon a Nagg.
Foorthwith a Bull, and quicly with a wish,
A princely sturgeon, or a lesser fish.
Neptune did turne his coach wher hee was sate
And askd how hee did like the Sea: with that
Hee reach’d, and kissd her twice, & road along
Praysing the art of Navigation.

Not far of stood a fleet of Pyratts, who
Sayld to this prize, as swift as shaft from bowe:
Then Neptune calld two monsters from the deepe
Two bellowing whales which were beneath a sleepe,
As low as hell; and bids them straight deliver
Those slaves to Charon at the Stygian river.\textsuperscript{37}
And thus in pompe th’arriv’d in Brittaines land
Where Prince and Nobles stood upon the sand.
The King\textsuperscript{38} thankd Neptune for his princely Care
Who answerd hee nere had a pledge soe rare
Committed to his slippery trust. The Nymphes
Then tooke their leaves, & still desyrde a glympes
Of her fayre eyes, and gave her guifts each one,
This gave a shell, and shee a ruby stone.
One gave a combe, another gave a ring,
And Neptune gave his Charriott to the king.
Take heere sayd hee the Ocean crowne & bee
Next under mee the monarch of the sea.
Then came the land nymphs with a rurall ditty
And singing brought him to the royall cittie
The auncient river with his frizled heyre
Striving with Christall from his Amber chayr
Where hee with Isis sate, rose when hee heard
The Princesse was at hand & brushd his beard
Which age had spun to silver, and putt on
His azure mantle, stiffe with pearle and stone.
Soe was my country Tagus clad said shee
When at his banks hee tooke his leave of mee.
With that the reverend Genius of the towne,
Came forth to meet her in his purple gowne.
Hee gave her jewells in a cupp of gold
Whereon were graven storyes done of old
And in his hand hee had a booke which shew’d
The birth starres of the citty which Brutus plowed
The furrowes of the wall: on every page
A Kinge was drawne, his Fortune, & his age.
But shee likes best & lov’d to see againe
The british Prince that should now match with Spayne
Thus entred shee the court where every one
To entertayne her made provision.
Nois had angled all the night & tooke
The troute, & gudgeon with her silver hooke.
The graces all were busy on the downes
Gatheringe of salletts & in wreathinge crownes.
The wood Nymphs ranne about & while twas darke
With light & lowbell caught the amazed larke
One with some hayre pluckt from a Centaurs tayle
Made springes to catch the woodcocke in the dale.
One spreade the nett the cony to ensnare
Another with the hounds pursued the hare.
Diana early with her beugle cleere
Armd with her quiver shott the fallow deere.
The stately stagge hott with the fatall shaft
Shedd teares in fallinge whiles the hunter laughd.
All sent their games to Hymen with a præsent
The buck, the partridge, and the painted pheasant.
And Jove to grace his feast of Hymens joy
Sent thither Nectar by the Trojan boy.
The graces & the Dryades were there
The Queene of Fayries with her golden hayre
The mountaines, Nymphs, Diana, & the nine
Invited there by Hymen all did dine.
Pan stood & whilst, Vulcan turnd the spitt,
And Pallas at the table shewd her witt
The Cumane Sybill and the Tyburtine
Like two old statues did by course divine.
One seemd old Saturnes Mothers midwife & the other
Soe cramp’d with age, old Dæmogorgons Mother.
The night gan now both feast & mirth surprise,
And th’azure turnd to sable in the skyes.
The royall couple then great Hymen ledd,
With noise of musicke to the marriage bedd.
Hee drew the curtaynes biddinge them good night
Soe Pallas & the Muses tooke their flight.

The Glosse.

This Poeme is noe Sybill or a Prophett
In future mysteryes of state & though it
May seeme of thinges not acted to divine
Yett thinke it means Princes Arthurs Katherine.  

Source. Folger MS V.a.162, fols. 46r-48v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 47, fol. 25r; Bodleian MS CCC. 309, fol. 80r; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 70v; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 21; BL Add. MS 47111, fol. 18r; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 40v; BL MS Sloane 542, fol. 21r; Brotherton MS Lt. q. 11, no. 41; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 1

1 Neptune: god of the sea.

2 Thetis: a sea goddess.

3 Venus: goddess of love.

4 Mars: god of war, and Venus’s lover.

5 Nereus: a sea divinity, often identified with the Aegean.

6 Sol: the sun god, Apollo.

7 Parnassus hill: Mount Parnassus, sacred to the Muses.

8 The nine: the nine Muses.

9 Hymen: god of marriage.

10 Mercury: the messenger god.

11 Euterpe: Muse of lyric poetry.

12 bring her to the brittish shore: i.e. bring the Infanta Maria to England.
lawrell mayd: Daphne, a nymph transformed into a laurel tree to enable her to avoid Apollo’s lascivious pursuit.

Jove: king of the gods.

Saturne: the most ancient of the gods, and father of Jove.

And at her birth...victory: this couplet is best read in loosely astrological terms; the Infanta’s birth was under the signs of Love and Happiness, rather than Strife and Sadness.

Phæbus: the sun god, driver of the chariot of the sun.

Auror’: Aurora, goddess of the dawn.

Triton: mythic sea creature, whose trumpet controlled the waves for Neptune.

Syren: siren, or sea nymph.

Lysbon coast: the western coast of Spain—Portugal was at that time under Spanish rule.

Bacchus: god of wine.

The golden starre...Io’s rape: Io was transformed into a white heifer (probably by the queen of heaven, Hera/Juno) to thwart the desires of Jove. According to some versions of the myth, Jove then transformed himself into a bull in order to have sex with her.

Proteus: a sea god, able to assume many shapes.

Doris...Nois: sea nymphs.

Satyres: satyrs; forest divinities.

Currall: coral.

Sisters seaven: the Pleiades, the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione, all but one of whom had affairs with the gods.

Arcturus: one of the brightest stars, especially prominent in the northern spring skies.

The twins: the constellation Gemini.

Hesperian: Western; here Spanish.
32 Tagus: the River Tagus in Spain.

33 Diana: maiden goddess of the hunt.

34 Juno: queen of the gods.

35 Timbrels: tambourine-like percussion instruments.

36 Jason: legendary leader of the Argonauts, and winner of the golden fleece.

37 Charon at the Stygian river: Charon ferried the souls of the dead across the River Styx to Hades.

38 The King: James I.

39 auncient river: personification of the River Thames.

40 Isis: the River Isis

41 Genius of the towne: mythic personification of London.

42 Brutus: mythic Trojan founder of London ("Troynovant").

43 british Prince: Prince Charles.

44 The graces: goddesses (usually three in number) often associated with Venus.

45 lowbell: a bell used for hunting birds at night.

46 Trojan boy: Ganymede, Jove’s cupbearer.

47 Dryades: driads; wood divinities.

48 Pan: god of shepherds.

49 Vulcan: the metalworking god.

50 Pallas: Athena, goddess of wisdom.

51 Cumane Sybill...Tyburtle: the Cumaean and Tiburtine Sibyls, aged prophetesses.

52 Dæmogorgons: infernal deity, glossed as hellish demon in Christian tradition.

53 This Poeme...Katherine: the “Glosse” appended to this poem disingenuously denies contemporary
applicability, claiming the poem refers only to the 1499 marriage of Prince Arthur, eldest son of Henry VII, to the Spanish Princess Catherine of Aragon.
Nv7 A Phillipp once to england came

Notes. This verse anxiously compares the plan to marry prince Charles to Maria, the Infanta of Spain, to the last Anglo-Spanish royal match, the marriage between the Catholic Queen of England Mary Tudor and King Philip II of Spain in 1554. We have chosen to present the poem the way the original transcriber set it down on the page, with the two stanzas headed “Phillipp & Mary” and “Charles & Mary” copied down side by side. The scribe’s intention is to highlight the rather frightening comparisons between the two matches, but the poem only makes complete sense if the two stanzas are read sequentially.

“Phillipp & Mary”                      “Charles & Mary.”
A Phillipp once to england came           | That Mary was a fiery starre
Now Charles is gone to Spayne.               | To all the fountaynes pure¹
A Mary did that Journey frame          | God grant this mary prove not far
A Mary mov’d againe.                       | The more Estrema dure.²

Source. Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 217

¹ That Mary...fountaynes pure: this couplet alludes to the persecution and burning of English Protestants during Mary’s reign.

² Estrema dure: “extremely harsh”; probably also a pun on the name of a region of south-west Spain, “Estremadura”.

Notes. A variant of this Spanish Match epigram has a different first-line (“The starre that sits in Charles his wayne”), but is otherwise effectively identical (Beinecke MS Osborn b.197). The poem draws an analogy between the south-north movement of a star in the constellation Virgo and the anticipated movement of the Spanish Infanta from Spain to England.

“The starre that rose in Virgo’s trayne, From South to North did post amayne. If Southene be the coast of Spayne, Then Northerne Charles looke to thy wayne.¹

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 3v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 25r; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 219

¹ thy wayne: Charles’s Wain was a group of seven stars in the Great Bear constellation.
Notes. Prince Charles and Buckingham arrived in Paris on 21 February 1623, on their way to Spain. Their temporary sojourn in France provides occasion for this mocking verse comparing Charles unfavourably to his more martial ancestors. Towards the end, the poem shifts its target to King James himself. Both P. Hammond (148) and Bellany (Politics 257) comment on the depiction of Buckingham as James’s “spouse” in the penultimate stanza.

Since Arthure, \(^1\) or his stable stood,
Or that black Prince \(^2\) that was so good,
    England could ne’re advance,
A cronicle to fill with fame
Of him who onely has the name,
    Alone in seeing France

Hee neither ridd his fathers fleete,
Nor mustered men his foes to meete;
    As erst at Agincourt\(^3\)
The mapcappe Prince of Wales \(^4\) once did;
Oh, no: such tumultes God forbidd;
    He onely went in sporte.

Some say t’was love that drewe him out,
And then it followes out of doubt,
    An errant Knight\(^5\) hee’l bee.
Which I confirme too by his store,
Two shirts hee tooke along no more
    Perhappes hee’l bring home three

If safe hee passe in this disguise,\(^6\)
As he was cunning whose advise
    So ere provok’d him to it,
Has not hee farr more honour wonne,
Then hee which march’d with horrid drumme,
    And came for to undoe it.

But if the French should chance to spye,
As they are plaguy knaves to prie,
    The Marquesse and the Prince.
Should not wee subjects good dispayre,
For ever seeing Englands Heire,
    without the French from thence.

Yet this for comfort still wee gather,
Two issues more his royall father
    Conceald, has kept in store.
For whose rich matter every day,
The faithfull pastors truly pray:
    And yet they still growe sore.

Nor have the people cause to hate
The King who ventured thus his state,
    His care of thinges well knowne.
For Buckingham his spouse is gone,
And left the widowed King alone,
    With sacke and greefe upblowne.

And though the Counsell picke their teeth,
And with their nightcappes hide their greefe
    Alas they are not blam’d.
For our safe Soveraigne ever chose,
Such heads to whom hee to disclose
    His secretes was asham’d
Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fols. 22v-23r

Other known sources. BL MS Harley 367, fol. 163r

Nv9

1 *Arthure*: King Arthur, legendary British king.

2 *black Prince*: Edward, the Black Prince, son of Edward III, commander of English armies in France during the Hundred Years’ War.

3 *Agincourt*: Henry V defeated the armies of France at the battle of Agincourt in 1415.

4 *mapcappe Prince of Wales*: Henry V had led a notoriously reckless youth.

5 *errant Knight*: a wandering knight of chivalric romance.

6 *disguise*: Charles left England disguised as the humble Jack Smith.

7 *Marquesse*: the Marquis of Buckingham.

8 *the French*: the pun here is on the common usage of “the French” as a synonym for the “French pox”, or syphilis.

9 *Two issues more*: probably referring to James’s daughter Elizabeth and her husband Frederick V, Elector Palatine. Dethroned as King and Queen of Bohemia by Imperial forces in 1620, then driven from the Palatinate by Spanish and Bavarian troops, Frederick and Elizabeth were refugees in The Hague.

10 *faithfull pastors*: i.e. Protestant ministers, critical of the Spanish Match, and ardent supporters of the cause of the Elector Palatine.

11 *sacke*: wine.
Nv10 Ilium deplores, but still old Priams glad

Notes. This poem, written during Charles and Buckingham's sojourn in Spain (February-October, 1623) begins in an intensely, and sometimes obscurely, allusive mode, inviting readers to identify contemporaries with classical figures. The latter part of the poem, however, concentrates explicitly on Buckingham (who used the pseudonym “Tom Smith” on his trip to Spain in 1623), and predicts his fall.

Ilium¹ deplores, but still old Priams² glad,
Cassandra³ mournes, and Hellena⁴ is sad,
Andromache⁵ with teares bedewes her eyes,
Hector of Boheme⁶ like the Lyon lyes.
Paris⁷ takes ship intendeinge to fetch home
A second Helen⁸ but shee’s sprunge from Rome.⁹
Heroes agree not, yet the upstarts they
though basest borne doe beare the greatest swaye.¹⁰
The states disordred not one halfe are just
and true Religion’s¹¹ buried in the dust
Ulisses¹² for his tongue not for his wit
assotiates Jacke¹³ though he be far unfit.
Ajax¹⁴ lyes prison’d, the matter’s small all knowes
Superiours not the Commons are his foes.
Aeneas¹⁵ was soe too, till fates devine
by poysoninge him, him cleare did resyne.
Lyke gold he glysters but his worth exceeds
great Xerxes forces¹⁶ or Alexander’s deeds.¹⁷
The hogge¹⁸ hath lost his pearle, and it is pittye
a hogge more just were rooted in a Cyttye.
And Subtill Synon¹⁹ that doth all this plot:
Coward Thirsites²⁰ must not bee forgot;
They twaine, like Janus²¹ with their double faces
Th’one speakes you faire while th’other you displaces.
If they but aske i’le boldly lay my lyfe
that they shall have, though it were th’others wyfe.
Jason assumes the golden fleece to gayne,
 against Romish wolves, and Bulls, he must maintayne
A feirce assault, thy soule not body feare
and thou a Lawrell wreath shalt allwayes weare.
First Jacke of England Jove prolonge thy dayes
and ave Jacke Smith, each man freely sayes.
Come thou away and leave Medea there
A second Mars, like Irefull Jove we feare:
till thou returne each flowre hangs downe her head,
and that which even now florisht is just now dead.
the Larke doth leave her Curious tunes to singe
and Narcissus makes his Eccho ringe,
the shape of Niobe each woman takes
that wept for her sweete Childrens sake:
the Pale fac’te Moone denyes us her sweete light
Since her Endymions out of England sight:
Aurora she lookes pale, her face is wan
old Thetis she esteemes but as another man:
Phœbus agayne laments, cause hee’s denyde
to shine on Phaeton, his and Englands pride.
the starry skye is dimmd, England is benighted
eich man that’s here with his owne shapes affrighted.
Thy presence here would wipe these mists away
and favour sorrowes lend a sunshine day:
Thy sight would ravish us and to be breife
would set a period to our poynts of greife;
Thy Companie’s pleasant Tom, but I doe vowe
I would have thy Roome if I could tell howe;
Thy titles great\textsuperscript{35} are, but thy vices flowe
and right by might thy oft dost overthrowe.
Thou lov'st thy kindred well, but shouldst doe more
prayse great Jehovah\textsuperscript{36} and his name adore.
But to the Crosse thou prayst a Crosse may fall\textsuperscript{37}
That in the end may fully pay for all.
Fortune smiles on thee but beware her frowne
for him she soonest rayseth she as soone casts downe.
Be sure in tyme that thou sowe well thy seed
that thou agayne maist reape when thou hast need.
Be like the paynefull Ant that doth provide
In Summers Crops to serve the Winters tyde.
Lay up thy store for god and men doe knowe
Through greatest expence the greatest wants doe grow.
One gives the Councell but 'tis at thy Choyce
to take it, for he hath noe Prophets voyce.
Yet by the fals of others he doth see
that the lyke Chance may one day light on thee.
Do as thou pleasest but 'tis knowne to all
the greatest Cedars have the greatest fall.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fols. 12v-13r

Other known sources. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 35v; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 11

Nv10

1 \textit{Ilium}: Troy; here England.

2 \textit{old Priams}: ruler of Troy; here James I.

3 \textit{Cassandra}: Priam’s daughter, whose prophecies were cursed never to be believed; here she probably represents James I’s daughter, Elizabeth, wife of Frederick V, Elector Palatine, who, with her husband had been driven from Bohemia and from the Palatinate, taking refuge in The Hague.
4 *Hellen*: Helen of Troy, wife of the Trojan prince Paris; her contemporary identity is not clear.

5 *Andromache*: Trojan woman, wife of the hero Hector; possibly referring to Elizabeth, wife of Frederick V, Elector Palatine (figured in the next line as Hector).

6 *Hector of Boheme*: the Trojan hero Hector, son of Priam, and husband of Andromache; here he is Frederick V, Elector Palatine, and erstwhile King of Bohemia, driven from Bohemia after the Battle of White Mountain in November 1620.

7 *Paris*: the Trojan prince who stole Helen from the Spartan king Menelaus; here, Paris is Prince Charles, who “took ship” in February 1623 for Spain in an attempt to bring negotiations for the Spanish Match to a swift conclusion.

8 *A second Helen*: the Spanish Infanta, Maria.

9 *syringe from Rome*: i.e. she is a Roman Catholic.

10 *the upstarts...swaye*: attacks the socially obscure (“base born”, “upstart”) royal favourite, Buckingham.

11 *true Religion’s*: Protestantism.

12 *Ulisses*: the greek hero Ulysses, known for his wisdom and facile tongue. The contemporary identity is a little unclear: the figure who most closely “associated” with Jack/Charles on the trip to Spain was Buckingham, but the comparison seems to imply a courtier known for flattery rather than wisdom, and the flattery charge does not really fit the favourite. A possible alternative is Sir Francis Cottington, Charles’s secretary, who accompanied the Prince to Spain.

13 *Jacke*: Prince Charles, who assumed the pseudonym Jack Smith as he journeyed out of England for Spain in February 1623.

14 *Ajax*: Greek warrior hero. A plausible candidate for the “prison’d” hero is the “pariot” noble, and veteran of the 1620 Horace Vere expedition, Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, who was imprisoned in the Tower from April 1622 to December 1623 for attacking Buckingham. Oxford was also, however, the butt of libellous attacks (see, e.g., “Some say Sir Edward Cecill can” and “When Charles, hath got the Spanish Gearle”), and his military record to that point hardly warrants the Ajax comparison.

15 *Aeneas*: Trojan hero and mythical founder of Rome. The contemporary identity of “Aeneas” depends on whether “was soe too” refers to imprisonment or enmity to Ajax. If the former, the only plausible candidate for a poisoned prisoner would be Sir Thomas Overbury, poisoned in the Tower of London in 1613. A somewhat looser reading might allow us to identify Aeneas with James’s eldest son, Prince Henry, the darling of English militant Protestant aspirations, who died in 1612 and was rumoured
to have been poisoned.

16 Xerxes forces: reference to the fifth century BC king of Persia. Herodotus claims that Xerxes raised forces of over 2.5 million men against the Greeks.

17 Alexander’s deeds: Alexander the Great, fourth century BC king of Macedonia, and conqueror of massive swathes of territory.

18 The hogge: possibly Sir Francis Bacon, the disgraced Lord Chancellor, whose surname encouraged libellers to compare him with hogs and pigs.

19 Synon: Sinon, the Greek who persuaded the Trojans to take the wooden horse into their city. While no obvious contemporary figure seems to be implied, Sinon could easily stand for wicked counsellors plotting to betray Protestant England by admitting the Trojan horse of a Catholic queen. Sinon might also plausibly stand for the Spanish ambassador to England, Count Gondomar.

20 Thersites: in book 2 of Homer’s Iliad, Thersites rails at King Agamemnon, accusing him of waging war solely as an excuse for plunder and rapine, and is then rebuked and struck by Ulysses. Again, a single contemporary identity is hard to prove, but Thersites’ cowardice could stand for those who opposed English military action against Spain.

21 Janus: two-faced Roman god.

22 Jason assumes...to gayne: the mythic hero Jason sailed with the Argonauts to take the famed golden fleece from Colchis. The three lines following on from this make it likely that Jason is Charles, setting sail to Spain in pursuit of the golden fleece—the Spanish Match, which, among other things would have brought the English a huge dowry—at the risk of his spiritual corruption by popery (“Romish wolves” and “Bulls”).

23 Jove: king of the gods; here a poetic shorthand for the Christian God.

24 ave: hail.

25 Medea: daughter of the King of Colchis. Jason met her on his mission to take the golden fleece and took her home as his wife. Here she represents the Infanta of Spain, Maria, while the awful consequences of Jason’s marriage to Medea are meant to represent the consequences of a Spanish Match.

26 Mars: god of war.

27 Narcissus...Eccho: Narcissus was loved by the nymph Echo, but his inability to feel love drove her to her death.
28 *Niobe*: Niobe’s children were slain by the gods and, even after she was transformed into stone, Niobe would weep for them.

29 *Pale fac’te Moone...England sight*: the moon fell in love with the youth Endymion; here Endymion is Charles (and, despite the name, almost certainly not Endymion Porter, one of the small group of men who accompanied Charles to Spain).

30 *Aurora*: goddess of the dawn.

31 *Thetis*: a sea goddess. The description of her as “old”, and her estimation as “another man” are puzzling, but may simply be intended as indicative of the poor dawn light.

32 *Phæbus*: god of the sun.

33 *Phaeton*: son of Phoebus; here representing Charles.

34 *Tom*: Buckingham assumed the pseudonym “Tom Smith” as he journeyed from England to Spain in February 1623.

35 *Thy titles greate*: Buckingham was elevated to Duke, the highest rank of the English peerage, in May 1623.

36 *Jehovah*: God. Buckingham was often assumed to be lukewarm in his commitment to Protestantism.

37 *But to the Crosse...may fall*: this line plays on two meanings of “cross”. The “cross” to which Buckingham “prayst” may be the crucifix used in Catholic ritual; the “cross” he may suffer is a setback.
Nv11 Our eagle is yett fliowne, to a place unknowne

Notes. This riotous song, set to a well-known contemporary ballad tune, imagines the effects of the great riches the Spanish Infanta was assumed to bring to England as a dowry.

“Whope doe mee no harme”¹

Our eagle is yett fliowne,² to a place unknowne
   To meete with the Phoenex of Spaine³
Fethered many moe, will after him goe
   To waite & attend on his traine.⁴

I here some men say, the Dutchmen⁵ must pay
   Great summes to make matters even,
And wee shall have gold, more then London can hold
   Were the walls built as high as heaven.

The Potents of Spaine will loade Charles his waine⁶
   And fill up the Brittans with Glee
God knowes what pearle, will be given to that Girle⁷
   By Ladys of every degree.

A Chappell⁸ shall bee, new built you shall see
   The walls shall be pceces of eight⁹
Within it the floore shall be paved all ore
   With gold of I know not what weight.

The Citty shall thrive, there weomen shall swive,¹⁰
   Exchange time¹¹ in the morn
I heard it right now, each Cuckold shall blowe
   And Guild the tippe of his horne.

The Mayors of townes, in there Conny-skin¹² gowns,
Shall noddinge ride in the rout,
It shall bee there grace, to ride the fooles pace,
   And at night see the sconce be hunge out.

The Lawyers no more, shall coson the poore
   In Westminster hall, nor in Towne.
There Greene Earthen pitcher, shall be silver or Richer
   And each goose weare A Barristers gowne.

The Schollars shall loath, chopt mutton in broth
   For Woodcocke in Plate shall be brought
To every messe, there shall not bee lesse,
   Then a brace the colledge throughout.

The Gentry shall spend, even world without end,
   They all there meanes shall out live,
Yett never bee poore, for there pockefyed whore
   Shall helpe them to what shee can give.

Our state shall forgett, they ever had witt,
   Our councell shall now not bee grave,
The clergy shall drinke like Dutchmen, I thinke
   Each shall a third benefice have.

The Keeper of cash, shall count it as trash
   Great houses shall bigger be made,
The chappell wherein, to laugh was a sin
   Shall be stord with bedds for the trade.

At court they shall Quaffe, great whole blacke Jacks off
   To Grandyes that shall come ore
And After perhappe D. shall have a clappe
   What can six & fifty doe more.
The reason of this, I take not amisse,

    Will in our clymate appeare

When that our northpole shall bee putt in the hole

    Of the Southerne inferior beare.\textsuperscript{21}

\textbf{Source.} Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, pp. 110-11

\textbf{Other known sources.} Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 398, fols. 188r and 229r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 176v

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Whope doe mee no harm:} “Whoop! do me no harm good man” was a well-known ballad tune, and had been used for a libellous ballad on the Overbury murder (“There was an ould ladd rode on an ould padd”) in 1615-16. Simpson (777-780) gives a transcription of the tune.

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Our eagle is yett flowne:} Prince Charles (“Our eagle”) left for Spain in February 1623.

\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Phoenex of Spaine:} the Spanish Infanta Maria.

\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Fethered many moe...traine:} other courtiers followed Charles to Madrid in the weeks after the Prince’s departure.

\textsuperscript{5} \textit{Dutchmen:} the Dutch, who were at war with Spain, had a great interest in seeing the Spanish Match fail, or in at least countering its diplomatic effects.

\textsuperscript{6} \textit{waine:} wagon.

\textsuperscript{7} \textit{that Girle:} the Spanish Infanta Maria.

\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Chappell:} any marriage treaty with Spain would require the English to allow the construction of a Catholic chapel for the Infanta to worship in. Inigo Jones began construction of a chapel for the Infanta in May 1623.

\textsuperscript{9} \textit{peeces of eight:} Spanish gold coins.

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{swive:} have sex.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Exchange time:} unclear; probably a reference to the morning hours of business at the Old and New Exchange, and hence a bawdy suggestion that city wives exploit the time when their husbands are out of
the house on business.

12 *Conny-skin:* rabbit skin.

13 *sconce:* lantern.

14 *Westminster hall:* location of a number of law courts.

15 *The Schollars:* i.e. of Oxford and Cambridge.

16 *pockefyed:* syphilitic.

17 *third benefice:* a third clerical living. The joke is that many clergymen already hold two benefices—the problem of pluralism was a matter of some dispute in the English Church.

18 *the trade:* prostitution.

19 *blacke Jacks:* large jugs of beer.

20 *D. shall have a clappe:* this line is a little obscure. A plausible reading is to take “D.” as an abbreviation for “Duke” and thus for Buckingham, and “have a clappe” as “have a misfortune”. This line and the one that follows then perhaps evoke the great celebratory drinking that might occur should Buckingham fall.

21 *When that our northpole...beare:* the merging of constellations offers a thin fig-leaf for a rather crude evocation of the consummation of a marriage between Prince Charles and the Spanish Infanta Maria.
**Notes.** Some stanzas in this poem inspired by the prospect of a Spanish dowry correspond with some of those in “Our eagle is yett flowne, to a place unknowne”; however, the differences between the two poems are sufficient to include them as discrete texts. Given the similarities, however, it is possible that this poem may also have been set to the tune of “Whoop! Do me no harm good man”.

Nv12 Poor silly wight that carkes in the night

Poor silly wight\(^1\) that carkes\(^2\) in the night
and lookes like a man that were starving
For the drosse of this world which by fortune is hurld
more on fooles then on men well deserving.

Sett sorrow apart and cheere upp thy hart
or hast thee or hygh thee to shore
There shalt thou espie Spanish gold comming nigh
then thou shalt not want any more.

Our Eagle is flowne\(^3\) to a place yet unknowne
to seeke out the Phœnix of Spayne\(^4\)
Feathred foule many moe, will after him goe
to attend and be of his train.\(^5\)

And some doe report they will bringe to the Court
such a masse and abundance of treasure
That the men of the land did they thrisie double stand
are not able the same for to measure.

The Grandies of Spayne will loade Charles waine\(^6\)
with the richest of riches that be
And God knows what pearle will be given to this girle\(^7\)
from the Ladyes of every degree

And others doe say that the Dutchmen\(^8\) must pay
a greate somm to make matters even
Soe we shall have gold more then London will holde
    were the walls built as high as the heaven.

But I doe say and still shall I pray
    god save us from the Spanish infection
The Divell, the Pope, the Masse, and the Rope,\(^9\)
    Together with Preistly correction

And graunt that shee prove as true as her love
    as shee is of royall desert
And I thinke of her gold, to say I may be bold
    we shall need little helpe of a Cart.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 50v

Other known sources. Folger MS V.a.339, fol. 255v; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 248

1 \textit{wight}: person.

2 \textit{carkes}: toils.

3 \textit{Our Eagle is flowne}: Prince Charles ("Our eagle") left for Spain in February 1623.

4 \textit{Phænix of Spayne}: the Spanish Infanta Maria.

5 \textit{Feathred foule...train}: other courtiers followed Charles to Madrid in the weeks after the Prince’s departure.

6 \textit{waine}: wagon.

7 \textit{this girle}: the Spanish Infanta Maria.

8 \textit{Dutchmen}: the Dutch, who were at war with Spain, had a great interest in seeing the Spanish Match fail, or in at least countering its diplomatic effects.
9 *Rope:* probably the hangman’s rope.
Notes. This rare verse stands out both for its well-informed scepticism about the health of Spanish royal finances—and thus about the low probability of a massive dowry payment as part of a marriage alliance—and for its political critique of the Jacobean regime. This critique, couched in “patriot” anti-popish rhetoric, engages not only with James’s foreign policy, but also with his domestic religious and financial policies, and then concludes by comparing James unfavourably with his predecessor.

“An Epithalamion on the Princes Mariage writt by a truer Catholiqe then he that styles himselfe the most Catholiqe Kinge”

Our Prince whom we soe dearely lov’d
And of whose lyfe we soe approved
    Our hopes did strangely mocke
By Saylinge through the Westerne deepe
To marry with a Scabbed Sheepe
    Of ThantiChristian flocke.

Whose father but a beggar was
And brother now doth likewyse pass
    For such a one or worse
As best the Genowayes can tell
That to the fearefull pit of hell
    him & his projects curse.

Tis true his Indies doe abound
With Jemms above, Gold underground
    In wished manner yet,
But those the states do still surprise
Knoweinge which way their passage lyes
    Before they home can gett.
Whereat inraged he doth vowe
Hee’le make them to his Scepter bowe
   Or battle with them joyne
Which plotte his treasure hath so spent that he must pay in Complement
   What we desire in Coyne.

Loe here is all the hopes we have
Howere the Papists doe outbrave
   Of Portion with our Prince
Allthough the braggeinge Spaniard sweares
Hee meanes to frustrate all our feares
   And us of Spite Convince.

Her wealth yow heare, her tawny face
Doth herrald like proclaime her race
   And shewes shee is a Moore:
Her faith it is Heriticall
To guess what then should him inthrall
   My judgement is too poore

Except their Silver alters, and
the golden gods that on them stand
   His heart did so bewitche,
That thence he did conclude there Kinge
As much out of his chests could bringe
   As Scottelande would inriche.

Which of all Countryes is the worst
And when the fruitefull earth was curst
   Was made the barrennest
As by our Kinges Revenues there
It might full easily appeare
   If that where here exprest.

But if those babyes won his love
And made him Neptunes kindenes prove
   And yet he bee beguiled:
Of Heyres, no matter, he did neede
A wyfe I know, but not for breede
   For he doth want no chyld.

Nor other riches for the Land
Where now he keepes & shall Command
   Much skornes the least increase
Of wealth or honour, as it seemes,
But rich enough in both esteemes
   Her selfe because at peace.

And soe her prudent ruler sayes
That money at his will may rayse
   As hee himselfe beleives
And soe he hath done hitherto
Not careinge whom it doth undoe
   So he his ends acheme.

But he his taxes must foregoe,
Or, sure our weale is chang’d to woe
   Wee’l change our love to hate:
And more condemne his crueltye
Than we commend her clemencye
   That in his throane last sate.

Dureing whose raigne, though none drunke wyne
Under the shaddowe of his vyne
Because no vines we hadd,
Yet Milke & honey Canaans food
By runninge in a several flood
    Therewith our hearts did gladde

But ah! these days of happynes
For others of as much distress
    Long since exchanged were
Our Ease to toyle our Joy to greife
And he of whom we crave releife
    Our cryes doth onely heare.

In Purse and Spirrit equally
We feele so great a poverty
    As mars our wonted sport,
Yet who can choose but faint & fall
To see Religion like a ball
    Quite bandied out of Court.

And to consider how our Kinge
Whose Fame through Christendome doth ringe
    For store of guifts divine,
Doth with the prodigal rejecte
The meate his Soule should most effecte
    To Feed on Huskes with swyne.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fols. 15v-16r

Nv13

1 Epithalamion: a wedding poem.

2 truer Catholiqe...Kinge: Protestants often affirmed that they, not the Church of Rome, were the true
“catholic”, universal Church. The kings of Spain assumed the title of “most Catholic king”.

3 Prince: Prince Charles, who travelled to Spain in February 1623.

4 Scabbed Sheepe: diseased sheep; here standing for the Infanta Maria of Spain. In September 1622, Joseph Mead learned that a Paul’s Cross preacher, one Clayton from Fulham, had been punished for telling a “tale of a great murrain of sheep in Edward the Sixth’s days (I think); the reason whereof was, as he said, the coming of scabbed sheep, our of Spain” (Birch, James I 2.329-330).

5 ThantiChristian: Protestant polemicists believed the Pope was the Antichrist.

6 father: the Infanta Maria was the daughter of Philip III of Spain.

7 brother: Maria’s brother had become Philip IV of Spain in March 1621.

8 Genowayes: Genoese. Genoese bankers served the cash-strapped Spanish crown.

9 his Indies: Spain’s American possessions.

10 the states: the Dutch, whose navy worked to capture Spanish treasure ships sailing from the Americas.

11 he: i.e. the King of Spain.

12 Which plotte...so spent: the Spanish had been fighting the Dutch for six decades, putting a huge strain on Spanish finances.

13 outbrave: boast.

14 Portion: the dowry the Spanish will offer with the Infanta.

15 Moore: a Spanish Muslim.

16 Silver alters...stand: the silver altars and golden statuary upon them are symbols not only of Spain’s apparent wealth, but also of the Spaniards’ Catholicism (and hence, from a Protestant perspective, “idolatry”).

17 Scottelande: to the English, Scotland was notoriously impoverished (see Section E).

18 our Kinges Revenues there: i.e. James I’s revenues from his Scottish kingdom.

19 his: though the sense of the poem becomes a little convoluted, the best reading is to assume that the poem here is referring again to Charles.
Neptunes: god of the sea.


prudent ruler: James I.

money...may rayse: referring to James I’s raising of taxation without parliamentary consent, including customs duties (impositions) and benevolences (voluntary taxes). In May 1622, Lord Saye and Sele was reported to have spoken out against a benevolence as an illegal tax (Birch, James I 2.312).

weale: good, well-being.

her: Elizabeth I.

Milke & honey Canaans food: “And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites” (Exodus 3.7-8).

Religion...bandied out of Court: court here has a double meaning, being both a tennis court, from which a ball can be struck out of bounds, and the royal court, where, in 1622-23, a number of high profile conversions to Catholicism and promotions of known Catholics seemed to imply a grave threat to Protestant political hegemony.

the prodigal: the last three lines of the stanza allude to Christ’s parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15.11-32).
Notes. This lumbering exercise in anti-Catholic wit does not seem to have been occasioned by any actual mishap at a show staged for Prince Charles in Madrid. Rather, the poem attempts to make some mild polemical capital out of the death of Pope Gregory XV in the summer of 1623.

“On a Shew presented before Prince Charles in the Spanish Courte”

The Prince of Wales with all his royall traine
Was entertaine in the Courte of Spaine:
The Catholikes theire respects disclose
Delighting him with Feasts, & Maskes, & Shewes.
Meane while the Romish Church is sick & dead,
Shee died a Noble death, she lost her head.¹
The holie father having clos’d his eies,²
The Spanish states among themselves devise
To grace Christs Vicar: The Catholicks
Before the Prince with antike shewes and tricks.
Within the Stage heav’n placed is on high
Opposd to which hells dreadfull gulfe doth lie.
Then in come Popelings³ Angells them defending
The Protestants black divells them attending
The Papists dying (as most joyfull happ)
By troops ar Carried into Peters⁴ Lapp
The Protestant no sooner yeeld their breath
But Divells dragg them to the second death
Poore Puritanes⁵ away by thousands pack
Carryed most swiftly on the divells backe,
Amongst the rest the Holy Father dies,
As soon he must be mounted to the skies.
And that they may the more advance the Pope
They wind him into heaven with a Rope
Nor must he as the Common sort ascend,
But troopes of Angells must his grace attend.
Now is hee mounting up in glorious state,
The rope hath brought him hard to heavens gate.
The blessed host now meaneth not to brave him,
And Peter stands as Porter to receave him;
All watch his Entrance; But I feare to tell!
The Rope breaks! The Pope falls into hell!
Yet greive not for your Fathers losse of Glory
Yee Catholikes; Hee’s gone to purgatory\textsuperscript{6}
To purg some secrett sin by him committed,
Which by your masses soon may bee remitted.\textsuperscript{7}
And then he may no doubt with little paine
Peepe out of hell, & mount to heaven againe.
But pitty ’twas his merits were so great
They weighd him downe so hard the rope to breake.
But tell mee frends, wast not a pretty thing
The Pope should go to heaven in a string?
What aild thee, ô thou that didst him pluck?
Towards the starrs that thou hast such bad luck?
Thou shouldst have borne him up upon thy back
If that thou hadst but foreseen the rope would crack.
Doubtles the fault will all bee laied on thee
That thou didst not this great mishapp foresee.
And might I but Conjecture this; I thinke
That thou that night too freely tookst thy drinke.
And so twixt hawke, & buzzard\textsuperscript{8} in thy Liquor
Thou madst a Divell of Christs Cheifest Vicar.
And what a chance ’twas such an holy man
Should have his portion with the Puritan?
O how the minds of Papists this doth daunt,
Thir Pope should dambd be with th’ Protestant?
Hee thinks that they that then about him went
Should by their powr have stopt this fatall vent
Did they take charg to carry him on high
And let him play the breaknecke by & by?
Where lay the fault? what did the man deceave thee?
Or did hee not foresee the Pope was heavie?
Methinks thou shouldst have considred that
His greate revenues needs must make him fatt.
Besides perhaps he carried up about him
Copes, Miters, Crosses, pixes, roodes without him.
Doubtles within there was wondrous weight;
His Heart & Conscience was not very light.
And drawing upward such a heavie Pope
How could it be but he must breake the Rope?
Since this it stands that heaven did deceave him,
And that small Rope of such great Joyes bereave him;
Yett Hell was ready alwaies to receave him,
There was he found att first & there I leave him.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, pp. 167-68

Other known sources. BL MS Sloane 542, fol. 37r

Nv14

1 lost her head: i.e. the head of the Church—the Pope—had died.

2 The holie father...eies: alludes to the death of Pope Gregory XV in the summer of 1623. The news of his death reached Spain in mid-July.

3 Popelings: Catholic clergy.

4 Peters: St. Peter in heaven.
5  *Puritanes*: mocking term for the hotter sort of Protestant.

6  *purgatory*: the middle place, neither heaven nor hell, where Catholics believed most sinners would purge their sins in suffering before ascending to heaven.

7  *masses soon may bee remitted*: Catholics believed that masses for the dead would remit some of the time the souls of the dead spent in purgatory.

8  *twixt hawke, & buzard*: a 1662 definition of this proverbial phrase renders it as “between a good and a bad thing” (*OED*). Here it seems to mean “in a state of confusion”.

9  *vent*: fall.

10  *Copes...roodes*: various Catholic vestments and liturgical implements. Copes are ecclesiastical vestments; miters are headdresses; pyxes are boxes in which the consecrated host was stored; roods are crucifixes.
Notes. Most versions of this popular poem include six stanzas; however, a few have an extra stanza. Although the text of Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160 is otherwise inferior, we include the extra stanza here, in its place as indicated. The poem’s sense that the Spanish Match was perhaps now not to be concluded, and its focus on the English fleet originally assembled to retrieve Charles and the Infanta from Spain, but which eventually brought home only Charles, allows us to date the verse to June-August 1623.

“On the Spanish match”

All the newes thats stirringe now
Is of the Golden Ladye:¹
The Pope as yet will not agree
    King James should bee her Dadye.²
The Prince he wanteth victualls,³
    Sufficient for his trayne
His horses & his Trumpeters,
    Are all turn’d backe againe.

Gundimore his breech is soare⁴
    He rides beesides the saddle,
And hath long tyme bin hatching egges⁵
    Now they may proove all addle.
And those false harted Englishmen,
    Which wrought with him for Spaine,
Doe stand and scratch because the match
    Doth doubtfull yet remaine.

Count Buckingham & Cottington
    With their Endymion swayne⁶
Us’d their best trickes with Catholiques
    To bring our Prince to Spaine.
But now she’s there, wee need not feare
The Lady must not marrye
God send our Charles safe home againe
And let her worship tarrye

Earle Rutland is our admirall
Lord Winsor is the Reare
Lord Marley cannot doe withall
Unlesse his wench weare theare.

God send them all a merrye wind
And rid them from our shore
God grant all Papistes love the Prince
As Marley loves his whore.

[The Navy is well furnished
with papists wondros store
And Captaines many & Admiralls
that never fought before
Lets pray then that our mariners
to their tacklings stout may stand
And fling the papists overbard
to floate unto the land.]

But shall I tell you what I thinke
I doubt tis but a rumor
The Fox hee knowes how for to wincke
To fitt the peoples humor.
For quaestionles all doubts weare scand
Beefore our Charles went thither
And now a Navy is at hand
To sayle the Lord knowes whether.
But God preserve our Kinge & Prince,
   A plague uppon their foes,
And all that are Hispanioliz’d
   And would their Country loose.
God grant all that matches make
   Beefore the partyes woe
May goe sell matches up & downe
   As now poore Frenchmen doe.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 19, pp. 32-33 [Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fols. 177v-178r]

Other known sources. “Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript” 172 and 174; Bodleian MS Don. b.8, p. 117; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1048, fol. 76r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 24v; BL Add. MS 5832, fol. 200v; BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 30v; BL Add. MS 61683, fol. 73r; BL MS Harley 907, fol. 75v; BL MS Sloane 1792, fol. 52v; CUL MS Gg.4.13, p. 48; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 72; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 222; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 73r; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 250

1 Golden Ladye: the Spanish Infanta Maria. She was “Golden” because it was believed she would bring with her a massive dowry.

2 The Pope...her Dadye: Maria could not marry a Protestant without a special dispensation from the pope.

3 The Prince he wanteth victualls: news reports of the shortage of food in Spain were common at this time. See, e.g., Richard Corbett’s mocking dismissal of such news stories in “I’ve read of Ilands flotinge and removed”.

4 Gundimore his breech is soare: Count Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador to England, 1613-18 and 1620-22, and leading architect of the Spanish Match, was alleged to suffer from an anal fistula.

5 hatching egges: depictions of Gondomar in anti-Spanish writing portrayed him as a Machiavellian plotter.

6 Count Buckingham...Endymion swayne: George Villiers, Marquess (and by May 1623, Duke) of Buckingham; Sir Francis Cottington, Charles’s secretary; and Endymion Porter, Groom of the Prince’s Bedchamber. All three travelled with Charles to Spain in 1623, and all three were rumoured to be
crypto-Catholic or Catholic, and pro-Spanish sympathizers. Both Cottington and Porter had spent significant lengths of time in Spain.

7 *Earle Rutland is our admirall:* Francis Manners, Earl of Rutland and Buckingham’s father-in-law. Rutland, a prominent Catholic peer, was appointed Admiral to lead the flotilla of ships originally intended for Spain to carry the Infanta to England. The flotilla left England at the end of July 1623.

8 *Lord Winsor is the Reare:* Thomas, Lord Windsor, a Catholic peer, was appointed Rear-Admiral in 1623 and was a member of the flotilla intended for Spain that left England in late July 1623.

9 *Lord Marley:* Henry Parker, Lord Morley, a Catholic peer, and presumably also a member of the flotilla intended to retrieve Charles from Spain, that sailed from England at the end of July 1623.
Oh for an Ovid or a Homer now
Whose sweet immortalizing pen knowes how
To give such life by that there excellence
To this dayes joy that many ages hence
Decreped Grandsires by their workes divine
May warme there blood by readinge but a line
And greiv’d they liv’d not in that blessed houre
When heaven rain’d soe much joy to have the power
To make times rusty chimes to backward runne
Untwistinge soe the thred the Fates had spunne
And children curse slow natures longe delay
That had not them producte to see this day
Is Spencer dead & Daniel gone, oh then
This morninges glories lost: theres not a pen
Can point on shaddow much lesse lustre give
To that daies fame that might for ever live
Now doe I wish I had the power to charme
All Poetts now a sleepe theise doe but harme
All writers now have soe farr wrackt their braines
With cloven-footed rough Satyrick straines
That everie thinge seemes monstrous they produce
Libellous rimes are onlie now in use
The soule of poetrie alas is fledd,
For Homer Ovid Spenser Daniells dead
And Charles & George that have outstript all story
Must want a pen t’imortalize their glory
The thunder mockinge Cannons lowde do hollow
And fame woulde force from harme the great Apollo
As if the subject did require the pen
Rather of gods then anie mortall men
The acclamations of the people peirce
The roofe of heaven & thence would draw a verse
Great Sydneis’ soule I thinke they woulde invite
On this unsampled theame some lines to write
That in record of everlastinge fame
Men still might read great Charles & Georges name
And by the vertue of his Muses fire
Draw after times their actions to admire:
That when there ashes rested in there urne
Yett men might read of joy for there returne
Which is soe farr beyond all mens expression
As none attempt itt may without transgression
Noe pen, noe tongue, noe excellence of art
Can speake the rapture of each good mans heart
Children uncapable to each mans thinkinge
Were drunke with joy as others were a drinkinge
Matrons & Virgins who untill that morninge
Nere lookt on wine but with a modest scorninge
Did drinke & blush & blush & drinke againe
For joy prince Charles was safe return’d from Spaine
Cripples lett fall there crutches, sick & lame
 Forgott there paine when they but heard his name
The blind man now lamentinge lowdlie cries
He never greiv’d soe much his losse of eies
Infants scarce taught to goe were seene to run
To see prince Charles great Britaines only son
The dumbe man now his want of speech bemoanes
Ventinge his joyes in sighes, in teares, in groanes
They sigh & groane for greife they cannot speake
Emptying there heartes by teares that els would breake
The Country clowne as he past on the waie
Aid^8 force from night an artificiall day
The Citizens to shew there deere affection
Did strive to bringe time under there subjection
And kept back night by stratagems & force
Five howers longer then her common course
The eveninge now att midnight did beginne
The starrs lookt out & blusht & soe shutt in
Heaven wept for joy the useless sun retirde
Fearinge his cheekes should by our flames^9 be fir’d
Aurora^10 rose survaide from East to West
Saw day without her & went back to rest
Yea Jove^11 himselfe did call the gods about him
Fearinge the worlde had fir’d himselfe without him
And whether this the last day were or noe
Swift Mercury^12 is sent in hast to know
The sullen fates^13 that never till that day
Were merry knowne to be he found att play
And on there brass-leav’d bookes^14 castinge his eye
Hee saw it written for eternitie
A day of rest & sport, & lett it stande
For ever in the Calends of this land
And lett the fift of October^15 be found
Like August fift wth a redd letter crown’d^16
For never soe much good as this before
Unshipt itt selfe upon the Brittish shore
Our weepinge summer was no sooner gone
But Charles a gratious after spring brings home
Speake mightie prince found you not mens lookes
As are indeed the Common peoples booke
Where those of understandinge read & find
Where very soules, there thoughts there hearts there minds
Have you not such a welcome written there
As noe tongue can deliver to your eare
Have you not th’heraulds of each Brittans hart
Mantled in deepest scarlett dy ready to start
Out of each blushinge cheeke, each sparklinge eye
Proclaiminge there (without base flattery)
There speechlesse blisse there loves sinceritie
There soules gladnesse there heartes alacritie
Countinge nothinge more happy then t’expresse
To you there joy, to heaven there thankefullnes
O lett the memory of itt ever rest
Within the Cabinett of your princely breast
And lett itt bringe forth fruite when you are old
So shall you reape from us a thousand foueld
Each graine of love cast on our humble ground
Shall with a glorious harvest still be crown’d
Winter shall loose its powers, noe mill-dew blast itt
Time may sinke with itt Sir, but not out last itt
What need your highness seek for love far hence
Or fetch itt home with hazzard or expence
Husband but what you have great Sir then know
Emperours & Kinges the worlds Monarkes shall throw
There sisters daughters neeces on our shoare
And gaininge your alliance aske noe more
Beautie & blood & wealth & birth shall stand
The humble vassals of your great command
England Scotland, Ireland joyned together
What dares she call her name they’le not fetch hither
Leave us not then in everlasting night
By such your absence Sir, by such your flight
Day without sunn may better govern’d be
Then England Scotland Ireland wantinge thee
And thou great Buckingham fortunes best child
On whom both heaven & earth & seas have smil’d
Live long in that high sphere wherein you move
In Gods, the Kinges, the Princes peoples love
Detraction now repeales what she hath spoken
Envy hath drunke her last is swolne & broken
And mightie prince whiles others offer gold
Some mirrhe, some frankinseence, some from the fold
Bring goats & kidds, some oxen from the stall
They offer but in part, I offer all
Some billetts brought some faggotts to the fire
I bringe a zealous heart whose flames aspires
As high as did the greatest piles of wood
And what they spent in wine Ile spend in blood
All that they did was but to speake there love
Upon the selfe same warrant comes this dove
From forth the arke then of your grace & favour
Vouchsafe to looke, putt forth your hand and save her
She bringes but 2 bare leaves of olive now
But att next flight great Sir expect a bow.

Source. Rosenbach MS 239/27, pp. 6-10
Ovid: Roman poet.

Homer: ancient Greek epic poet.

Spencer: Edmund Spenser, English epic poet (d.1599).

Daniel: English poet Samuel Daniel (d.1619).

Charles & George: Prince Charles and George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, whose return from Spain is the occasion of the poem.

Apollo: sun god and god of the muses.

Sydneys: Sir Philip Sidney (d.1586), Elizabethan poet and writer.

Aid: probable scribal error; read “Did”.

our flames: bonfires were lit to celebrate Charles’s return.

Aurora: goddess of dawn.

Jove: king of the gods.

Mercury: messenger of the gods.

fates: the three fates, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos.

bookes: i.e. the books of fates.

fift of October: Charles and Buckingham arrived in England on 5 October 1623.

August fift...crown’d: bells were rung on 5 August to commemorate the anniversary of King James’s deliverance from the Gowrie conspiracy in Scotland. “Red letter” days were holidays marked with red ink in the prayer book.

Where: probable scribal error; read “There” (i.e. “Their”).
Nv17  The Prince is now come out of Spayne

Notes. This anti-Spanish poem is notable not only for its loyal praise for Charles and Buckingham, but also for its rather distanced perspective on the excesses of popular celebrations for the Prince’s return.

“Of the Prince’s returne from Spayne. 1623”

The Prince is now come out of Spayne,\(^1\)
God blesse his highnesse and his trayne
They all have seene Madrid.
Yet most of them came post before,
And happy hee gott first ashoare,
To tell us how hee did

They tolde us twenty thousand lyes,
To feede the peoples fantasies;
And put them in great feare.
But when the Prince to England came,
And brought not home the Spanish Dame,\(^2\)
The Papists hung their eares.

They say the Pope cannot dispense,\(^3\)
Nor will hee soyle his innocence
To match these two together:
But had wee knowne as much before,
The Cunninge of old Gundamore,\(^4\)
Could not have gott him thither.

Some say, their victualls were but scant,\(^5\)
But that’s a lye, there was no want:
The Prince and Duke\(^6\) had guifts;
And so had everyone beside,
That could but ether runne or ride,
    The rest made other shifts.

But when to London once hee came
To see the citie on a flame,\(^7\)
    The people did admire.
I speake it to the townes-mens prayse,
It’s thought that since Queene Maries dayes,\(^8\)
    There was not such a fyre.

He was receiv’d with asmuch joy,
As was the wandering Prince of Troy,
    When hee to Carthage went.\(^9\)
Some Maudlinn drunke did weepe and swore,
That sweete Prince Charles should never more
    Crosse seas without consent.

They vow’d they now would shew their care,
For they had all in him a share,
    As well as had the King.
So to the taverne all they went,
And every foole his verdict spent,
    And then the bells did ring.

The regent of that noble towne,\(^10\)
Got up betimes, put on his gowne,
    His service to have done:
But ere that hee to York house\(^11\) came,
The Prince and Duke of Buckingham
    Three houres before were gone.

I would it had my fortune beene,
Those strange adventures to have seene,
That others did in Spayne:
I might have then more honour wonne,
Then Archy did, or els some one,
That wore a golden chayne.

But I am hee that have no hope,
To get by Spanyard or by Pope;
I like them both all one.
I love the Prince, and every name
That honours noble Buckingham,
and so my song is done.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 22r-v

1 Prince...out of Spayne: Prince Charles arrived in England on 5 October 1623.

2 Spanish Dame: the Spanish Infanta Maria.

3 Pope cannot dispense: for the Spanish Infanta to marry the Protestant Charles, she required a dispensation from the pope.

4 Gundamore: Count Gondomar, Spanish ambassador to England (1613-18, 1620-22), and one of the architects of the Spanish Match.

5 Victualls were but scant: this news was noted by a number of libellers in 1623, and most memorably dismissed as false in Richard Corbett’s “I’ve read of Ilands flotinge and removed”.

6 Duke: the royal favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who accompanied Charles to Spain in February 1623.

7 on a flame: numerous bonfires were lit in London to celebrate Charles’s return.

8 since Queene Maries dayes: a mordant allusion to the bonfires in which Queen Mary (1553-58) had had Protestant “heretics” burned.
9 *Prince of Troy...Carthage went:* alluding to Aeneas, whose arrival in Carthage is described in book 1 of Virgil’s *Aeneid*.

10 *regent...towne:* presumably the Lord Mayor of London.

11 *York house:* Buckingham’s residence.

12 *Archy:* Archie Armstrong, court jester, who, along with other courtiers, followed Prince Charles to Spain in early April. According to Redworth (100), Philip IV of Spain presented Archie with a golden chain.
Notes. A variant source gives a more accurate title for this song: “Upon Prince Charles his arrivall from Spaine. Octob. 5. 1623” (Beinecke MS Osborn b.197). The poem appears to be a song, but unfortunately no evidence of tune or performance survives.

“The fift of August, and the fift”

Nv18

The fift of August,¹ and the fift
Of good November² made a shift
To make us sing and drinke merrily, ly, ly, ly.
But shalbee treason to bee sober
On the fift day of October:³
And will you knowe the reason why? why, why, why.

The sonne of our most noble king
wentt into Spayne to fetch a thing;⁴
perhappes you heard of it before; before, before, etc
But there was such a doe about her,
That hee is come agayne without her,
And I am very gladd therefore, therefore, therefore etc

With him is come unto our coast,
A man as great as hee all most,
A Duke⁵ hee is, a Dutche⁶ is his wife, his wife, his wife etc
What needed hee so farre to come,
Who had so many wives at home,⁷
Doe what hee could, to last him all his lyfe? his lyfe, his lyfe etc

Your Puritans⁸ who will not drinke,
I warrant you, did wisely thinke,
That our prudent King was very much to blame; to blame, to blame etc
Bycause hee made so many blottes;
They knew not hee had after plottes,
And went about to play an after game; game, game etc

Even as the head is wiser then
The body, So let other men,
Give leave unto our king to bee wise; be wise, be wise, etc
And drinke a health unto the Prince
Who hath been absent ever since
Hee went away from hence in a disguise; disguise etc.

Harke, I heare the belles ring;
O strange, How the gunnes sing,
It is not for a Mayor, or such a toye; a toye, a toye etc
The melancholy drums do beate,
The bonefires all are in a sweate,
And melt away themselves for very joye, joy etc

The Lord Maior and his brothers, Though not so wise as others
But that it rain’d, had mett him all in order, order etc
Much joye in heart they did conceive,
But, for they cannot speake, they leave
Their minde in the mouth of their Recorder, corder etc.

The citizens of London there
All pitifully undone were
And hung downe their heads; like men forlorne; forlorne, etc.
When now the Prince is come from Spaine,
Holde up their broken heads agayne
And every one exalts on high his horne; his horne etc

I would his Majesty of Spaine were here a while to se
The jollyty of our English nation; nation etc
Then surely hee would never hope, That either hee or els the pope
Could make here a Romish plantation,\(^\text{14}\) etc.

Now fye upon I knowe whom
Who turne for hopes in tyme to come,
And say that wee are blindly ledd away; away etc.
As if that they had better sight
Who say the masse by candle light\(^\text{15}\)
When the sunne shines as cleare as day: day etc.

And therefore you, who serve the tyme,
Lend both your eares unto my rime;
And turne agayne, or els ere it bee long, long etc
I hope to see you killed all,
Like those that from a ladder fall,\(^\text{16}\)
And put into a lamentable song, song, song etc

God blesse our Prince, and if hee chance
To goe once more by Spaine to France;
His love unto his mistress for to show, show etc
I hartily desire hee may,
Even as he went, so come away:
And have no worse luck then hee had now, now etc.

And if our royall King wilbee
In one thing well advis’d by mee:
Then let him give his loyall subjects leave, leave etc
To put the day the Prince ariv’d,
Into such bookes as are contriv’d
By John a Stowe,\(^\text{17}\) and Jeffery a Neave,\(^\text{18}\) a Neave etc.

\textbf{Source.} Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fols. 23v-24r
**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 180v; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 63

Nv18

1 _fift of August_: 5 August was commemorated as the anniversary of King James’s deliverance from the Gowrie assassination plot in Scotland.

2 _fift / Of good November_: 5 November was commemorated as the anniversary of the discovery of the 1605 Gunpowder Plot to blow up King James and the Houses of Parliament.

3 _fift day of October_: Prince Charles and Buckingham arrived in England from Spain on 5 October 1623.

4 _thing_: i.e. the Spanish Infanta, Maria.

5 _A Duke_: the Duke of Buckingham.

6 _Dutches_: Katherine (Kate) Villiers, Duchess of Buckingham.

7 _so many wives at home_: perhaps a (relatively friendly) dig at Buckingham’s reputation for womanizing.

8 _Puritans_: mocking term for the godly, sober, hotter sort of Protestant. The poet is dismissing criticism of James’s conduct of the Spanish Match negotiations in 1623 as the work of Puritans.

9 _disguise_: Charles and Buckingham left England disguised in false beards and simple clothes as Jack and Tom Smith.

10 _not for a Mayor_: the festivities for the return of Prince Charles—church bells, bonfires in the streets, drums and cannon salutes—were part of the early modern English “vocabulary of celebration” (Cressy) and were thus similar to those used at the installation of Lord Mayors of London.

11 _his brothers_: presumably the London aldermen.

12 _Recorder_: the Recorder of London.

13 _exalts on high his horne_: celebrates his victory or deliverance. The phrase is biblical (see, e.g., 1 Samuel 2.10).

14 _make here a Romish plantation_: i.e. re-establish Catholicism in England.

15 _say the masse by candle light_: reference to priests and Catholics who perform mass in secret at
night.

16 *those that from a ladder fall:* those that are hanged (about whom many a “lamentable song” was printed).

17 *John a Stowe:* John Stow (d.1605), chronicler and antiquary.

18 *Jefferey a Neave:* Jeffere Neve (or Le Neve) was an almanac writer. His *A New almanack and prognostication* was published annually during the early Stuart period. Cogswell (*Blessed Revolution* 11) notes that 5 October did find its way into almanacs.
Nvi Against the Libellers

Nvi1  O stay your teares yow who complaine

Notes. On 18 January 1623, Joseph Mead’s newsletter to his kinsman Sir Martin Stuteville reported that, “There is also a great paper of verses, in way of answer to these libels and State meddlers, vulgarly said to be the King’s; but a gentleman told me that he will not own it” (Birch 2.355). A week later, John Chamberlain informed Dudley Carleton: “And now touching libells the report goes there be many abrode, and it shold seeeme the Kings verses I herewith send you were made in aunswer to one of them”. Two weeks later, however, Chamberlain reported in his following letter that the king now discla imed authorship (Chamberlain 2.473, 478). Four days later still, Mead sent Stuteville a copy of the same poem—written “in answer, as it seems, to some libel”—and of a second verse also attributed to James. “This latter”, Mead noted, “some say, the king hath disclaimed expressly; but what he saith to the other, I know not. But if it be not his, it is worse than a libel, and not to be read. But till that appears, I suppose, there is no danger” (Birch 2.364-365). Mead and Chamberlain, uncertain as they were about royal authorship, allow us to date with some precision the moment that “O stay your teares yow who complaine” began to circulate among the well-informed collectors of news. One copy of the poem (BL MS Harley 367) states that the libel James was responding to was “called the Comons teares”. Unfortunately, no libel with that title has yet been found, though one might note a partial similarity to the title of the verse “If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare”, a petition to the late Queen Elizabeth that couched itself in the voice of “her now most wretched and most Contemptible, the Commons of poore distressed England”. Both copyists’ notes and internal evidence, however, suggest that “If Saints in heaven” was written after March 1623, thus at least two months after James’s poem began to circulate. We can reconstruct something of the content of the lost “Comons teares” by collating James’s more specific allusions to the libel’s charges—James makes about about a dozen such allusions in all, which we have annotated below. The charges thus deduced do not, as a group, match the charges of any one poem, but, taken individually, can be found in a range of other extant verses from the period of the Spanish Match crisis. James’s poem has frequently been noted by scholars of verse libel for its memorable attack on “railing rymes and vaunting verse”, and is explored in some detail by Perry (“Late Manuscript Poetry of James I” 212-17).

“King James his verses made upon a Libell lett fall in Court and entituled

‘The wiper of the Peoples teares
The dryer upp of doubts & feares”

O stay your teares yow who complaine
Cry not as Babes doe all in vaine
Purblinde\(^1\) people why doe yow prate
Too shallowe for the deepe of state
You cannot judge what’s truely myne
Who see noe further then the Ryne\(^2\)
Kings walke the heavenly milky way
But yow by bypathes gadd astray
God and Kings doe pace together
But Vulgar wander light as feather
I should be sorry you should see
My actions before they bee
Brought to the full of my desires
God above all men kings enspires
Hold you the publique beaten way
Wounder at kings, and them obey
For under God they are to chuse
What right to take, and what refuse
Whereto if yow will not consent
Yet hold your peace least you repent
And be corrected for your pride
That Kings designes darr thus decyde\(^3\)
By railing rymes and vaunting verse
Which your kings brest shall never peirce
Religion\(^4\) is the right of kings
As they best knowe what good it brings
Whereto you must submitt your deeds
Or be pull’d upp like stubborne\(^5\) weeds
Kings ever use their instruments\(^6\)
Of whome they judge by their events
The good they cherish, and advance
And many things may come by chance
Content your selfe with such as I
Shall take neere, and place on highe
The men you nam’d serv’d in their tyme
And soe may myne as cleere of cryme
And seasons have their proper intents
And bring forth severall events
Whereof the choyse doe rest in kings
Who punish, and reward them brings
O what a calling weere a King
If hee might give, or take no thing
But such as yow should to him bring
Such were a king but in a play
If he might beare no better sway
And then weere you in worser case
If soe to keepe you auntient face
Your face would soone outface his might
If soe you would abridge his right
Alas fond men play not with kings
With lyons clawes, or serpents stings
They kill even by theire sharpe aspect
The proudest mynde they cann deject
Make wretched the most mightiest man
Though hee doth mutter what hee cann
Your censures are in hurrying sound
That rise as vapours from the ground
I knowe when I shalbee most fitt
With whome to fill, and emptie it
The parliament I will appoint
When I see thyngs more out of joynt
Then will I sett all wry things straight
And not upon your pleasure waite
Where if yow speake as wise men should
If not, by mee you shall be school’d
Was ever king call’d to accompt
Or ever mynd soe high durst mount
As for to knowe the cause and reason
As to appoint the meanes, and season
When kings should aske their subjects ayd
Kings cannot soe be made affraid
Kings will Comand and beare the sway
Kings will inquire and find the way
How all of yow may easiely pay
Which theyle lay out as the thinke best
In earnest sometimes and in jeast.
What counsells would be overthrowne
If all weere to the people knowne?
Then to noe use were counsell tables
If state affairs were publique bables.
I make noe doubt all wise men knowe
This weere the way to all our woe
For Ignorance of causes makes
Soe many grosse and fowle mistakes
The moddell of our princely match
You cannot make but marr or patch
Alas how weake would prove your care
Wishe you onely his best welfaire
Your reasons cannot weigh the ends
So mixt they are twixt foes, and frends.
Wherefore againe meere seeing people
Strive not to see soe high a steeple
Like to the ground whereon you goe
Hige aspects will bring yow woe
Take heed your paces bee all true
And doe not discontents renewe
Meddle not with your princes cares
For who soe doth too much: hee darrs.
I doe desire noe more of yow
But to knowe mee as I knowe yow
So shall I love, and yow obey
And yow love me in a right way
O make me not unwilling still
Whome I would save unwilling kill
Examples in Extremitie
Are never the best remedie
Thus have I pleased my selfe not yow
And what I say yow shall finde true
Keepe every man his ranke, and place
And feare to fall in my disgrace
You call your children chicks of state
You claime a right unto your fate
But know yow must be pleas’d with what
Shall please us best in spight of that
Kings doe make Lawes to bridle yow
Which they may pardon, or embrue
Their hands in the best blood you have
And send the greatest to the grave.
The Charter which yow great doe call
Came first from Kings to stay your fall
From an unjust rebellion moved
By such as Kingdomes little Loved
Embrace not more then you can hold
As often doe the overbold
As they did which the Charter sought
For their owne greatnes who soe wrought
With Kings and you; that all prov’d nought
The Love that Kings to yow have borne
Mov’d them therto for to be sworne
For, where small goods are to be gott
We are knowne to thee, that knowes us not,
But yow that knowe mee all soe well
Why doe you push me downe to hell
By making me an Infidell
Tis true I am a craddle King
Yet doe remember every thinge
That I have heeretofore putt out
And yet beginn not for to doubt
But oh how grosse is your devise
Change to impute to kings for vice
The wise may change yet free from fault
Though change to worse is ever nought
Kings ever overreach you all
And must stay yow tho that you fall,
Kings cannot comprehended bee
In comon circles. Conjure yee
All what you cann by teares or termes
Deny not what your king affirmes
Hee doth disdaine to cast an eye
Of anger on you least you die
Even at the shadowe of his face
It gives to all that sues for grace
I knowe (my frends) need noe teaching
Prowd is your foolish overreaching.
Come counsell me when I shall call
Before bewarr what may befall
Kings will hardly take advice
Of counsell they are wondrous nice
Love and wisdome leads them still
Their counsell tables upp to fill
They need noe helpers in their choice
Their best advice is their owne voyce,
And be assured such are kings
As they unto their counsell brings
Which allwaies soe compounded are
As some would make and some would marr.
If I once bend my angrie browe
Your ruyne comes though not as nowe;
For slowe I am revenge to take;
And your amendments, wroth will slake
Then hold your pratling spare your penn
Be honest, and obedient men
Urge not my Justice, I am sloe
To give yow your deserved woe.
If proclamations will not serve
I must do more, Peace to preserve
To keepe all in obedience
And drive such busie bodies hence.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 49-56

Other known sources. James VI and I 2.182; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 58r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.11, fol. 15r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D.152, fol. 11r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D.398, fol. 183r; Bodleian MS Tanner 265, fol. 14r; Bodleian MS Tanner 306, fol. 242r; BL Add. MS 25707, fol. 74r; BL Add. MS 28640, fol. 123v; BL Add. MS 29303, fol. 5r; BL Add. MS 52585, fol. 4r; BL Add. MS 61481, fol. 97r; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 37r; BL MS Harley 367, fol. 151r; BL MS Lans. 498, fol. 32r; St. John’s MS
1 *Purblinde*: totally blind.

2 *Ryne*: the scribe includes “Lyne”, above the line, as an alternate reading. The exact meaning of “Ryne” is unclear, though it probably means “rain”, or perhaps is a misuse of the verb “rine” (to touch; lay the finges of the hand upon). One might, with a little stretching, take it to mean “Rhine”, in which case it would function as a mockery of James’s subjects’ fascination with events in Germany.

3 *decyde*: probable scribal error; read “deryde”.

4 *Religion*: probable allusion to an attack, in the lost libel “the Comons teares”, on James’s religious policies.

5 *stubborne*: the scribe includes “stinking”, above the line, as an alternate reading.

6 *their instruments*: in this and the next few lines (and again towards the end of the poem), James counters the critique in the lost libel “the Comons teares” of his choice of ministers, presumably with his favour towards Buckingham being the most significant of the libel’s targets.

7 *neere*: probable scribal error; read “neere me”.

8 *The men you nam’d*: this allusion suggests that the lost libel “the Comons teares” invoked the names of past, and probably Elizabethan, counsellors and favourites. Both Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, and Sir Walter Ralegh enjoyed a posthumous revival in the 1620s as icons of militaristic Protestantism.

9 *you*: probable scribal error; read “your”.

10 *The parliament*: in the following lines James reasserts his prerogative over the calling of parliament and alludes to some of the problems of the last session of parliament in 1621. Presumably the lost libel “the Comons Teares” either lamented the dissolution of the 1621 Parliament or urged the calling of another one, presumably to raise money for a more militaristic foreign policy.

11 *When kings should...ayd*: i.e. by calling a parliament.

12 *How all of you...thinke best*: probable allusion to the royal right to raise revenue and spend it as the King sees fit. This might be rebutting charges in the lost libel “the Comons teares” concerning extra-parliamentary taxation or the usage of money granted to the King by parliament. James’s comments might, however, be directed at members of parliament rather than at the libel. (The phrase “as the thinke best” is a probable scribal error; read “as they thinke best”.)
13 councell tables: allusion to the King’s Privy Council.

14 our princely match: probable allusion to James’s plan to secure a Spanish Match for his son Charles. One could deduce that the lost libel “the Comons teares”—like the House of Commons in 1621—had argued against the Match.

15 Hige: scribal error; read “Highe”.

16 O make me...unwilling kill: the meaning of these lines is not entirely clear. In general terms, James seems to be attacking attempts—perhaps articulated in the lost libel “the Comons teares”—to contest his prerogative of mercy. Possibly the lost libel included lines criticizing James’s release of the convicted murderers, the Earl and Countess of Somerset, early in 1622.

17 You call...unto your fate: a variant has “you call our children, chidds of State / you claime a right unto there fate” (BL MS Harley 367). This reading suggests James is alluding to the lost libel’s comments on—and support for—the displaced Elector and Electress Palatine, James’s daughter Elizabeth and her husband Frederick; however, such an interpretation does not really accord with James’s continued interest in his prerogative of justice and mercy in the lines that follow.

18 The Charter...great doe call: Magna Carta, the grant of liberties, extracted by rebellious nobles from King John in 1215, and a shibboleth of parliamentary constitutionalist rhetoric in the early Stuart period. James’s specific evocation of “you” suggests the lost libel “the Comons teares” might have referred to the Magna Carta (as did the later libel “If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare”). James goes on to provide an interesting gloss on the origins of the Magna Carta.

19 making me an Infidell: the lost libel “the Comons teares” may have charged James with popery or irreligion.

20 craddle King: cradle king. James ascended the throne of Scotland as a one-year-old.

21 Change to impute...for vice: James is presumably again rebutting a charge, most likely of (religious) “innovation”, made in the lost libel “the Comons teares”.

22 proclamations: James issued two proclamations intended to suppress “Lavish and Licentious Speech of matters of State” in December 1620 and July 1621 (Stuart Royal Proclamations 1.495-96, 1.519-520).
Notes. This poem responds to James I's “O stay your teares yow who complaine”, and is thus a rather neat example of how a royal performance designed to dampen the craze for “railing rymes” is subsumed into, and ends up stimulating, the manuscript culture of political versifying.

“An answere to the wiper away of the Peoples teares”

Contemne not Gracious king our plaints and teares
Wee are no babes the tymes us witnesse beares
Yet since our father yow doe represent
To be as babes to yow wee are content
T’is true yow can deject the prowdest minde
For pride is base and soone to fall inclinde
Yow can take downe the mightiest man alive
Who doth from man his mightines derive
Yes shides of state will chipps of chance excell
though theise in Courts and those in dungeons dwell
When soe yow please to imbrue your Royall hand
In bloud of those that dare at bay to stande
But we must goe in saufetie to our grave
Our harts for raunsome of our heads yow have
O lett not then disdaine but grace and love
Lengthen their dayes whose faith yow daily prove
Or might we dye then kill with your aspect
Which death & life in instant doth effecte.

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 59r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet.c.50., fol. 25v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet.26, fol. 20r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet.152, fol. 4r
1. *our father yow doe represent:* alluding to James I’s self-presentation as the nation’s father in “O stay your teares” (an image ubiquitous in royal imagery from this period).

2. *Shides:* planks. Shides of wood are thus greater in size than “chipps”.

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666
Notes. In the only known source, this poem is attributed to “Wm. T.”. The poem answers several specific libels circulating c.1622-23, including “From such a face whose Excellence”—which implicitly identifies the favourite Buckingham as James’s Ganymede—and “If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare”, the 1623 verse petition to the late Queen Elizabeth. The poem also replicates some of the arguments made by James himself in “O stay your tears yow who complaine”, while adding a fascinating section marrying an attack on libelling with an attack on Puritanism. Bellany (Politics 260-61) offers a brief analysis of the ideological significance of the poem’s anti-Puritanism.

“In the distast of Englands Licentious Libellers”

Withold thy fiery steeds great God of light
And hurry not the Day from gloomy Night,
Adorne no more the woods, nor paynt with flowers
The Earths swart Brest: allot old Time no howers;
Let without order undistinguished slide
All humane Actions; be no more a Guide
To proud insulting Man; that haughtly Clay
Which spurnes at Power, & Justles from the way
Gods upon Earth; who proudly dare confine
The will of Princes to theyr Crooked Line
As if, by frightened reason things should run
And make a Father Pupill to the Son.

Monsters of Nature! boldly which deny
Annonited Greatness such a liberty
As Cottage Thatch injoyes; One only Friend
Forcing th’Affection hartily to tend
An equall faith to all: or else to loose
The benefitt of Judgment, skill to choose.

Cannott a Princes Love be limited
Without the nick-name of a Ganimed?\textsuperscript{4}
Nor may they Clip\textsuperscript{5} true friendships virgin Wast
Withowt the breach of being pure & Chast?
That libelling Muse to punish Heaven be just
From selfe-sex-beawty with princes lust.
Reward, the Crowne of meritt, virtues life
Must be divorc’d from kings; as man & wife
From one another may (so neare a Tye
There is ’twixt kings & Liberality):
Desert must starve, unless the People say
The king hath leave to give his owne away;
For theyr Amen is Text: unless they all
Doe give Consent, guifts are Apocriphall.\textsuperscript{6}
If that his sacred Highness wold advance
With good advise from them, & not by Chance;
Nor take on trust such persons as are knowne
Not to theyr deep Judgments, but his owne,
He then might scape a Libell; wold he ware
Some White-Eyed-Brother;\textsuperscript{7} whose religious feare
Makes him a separatist\textsuperscript{8} from things profane
And all the vanityes which come frome Spayne:
Some silenc’d Teacher,\textsuperscript{9} one whose Trencher Zeale\textsuperscript{10}
Consumes the uncleane Birds at many a Meale:
Were such as these to eminency browght
His Majestie were then discreetly tawght
How & upon whom, to dispose & place
The riches of his favor & his Grace:
No Guift so great but then wold easily down
Were it a Corporation\textsuperscript{11} or a Towne:
Nay should his State so Ebb by’s liberall hand
As yf with Richard he should bare his Land\textsuperscript{12}
Why, 'twas a kingly virtue, no sordid vice
Far from the staine of Peasant Avarice.
'Tis not Allegiance breeds this Truth, but Gayne
That's theyr Religion; for a match with Spayne
France or Low-Countryes, 'tis no matter which
So they may Saint it, Cosen & grow rich.

Oh these are they whose irreligious hearts
Full fraught with mischief, send the poys’n’d darts
Of fowle aspersions 'mongst the Acts of kings
Adders & serpents whose envenom’d stings
Blyster the tender Palme of Quiet sway
Hiss peacefull kings to spitt at obay
For if his goodness shall extended be
To those ungrossd in theyr society
Then rayling Rimer's unchristian & unfitt
Must vilify theyr king: advance theyr witt:
The person gracd, with upstart, Parasite
Defam'd, & other Titles infinite;
As if the king to high Estate wold rayse
Persons of no meritt; & place his Bayes
On undeserving Heads: Or if he did
Shall we dare Contradict, or he be Chid?

Nor doe they only seek to countermand
The God like Actions of his sowle & hand
But now his sports must be denyd. The Game
As pedegreed from kings by royall name,
Is growne sowre & distastfull, bycause the Cry
Of Fowler’s heard, when unrelented dye
Some of his rayling subjects; whose envious spleene
Must Crack heavens Vault, & invocate a Queene
To give a schedule to th’Almightyes hand:
What daring Ignorance was this? what Land
Unless Nature & Hell conspir’d a Truce
Did ever yet such horrid births produce?
Could else that monstrous Hidra-headed thinge
Blaspheme a Diety, & profane a king?
But Thow art patient Heaven! & James will be
A God on Earth by imitating Thee:
Yet thow art Just divinest power, & wilt
Repay in judgments prose theyr riming Guilt;
Thy Pace is slow, but sure; & let those witts
Which scoff the sacred Majesty that sitts
On Englands blessed Throne; who nimbly play
In frisking satires with his sweete delay
Whose sharpe-tooth’d Libells curle & twinge the hayre
Of our Apollo gentle as the Ayer
Know; that those glorious beames which heretofore
They durst to obnubilate, not adore
Shall singe theyr wings; & when they least intrust
Hee’le rayse his head, & shake them into Dust.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fols. 52v-54r

Nvi3

1 Withold...God of light: the poet is addressing the sun god, Phoebus Apollo, whose “fiery steeds” pull the chariot of the sun.

2 swart: dark.

3 Gods upon Earth: i.e. kings.

4 Ganymed: Ganymede, the Trojan boy kidnapped by a besotted Jove, and a contemporary term for a sodomite. The poem is countering allegations levelled in libels that the royal favourite Buckingham was James I’s “Ganymede” (see Section L).
Clip: embrace.

For theyr Amen...Apocriphall: playing on the distinction between true scripture ("text") and unreliable scripture ("Aprocriphall"). The shift to religious allusions marks the opening of the anti-Puritan section of the poem.

White-Eyed-Brother: contemptuous term for a Puritan, or hotter sort of Protestant. Puritans were often caricatured as rolling their eyes (revealing the whites) when in spiritual transport.

separatist: the word is deliberately chosen to allude to those (in reality very few) "Puritans" who urged separation from the Church of England.

Some silenc’d Teacher: a (presumably Puritan) preacher suspended from his living, either for refusing to conform to the dictates of the Book of Common Prayer and subscribe to royal authority, or, like a number of preachers in the early 1620s, for broaching sensitive political subjects in the pulpit.

Trencher Zeale: anti-Puritan satire focused chiefly on hypocrisy, and prominent among the sins the hypocritical Puritan committed was the sin of gluttony. "Trencher" is a knife or a flat plate.

Corporation: town incorporated by royal charter.

As yf with Richard...farme his Lande: possible allusion to the wastrel policies of the late-medieval English king, Richard II. Holinshed reports that "The common brute [rumour] ran, that the king had set to farme [i.e. leased out] the realme of England unto sir William Scroope, earle of Wiltshire, and then treasuror of England, to sir John Bushie, sir William Bagot, and sir Henrie Greene, knights" (29-30).

Gayne: Puritan greed for money was another element of the hypocrisy charged by their enemies.

Hiss peacefull...obay: A gap in the manuscript indicates a missing word.

The person gracd...Defam’d: several libels branded Buckingham and other Jacobean favourites as social "upstarts" and as corrupt feeders on the public good ("parasites").

Bayes: bays; laurel wreaths.

his sports: reference to James’s passion for hunting, attacked by a number of early 1620s libels.

the Cry...his rayling subjects: probably an allusion to the charge made in the last stanza of "From such a face whose Exellence”.

Crack heavens Vault...a Queene: allusion to "If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare", couched as the petition of "the Commons of poore distressed England" to the late Queen Elizabeth.
20 *that monstrous Hidra-headed thinge:* the Hydra was a nine-headed mythological monster slain by Hercules; here it refers to the populace, often dismissed by early Stuart social elites as the “many-headed monster”.

21 *Apollo:* the great Greek god of the sun (and much else); here standing for James.

22 *to obnubilate:* to cloud; to darken.
The poems in this section span the period 1624 to 1628, and revolve around three main topics of political interest: firstly, England’s entry into wars with Spain (in 1625) and with France (in 1627); secondly, the escalating crisis in parliamentary politics that was in part a result of these failed military adventures; and thirdly, connected to both the military and parliamentary crises, the growing problem posed by the immense power of the royal favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

The Parliament of 1624 witnessed a major shift in English foreign policy as Prince Charles, with Buckingham at his side, worked with a “patriot” coalition at court and in Parliament to undermine James I’s policies, break negotiations with Spain, and drive England into a war against the Spanish that would supposedly result in the restoration of the Palatinate. England’s commitment to foreign war, reasserted at the accession of Charles as king following James’s death in March 1625, placed immense financial demands on the nation, necessitating the calling of frequent meetings of parliament. The parliamentary sessions of 1625, 1626 and 1628-29 proved increasingly fractious. Part of the reason for this was that the war had brought little success. The two major expeditions—to Cadiz in 1625, and to the Ile de Ré in 1627—both ended in humiliating failure. In the light of these disasters—and to the great frustration of the King—MPs proved reluctant to grant sufficient taxation revenue to the Crown. When, in 1626-27, Charles attempted to bypass parliament and raise money through a forced loan of questionable legality, he triggered a constitutional crisis that preoccupied much of the 1628 Parliament. Parliament also clashed with the King in both 1626 and 1628 over the increasing power of the favourite Buckingham. Buckingham had achieved the impossible: he had become the favourite of two successive kings, and his power seemed only to be growing. He had been instrumental in bringing England into the continental wars in 1624-25, and had assumed many of the responsibilities of military command—overseeing the Cadiz expedition in absentia as Lord Admiral, and leading the expedition to Ré in person. Many MPs blamed Buckingham for the failures of English military intervention and for an ever-growing array of other ills plaguing the kingdom, ranging from the decay of trade to the rise of anti-Calvinist Arminians in the Church. During the parliamentary session of 1626, the House of Commons attempted to
impeach Buckingham in the face of Charles’s repeated and explicit declarations of support for his favourite. In the 1628 session, despite securing Charles’s concession to a Petition of Right settling their constitutional grievances, the Commons drew up a Remonstrance of the nation’s ills that named Buckingham as their prime cause and asked the King to remove the favourite from power.

We have divided the poems in this section into three groups. The first focuses on the period from 1624 to the spring and early summer of 1627, and includes verses on several events and topics. The group begins with poems on the breach with Spain and the fall of the anti-war Lord Treasurer, Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex during the 1624 Parliament. It then continues with verses on the failure of the Cadiz expedition of 1625, the build-up to and aftermath of the 1626 Parliament, and on the 1627 promotion of Nicholas Hyde to Lord Chief Justice. The group concludes with a series of vitriolic libels on the Buckingham problem, as it was perceived in the early months of 1627.

The second group of poems primarily focuses on the expedition to the Île de Ré in the summer and autumn of 1627. Designed to assist the beleagured Huguenots of La Rochelle, the Ré campaign ended in an ignominious English retreat that resulted in heavy casualties and an escalating number of vicious attacks on Buckingham’s military leadership.

The final group of poems belongs to the first seven or eight months of 1628. One set centres on the first session (17 March to 26 June) of the 1628 Parliament—focusing not on the great constitutional debates surrounding the Petition of Right, but on the Commons’ interventions in religious politics and the crafting of the Remonstrance against Buckingham. A second selection of poems celebrates the 13 June street lynching of Buckingham’s astrologer-physician, the notorious John Lambe, while a third selection explicitly fantasizes about Buckingham’s own violent demise.

Although the poems collected here focus on a wide range of contemporary political issues and anxieties, it is Buckingham who dominates. In 1624 he became, briefly, the libellers’ hero. No longer the corrupt, crypto-Catholic court Ganymede of the 1620-23 libels, Buckingham was reimagined as a militant champion of the Protestant cause. By 1626, however, the favourite’s
“patriot” reputation was in tatters. Despite an aggressive printed media campaign to burnish his image before and during the Ré expedition, Buckingham became once again the libellers’ cynosure of corruption. In the libellous discourse of 1626-28, the Duke was represented as a lowborn, womanizing, effeminate coward; an incompetent and a traitor; a poisoner and patron of witchcraft; and an agent of popery, who wielded immense transgressive power over king and country. By the summer of 1628, with parliament having failed for a second time to curtail Buckingham’s power, the poems registered and reinforced deep-grained popular fantasies of the Duke’s violent death. The assassination that was to come in August 1628 had already happened in the imaginations of libellers and their readers.

Most of the scholarly work on the libels of the mid- and late-1620s has focused on Buckingham. The 1624 poems are discussed and contextualized in Cogswell’s *Blessed Revolution*; the shifting image of Buckingham in the libels is sketched out in Bellany’s “‘Raylinge Rymes’”; the function of satire in the interpretation of confusing circumstances in the 1620s is examined by McRae (*Literature* 114-152); while many of the anti-Buckingham poems are given intriguing close readings by Holstun. A forthcoming book by Bellany and Cogswell will present a full-scale study of the favourite’s libellous reputation.
Notes. This ballad on events in the 1624 Parliament and the collapse of the Spanish Match was probably written in late April. In one source—a copy from the Ripon archives—the song is assigned the popular contemporary ballad tune “To drive the could winter away” (Smurthwaite; Simpson 197-99). Alsop, adding to Smurthwaite’s commentary on the poem, has written a useful note explicating the significance of the language of “Jubile” and the myth of Astraea in the ballad’s first eight lines.

“A Song”

The Parliament sitts with a Synod of Witts,
Knight, Gentlemen, Burghesse & Peere,
God grante they agree, and then you shall see
A Jubile crowning this yeare.

Astræa, that swore to see Earth noe more,
Shall visit us once againe;
And Saturne shalbee as merry as wee,
And in this ould Kingdome shall raigne.

The Catholique King hath a little younge thing
Calld Donna Maria, his Sister;
Our Prince went to Spaine her love to obtaine,
But yet by good happ hee hath mist her

I am gladd it is ended what e’re was pretended,
For Spaniards did never keepe word
But great Brittaines King a peale will then ring,
If once he unsheath his sword.

The Protestants are gladd, and the Papists sadd
To see this strange alteration,
It is nowe but begun, but when more is done
You shall have a more perfect relation.

When Digbie comes o’re, and landes on our shoare
The state of all things wilbee better,
But all my care is that Cond’ Olivare Wilbee shent for shewing the Letter.

The Treasurer stinkes, and the upper house winks
At some are as badd as hee,
The lower howse sweares that all at full yeare
And Cooke all their cases shall see.

Report of his owne hath made him soe knowne
That all the world need not admire him,
’Twas once his own case, and now to displace
All others you need not desire him.

Theres naught can asswage Spaines Ambassadors rage
But the great Duke of Buckingham’s head,
For the barbarous Don knowes whilst it is on
’Twill bee to their terror and dread.

But why laugh you tho’ hee doe wish it soe
Perhaps twas his Masters request,
If such a condition bee in his commission,
I’le sweare twas a capitall Jest.

But yet who but fooles will jest with edge tooles,
though hee lack both his time and his place,
’Twas wisedome noe doubt that you see all come out
More plaine then the Nose of his face.
The vaile of the night that muffled our sight
Is drawne from our credulous Eyes,
Then bee not soe hott, but invent some new plott
For this smells of most damnable lies,

Then hoise24 up your sayle, you cannot prevaiile,
Knowne Mischiefs are voyd of all fearee,
Wee need not your beads,25 nor your villainous heads,
Would those were at home that are heere.

Your Infanta may goe to the Cloyster,26 and tho
Shee was not disposed to wedd,
Yet put up your drumme, for Mansfeild27 is come
And receiv’d in her Ladyshippes steade.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 159r-160v

Other known sources. Smurthwaite; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 14; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 24; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet 172, fol. 79r; BL Add. MS 5956, fol. 28r; BL Add. MS 28640, fol. 149r; BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 26r; BL Add. MS 72368, fol. 31r; BL Add. MS 72479, fol. 6r; BL MS Harley 1221, fol. 90r; BL MS Harley 6038, fol. 27v; BL MS Harley 7316, fol. 6r; BL MS Lans. 498, fol. 140r; CUL MS Gg.4.13, p. 47; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 23; TCD MS 806, fol. 560v; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 201; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 53v; Rosenbach MS 1083/15, p. 175; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 8

Oi1

1 The Parliament sitts: the 1624 Parliament met from 19 February to 29 May 1624.

2 Burghesse: MPs for towns and cities.

3 God grante: the copy published by Smurthwaite reads “Toe grant”, which Smurthwaite takes as an allusion to the March 1624 grant of taxation to the Crown of three subsidies and three fifteenths.

4 Jubile: Alsop argues that the “Jubile[e]” should be read not only as the popular celebration at the collapse of the Spanish Match, but also as an allusion to the fiftieth anniversary of the collapse in 1574
of the plans to marry Elizabeth I to the French Catholic Alençon. The Elizabethan allusion of line 4, Alsop suggests, thus connects to the allusions to Astraea—one of Elizabeth’s cultic identities—in the lines that follow.

5 *Astræa*: goddess of justice. Astræa had left earth in response to the proliferation of vice and criminality that ensued upon the end of the Golden Age. Virgil’s fourth eclogue prophesied the return of Astræa to earth at the dawn of a new Golden Age. Elizabethan poets and painters appropriated the Virgilian myth in their depictions of the Queen as the returned Astræa, agent of justice, purity, true religion and English empire.

6 *Saturne*: god of the Golden Age.

7 *The Catholique King*: Philip IV of Spain.

8 *Donna Maria, his Sister*: the Spanish Infanta Maria, sister of Philip IV.

9 *Our Prince went to Spaine*: Prince Charles journeyed to Madrid in February 1623 (see Section Nv).

10 *But great...then ring*: a variant of this line is less decorous: “James of greate Britten will make them beshitten” (BL Add. MS 28640).

11 *unsheath his sword*: led by Charles and Buckingham, and with significant parliamentary support, James was under pressure not only to break off the Spanish Match but also to declare war on Spain.

12 *Digbie*: John Digby, Earl of Bristol, and English ambassador to Madrid. Digby was recalled in January 1624, and arrived in England early in May.

13 *Cond’ Olivare*: Gaspar de Guzmán, Count of Olivares, Philip IV’s chief minister, and the head of negotiations with Charles and Buckingham in Madrid in 1623.

14 *shent*: disgraced.

15 *shewing the Letter*: alluding to “an incident on an unknown date in the summer of 1623, when Olivares...showed Charles and Buckingham a secret letter in which Philip expressed his determined opposition to the marriage” (Smurthwaite 322).

16 *The Treasurer stinkes*: the Lord Treasurer Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, was impeached by the 1624 Parliament on charges of bribery and corruption.

17 *upper house*: House of Lords.

18 *lower howse*: House of Commons.
Cooke: Sir Edward Coke, who led the prosecution of Cranfield.

Report of his owne: there may be a pun here on Coke’s legal Reports, published in Latin and French between 1600 and 1617, and reports of Coke’s own fall from office in 1616, his unseemly attempts to win office back through a marriage alliance with the Buckingham clan, and his more turbulent oppositional behaviour in the 1621 and 1624 parliaments. Coke had also harboured ambitions for the Treasurership given to Cranfield late in 1621.

Theres naught...Buckingham’s head: in February 1624, the Spanish ambassadors Don Carlos Coloma and Juan Hurtado de Mendoza, Marquis of Inijosa, had complained to James that Buckingham’s address to parliament on the Spanish negotiations had defamed the Spanish crown. In April 1624, in a further attempt to destroy Buckingham, the Spanish ambassadors presented James I with a series of extremely serious charges against the duke, including some that alleged the favourite had been conspiring to depose James in favour of his son, Prince Charles.

his Masters: i.e. Philip IV’s.

the Nose of his face: Inijosa was apparently afflicted by advanced syphilis. Simonds D’Ewes noted that the ambassador’s “nose had been eaten away with whooring” (Diary 141).

hoise: i.e. hoist.

Beads: i.e. rosary beads.

Your Infanta...Cloyster: Olivares had proposed at one point that the Infanta be cloistered—sent to a nunnery—if that was necessary to avoid a marriage to Charles. On his departure from Madrid, Charles became convinced that that was what the Spaniards planned to do.

Mansfeild: Ernst von Mansfelt, German mercenary and erstwhile commander of the Elector Palatine’s forces, arrived in London on 14 April 1624, where he was greeted with great popular enthusiasm and considerable political manoeuvring in Whitehall and Westminster.
Oh honoured England how art thou disgrac'd

Notes. The occasion of this poem was one or more of the series of attempts by the Spanish ambassadors Coloma and Inijosa to bring down the Duke of Buckingham during the 1624 Parliament. In February 1624, the ambassadors complained to James that Buckingham had insulted the Spanish Crown in his speech to parliament on the 1623 negotiations in Madrid. After Buckingham had secured parliamentary exoneration on these charges, the Spanish presented James with charges accusing Buckingham of a wide variety of misconduct, including a plot to ease James from the throne. Later, they inflated the charge to allege that Buckingham planned to usurp the Stuart line by marrying his daughter to the son of the Elector Palatine. And on 24 April, the ambassadors formally charged that Buckingham and other peers had planned that in the event James blocked the breach with Spain, “they would give him a house of pleasure whither he might retire himself to his sports, in regard that the Prince had now years sufficient to, and parts answerable for the government of the Kingdom” (qtd. in Ruigh 283). The King seems initially to have been shaken by the information, but the Spanish failure to produce evidence, and Buckingham’s fortuitous affliction with illness, soon restored monarchical confidence in his favourite. The libel is a splendid example of the temporary transformation in Buckingham’s reputation following his return from Spain and his ardent adoption of a militarist anti-Spanish platform. No longer the corrupt, crypto-Catholic, hispanophile and Ganymedean “parasite” of the 1618-1623 libels, Buckingham was now depicted as a Protestant patriot hero fit to be ranked alongside true military legends both of the recent past, like the anti-Spanish sea-dog Ralegh, and of the Ancient World, like Scipio, conqueror of Spain and hero of the Roman Republic. For a brief elaboration on this theme, see Bellany’s discussion of the poem (“Raylinge Rymes” 300).

“Verses uppon the Complaynt of the Spanish Embassador to his Majestie of the Duke of Buck: whose head he desired for the satisfacion of the Catholiqe Majestie his Master”

Oh honoured England how art thou disgrac'd
By Moorish faces thus to bee outfac’d?
Where are those spirits? which in a womans raigne
Sackt Cales, and with pale terror strooke all Spayne.
Harrowd their Indian fleete, drownd their men
And made theire twelve Apostles lesse by Ten.
Durst they insult thus then? or else demande
the head of any subject in this land?
No Raleighs\(^6\) blood did flesh their first desire
And now they dare to higher heads aspire.
So none that good must scape, but all must dy
(as Envyous Traytors to Spaynes Monarchy)
Ye Jesuited\(^7\) Englishe drunke with Popery
What veiw your Country with a Spanish eye
Let not their bloody damned pollicyes
Maskt in faire shewes of formall fopperyes
Sway your allegiance from your prince & land
To wish the rule were in a Spanish hand
Assure your selves and be of this opinion
There hotte devotion hunts but for Dominion.\(^8\)
And Thou Great James whom God hath made our Kinge
Be no wayes guilty of so vilde a thinge
Thy Children\(^9\) beare the Spanish Tyrannie
The badge of bondage bayte of Infamy:
Slacke not thy helpe releive the Palatine
State him\(^10\) againe he is a Lymbe of thyne.
And let not that head satisfy the thirst
Of Morish pride? which was the very first
of all thy favourites? Er’e undertooke
His Countrys Cause and thus did overlooke
Spanish Deceiveings. For he hath done more
Then twenty of thy favourites before
Give him but force his owne head to maintaine
And like brave Scipio he will sacke proud Spayne.\(^11\)

**Source.** Bodleian MS Eng. Poet c.50, fol. 21r

**Other known sources.** PRO SP 14/118/104; TCD MS 806, fol. 469r; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 225
Moorish: Spanish. The “Moors”, Muslims, had ruled large portions of Spain in the Middle Ages, but had been expelled in 1492. The “moriscos”, of Muslim stock but converted to Christianity, were expelled in the early seventeenth century.

womans: i.e. Elizabeth I’s.

Cales: Cadiz.

Indian flete: Spanish treasure ships sailing from South America and the West Indies.

twelve Apostles lesse by Ten: the “apostles” was the nickname given by the Spaniards to a group of twelve Spanish galleons.

Raleighes: reference to Sir Walter Ralegh, executed by James I in 1618 after considerable urging from the Spanish ambassador Gondomar (see Section I).

Jesuited: the Jesuits (Society of Jesus) were the most feared and hated Catholic order; English stereotypes represented them as the dangerously subtle spearhead of Counter Reformation.

Dominion: English anti-Spanish pamphleteers asserted that Spain aimed at nothing less than a “universal monarchy”.

Thy Children: James’s daughter Elizabeth and son-in-law Frederick V, Elector Palatine, who had lost the Palatinate to Spanish troops in 1620-21.

State him: i.e. restore him to his state as Elector Palatine.

like brave Scipio...sacque proud Spayne: Scipio Africanus, the great Roman general, who conquered Spain from the Carthaginians, 210-207 BC.
Notes. The only known version of this poem exists in the unpublished section of the news-diary of John Rous, where it is transcribed alongside libels and other documents on events in the 1624 Parliament.

Oi3 Our digby digd’e but digd’e in vaine

for powdering Pope & king of Spaine
& though he dig’d e with might & maine
to make a matche twixte us & Spaine

Our digby digd’e but digd’e in vaine
for powdering Pope & king of Spaine
& though he dig’d e with might & maine
to make a matche twixte us & Spaine

Our digby digd’e but digd’e in vaine
for powdering Pope & king of Spaine
& though he dig’d e with might & maine
to make a matche twixte us & Spaine

Source. BL Add. MS 28640, fol. 149v

Oi3

1 digby: John Digby, Earl of Bristol and English ambassador to Spain. Digby was widely characterized as an agent of Spanish ambitions and chief English architect of the Spanish Match.
Notes. This is one of a pair of surviving poems focusing on the fall of Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex and Lord Treasurer, who, having opposed Buckingham and Charles’s war policies, was impeached by the 1624 Parliament on charges of bribery and corruption.

“On Sir Lyonell Cranfield Earle of Middlesex & Lord Treasurer of England his fall. 1624”

The base on which mans greatnesse firmest stands
Is Goodnes, els its built on sands
Princes have power to make men great wee see
But Goodnes is involv’d by the Dyetie\(^1\)
Soe that to make a good greate Man’s a thing
Wrought joynet together both by God & King
For where the King makes great & God not good
There greatnes dyes, whilst it doth scarcely budd.
Witness this Great one mounted to the ayre
But (wanting goodnes) his Honors vapours are,
Hee being not good, his greatnes was but small
For meane men good are pittied when they fall
So is not hee, hee loved himselfe alone
And nowe noe good man doth his fall bemoane
I pray observe from whence hee came, the citty\(^2\)
That hee rose so soone and fell noe sooner; Pitty.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 27

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 136; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 23r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 1100, fol. 89v; BL Add. MS 28640, fol. 148r; BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 27r; BL Add. MS 72479, fol. 8r; BL MS Stowe 962, fol. 146r; Brotherton MS Lt. q. 9, fol. 61r; CUL MS Gg.4.13, p. 47; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 135
1 Dyetie: i.e. deity.

2 the citty: Cranfield had been a successful London merchant before turning courtier and taking royal office.
Notes. The original target of this poem is unclear. While most sources frame it as an attack on a nameless merchant, at least one presents it more specifically, as being concerned with “the late Lord Treasurer, Sir Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, disgraced, imprisonned, and putt from his office by the Parliament in anno 1624, much against King James will” (Bodleian MS Don. c.54).

“In Mercatorem quendam”¹

There was a man & hee was Semper idem,²
And for his life, hee was Mercator quidam,³
Hee had a Wife⁴ was neither tall nor Brevis⁵
Yet in her carriage was accounted Levis⁶
Hee to content her, gave her all things Satis⁷
Shee to requite him made him Cuckold Gratis.⁸

Source. BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 42v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Don. c.54, fol. 29r; Bodleian MS Don. f.39, fol. 24r; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 40v; Brotherton MS Lt. 31, fol. 38v; Folger MS V.a.262, p. 103

Oi5

¹ In Mercatorem quendam: “quendam” seems to be incorrect; perhaps a better reading would be “In Meractorem quidam” (“Upon a Certain Merchant”), or “In Mercatorem quondam” (“Upon a former Merchant”).

² Semper idem: “always the same”.

³ Mercator quidam: “a certain merchant”. “Quidem” might fit the rhyme scheme better, which would make him a “Mercator quidem” (“merchant indeed”).

⁴ a Wife: Cranfield married as his second wife Anne Brett, the favourite Buckingham’s cousin on his mother’s side. The libel “Heaven blesse King James our joy”, alleges that Cranfield’s wife had an affair with Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel.

⁵ Brevis: short.
6  *Levis:* light, immoral.

7  *Satis:* enough, sufficient.

8  *Gratis:* for free.
**Notes.** This poem records the embarrassing failures of the first major military operation by the English against the Spanish. A fleet, sent to raid the Spanish port of Cadiz, set sail under the command of Edward Cecil, Viscount Wimbledon, on 8 October 1625. As the libeller’s narrative makes clear, the expedition was little more than a series of disasters.

“Upon the English fleete sett forth. Anno. 1625”

There was a great fleete, all they that did see’t
   As twas in the Downes⁴ a ridinge,
Will say Sir John Cooke² shall sweare on a booke
   It was a yeere a providinge.
And ten thousand foote,³ were added untoo’t
   Which were at Plimouth traynd
By those that knewe little but to eate up your vittaile
   And that was all they gaind.
This flete & this Army, which did meane no harme, I
   Perswade my selfe to any.
Had like to have bin lost in the Spanish Coast
   By a storme that is knowne to many.
At Cales⁴ wee putt in, where if you had bin,
   You should have seene good sport.
The collyers⁵ that day, did all runne away,
   And would not batter the fort.
Wee landed our men, & marcht too & agen
   Three dayes & then came back
To our shippes againe, having gotten in Spaine,
   Our bellys full of sacke.⁶
This service thus ended, wee homewards intended
   To eate no more rotten beefe.⁷
Or as foule a matter, to drinke stincking water,
But the wind was in our teeth.
A Councell was call’d, by the heads that were bald,
Where it was thought most meete.
Because we must stay, & not goe away,
To waite for the Indian fleete.
For wee were told, they were laden with gold
And should greate riches finde
But hee that went thither, found naught but ill weather,
I feare there words were but winde.
Its such a condition, to have a commission
To bringe out so many men
And doe nothing more, but eate up your store,
And then goe whome agen
As never was knowne, if the Case were my owne,
And I had so much pelfe.
I would giv’t away cleare, to bee ridd of the feare
or else goe hang my selfe.
Some say that Sir Thomas Loove, god keepe him from us
Did sett this project on foote.
Which if hee did, it may cost him his head,
And his great masters to boote.
Amongst them twill fall, but who shall have all
The weight on’t is not knowne
Lett it wither for mee, if that the proud tree
Bee not blasted or overblowne.
God blesse charles our Kinge, & every thinge
That hee warlickly takes in hande.
And in his next choyse hee shall have my voyce
For a wiser man to commande.
Finis. ignoto.
the Downes: a common naval rendezvous off the English coast, east of Deal in Kent.

Sir John Cooke: i.e. Sir John Coke, Commissioner of the Navy and Master of Requests, who was promoted to Secretary of State to Charles I in September 1625.

ten thousand foote: the expeditionary force consisted of 10,000 foot soldiers and 5000 seamen.

Cales: Cadiz.

The collyers: the fleet included forty collier ships (coal ships), which failed to follow orders to bombard Cadiz during the assault of 22 October.

Our bellys full of sacke: the English troops discovered several vats of wine (sack) that they then consumed with predictably disastrous effects on their military effectiveness.

rotten beefe: the fleet was beset by supply shortages.

A Counsell was call’d: on 29 October a Council of War decided to try to intercept the Spanish treasure fleet from the Americas; however, the plan was foiled by bad weather.

pelfe: goods, money.

Sir Thomas Loove: Sir Thomas Love was a leading commander during the Cadiz voyage. In January 1626, Chamberlain reported that in contemporary post mortems on the Cadiz voyage, “Some lay the blame on the desseign or counsell, the souldiers on their generall Vicount Sitstill, [i.e. Edward Cecil] (as they now stile him) he on the sea men, but most on his Grace [i.e. Buckingham], and he on Sir Thomas Loue and so from post to piller” (2.628).

his great masters: the Duke of Buckingham’s.

For a wiser man to commande: this last line could be read as an attack on either the Cadiz expedition commander, Viscount Wimbledon, or Wimbledon’s superior, the Lord Admiral Buckingham.
There was a Munkye clumbe up a tree
When he fell downe then downe fell hee

There was a crow sat on a stone
When he was gone, then was there none

There was an old wyfe, did eate an apple
When she had eat two, she had eat a cupple

There was a mayde that they cald Cisse
When she made water, she did pisse

There was a horse, going to the mill
When he went on he stood not still.

There was a butcher cut his thombe
When it did bleed, then blood did come

There was a lackye, runne a race
When he ran fast, he ran a pace

There was a Cobler clowting shoone
When they were mended, they were done

There was a Chandler making candle
When he them shipte, he did them handle

Notes. The sting in this strange poem lies in the closing couplet. The poem appears to have been considered extendable, since extant versions differ in length (though to no considerable poetic effect). In the version transcribed by John Holles, 2nd Earl of Clare (BL MS Harley 6383), he titles it “A libell of Cales vyage 162” (having, perhaps, forgotten the exact date of the voyage to Cadiz in October 1625).
There was a Navye went into Spayne
When it returnd it came againe.\(^2\)

**Source.** BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 19v

**Other known sources.** *Court and Times of Charles I* 1.118; BL MS Harley 6383, fol. 63v; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 41v

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1  *clowting shoone*: patching shoes.

2  *There was a Navye...it came againe*: although this couplet is slightly opaque, it depends on a calculated sense of anti-climax as it refers to the return of Wimbledon’s fleet from Spain. The phrase “it came again” may refer to the fact that the fleet returned in groups.


Notes. Composed in the aftermath of the failed Cadiz expedition and in an atmosphere of growing suspicion of the favourite Buckingham, this song-like libel returns to the theme, so widely articulated in the polemical literature of 1618-1623, that internal enemies had rendered England vulnerable to Spanish power. Given the poem’s allusions to the ineffectiveness of England’s ports and naval defences, one might plausibly deduce the chief internal enemy to be Buckingham, Lord Admiral and, since the autumn of 1624, Warden of the Cinque ports.

“Vox Britanniae Ad Hispaniam.  1626”

Yee Spanyards, come away, come away!
For now you may undoe us,
Since heer at home do staye, worse enemyes unto us,
    Thus they saye.
You may not want a guyde, to leade you unto evyll,
Nor to supporte your pryde, since that you have a Devyll,
    On your side.
All our poartes are open, if that you please to venter,
There is as wide a scope, as into Hell to enter,
    That’s the Hope.
On the fominge floods, our shipinge doth attende us,
But ’tis not understoode, to hender or defende us;
    This is goode.
But it doth well appeare, they have noe good effected,
And some in England heere, ar pockely suspected,
    For this geare.  
Yet wee make noe foorce, if any ill intended,
Lett eache man take his course, and this will soone be mended,
    With a woorce.
For wee that should disdayne, all poore and base condicion,
Can hardly now refrayne, to sende our good munition,

Into Spayne.  

Was there ever knowen, so fyne a trycke to stripe us;
Spayne lett your roodes\(^4\) alone, wee have enoughe to whip us,

Of our one.  

Though yet for speakeinge ill, you barre us in our drinkinge,
Yett grante us if you will, our privelidge of thinkeinge,

Mischcheife still.

**Source.** *Trevelyan Papers* 3.171-72

**Other known sources.** NLW MS 5390D, p. 449.

Oi8

1 *Vox Britanniae Ad Hispaniam*: “The Voice of Britain to Spain”.

2 *geare*: equipment.

3 *sende our...Into Spayne*: presumably an allusion to the failed expedition to Cadiz in 1625.

4 *roodes*: “rods” might make better sense. “Roodes” are crosses or crucifixes.

5 *one*: i.e. own.
Notes. After their criticism of royal policy during the 1625 Parliament, Sir Edward Coke and five other MPs were deliberately excluded from the 1626 Parliament. The Crown appointed (“pricked”) the men as sheriffs who, by virtue of their office, could not stand for parliament. Although Coke tried to challenge the terms of his appointment as Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, his efforts were unsuccessful and he did not sit in the 1626 session. Since the text of this poem is particularly unstable, we have chosen the longest known version, but have appended twenty-two lines that appear to be unique to a version that is otherwise shorter.

“Certaine verses made when my Lo: Cooke was made highe Sheriffe of Buckingham:”

There was some pollicie I doe beleive,
out of an old cast Judge,  to make a Shrieve
for hee soe longe at lawe had beene a Pedler,
that hee was growne as ripe as anie Medler.
And is thought fitt by good Sir Simon Harvies
judgment, to come now in the later service
Soe he that was for lawe soe well reputed
now may stand by, and see them executed.
Corage my Lord, yow shall growe yonge againe,
and bee attended by A Gallant trayne
your liveries & your feathers bothe shall showe,
that yow your office of Sherive knowe
I would not have you flye into a Cottage,
nor plead against it, with a writt of Dotage
But beare it bravely, that it may bee spoke
How bountifull a house is kept at Stoke
for all the people prayeth for your healthe
as beeinge Patron of the Common Wealth
Now when yow ride amonge your feathered troope
Shew your selfe curteous, & to each man stoope

Oi9 There was some pollicie I doe beleive

696
Give largely to the poore, that through the Countie
each man may freely speake, of your great bounty
As for the charge yow knowe that in the sheere
whats in the hundred lost is gained cleere
Besides yow have not reigned soe longe in Courts
and filld the Towne and Cuntry with reports
But that yow have both furnished your Chest
and as your Capp, soe feathered your Nest,
Now sittinge on the benche although hee grudge
pray undertake yow to direct the Judge,
offer to give the charge I know yow cann
and bee against the savinge of a mann
Then whisper to the Judge if yow bee wise
your private Judgment of each Nisi prise
yow have the name yow will not have things rawe,
as others doe that doe not knowe the lawe,
your wife & frends will all bee gladd to heare
that yow are made highe sheriffe of the sheire
P your sonne in lawe that roareinge boye
will now growe madd againe for very joye
his wife will wishe, shee hathe beene often trickt
her husband were like to her father prickt
But shee will have it all by night or daye
if it bee Inter quatuor Maria
And throughge this great Alliance sure it came
that yow was prickt highe sheriffe of Buckingham
But harke yow now some foolishe fellowe urges,
and sayes a Sheriffe cannott bee a Burges,
Aske your man Samon hee can all relate
followe his counsaile hee hathe a knavish pate
Make him your undersheriff with resolucion
none fitter is to goe to execucion
The towne of Coventrye does not overslipp
if yow doe meane to have a Burgeshipp
Goe write your letters, and dispatche them thither
and lett them know, that yow with hatt and feather
will come & sitt, onely with theire consent
as Lord cheif Burges of the Parliament
There call a strickt account of all the treasure
that hathe beene spent, of late without all measure
Bringe grave examples from the ancient Kings
howe they with lesser charge did Greater things
Nowe as for Subsidies pray lett them tarry
for this is but a Warre thats voluntary
Twere better the Palatinate were lost
then that it should soe much the kingdome cost
And still remember them that sitt at Helme
my Lords take heed, how yow exhaust the Realme
Speake stoutlie for the Publique to your power
Soe may yow bee kept safe as in a Tower
Soe may the winde make your riches feathers wagge
Soe may noe raine at Sires make them flagge
Soe may yow bee and say yow hadd a Cave
made Pagadore in cheif of all the Navie
Soe may yow live to see the joyfull day
to bee Lord Chancelor of Virginia
When yow were Lord cheif Cooke they went to pott
Monson did scape a scouringe, did hee not?
Oh then yow were as hott as any toast
yow tooke away the scumme, and ruld the roast
yow might have beene Lord Keeper longe agoe
hadd yow beene wise, that all the world dothe knowe
But yow on point of lawe, did stand soe strickt that now too late yow finde that yow are prickt,
Well tis noe matter better to plodd on then rise & fall as Francis did & John
When B. was but B: hadd hee spar’d hee longe ere this, hadd proved dainty lard but hee in stead of Lard must bee a lord when hee grewe very leane not fitt for bord
Though hee was greazed, well about the flanck and was sett up to fatt in a brawne francke
All was to litle for at last hee brought his fleshe to Albones which is all to nought
My lord said that hee was like to one That soone hadd brought his Gamon to a bone
Another said, and sharply if yow marke it That he brought his hoggs, to a faire markett
A third concludeinge, all the case thus handles hoggs greaze dothe waste to fast to make good candles
Why did the late lord Keeper loose the Seale did hee injustice, in the office deale?
Did hee take bribes? for bribes are to bee taken by order of his Predecessor Bacon
Or was hee too conceited in his will as armed with resolucion more then skill
Or did hee shewe himselfe at Oxford bace practizinge the house to question my lord Grace
Or was hee thought too good, and then a worse must take the Seale, and bringe with him a purse
I cannott tell, but I see by my bookes the Divell sometimes over Lincolne lookes.

[the following lines appear only in BL MS Harley 4955, fol. 73r]
If that your vertuous Lady felt it too,
she woulde be humble, & fall downe and doo
you better service for when you doe rise
Then she is patient, But she seemeth wise
if once you fall, & leaves you for another
Soe she will serve both Husband Childe, & Brother
for all this I say nott shee will dalley
though you live privatelie in ram Alley
she lives to her selfe, & makes a happy life
as ever woman did that was a wife.
Being seperated from her Husbande
for still she keepes both Juells, plate, & land
and never askt you Counsayle for to drawe
an instrument to setle it by lawe
she had a better of her one invention
for when she maried this was her intention
she meant the premess off her mariage Jurney
should be well don, & not by an attourney.
O this ladye worthelye doth meritt
for she is hye, & a mightie spiritt
If she take wrong Ile be bound to eate her
for let a Dutches wronge her, she’ll beate her

Source. BL Add. MS 15226, fols. 22v-24r

Other known sources. BL MS Harley 4955, fol. 72r; NLW MS 5309D, p. 447; Huntington MS 198, 1.56

Oi9

1 old cast Judge: Coke had been one of the leading judges of England until his dismissal as Lord Chief Justice of the King’s Bench in 1616.
2 *Shreive:* sheriff; one of the most significant legal officers in a county.

3 *Medler:* a pun on “meddler” and “medlar”, a type of fruit.

4 *Sir Simon Harvies:* Sir Simon Harvey, a former Grocer and now a financial official in the royal household (Clerk of the Green Cloth), whom Coke had attacked in an August 1625 speech in parliament on the King’s fiscal woes.

5 *Dotage:* Coke was in his mid-seventies at the time of his appointment as sheriff.

6 *Stoke:* Coke had a residence at Stoke Mandeville in Buckinghamshire.

7 *reports:* allusion to Coke’s legal reports, published (in French and Latin) 1600-1615.

8 *Nisi prius:* “nisi prius”—literally meaning “unless previously”—was the name of a legal writ.

9 *your wife:* Lady Elizabeth Coke.

10 *P:* John Villiers, Viscount Purbeck and brother of the favourite Buckingham, was married to Coke’s daughter, Frances.

11 *groke madd againe:* Purbeck suffered from notorious bouts of mental illness.

12 *his wife:* Frances, Lady Purbeck, had been charged in 1625 with an adulterous relationship with Sir Robert Howard, who was rumoured to be the father of her baby boy. The following lines on Lady Purbeck are quite obscure, though it is possible they allude to this scandal.

13 *prickt:* men were chosen as sheriff by pricking a hole in parchment next to the chosen person’s name. In the context of the poem’s discussion of the marriage of the Purbecks, the term probably bears bawdy innuendo. Similarly, it might also allude to Lady Purbeck’s hope that her husband would be chosen sheriff and thus be forced to reside in his county while she pursued her adulterous liaisons.

14 *Inter quatuor Maria:* “between the four seas”; i.e. on English soil.

15 *throughe this great Alliance...of Buckingham:* the marriage of Coke’s daughter allied him to the family of the favourite, the Duke of Buckingham.

16 *a Sheriffe cannott bee a Burges:* sheriffs could not serve as MPs (a burgess is an MP from an incorporated town).

17 *Samon:* identity unknown; presumably one of Coke’s servants or clerks.

18 *Coventrye:* Coke had been MP (burgess) for Coventry in the 1624 Parliament.
Lord chief Burges of the Parliament: not a real office; rather, mocking Coke’s leadership of the Commons, and alluding to his former royal office as Lord Chief Justice.

strictt account of all the treasure: an allusion, perhaps, to Coke’s critical remarks on royal financial governance during the 1625 Parliament.

grave examples from the ancient Kings: legal-historical precedents, which formed the substance of Coke’s parliamentary rhetoric.

Subsidies: parliamentary taxation granted to the King.

a Warre thats voluntary: i.e. England’s war with Spain, the supposed goals of which included the recovery of the Palatinate from Spanish and Bavarian occupation, and the reinstallation of Charles I’s brother-in-law Frederick V as Elector Palatine.

Sires: lords, gentlemen.

Pagadore: pay-master.

Lord Chancelor of Virginia: Coke is being mocked here for his continued pursuit of high legal office—Lord Chancellor of England being the most important such office. The English settlement in Virginia enjoyed a precarious existence in the 1620s.

Lord chief Cooke: Coke was Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas 1606-1613 and of the Court of King’s Bench from 1613 until his dismissal in 1616. The next few lines pun on “Coke” and “cook”.

Monson: Sir Thomas Monson, imprisoned as a suspect in the conspiracy to murder Sir Thomas Overbury. As Lord Chief Justice of the King’s Bench (and chief prosecutor of the Overbury murder), Coke attempted to bring Monson to trial on two occasions in 1615; on both attempts, Coke was forced to postpone proceedings. Monson was eventually released without trial.

Lord Keeper: Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, another high office Coke was known to have coveted.

But yow...soe strickt: probably an allusion to Coke’s disputes over matters of law with Lord Chancellor Ellesmere and the King which led to Coke’s fall in 1616.

Francis did & John: Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Keeper, who lost office in 1621; and John Williams, bishop of Lincoln, who succeeded Bacon as Lord Keeper and, having fallen foul of Buckingham, was dismissed in October 1625.

When B. was but B: “when Bacon was but Bacon”; i.e. before he was elevated to Lord Verulam and
Viscount St. Albans. The next thirteen lines include a series of puns on “Bacon” and “bacon”.

33 *late lord Keeper:* John Williams.

34 *for bribes...Predecessor Bacon:* Bacon was impeached by the 1621 Parliament for taking bribes.

35 *at Oxford...my lord Grace:* under attack in the Oxford session of the 1625 Parliament, Williams may have tried to shift blame onto the Duke. Buckingham seems to have believed that Williams was working with his enemies during the 1625 session.

36 *bring with him a purse:* i.e. pay a bribe for the office.

37 *the Divell...Lincolne lookes:* Williams was Bishop of Lincoln; the “Divell” here might be taken to be the Duke of Buckingham. “The Devil looks over Lincoln” was a proverbial phrase that referred to a large devil gargoyle on Lincoln College, Oxford.

38 *your vertuous Lady:* Coke’s wife, Lady Elizabeth Coke. The Cokes’ marriage was notoriously volcanic, and the two had fallen out when Coke attempted to marry their daughter to John Villiers against Lady Elizabeth’s wishes. The lines that follow allude to the quarrel and the property disputes that surrounded it.

39 *ram Alley:* a narrow passage near Coke’s residence in the Inner Temple in London.
Notes. Charles I dissolved the 1626 Parliament on 15 June after a tumultuous session in which the House of Commons had attempted to impeach the favourite Buckingham. This highly sexualized libel, prompted by the dissolution, is good evidence of the intensifying hostility to Buckingham outside as well as inside Parliament. Holstun (158-59) offers a provocative reading of some of the poem’s sexual imagery, while Bellany (“‘Raylinge Rymes’” 301) offers a reading focusing on the evolving “popish” image of the duke.

The Kinge and his wyfe the Parliament

are parted both in discontent,

the cause I can not knowe:
Fooles say, the fates brought it about
knaves say, the husband is too stout
some say, the wyfes a shrewe.

Unto the later I give noe name,
But it is just they beare the blame,

they shall be styled mad:
for who but such would thinke a spouse,
that hath as many wits as browes,

would ere prove halfe soe bad.
fault with the fates let noe man fynd,

Let none dare say the kinges unkynd,
he scornes to be soe poore:

Unles the Parliament his wyfe,

hath given him any cause of stryfe
by playinge of the whore:
Which sure she hath if it be true,

that she of late hath had to doe,

with Englands wanton Duke:¹

But as I better call to mind
she did quite in another kinde
solace his curled peruke.  

Soe as if either deserves blame
t’is he who sought to sinke his fame,
by rape committed on her:
for he did stryve with all his might,
To robbe her of her antient right,
and that is this wyves honor:
But it is well, he of his dede did fayle,
and that she ne’re turnd up her tayle,

to him unles to kisse:
As shee will do to all his faction,
Who were the cause of this distraction,
That hindred once our blisse.
An art sprunge from a blacker seed,
then that which he powred in that weed
Whom we call Guido Faux:
Who if he fiered had his vessell,
of Sulphure standeinge on beare tressell,
in his sepulchrall walkes:
Could not have soe disperst our state,
Nor opened Spayne soe wyde a gate,
as hath his gracelesse grace:
for till time comes which is at hand,
that all speake Spanish in our land,

We are bound to curse his face.
And yet I guesse we neede not doe it,
for France hath sent one to undoe it
her Countryman the Pox:
A hungry Mounsieur that will eate,
his joyntes past cure of any sweate,
that Poes' great art unlockes.

But yet as longe as they can laste

Say what you will, his foote is fast,
    the kinge will nere rebuke him: 7

but love him dearely, for in case,

hee would withdraw from him his grace,
    he knowes he must unduke him.

Which he may not unlesse he make

him lower by the head, 8 and shake
    the reste of that lewd faction:

A thinge to which they’le ne’re consent,

however parliaments are bent
    to purge that putrifaction.

What cares the kinge to urge the house 9

for’s people, what cares he a lowse

    For kingdomes transitory:

Don Fredericke 10 he may have these

But hee’le to heaven & take [word missing] ease
    to joyne in lastinge glory.

Meane tyme hee’le give them to his minion, 11

a pretty toy, his whole dominion
    will serve his wife for pynns.

Then Turner, Eliot, and Digges, 12

Shall scourged be like whirlegigges
    and suffer for their dinns.

But those that with the Duke combinde

shall from base mettle be refinde
    to shine like rotten wood 13

At midnight in a darkesome night,

noe devill shall appeare soe bright
    in shape of angel good.
Then shall the effiminate Holland Count,\textsuperscript{14} vile worme, all Englands Lords surmount, then the Nothumberlands girle

Shall cease repininge that she stoopt to wed a man whose fortunes droopt the brave Carlelian Earle.\textsuperscript{15}

For he an Embassage shall goe if he but prevent our foe,

of findeinge money here: Or els when all the land is sack’d, perhaps our bodyes might be rack’d to tell them where it were.

To these if Carlton\textsuperscript{16} goe not next, how with his wife\textsuperscript{17} will he be vext, her tongue will never lye, But that were strange for in good sooth I never knew that it tould truth since first I did her spye.

But see her I must needs confesse I never did, nor can, unlesse her visage she uncase which buried is in payntinge\textsuperscript{18} white and red for shee’s a modest wight as loath to shewe her face.

Then Ragles Lord,\textsuperscript{19} and Wimbleton, and Dorsette,\textsuperscript{20} with his nimble tongue, May looke without a bribe, To have in Court the cheifest graces, and in the state the highest places next the Villerian tribe.

But now my story is too longe,
& therefore here Ie end my songe
   with prayinge for our kinge
God graunt him life & with his wyfe
graunt he may never have more strife,
   she is a pretty thinge.
I meane the Parliament for she
When all trickes else quite helpeles be
   may helpe her man to monye
Soe he will heare her most just groanes
   and chase from him those busy droanes
that eate up all the hony.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fols. 14r-15r

Oi10

1 *Englands wanton Duke:* George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

2 *peruke:* wig.

3 *tayle:* backside.

4 *Guido Faux:* Guy Fawkes, leading conspirator in the Catholic Gunpowder Plot to blow up James I as he addressed parliament in November 1605.

5 *France hath sent...Countryman the Pox:* syphilis was commonly referred to as “the French pox” or “the French”.

6 *Poes:* Dr. Leonard Poe’s. Libellers writing at the death of Robert Cecil alleged that Poe had treated him for syphilis (see Section D).

7 *the kinge will nere rebuke him:* Charles had made clear and public gestures of support for Buckingham during the 1626 Parliament.

8 *lower by the head:* i.e. behead him.

9 *the house:* i.e. the House of Commons.
Don Fredericke: Charles’s brother-in-law, Frederick V, Elector Palatine.

minion: favourite; i.e. Buckingham.


to shine like rotten wood: a line probably stolen from Sir Walter Ralegh’s attack on the court in “The Lie” (“Goe soule the bodies guest”).


Nothumberlands girle...Carlelian Earle: Lucy Percy, from one of the most ancient of English noble families, the Percies of Northumberland, had married the Scotsman James Hay, Earl of Carlisle. Hay was a notorious profligate, and it is possible the drooping “fortunes” here are financial ones.

Carlton: Sir Dudley Carleton, ally of Buckingham, who was sent on an embassy to France in the late summer of 1626.

his wife: Lady Anne Carleton.

payntinge: cosmetics.

Ragles Lord: Sir Edward Conway, Secretary of State, made Lord Conway of Ragley (Warwickshire) in 1625.


helpe her man to monye: parliament could supply the King with money through a grant of subsidies.
Why did the fond Plebeans say

That Buckingham was runne away?
Why did the sailours and their wives,
Hope for fresh meat and merry lives?
The monied and the poore men make,
All holy-days for his flight sake?
Why were the Parliament benches brusht
And all new plotts for money husht?
Why did this knight, and that rich squire,
Who did their kingdoms good desire,
The voyces of their shears to gaine
Free open houses now proclaime?
Why were the exchequore coffers wide,
The mouldie chests new purifide?
The tellers talleys itching lye
For feefteens and for subsidie?
Why did the soldiers, whose sad sailes
Came home anotamized from Cailes,
Promise that Christmas day should see
Him cassockt, and his companie?
Why on this hope did they plung more
Into the soaking Tapsters' score:
And make their greedy lanlord stay,
For rent, another quarter day?
The Dukes returnd, these hopes are vaine,
Th’Artillery men must watch againe.
Put up your uselesse cudgells you,
You munmorth-murriand-pitchie crew.
Your tryumphs under hatches stow,
Your ebbes encrease, so dose his flow.
And though your wives have sharpt their nailes,
To scratch his face, that project failes;
He’is garded with the citie swisses,
And whilst you scould he huggs his blisses.
I graunt you as he went from hence,
So fowle a night nere rained since,
The body of the Scotish Queene
To westminster remoovd hath beene.
But ah poore wretches did you thinke
Your Admirall so soone would sinke
Or that his stately toppe should vaile
To one poore storme or shower of haile,
And though some fondlings idely say
The wind his periwigg blew away:
Which found, an other swears he’s dead,
His body’s gonne but hears his head.
This stopt pursuit, which slie that night
Could not have donne for all his spright.
At Canterbury, ther he met
An other storme as lowd and wet,
As that he ridde in, for the cry
Beeing but once raiz’d the Dukes past by,
With knitting needles, and with ladles,
Spitts, fire-forkes, and leggs of cradles,
The women whose friends were yet unpaid,
The coaches of the Duke assaid,
And then had sheard his flesh assurd
But Hollands\textsuperscript{16} lookes his peace procured
The Mirmadones\textsuperscript{17} themselves had donne
As much for Priams valiant sonne.\textsuperscript{18}
And he look’t soe, and yet tis true,
The wether chang’d his lookes to blew
At Dover least they should deceive him
He made the Castle to receive him.
The Embassadour of France\textsuperscript{19} and he
Talked of whats unknowne to me:
Perhaps they have agreed together
To meete in France in fairer wether:
Which so ift proove, then his returne
Can never make the people mourne,
For hees come back to let you know
Some good of his before he goe.

Ignoto.

\textbf{Source.} BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 28v-29r

\textbf{Other known sources.} Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 28v

Oi11

\begin{enumerate}
  \item \textit{sailours}: many English sailors, under Buckingham’s command, remained unpaid for long stretches during England’s military mobilization of 1625-1630.
  \item \textit{Parliament benches brusht}: i.e. the benches were cleaned in expectation that, now Buckingham had gone, parliament would be recalled.
\end{enumerate}
3 plotts for money: after the dissolution of the 1626 Parliament, Charles I levied a controversial extra-parliamentary tax—the Forced Loan—to raise money.

4 The voyces of their shears to gaine: to gain the voices of their shires in the expected parliamentary election.

5 For feeeteens and for subsidie: for parliamentary grants of taxation (subsidies and fifteenths).

6 soldiers: like the sailors, many soldiers remained unpaid and undersupplied for long stretches during England’s military mobilization from 1625 to 1630.

7 Cailes: Cadiz. The lines allude to the failed English expedition to Cadiz in 1625.

8 cassockt: cloaked. The promise is that the soldiers will now be properly equipped with clothing.

9 Tapsters: barman’s.

10 munmorth-murriand-pitchie: the exact meaning of “munmorth” is obscure; “murriand” might be “murrained” (i.e. scabby); “pitchie” means covered in pitch, and therefore black.

11 citie swisses: presumably Buckingham’s bodyguard.

12 The body...remoovd hath beene: the body of James I’s mother, Mary, Queen of Scots, who had been executed in England in 1587, was reinterred in October 1612 in the Henry VII Chapel of Westminster Abbey.

13 Admirall: Buckingham had been Lord Admiral since 1618-19.

14 periwigg: wig.

15 At Canterbury: Canterbury, the cathedral city in Kent on the way to Dover. None of the standard secondary accounts of Buckingham’s career record a riot against his coach in Canterbury; however, mobs of sailors had attacked the Duke’s coach at least twice before, in August and October.

16 Hollands: Henry Rich’s, Viscount Kensington and Earl of Holland.

17 Mirmadones: Myrmidons, part of the Greek forces at Troy, and commanded by Achilles.

18 Priams valiant sonne: Hector of Troy, slain by Achilles.

19 The Embassadour of France: Francis de Bassompierre.
Oi12 Fower Cheyff Justices late wee had

Notes. This is the most widely circulated of three extant verses penned on the promotion of Buckingham’s client Sir Nicholas Hyde to Lord Chief Justice in February 1627. Some versions of this poem (e.g. the copies in the newsdaries of Rous and Yonge) consist only of the last four lines, and different versions have different adjectives for the four justices. The final four lines of this version also form part of “Justice of late hath lost her witts”. Bellany (Politics 103) comments on evidence about the oral transmission of this poem, while McRae (Literature 38) discusses it in relation to news culture.

“Uppon the Cheyff Justices of the Kings Bench”

Fower Cheyff Justices late wee had
Two were good, and two weare badd
Learned Coocke, Rich Mountague
Grave Sir Lee and honest Crew

two perferd, two sett a syde
upp-starte Sir Nicholas Hyde.

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 87

Other known sources. D’Ewes 2.48; Rous 8; Yonge 100; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 120; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 8r; Folger MS V.a.262, p. 38; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 134

Oi12

1 Learned Coocke: Sir Edward Coke, dismissed as Lord Chief Justice in 1616.

2 Rich Mountague: Sir Henry Montagu, who succeeded Coke as Lord Chief Justice in 1616 and held the office until his promotion to Lord Treasurer in 1620. Montagu was created Viscount Mandeville around the time of the promotion and became Earl of Manchester and Lord President of the Privy Council under Charles I.

3 Grave Sir Lee: Sir James Ley, Earl of Marlborough, who succeeded Montagu, and left after he became Lord Treasurer in 1624.

4 honest Crew: Sir Randall (or Ranulph) Crew (or Crewe) was sworn in as Lord Chief Justice early in
1625 and held the office until late 1626 when his challenge to the legality of the forced loan led to his dismissal. The adjective “honest” thus has an extra political bite here.

5 *two perferd, two sett a syde*: Montagu and Ley were “preferred”, promoted from Lord Chief Justice; Coke and Crew were “set aside”.

715
O113  Justice of late hath lost her witts

Notes. The final four lines of this poem on the elevation of Sir Nicholas Hyde to Lord Chief Justice of the King’s Bench in February 1627 are not commonly included in variant sources. Since they also form part of “Fower Cheyffe Justices late wee had”, we might infer a scribe either wittingly or unwittingly conflating different poems on the same topic. The version used also has “1628” as a date, which is off by a year.

“1628”

Justice of late hath lost her witts
Or els is growne into strange fitts
And flyes about like Ague-fitts
With Reverend Cooke it would not stay
For Mountague drew it away
From learned Lee and honest Crewe
As swift as ayre away it flewe
And sith it would not theire abide
Its nowe wrapt upp within a Hyde
Nowe boots, and shooes must needs be deere
For Hyde is rais’d for all this yeare.

1 Learned Cooke. 2. Mountague
3 Grave Lee. 4 honest Crewe
Two preferr’d two sett asyde
And then upstart Sir Nicholas Hyde

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 119-120

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 143; BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 29v; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 46
1. *Ague-fitts*: shivering fits associated with the malaria-like disease known to contemporaries as the ague.


3. *Mountague*: Sir Henry Montagu, who succeeded Coke as Lord Chief Justice in 1616 and held the office until his promotion to Lord Treasurer in 1620. Montagu was created Viscount Mandeville around the time of the promotion and became Earl of Manchester and Lord President of the Privy Council under Charles I.

4. *learned Lee*: Sir James Ley, Earl of Marlborough, succeeded Montagu as Lord Chief Justice and was promoted to Lord Treasurer late in 1624.

5. *honest Crewe*: Sir Randall (or Ranulph) Crew (or Crewe) was sworn in as Lord Chief Justice early in 1625 and held the office until late 1626 when his challenge to the legality of the forced loan led to his dismissal. The adjective “honest” thus has an extra political bite here.

6. *Hyde*: Sir Nicholas Hyde. The next two lines pun on Hyde’s surname to imply that his raising—the raising of Hyde—would inflate the cost of leather goods because the price of “hide” has risen.

7. *Two preferr’d two sett asyde*: Montagu and Ley were “preferred”, promoted from Lord Chief Justice; Coke and Crew were “set aside”.

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717
Notes. This rare poem is clearly related to “Justice of late hath lost her witts”, and “Fower Cheyffe Justices late wee had”. All three poems comment on the elevation of Sir Nicholas Hyde to Lord Chief Justice of the King’s Bench in February 1627.

Ould Ned Cooke\(^1\) is putt to a new booke

Learned Crue\(^2\) is putt out for a new

Sage Ley\(^3\) is sett aside, up starts Sir Nicholas Hide.

Source. CUL Add. MS 29, fol. 2r

Oi14

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\(^1\) *Ned Cooke*: Sir Edward Coke, dismissed as Lord Chief Justice in 1616.

\(^2\) *Learned Crue*: Sir Randall (or Ranulph) Crew (or Crewe), dismissed as Lord Chief Justice late in 1626 following his judgement on the illegality of the forced loan.

\(^3\) *Sage Ley*: Sir James Ley, Earl of Marlborough, Lord Chief Justice from 1621 until his promotion to Lord Treasurer late in 1624.
Oil5 Rex & grex are both of a sound

Notes. This poem is an early example of what would become a common theme in the libels of 1627-28: the belief that only the (perhaps violent) removal of Buckingham (“Dux”—Duke) from power can reunite Charles (“Rex”—king) with his subjects (“Grex”—the people) inside and outside parliament. Different sources date the poem at either 1627 or 1628, but both William Whiteway (CUL MS Dd.11.73) and William Davenport received their copies in 1627, Davenport noting by his transcription that the verse had been “pinned uppon the Court gates Maye 1627” (CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 58r). The final two lines of the version selected here are unusual, if not unique; most versions are only eight lines in length.

“On the Duke”

Rex & grex are both of a sound,
But Dux doth Rex & Grex confound.
If Crux\(^1\) of Dux might have his fill,
Then Rex with grex might worke his will:
Three Subsidies to five would turne,\(^2\)
And grex would laugh, that now doth mourne.
O Rex, thy grex doth sore complaine,
That Dux hath Crux, and crux not Dux againe\(^3\)
But now it is the praier of thy poore Grex,
That vivat Rex, on Dux may currat Lex.\(^4\)

Source. BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 40v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 62r; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 44; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 5r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 24v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. d.152, fol. 86r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 13r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 31; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 117v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.16, fol. 1r; Bodleian MS Hearne’s Diaries 30, p. 228; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 119; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 246, fol. 16v; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 100r; BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 185r; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 58r; CUL MS Dd.11.73, p. 69; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 1r; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 175; Houghton MS Eng. 686, fol. 53r; Huntington MS HM 116, p. 65; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 181
Crux: literally “Cross”. The meaning here seems to be that if the duke (“Dux”) is punished/destroyed (put on the cross; made to suffer the cross or a cross/setback), then king and people (“Rex” and “Grex”) can work together again.

Three Subsidies to five would turne: variant sources inflate the figures to five and ten, respectively. The essential point remains the same: with Buckingham gone, Charles can expect a more generous parliament.

That Dux...againe: that the Duke has the power to punish but is not subject to punishment.

on Dux may currat Lex: that the law may take its course on the Duke; i.e. that Buckingham should be judicially punished (perhaps through the kind of parliamentary impeachment thwarted in 1626) for his crimes.
Notes. The refrain suggests that this song against Buckingham may have been set to the popular ballad tune “The Clean Contrary Way” (Simpson 109). Three fiddlers were tried and convicted of seditious libel after performing this song at Ware, Buckinghamshire, and at Staines, Middlesex, in the late spring and early summer of 1627.

“A Song”

Come heare, Lady Muses, and help mee to sing,

Come love mee whereas I lay

Of a Duke that deserves to bee made a King

The cleane contray way

O the cleane contrary way.

Our Buckingham Duke is the man that I meane

Come love mee &c

On his shoulders the weale\(^1\) of the Kingdome doth leane

The cleane contrary &c

O the cleane contrary &c

O happiest Kingdome that ever was ken’d\(^2\)

Come love mee &c

And happie the King that hath such a Frend

The cleane contrary &c

O the cleane &c

Needes must I extoll his worth and his blood

Come love me whereas I lay

And his sweet disposition soe milde and soe good

The cleane contrary way

O the cleane contrary way.
Those innocent smiles that establish his face
   Come love mee &c
Who sees them not tokens of goodnes and grace
   The cleane contrary &c
   O the cleane &c
And what other Scholler could ever arise
   Come love mee &c
From a Master\(^3\) that was soe sincere and wise
   The cleane &c
   O the cleane &c
Who if hee could now from his Grave but ascend
   Come love mee &c
Would surely the trueth of his service commend
   The cleane contrary way
   O the cleane &c
The King understands how hee honours his place
   Come love mee &c
Which is to his Majestie noe little grace
   The cleane &c
   O the cleane &c
And therefore the Government justly hath hee
   Come love mee &c
Of horse for the land and shipps for the Sea\(^4\)
   The cleane &c
   O the cleane &c
What though our Fleet bee our Enemies debtor
   Come love mee &c
Wee brav’d them once and wee’l brave them better
The cleane contrary way
O the cleane &c

And should they land heere they should be disjoynted
Come love mee &c
And finde both our horse and Men bravely appointed
The cleane &c
O the cleane &c

Then let us sing all of this noble Dukes praise
Come love mee &c
And pray for the length of his life and his daies
The cleane &c
O the cleane &c

And when that death shall close up his Eyes
Come love mee &c
God take him up into the skies
The cleane &c
O the cleane &c

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 164v-166v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Add. C.302, fol. 18r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 61r; BL MS Add. 58215, fol. 173v; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 196

Oi16

1 the weale: the good; the welfare.

2 ken’d: seen.

3 Master: James I.

4 Government...shipps for the Sea: Buckingham was Master of the Horse and Lord Admiral.
Oi17 There is a man, a Plauge uppon him

Notes. A variant source of this poem on Buckingham presents it as a song, with the refrain, “take him divell divell divell take him / god forsake him divell take him” (NLS Advocates MS 33.1.7, vol. 24). The fiddlers at Staines and Ware who performed “Come heare, Lady Muses, and help mee to sing” in the spring and early summer of 1627, also performed “There is a man, a Plauge uppon him”.

There is a man, a Plauge uppon him
who hathe taen many thinges uppon him
Papistes, Protestants, curse and banne him
the Devill his Father scarce can stand him
They Lower House they did thunder itt
the upper house they did grumble itt,
his necke from his shoulders they could not sunder itt,
which made the people much to wonder itt:  
Indeade he was but a younger brother
the fourth Sonne to the knight his father
A Chambermayde he had to his mother,
and this from his cuntryefoulkes wee gather
he came to the courte and grewe Cupp bearer,
unto the Kinge he still grew nearer,
In his eye he semed a Pearle
sate downe a viscount, and rose upp an Earle
Indeade he had a verie faire face
wich was the cause he came in grace
Fairely he could tripe a Gallyard
and plaise the ladies with his stalliard,
when warres did plauge the palsgraves land
this man in favour great did stand
goode Kinge James he ruled so
iff he said yea, none durst saye no.
thus I learne my sounge to singe
off the tale off the begger and the kinge,
and I wishe when death undoes him
he maye rest in the Devills bosome.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 58r

Other known sources. NLS Advocates MS 33.1.7, vol. 24, fol. 78r

Oi17

1 *They Lower House...much to wonder itt*: allusion to the attempted impeachment of Buckingham by the 1626 Parliament.

2 *Indeade he was...to his mother*: slurs on Buckingham’s obscure social origins were common. He was the fourth son of Sir George Villiers of Brooksby, Leicestershire. His mother, Mary Beaumont, was Sir George’s second wife. They met when Mary was, in Roger Lockyer’s words, “serving as companion and waiting-woman to her richer relatives” (Lockyer 5).

3 *Cupp bearer*: Buckingham’s first court office was as a Cupbearer to King James I.

4 *sate downe a viscount, and rose upp an Earle*: Buckingham was made Viscount Villiers in August 1616 and Earl of Buckingham in January 1617.

5 *Gallyard*: galliard; a type of dance.

6 *plase*: i.e. please.

7 *stalliard*: obscure; the NLS Advocates MS version has “talliard”, which is equally obscure. Presumably the word had some bawdy meaning.

8 *when warres did plauge the palsgraves land*: allusion to the invasion and occupation of the Lower and Upper Palatinate in 1620-21 by Spanish and Bavarian forces. The Palsgrave was Frederick V, Elector Palatine, and son-in-law of James I.
Oii Parliament and Poison (1626)

Notes. The date of this poem is difficult to establish with precision. It might have been written during the delays preceding the 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré outside the besieged French Protestant stronghold of La Rochelle, or during the delays before the second expedition planned for the summer of 1628. But it may instead date from earlier in the La Rochelle crisis, perhaps from the period 1625-26. In any case, the political punch of the poem comes in its last line, lamenting the reversal of proper authority brought on by the excessive power of Buckingham in the late 1620s.

“Upon the slowed provision for Rochell”

when the uncivill civill peace of State
makes such as live in peace unfortunate
then men of warre are streight brought to this passe
the stoutest Lion proves the Cravenest Asse
and those wont fight\(^1\) with men of all condicions
nowe fight with none for they have no Commissions\(^2\)
who doubts this state let him on that state looke
wheras the Duke’s a king the king a Duke.

Source. BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 55v

Oii1

\(^1\) *those wont fight*: this phrase remains ambiguous. It could be read either as “those wont to fight”, or as “those won’t fight”.

\(^2\) *Commissions*: i.e. commissions as officers. Buckingham’s awarding of commissions for the Ré expedition aroused a certain amount of criticism.
Notes. The tone of this song’s prediction that Buckingham would lead a Protestant conquest of Europe may very well be ironic; however, it seems almost certain that the poem dates from before Buckingham’s actual departure for the Ile de Ré in late June 1627, a period in which the Duke and his artistic clients were busy fashioning the favourite anew as a military hero in the making.

“A Song”

It makes mee to muse to heare of the Newes
That Men doe report of the Duke,
Let us bee content with the money thats spent
Hee’l put all our Foes to rebuke.

Hee’l cool France and Spaine, and quiet the Maine,
The Dunkerks passage hee’l stopp:
To stay all commotion hee’l plough up the Ocean,
God send him a good harvest cropp.

Nay at a word, like Edward the third,
Hee’l make the proud French to tremble,
Like Henry the fift hee’l make them to shift
And runne with their limbes soe nimble.

Nay at his owne cost, hee, all that is lost
Will restore to the crowne againe,
Then Callis will hee take, with Normandie,
And all the rest of Aquitaine.

Nay’t may bee his chance but to conquer all France,
Where Henry the sixt was crowned.
Then what other Man like our Buckingham
Shall through the world bee renowned.
Then he casts his accounts to the Apinine Mounts, and the Alps for to take his way,
Where the Emperor for feare, when he sees him there
   will deliver him Bohemia.

Nay many Men hope hee’l subdue the Pope
   And discover that Man of sinne,
The isles in the way, in the midland Sea
   For certaine hee will take in.

And then hee will meet with the West Indie Fleet,
   And of them hee will take fast hold,
And bring them away for England a pray,
   And choke us with silver and gold.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 166v-167v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 104

1 the money thats spent: allusion to the great fiscal burdens placed on the English by the necessities of military mobilization.

2 The Dunkerks: the Dunkirk pirates, a serious threat to English shipping in this period.

3 Edward the third: King Edward III (reigned 1327-1377) led the English in the first phases of the Hundred Years’ War with France.

4 Henry the fift: Henry V defeated the French at Agincourt in 1415.

5 Callis...Aquitaine: territories in France once under the control of the kings of England.

6 Henry the sixt was crowned: King Henry VI, son of Henry V, was crowned King of France in Paris in 1431.
7 *Apinine Mounts*: the Apennine Mountains of Italy.

8 *the Emperor...Will deliver him Bohemia*: the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II was King of Bohemia. In 1618-1620, Bohemian Protestant rebels had toppled Ferdinand and offered the throne to Frederick V, Elector Palatine, and brother-in-law of Charles I. Imperial forces drove Frederick from Bohemia late in 1620.

9 *midland Sea*: Mediterranean Sea.

10 *the West Indie Fleet*: the treasure ships bringing to Spain silver and gold mined in the Spanish American possessions.
Notes. The likeliest date for this poem is the period preceding Buckingham’s departure for the Ile de Ré in late June 1627. Suspicions of Buckingham’s cowardice were common during this period, and were intensified after the abject failure of the Ré expedition.

Great Buckinghame
hath spred a fame
that soone he will be gone
But what say some
that times not come
till sure the thirtie one
which beinge past
Hee’le then make hast
and make noe longer stay
if this be soe
hee’le never goe
and thus the most men say.
He hath a trick
that hele be sick
to find his Doctors sport
and they must say
he needs must stay
Soe cheates the vulger sort.
But soft Sir knave
we often have
had triall of that shift
we know the cause
Of your longe pause
Your whole Intent & drift.
you would not goe
the matters soe
    You would avoyd the warr
you thinke to have
your bodie safe
    in England as you are
I wonder here
the whores staye cleere
    the Dukes most mightie presse
Because not one
but these alone
    to him can have accessse.
Tis said the kinge
the Duke will bringe
    to portsmouth if he may
and then I hope
the D: and pope
    will beare him quite away.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 27r

Oii3

1  the thirtie one: presumably a reference to the thirty-first day of the month in which this poem was written (possibly, therefore, May or March).

2  the Dukes most mightie presse: the meaning of “presse” here is a little unclear. It might have a bawdy innuendo, but it might also refer to the pressing of men for the army to go to Ré.

3  Tis said...to portsmouth: Charles I visited the fleet at Portsmouth in early June 1627.

4  the D: the devil.
Oii4 In reading these my Lord youll see I’ve gott

Notes. This verse, written as a petitionary letter to an unnamed (and, perhaps, entirely notional) patron, from an inmate in one of London’s debtors’ prisons, is primarily a satirical evocation of the experience of imprisonment. However, the section following line 39 describes the political talk that takes place in the prisoners’ “parliament”, talk that includes gossip on the Duke’s planned voyage to Ré, continuing resistance to the Forced Loan, the religion of Charles’s French Queen, Henrietta Maria, and the promotion of Richard Neile, Bishop of Durham, to the Privy Council.

In reading these my Lord youll see I’ve gott
What Dives¹ in the Parable could not
Hee could not send abroad amongst his frends
The storie of his prison, and the feinds,
Or tell the yet free people what intent
Heaven had on him in his imprisonment²
In this full point wee differ too I thinke
Hee had the greatest fire I the most drinke³
Nor cann it be deny’d him damned wee knowe
For what the miser had, I what I owe
Hee but one debt, one reckoning had to pay
One creditor, one judge, one judgment day.
But I of all these have a tallie more
Then Lazarus had ulcers⁴ at his doore.
Onely my blessing is I’ve leave to tell.
The storie and condition of my hell
The spiritts which confine, not guard mee heere
Whome wee call keepers, and the case is cleere,
They keep indeed our feet they should not stray
Yett wee keepe them and for our mischeifes pay⁵
These feed on the leane soules of captiv’d men
And what is left by Fortune must feast them,
Of all sorts and conditions heere remaine
Soules by the Mercer and the Taylor slaine
The bankrupt Tradesman & the needy knight
The outlaw’d Lawyer, and whose damn’d outright
The thirstie Prodigall young gent, or hee
Who hath nought left of his last legacie
All ages, all degrees, all sorts heere lye
From Jew to Christian, truth to honestie
And as Saint Peter as the storie teach’t
Unto the soules which weeere in Lymbo preacht
Soe hither to bewaile our Martyrdomes
A travelling Apostle sometimes comes
Who for our Saboath, Turnips, Irish beefe
Gives to our Soules, as poore and thinne releife
Journinen Levits, who are more perplext
Where they shall dyne, then to devid there text
Heere a perpetuall parliament doth sitt
Which I doe not comend for speach or witt,
Att this wee all are speakers, and each brings
Affaires of state to light, clossett of kings
Wee knewe at first the Duke but mock’t the people
And durst not goe from sight of old Powles steeple
That the shipp beife would stinke & make him sicke
His wife and mother would growe Luniticke
If hee departed, That the Queene should pray
And kneele unto my soveraigne for his stay,
That the Northampton knights when hee is gone
Will pay their mony doubly every one.
And in last session heere it was inserted
The Queene should nowe be crown’d shee was converted,
When Durham preacht, for which with us ’tis sayd
His honor was one of the counsell made
And though wee heere noe subsedies can give
Since more then halfe our court can hardly live,
But in the strength of hope, and such strang newes
As their invention, and tyme's frailtie brewes.
Yet I could wish the king could find a tricke
Like what is done in our state polliticke
I meane for thrift, what food it would preserve
Within his store, yet not the soldiours sterve,
If all his fighting men could be content
As wee doe heere, to make the whole yeare lent
Wee have our femall spiritts heereto, but my lord
I must not of these creatures talke a word
For knewe the people of the world what sport
Wee have in hell, heere, with this wanton sort
They would confesse in this wee are divine
Where every Pluto has his Proserpine
Heere is Elizium too, a Garden where
The ground & trees noe grasse, noe fruit do beare,
And heere I could upon this barren plott
Discourse as freely as it wanted not
The blessings stored fruitfull Eden, noe
I will noe further in this story goe.
Lett it suffice Elizium comes to mee
When I your favour & your person see.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 58-61

Other known sources. Folger MS V.a.276, part 2, fol. 33v

Hee could not send...his imprisonment: tormented in hell, Dives was unable to send a message back to his brethren to warn them of the costs of their sinful living (Luke 16.27-31).

Hee had the greatest fire...drinke: in Luke 16.24, Dives begs Abraham to send Lazarus, to him “that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame”.

Lazarus had ulcers: Lazarus, lying at Dives’ gate, is described as “full of sores” (Luke 16.20).

wee keepe them...mischeifes pay: early modern prisoners paid fees to their keepers.

Journinen: probable scribal error; “Journeymen” is a better reading.

Levits: preachers, priests.

Duke: Buckingham.


wife and mother: Buckingham’s wife, Katherine Villiers, Duchess of Buckingham; and mother, Mary Villiers (subsequently married to Sir Thomas Compton), Countess of Buckingham. News reports circulating in this period claimed that Buckingham’s mother was convinced her son would be assassinated on the voyage to Ré.

Queene: Henrietta Maria.

Northampton knights: allusion to the group of Northamptonshire gentry, led by Richard Knightley, who refused to pay the extra-parliamentary tax (commonly known as the Forced Loan) levied by the King in the aftermath of the 1626 Parliament (Cust, Forced Loan 233-34).

The Queene...was converted: Charles I was crowned in February 1626; his wife, the Catholic French princess Henrietta Maria, refused to be crowned alongside him because of her religious scruples at participating in a Protestant religious service. Henrietta Maria never converted to Protestantism.

When Durham preacht...one of the counsell made: Richard Neile, Bishop of Durham, and a leading Arminian cleric, was appointed to the Privy Council in April 1627.

Pluto...Proserpine: Pluto, the king of Hades, and Proserpina, the queen.

Elizium: Elysium, the residence of the blessed in the land of the dead.
Notes. This is by far the sharpest and widest-circulated of the attacks preceding Buckingham’s expedition to the Ile de Ré in the summer of 1627. On the possible attribution of this poem to John Marston, see Brettle.

“Upon the Duke of Buck. his going to Ree”

And wilt thou goe, great Duke, and leave us here
Lamenting thee and eke thy Pupill deare
Great Charles? Alas! who shall his Scepter sway,
And Kingdome rule now thou art gone away?
Are there noe Whores in Court to stay thee? Must
Thy hate to France and Spaine exceed thy Lust?
Hast thou no Neece to marry? Cannot an Inne
Or bawdyhouse afford thee any kinne
To cuckold Lords withall? Hast not a Foe
To poison here at home? And wilt thou goe
And thinke the Kingdome plagued sufficiently?
Most gracelesse Duke, wee thanke thy charitie,
Wishing the Fleet such speed, as thou but lost,
Though wee bee conquer’d, wee have quitted cost.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 161r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 21v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 13v; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 105; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet 26, fol. 80v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet 160, fol. 198r; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 42v; BL MS Sloane 1792, fol. 5r; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 14; Huntington MS HM 742, fol. 1v; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 57

1 Hast thou no Neece...cuckold Lords withall: allusion to Buckingham’s notoriously aggressive pursuit of socially and politically advantageous marriages for his close (and distant) kindred.
Hast not a Foe...at home: George Eglisham, a former physician to James I and to James, the Marquis Hamilton, published a tract in 1626 accusing Buckingham of poisoning the King, Hamilton and several other nobles who had crossed his intentions at court.
Notes. This punning epigram on Buckingham’s 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré is commonly attributed to William Drummond.

“Of the Isle of Rhees”

Charles would yee Prevaile your foes, thine better Lucke

Send forth some Drake and keep at home the Ducke.¹

Source. NLS MS 2062, fol. 220r

Other known sources. Drummond 2.245

¹ Send forth some Drake...the Ducke: this line depends on a number of puns. “Drake” is a male duck, a type of cannon, and the surname of the Elizabethan naval hero Sir Francis Drake. The “Ducke”, effeminized and unmilitary, is a pun for the “Duke”, Buckingham.
Notes. This mocking song on Buckingham’s expedition to the Ile de Ré dates from the early months of the campaign when the news was, for the most part, encouraging. The libel’s taunts at Buckingham’s sexual and culinary appetites and his military incompetence are repeated in many of the other attacks on the favourite in 1627. Bellany (“‘Raylinge Rymes’” 301-02) places the poem in context of the evolving libellous image of the Duke.

“A Song”

Rejoyce brave English Gallants

Whose Auncestors wonne France

Our Duke of Buckingham is gone

To fight and not to daunce.

Beleive it; for our Ladies

His absence greatly mourne,

And swear they’l have noe Babies

Untill hee doth retourne.

They feare him very sore,

But hope hee’s wondrous strong,

And therefore they doe thinke hee will

Bee with them er’t bee long.

But they and every Man

Are glad that loves a Wench,

That since hee’s gone, hee’s gone to kill

His Enemie the French.

They sing how many thousands

With him of worth there bee,

Of whom the worst amongst them all

Is better skilld then hee.

Besides a gallant Fleet of Shipps
That with him still must stay,
Either that they may fight with him,
Or with him runne away.

His Army was twelve thousand,
Well nombred on our shore,
Besides his Pasties and bakt meates,
Which were as many more,
Besides his many Partridges,
His Quailes and many Pullen,
That it is thought a greater hoast
Than Harry led to Bullen.

At last hee is for France
After his thus long tarrying,
Hee stay’d but for his victualling
And for some kinsfolks marrying.
But now hee is at Sea
Where hee commaunds amaine
Whence all true Englishmen doe hope
Hee’l ne’er come back againe,
Without such Victories and spoiles
From that proud and rich people
That England all must ring of them
And ev’rie flattering steeple.
For he doth threaten sore,
And Frenchmen greatly feare
Hee’l have a Royall Subsedie
In France as well as heere.

For when hee came to land
His Soldiers, that were starting,
Hee stood behinde and backt them soe
That they have won Saint Martin.  
Yet at the first Encounter
The Frenchmen were soe hott,
Our Englishmen were like t’ave been
Devour’d in a showre of shott.

But though they did prevaile
Against us at the first,
Yet wee bore up so well againe
That wee gave them the worst.
This was noe sooner done,
    But Grymes posts to the King,
Where all that hope by flatterie
    To bee preferr’d doe singe.

They ranck the Duke with Bevis,
This skirmish they doe place
Before the Cowe of Dunmowe heath
    And next to Chevy Chase,
And sweare that through our Chronicles
    Wee farr and neere doe wander
Before that such an one wee finde
    Imploy’d as a commaunder.

Algiers, Cales, and Guyana
    Were spoild before they went,
They had commission to doe naught
    But onely to bee sent.
And i’st not a great wonder
    That hee should compasse more
Than all our old Sea-Captaines
   That never fought before.  80

Returne then glorious Duke
   Unto thy old commaund
For though th’art Admirall at Sea
   Th’art admirable at land.
Heere thou commaunds the Sea,
   Religion, and the States
Art Admirall of our Bishops Seas 9
   Aswell as of the Straites.

Or do’st thou stay soe long
   To love thine Enemie,
And stay with him because thou think’st
   Hee hates thee lesse than wee?
Ne’er fear: For men must love thee
   When they behold thy glorie
To fill two leaves in a Currant 10
   Or bee a Bishops Storie.

London, prepare thy Faggotts 11
   Against the Dukes returne,
And see thou hast them readie
   Layd for the Duke to burne.
For hee deserves them all,
   All that thou canst lay on,
I thinke his greatest Enemies
   Will sweare it, every one.

So God preserve our noble King
   And send him long to Raigne,
And gett a boy that shall enjoy
England and France againe
God blesse the Church and Parliament,
Our Queene\textsuperscript{12} God blesse, and Wee,
And send us Peace that ne’er shall cease,
But that wee all agree.

\textbf{Source.} BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 167r-171r

\textit{Oii7}

1 \textit{Whose Auncestors wonne France:} alluding to the (temporary) conquests of French territory during the Hundred Years’ War of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

2 \textit{His Enemie the French:} the last four lines of this stanza depend on the pun in the tail. “The French” was a common term for syphilis (“the French pox”).

3 \textit{Than Harry led to Bullen:} allusion to Henry VIII’s large-scale military expedition to France and his siege and capture of Boulogne in 1544.

4 \textit{some kinsfolks marrying:} Buckingham was an aggressive promoter of politically and socially advantageous marriages for his kindred.

5 \textit{Saint Martin:} the chief town on the Ile de Ré. Buckingham took the town of St. Martin early in the expedition, but had to besiege the French force in the citadel of St. Martin from July to October 1627 before a failed assault on the fort forced the English to retreat.

6 \textit{Grymes:} Richard Graham, one of Buckingham’s clients, who brought news of the first phase of the Ré expedition back to court.

7 \textit{They ranck the Duke...Chevy Chase:} these lines mock Buckingham by ironically comparing his achievement in the early days on Ré with legendary battles (like Chevy Chase) and the actions of heroes (like Sir Bevis of Southampton), celebrated in the English broadside ballad tradition.

8 \textit{Algiers, Cales, and Guyana:} alludes to earlier, apparently less successful naval expeditions: Sir Robert Mansell’s expedition against the Barbary pirates in Algiers in 1620-21, Wimbledon’s Cadiz expedition of 1625, and Ralegh’s second voyage to Guiana in 1617-18.

9 \textit{Admirall of our Bishops Seas:} a pun on “bishops’ sees”, implying that Buckingham controls the...
allocation of appointments to bishoprics.

10 *Currant*: coranto; a printed serial newsbook. An authorized serial newsbook reported Buckingham’s exploits on Ré.

11 *Faggotts*: firewood for the celebratory bonfires in the case of Buckingham’s victorious return. Of course, the subtext here is that the firewood could also be used to burn the duke.

12 *Our Queene*: Charles I’s wife, Henrietta Maria.
**Notes.** The 17 August 1627 issue of the official newsbook on the Ré expedition featured a report of an assassination attempt on Buckingham by a so-called “Disciple of the Jesuites” acting on the orders of the commander of the citadel of St. Martin (A Continued Journall, 17 August 1627, 14). The 30 August issue included a foldout picture of the assassin’s weapon—“a strange and dangerous Poynado”—which had been brought over to England and “delivered unto the Dutches of Buckinghame”. Buckingham, in the act of what the newsbook termed “a noble and mercifull Generall”, pardoned his attempted assassin (A Continued Journall, 30 August 1627, tp, 1-2). This libel casts a rather more sceptical eye on the whole affair, undercutting the considerable boost the Catholic assassination plot might have given to Buckingham’s much cherished and always tenuous reputation as a Protestant hero.

“the duke at the Isle of Ree sent a knife into England wherewith a varlet should have stab’d him. ut dicitur.”

Why was the varlett sent into the meane

and the knife heere that should thy grace have slaine

Great Duke we thinke thy polecie discreete
to take such care those two should never meete

Yet since we cannot vindicate thy foe

unles we might his name or beinge know

o send him hither, whilst him we pursue

we doe mistake him for the wanderinge Jewe.

**Source.** Bodleian MS Eng. Poet c.50, fol. 27r

1 *the meane:* the main; the mainland of France. *A Continued Journall* reported that after questioning the assassin, Buckingham “sent him back to the prison, and after three dayes pardoned him, and sent him over into the mayne” (17 August 1627, 14).
the wanderinge Jewe: medieval anti-semitic legend told of the Jew who, after insulting Christ, was sentenced to wander the earth until Christ’s return on Judgement Day.
Notes. After the failure of the English assault on the citadel of St. Martin on 27 October 1627, the expeditionary force had little option but to leave the island. The 29 October retreat was a disaster. French troops attacking from the rear slaughtered many English soldiers and officers as they tried to make their way across a poorly defended narrow bridge to the ships. Among the dead was one of Buckingham’s colonels, Sir John Radcliffe, who is mourned, at Buckingham’s expense, in this poem.

One askte me, why I mournde?
because I walkt in blacke?
I answered; for a Duke:
Yett did not crye alacke;
hath death, quoth he, and smilde,
done us soe good a tourne?
But then I cryde, alas
noe: that’s the cause I mourne;
For noble Ratclyff’s loss
Fallen; with our aunciente glorie
I truly mourne; and for his lyffe,
could wishe Dukes Fatall storye.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 60r
Oii10 Oure crossrow’s turnd, a signe off monstrous luck

Notes. This tricky verse from William Davenport’s commonplace book is a lament on the defeat at Ré and a bitter indictment of Buckingham’s personal responsibility for the disaster. While the general meaning of the poem seems clear enough, some of the allusions remain very obscure.

Oure crossrow’s\(^1\) turnd, a signe off monstrous luck
    when D.\(^2\) ledd the Englishe cross,\(^3\) over St. Gorges brooke,\(^4\)
who better knewe to courte, and kiss his hande
    then how to guide an hoste bye sea or lande
there hath bene D\(^5\) D\(^5\) could conquer Townes,
    and make all France to fflye
this D. can better conjure Crownes,
    and runne away ffrom Ree
And leave oure noble English buddes,
    a praye to’th pockye French,
when D. lyke Dorus\(^6\) darnige stoode;
    O: that the Madrille wenche\(^7\)
had changde her smocke, for Hercules shirte,\(^8\)
    when this Adulterouse D.
was cousoned, with a common cutte,\(^9\)
    and changde P. for a C.B.\(^10\)
Our brave men had breathed still,
    our Cuntrye loste no grace;
God graunte the next greatte Gennerall
    better deserve, his place.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 60r

Oii10

\(^1\) crossrow’s: cross-row; the alphabet.
D.: Duke of Buckingham.

the Englishe cross: the battle standard of the English was the red cross of St. George.

St. Gorges brooke: the exact reference is unclear. St. George’s Channel is between Wales and Ireland; however, this may simply refer to the English Channel.

D D: probably “Dukes” plural, or perhaps “fifty” (i.e. Roman numeral D) dukes.

Dorus: the poet is probably comparing Buckingham to Dorus, the shepherd pseudonym of the prince Musidorus in Philip Sidney’s Arcadia. The allusion is possibly to the scenes in the Old Arcadia in which Musidorus, conquered by love, is, in Worden’s words, “plunged into idleness and self-absorption”, neglecting to take up the call of arms (Sound of Virtue 299).

Madrille wenche: Madrid girl. This and the following lines seem to allude to Buckingham’s alleged womanizing in Madrid in the summer of 1623.

Hercules shirte: the Greek hero Hercules’ jealous wife poisoned a garment he wore, burning his skin and precipitating his death.

cuttte: northern slang for whore.

changde P. for a C.B.: meaning obscure; perhaps bawdy, developing in a coded manner the suggestions raised in the preceding lines.
The noblest brave profession
that ether is or hath bene
was for to bee, A souldeir true
and theire to live, and dye in,
when great Elyza\(^1\) raigned
the glorie of all weomen
her souladyers Fame, rounge through the world
theire deedes yet matched by noe man.

Ould Souladyers heads, were decked
with bayes\(^2\) and not with willowes,\(^3\)
theire armes were then theire cheiffe delighte
theire armores, were their pillowes.

Her Generalls noblye valient
performed the partes of Cæsar,\(^4\)
her Captaynes Acts were lyke to Kinges,
comparde, to most off these are,
From all the partes of Belgyke
that states have in submission,
The Englishe beate the Spaniars awaye,\(^5\)
to Fight the\(^6\) had Commission.

Ould Souladyers heads, were decked
with bayes and not with willowes,
theire Armes, were then theire cheiffe delight
theire Armores, were their pillowes.
When Noblemen, were Leaders,
   New uppstartes,\textsuperscript{7} not Commaunders,
Our English, bare the pryze from Cales,\textsuperscript{8}
   and Newport\textsuperscript{9} too, in Flaunders,
Through all the world then sounded,
   the glorie off this Nation
Our Captaynis victors, came awaye
   they fought not by Commission.\textsuperscript{10}
   Ould souldyers heades, were decked
      with bayes and not with willowes
   theire Armes, weare then theire cheiffe delighte
   theire Armors, weare theire pillowes.

Lett bragginge Frenchmen pratle
   off Rees, late treacherous glorie
but see, iff Poytyers\textsuperscript{11} can bee found,
   within theire ancyent storye
Our redd Cross\textsuperscript{12} that daye dasseld
   the eyes off theire St. Dennys\textsuperscript{13}
as Englandes henries,\textsuperscript{14} men did playe
   with Frenchmens heades at Tennyes
      Ould Souldyers heades were decked
         with bayes, and not with willowes,
   theire Armes were all theire cheeff delight
   theire Armors, were theire pillowes.

St. Gorge,\textsuperscript{15} had once the name
   to leade, our English collours,
Duke Gorge, doth now usurpe the same
   which causeth all our dolors,
come now his mynions\textsuperscript{16} brave
   that, this proffession enterde
Letts heare the acts, you have nobley donne
with him since first you venterde
decke not youre heads with bayes
For feare off after willowes
First bloude youre armes, trye iff youre heads
can sleepe on Iron pillowes

You traveled once to Cades
some secrett plott to cover,
More honnor, had you gotte at home,
Dunkerkes, to have kepte from Dover,
Ould honnored Essex stepps,
his noble sonne, was treadinge,
Commission basely, cald him backe,
and blamed, his Forward leadinge.

See that you decke youre heads
noe more with bayes, but willowes,
go change youre Armes, For liverie cloakes
and make youre plumes, youre pillowes.

Youre False pretence, For Rochell
made the Enymie, laughe and wonder,
Youre Ordinance, would have made you awaye
lyke lighteninge joynde with thunder,
waste Feare benummed youre sensces,
or that False Lordes Commission?
whose projects shew he would christians drawe,
to Anticristes profession

Youre heads in steadd off bayes,
are deckt, with beades and crosses
’twere better, you had noe heads att all,
then bringe, these shames & losses
Youre Action late att Ree
    would it, might bee Forgotten,
the Shame off it, will still remaine,
    when youre base bonnes, are rotten,
the Loss off roall Ractlyffe,  25
    whose bloode, lyke Abells, (cryinge,
with Rich and Brett,  26 and brave men moe)
on great Gorge, For revenginge.
    The Bayes, should decke youre heads,
crowne those true honnored graves,
    that, bravelye Fought, and nobley dyed,
when you runne, most lyke slaves.

It is not Crates off Feasants,
    off partridge, quailes, and Rayles,
to batter downe St. Martin’s Forte,  27
    nought, pastye crust avayles.
was it Ignorance or Feare,
    his grace, that soe distracted,
naye rather, it was some treacherous plott,
    in blood, that must be acted
    Keepe home, and plaunt younge willowes,
    send valyent men for trenches,  28
    youre armores, change for reevellinge sutes,
and dance, amounge youre wenches.

Foole Lambe,  29 that lewde Impostar
    his Maister saffe to enable,
sent a devill armed lyke his Lorde,
    that close sate, coyld in cable
this Generalls, generous action,
    to his glorie be it spoaken,
Deserves, to have Sejanus ende;
or in the Geamonies broaken
   In stead off honoringe Lawrell
   If fortune, happ to Faltere
   A hatchett I hope will crowne his head
or decke him with a halter.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fols. 62v-63r

1  Elyza: Elizabeth I.
2  bayes: the laurel wreath of victory.
3  willowes: a sign of mourning.
4  Caesar: Julius Caesar, the great Roman general.
5  From all the partes...Spaniars awaye: allusion to English military assistance to the Netherlandish rebellion against the Spanish during Elizabeth’s reign, which had resulted in the creation of the United Provinces (the “states”) in the northern part of the Netherlands.
6  the: i.e. “they”.
7  New uppstartes: socially obscure men promoted to office and position, with Buckingham being the intended contemporary example.
8  Cales: Cadiz. The allusion is to Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex’s, capture of Cadiz in 1596.
9  Newport: Nieuwpoort, a town in Flanders. An English contingent fought in the (at best) pyrrhic Dutch victory at Nieuwpoort in 1600.
10  they fought not by Commission: the meaning of this phrase is a little opaque. It may refer here to the disputes in 1627 about who was—and who was not—the recepient of a military commission in Buckingham’s expeditionary force.
11  Poytyers: Poitiers. An English army under the command of Edward the Black Prince, son of Edward III, inflicted a major defeat on the French at the battle of Poitiers in 1356.
redd Cross: the red cross of St. George; the English battle flag.

St. Dennys: St. Denis, patron saint of France. The French battle flag, the oriflamme, was the flag of St. Denis.

Englanedes henries: the poet seems to have confused his English kings here; Edward, the Black Prince, not Henry V, was the victor at the battle of Poitiers.

St. Gorge: St. George, patron saint of England, whose flag was the battle standard of the English.

mynions: minions; favourites.

Cades: Cadiz. The English had tried but failed to attack Cadiz in a naval expedition in 1625.

Dunkerkes...from Dover: i.e. the fleet would have won more honour if it had focused on protecting English ports like Dover from the ravages of the Dunkirk pirates.

Ould honnored Essex...Forward leadinge: Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, and son of the great Elizabethan hero, was one of the commanders in the 1625 voyage to Cadiz. These lines appear to refer to an incident on the voyage in which Essex was forced to abandon an attempt to seize Spanish ships because of lack of support (Lockyer 282).

liverie cloakes: cloaks bearing the badge of a person’s lord.

False pretence, For Rochell: this may refer to the planned fleet to succour the Huguenots of La Rochelle early in 1626. The mission was aborted, thus perhaps prompting the allegation that the help promised the Huguenots had never been sincerely intended.

False Lordes: presumably a reference to Buckingham. The poem is still addressing the Duke’s “minions”.

Anticristes profession: i.e. Catholicism. In transcribing the poem, William Davenport inserts in the margin, as though considering an alternate reading, the word “submission”.

beades and crosses: rosary beads and crosses, symbols of Catholicism.

Ratchyffe: Colonel Sir John Radcliffe, killed in the retreat from Ré, 29 October 1627.

Rich and Brett: Sir Charles Rich and Sir Alexander Brett, both killed in the retreat from Ré, 29 October 1627.

St. Martin’s Forte: the citadel of St. Martin on Ré. The English laid siege to St. Martin for several months before attempting an assault late in October 1627.
28 trenches: trenchers; plates and knives for feasting.

29 Foole Lambe: John Lambe, astrologer, magician and convicted witch and rapist, who was believed to be Buckingham’s assistant.

30 Sejanus ende: Sejanus, the mighty favourite of the corrupt Roman Emperor Tiberius, was executed on the order of the Senate and his body dragged to the Tiber by the Roman mob.

31 Geamonies: the scala Gemoniae, “steps on the Aventine Hill [in Rome] leading to the Tiber, to which the bodies of executed criminals were dragged to be thrown into the river” (OED).

32 A hatchett: allusion to the executioner’s axe.

33 halter: hangman’s noose.
Notes. This is probably the most significant of the libels penned in the wake of the English defeat at Ré. The widely copied poem focuses blame for the defeat squarely on Buckingham’s shoulders and depicts the Duke as a cynosure of all kinds of scandalous corruption. The poem also engages in a discussion of military tactics, adding its voice to a quite vibrant contemporary debate about the strategic mis-steps at Ré. At one point, the poet claims to have “lost a share” of the English blood spilt on Ré. Whether this suggests the poet took part in the campaign, or whether it implies he lost a blood relative there, is unclear. In one source, the poem is ascribed to John Heape (Bodleian MS Ashmole 38), but no historian has yet identified a “Heape” among the soldiers known to have fought at Ré. The politics of the poem are discussed at length by Bellany (‘Raylinge Rymes’ 302-04), and more briefly by G. Hammond (149).

“Upon the Dukes Returne. In Ducem Reducem”

And art return’d againe with all thy Faults,
Thou great commaunder of the All-goe-naughts, ¹
And left the Isle behind thee? Whats the matter?
Did Winter make thy chopps begin to chatter?
Could not the surging and distemper’d Seas
Thy queasie stomach (gorg’d with sweet-meates) please?
Or did’st thou sodainly remove thy station,
Through Jealousie of Hollands supplantation? ²
Or was’t for want of Wenches? Or did’st feare
The King (thou absent) durst wrong’d Bristoll³ heare?
Or didst thou hasten (headlong) to prevent
A fruitlesse hop’d-for needfull Parliament?
All these, noe question, with a restlesse motion
Vext thy bespotted soule, as that black Potion
Tortur’d the noble Scott, whose Manes tell
Thy swolne Ambition made his carkasse swell. ⁴
But there’s a reason worse then these: they say
The Frenchmen beate thee, and thou ran’st away.
Can this bee true? Could not thy glorious boasts,
Before thy going, fright them from their coasts?
Could not thy Titles feare them? Nor thy Lambe’s
Protection safeguard from thee those French Ramms?
Could not thy Cambridge Pupils⁵ zealos Praiers
(Compos’d of Brownist and Arminian⁶ Ayres)
Confound thy Foes? Or ells did their distraction
Make in thy happlesse hope the helplesse fraction?
Nor could thy Parliamento-Mastix⁷ Vowes
Prevaile t’impose the Garland on thy browes?
Could not thy chaplaine,⁸ London’s Sacrifice,
Nor move, nor suffocate the destinies,
That sends from’s paunches Altar more fumes forth
Of smoake and vapours then Landaffe is worth?
Could not thy Mothers Masses,⁹ nor her Crosses,
Nor Sorceries prevent these fatall losses?
Nor Regal Wishes, nor Imbraces neither,
Nor th’Armies valour, nor all these together?
“Hence we collect: To those that wilbee vitious,
“Praie who will praie, Heaven will not bee propitious.
“God’s deafe to those that will not hear the cries
“Of their oppressed Subjects Injuries.
“Happie successe then great attempts attends
“When those commaunds vertue and skill commends.
“Thy Sinne, Gods Justice, and the Kingdomes curse,
“Makes mee admire thy Fortunes were noe worse.

Now I have spoke enough, I know, great George,
(If I were knowne) to make thy Rage disgorge
Its venome on mee: yet, for all this hate,
Lets (at this distance) but expostulate.
How could this Voyage have such sadd effect
Without close treacherie, or grosse neglect?
Thou had’st a Navy Royall, that need not feare
All the French Power. This the coast could cleare
From all Invasion, and keepe back supplie;
The Isle did whollie at thy service lye.
Had every part of that small tract of land
Been with a slender Guard and Feild-peece man’d,
Their Entrance, sure, have been impeachd a while,
Or their approch echo’d o’er all the Isle.
What! were our captaines streight’ned in commission,
That they soe landed without Prohibition?
They durst not, but wee had (they did descrie)
A headlesse Duke, a headlesse companie.
But, Oh! What Men or Angels can devise
T’excuse thy base ignoble cowardise,
That brunt of dangers could soe little bide,
The very bruite\(^{10}\) would allwaies make thee hide:
And when the bloodie Die of Warr was throwne,
And each Mans valour should bee chiefly showne,
Was’t not a noble part, and bravely playd,
To send a shadowe\(^{11}\) in thy Arms array’d,
To personate thee in the battaile, while
Thou sat’st environ’d with a cable coyle
Discharging sugar pelletts? Had it not been
More noblie done, by death, renowne to winne,
Then in an hempen cabbin plagu’d to bee
With view of the deserved destinie?
Oh! when I thinke upon that fatall Feild
Wherein soe much brave English blood was spilld
(Wherof I lost a share) And when I call
To minde those Heroes lamentable fall,
Rich, Brett, and Cornwall, with the rest, whose bones
Want ev’n a Monument of Pebble-stones,
My soule wastes into sighs, My troubled braines
To teares, but that a manly heart disdaines
Such female follie, And I hope to see
These worthies deatthes (proud France) reveng’d on thee.
But is the cause come safely home againe,
Tryumphing o’er his conquer’d countrymen,
As if such valient leaders mournfull slaughter
Were but a subject for such cowards laughter?
Leave (upstart Greatnes) e’re it bee too late
Submitt thy self; be govern’d by the state.
For if but one yeare more thou lordst it thus,
Thou draw’st confusion on thy self and us.
Stay, stay at court then, and at Tennys play,
Measure French Galliards out, or Kil-a-gray.
Venus Pavilions doe befitt thee best:
Perwiggs with Helmetts use not to bee prest.
To o’re-run Spaine, winne Cales and conquer France,
Requires a Soldier’s March, noe Courtiers daunce.
Let valient skillfull Generalls bee chose,
That dare in blood confront their proudest Foes,
Then there’s some hope wee may repaire our losses
And make our Enemies to rue our crosses.

Three things have lost our honour (all surmise)
Thy Trechery, Neglect, and Cowardise.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 161v-164r

Other known sources. Rous 19; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 50v; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 133; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 5v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet c.50, fol. 27v; Bodleian MS Malone 21, fol. 56v; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 106; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 79r; Bodleian MS Rawl.
All-goe-naughts: punning on the heroic Argonauts who sailed with Jason for the Golden Fleece.

Through Jealousie of Hollands supplantation: the allegation is that Buckingham feared that, in his absence, Henry Rich, Viscount Kensington and Earl of Holland, would supplant him as favourite.

wrong’d Bristoll: John Digby, Earl of Bristol, and former ambassador to Spain. Digby had been barred from court and placed under house arrest since his return from Spain in 1624. In the Parliament of 1626, the King charged Bristol with treason for his conduct in Spain; Bristol countered by levying charges of treason against Buckingham for his actions in Spain in 1623.

black Potion...carkasse swell: allusion to the allegation, levelled by George Eglisham in 1626, that Buckingham had poisoned James, Marquis Hamilton and King James I. “Manes” means “shade” or “ghost”, or possibly “remains”.

Cambridge Pupills: Buckingham had become Chancellor of Cambridge University in 1626.

Brownist and Arminian: Brownists were radical Protestant separatists; Arminians were followers of the Dutch theologian Arminius and critics of the Church of England’s Calvinist teachings on predestination. Many feared that, under Buckingham’s protection, “Arminianism” was on the rise in the English Church in the mid-1620s.


thy chaplaine: the identity of Buckingham’s chaplain is difficult to establish. It is possible that the reference to “Landaffe” in the following lines means that the cleric intended is Theophilus Field, Bishop of Llandaff (1619-1627), a Buckingham client.

Mothers Masses: Mary, Countess of Buckingham, had converted to Catholicism several years earlier.

bruite: rumour.

shadowe: substitute disguised as the Duke. Others repeated the same (almost certainly false) allegation.

Galliards: a galliard is a type of dance.

Kil-a-gray: unknown; presumably a courtly dance.

Venus Pavilions: the pavilions of the goddess of love (rather than of war).

Perwiggs: periwigs; wigs.

Cales: Cadiz.
Notes. In the only known source for this rather opaque couplet, John Rous’s news-diary, Rous notes that in October 1628, “ere Bartholomewe fayer was done there was a picture sold (to which much running) where in was drawen a naked young woman & besides her or before her one riding on the backe of an ougly ould woman”, and “under it” were these lines, on the Ile de Ré expedition.

All you that will goe with me
Ile carry you to the naked Ile of Re

Source. BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 28r

Other known sources. Rous 31
Notes. Without resorting to explicit defence of Buckingham, this poem puts a positive spin on what most contemporaries saw as a shameful defeat at Ré. The poet argues that there was no shame in being driven off by vastly superior numbers, and that the English scored a “victory” by escaping with so few losses. In the only known source, the first letter of each line of the poem is missing. The scribe’s practice in earlier poems in the manuscript was to add the initial letter of each line in the ruled margin of each page, in a different colour ink; however, he has omitted to add the initials to this poem. While most of the words are obvious, and we have added the initial letters accordingly, there may be one or two where a different first letter might also work.

As sick men feare the cure & startle more
To feele the surgeons paine then than the sore
And rather then the steele & knife shall cease
There flesh they’le rather putrifie with ease
Thus we dread warr because itt shewes in blood
And death & iron; which misunderstood
Affright the eie soe much; we thinke itt sure
A countries ruine, which indeeds the cure
Then like our selves diseasd the Commonwealth
Takes Phisick onlie & lets blood for health
Take of this name of warr; it will soone appeare
Theres nothinge fearefull in itt but our feare
Thinke itt an arme lent to maintaine our peace
And make itt safetie which was drowsines
Alas we nickname peace the sleepe of state
When tis obnoxious both to sword & fate
And feares all smoakes of warrs: when those our calmes
Proceed not from our strength, but from their almes
That doe forbeare of Courtesie & delaie
To crush our naked countrie, when they maie
Give me a peace that’s fenc’d from all alarmes
By its own power; & that's a peace in arms
Thinke it a hand given to regain our glory
Which now is only living in this story
Whilst men that read our Chronicles do look
To match our present virtue with the book
And cannot, whilst the gentrie knowes noe field
Nor armes but that the herald gives their shield
When each noise baffled us, & we fear'd: more
Fly of enemies then a sword before
And even the lowest nation did dare
To be our foes whiles we were foes to war
Thinke but that war recovers what was lost
In honour only & it quits the cost
Thinke it a sword then in religions hand
Which now alone unweaponed could not stand
The sharp encounters of whole Europes wrath
Were it not arm'd as well with steel as faith
Whilst Spain now knits with France & France again
Is foes so much to us as friends to Spain
Whilst our profession is defied & we
Maintaininge it, maintain an injurie
Warr must relieve this too; in war alone
Subsists our honour, peace religion
And when this last doth call for wars that man
That is no soldier is no Christian
Indeed our triumphs have so usual been
Upon those shores we loose when we not win
And tis a thing scarce yet in story read
That we saw France & France unconquered
Thus some of old of Agincourt can tell
And judge of battles by the Chronicle
That after thinges are done of thinges can guesse
And measure all thinges meerelie by successe
Sweare att this bloodshed\(^5\) would have war to kill
As thriftilie as doth the cittie bill\(^6\)
Thirtie a weeke or soe, & wonder why
A sword or gunn should strike soe mortallie
But valour allwaies masters not the field
Tis sometime greate masterie to yeeld
And some with weaker spiritts have aspir’d
A victorie, then others have retir’d
Thus those 300 Greekes that kept the straights
And held the Persian off att Europe gates\(^7\)
Were Victors, although slaine & those that slew
They vanquisht that soe manie kild soe few
But we came safelier of nor need France boast
Our handfull could not overcome their hoast
Nor they our handfull; twas a brave defeat
In disadvantage we could thus retreat
Even we still orecame & beinge thus
In soe much ods they did but equall us
Naie we subdued them in not beinge subdued
This was a victorie in a multitude
Had France stept soe farre on the English shore
And brave our land & strength att our owne dore
Had soe few held us worke soe long in spite
Of our neere armie & thats more in sight,
Fought with our stone & Forts & which worse dants\(^8\)
Then all these putt together their owne wants
And we thus forc’te them nak’te without supplie
And to each man oppos’d a companie
And came thus thinlie lopt awaie & stood
There countrie in so cheape a rate of blood
This had beene bonefires then & many a bell 9
Had runge their joyes out that had scapt soe well
In desperate peril tis good luck we have
Not shipwrackt all, we conquer what we save
Were farre more dangerous then the sea the ground
Suckt us up faster then the sword could wound
Wee thought we singlie had with men to doe
But we had skirmish with their salt pitts 10 too
Whose graves that not receav’d but made the dead
Easy to kill those were first buried.
Thus one might slaughter 20 & yett be
A greater coward in his victorie.
Thus fell our Captaines that were in such store
Had falne by them had they not falne before
Our losse was deere but lett not some base lie
And our feares make a worse mortalitie
Then all our warr, & doe our selves that wronge
The french would doe that kill more with their tongue
Then twice our number; true, some valiant blood
Had beene drawne here but we have left as good
If we would thinke but soe, nor can we bee
Enfeebled by soe small a companie
Our murmure onlie can resist our chance
Our vertue is as good as when t’wann France
Letts rather thinke our English corps upon
The French ground their have tane possession
Which when we prosecute againe we feare
Theyle hardly scape soe well as we scapt there.

Source. Rosenbach MS 239/27, pp. 14-17
1 Nor armes...their sheild: i.e. the only arms the gentry know are their coats-of-arms, assigned by the royal heralds.

2 Whilst Spaine...friends to Spaine: alluding to the Franco-Spanish rapprochement. At this time England was at war with both countries.

3 our profession: Protestantism.

4 Agincourt: the English armies under Henry V defeated the French at Agincourt in 1415.

5 this bloodshed: i.e. the fighting on the Ile de Ré.

6 the cittie bill: i.e. the Bills of Mortality that published names of the dead in London.

7 300 Greekes...att Europe gates: allusion to the 480 BC battle of Thermopylae (literally “the warm gates”) in which a force of 300 Spartans led by Leonidas withstood for several days an assault by the massive forces of the Persian king Xerxes before being destroyed.

8 dants: daunts.

9 bonefires...bell: bonfires and bell-ringing were traditional forms of celebration.

10 salt pitts: retreating to their ships, the English army had to cross treacherous salt marshes.
Oiii The Ile de Re (1627)

Oiii1 O Admirall! Since thou camst back againe

Notes. It is unclear whether this poem refers to Buckingham’s opposition to the calling of the 1628 Parliament or to his wish to see it dissolved once it had begun to sit. In either case, the libel is perhaps most striking for its explicit allusion to the possibility of assassination as a solution to the Buckingham problem.

“Upon the Duke Buckingham his opposition to the Parliament”

O Admirall! since thou camst back againe
more base from Rhee, then Cecill did from Spaine
Since thou hast bin againe receaved at Court
beyond thy owne conceite beyond Reporte.
Since thou hast guilt of all the bloud Rhee spent
must thou still live to breake a Parliament!
hath no witch poyson! not one man a dagger
or hath our Coward Age forgott to swagger
no! no! Greate George! it is nor them nor thee
tis not thy Charmes tis not thy Venery
though thesee doe much, tis none of them doe this
tis nought that does it but our owne Amisse
would each of us mend one, though thou mend none
then all thy plots were straightwaies overthrowne
till then thou thrivst & till then mayst thou still
as hangmen doe by the lewd peoples ill.
if once we prove (as once we may prove) good
then, than thy Brother thou wilt prove more wood.
meane while this is the state of our lost land
thou standst we fall & when thou fallst we stand.
Admirall: Buckingham was Lord Admiral.

Rhee: the Ile de Ré, where Buckingham had led the ill-fated English expedition of 1627.

Cecill did from Spaine: alluding to the failed 1625 expedition to Cadiz led by Edward Cecil, Viscount Wimbledon.

Venery: sexual sins. Buckingham was commonly depicted in the later 1620s as a sexually voracious womanizer.

thy Brother...prove more wood: “wood” here means “insane”, and thus the allusion is to Buckingham’s brother John Villiers, Viscount Purbeck, who suffered notorious bouts of madness during the 1620s.
Notes. This poem, by Richard Corbett, was widely circulated, most often paired with the answer-poem, “The warrlike King was troubled when hee spy’d”. Both poems have been printed and annotated elsewhere—by Bennett and Trevor-Roper in Corbett, Poems, and by V.L. and M.L. Pearl (“Richard Corbett’s”). McRae (Literature 175-78) explores the religio-political and literary significance of this satiric exchange, which, despite the title’s allusion to parliament’s June 1628 attacks on Buckingham, focuses chiefly on religious and ecclesiatical controversies.

“Verses supposed to bee made by Dr. Corbet Bishop of Oxford against the opposing the Duke in Parliament 1628”

The wisest King did wonder when hee spy’d
The Nobles march on Foot, their Vassalls ride. 1
His Majestie may wonder more to see
Some that will needs bee Kings aswell as hee:
A sadd presage of daunger to this land,
When lower strive to gett the upper hand;
When Prince and Peares to Peysants must obey,
When lay-men must their Teachers teach the way 2
When Prym and Prinn and Jourdan 3 must define
What Lords 4 are hetrodox, and what divine,
Good brother Brough, Elder of Amsterdam
Shutt up at home your wilde Arminian Ramm, 5
If heere hee comes, these men will cutt his throat,
Blest Buchanan 6 sings them a sweeter note,
Hee teacheth how to curbe the power of Kings,
And shewes us how to clipp the Eagles Winges,
It is a Paritie 7 must sett all right,
Then shall the Gospell shine like Phœbus 8 bright,
Our Consistorian Fabrick 9 is the thing
Wee must reare up in spight of Church and King,

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Against the Papists wee have gott the day,
Blinde Bishops onely now stande in our way,
But wee will have a trick to tame their pride,
Tonnage and Poundage ells shall bee deny’de.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 153r-v

Other known sources. Corbett, Poems 82; Corbett, “Richard Corbett’s” 32; Rous 42; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 116; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 8v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 62, fol. 42v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 72r; BL Add. MS 22118, fol. 36v; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 35v; BL Add. MS 29996, fol. 70v; BL Add. MS 35331, fol. 28r; BL Add. MS 61683, fol. 68r; BL MS Egerton 2541, fol. 118r; BL MS Harley 6383, fol. 29r; BL MS Lans. 491, fol. 184v; BL MS Sloane 1479, fol. 47r; CUL MS Dd.11.73, fol. 102v; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 30

1 The wisest king...Vassalls ride: alluding to Ecclesiastes 10.7 in which the author— usually identified as Solomon—notes, “I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth”.

2 When lay-men...teach the way: Walter Yonge (BL Add MS 35331) believed this line referred to a controversial Puritan tract, Maschil Unmasked, by a London draper, Thomas Spencer. Both Pearl and Pearl and Bennett and Trevor-Roper argue, however, that the line refers to the House of Commons’ committee on religion.

3 Prym and Prinn and Jourdan: John Pym, William Prynne and Ignatius Jordan. John Pym was a leading anti-Arminian MP; Ignatius Jordan a notoriously Puritan MP; and William Prynne a Puritan polemicist and pamphleteer.

4 Lords: in this context probably bishops.

5 Good brother Brough...wilde Arminian Ramm: perhaps an allusion to William Brough, Rector of St. Michael in London, who was later accused of teaching “the errors of Arminianism, of universal grace and free-will in man fallen, and the apostacy of the saints” (qtd. in Tyacke 196). Arminianism had begun in the United Provinces (hence the reference to Amsterdam). The rise of Arminianism in England was a source of great concern in the parliamentary sessions of 1628 and 1629. Pearl and Pearl argue that “Ramm” is an allusion to the French logician Petrus Ramus.

6 Blest Buchanan: George Buchanan, sixteenth-century Scots Calvinist who defended the right of resistance to an ungodly monarch.
Paritie: equality of rank in the Church—i.e. a Presbyterian rather than an episcopal system of Church government. Anti-Puritan discourse routinely assumed that Puritan demands for parity in the Church implied a Puritan desire for social and political parity in the commonwealth.

Phœbus: the sun.

Our Consistorian Fabrick: a Presbyterian system of Church government.

Blinde Bishops: Walter Yonge identifies three such “Blinde Bishops” in a marginal note: William Laud, Bishop of London, Richard Neile, Bishop of Winchester, and Samuel Harsnett, Bishop of Norwich (BL Add. MS 35331). All three were noted anti-Puritans and suspected Arminians.

Tonnage and Poundage: a customs levy usually granted by parliament to a king for life at the beginning of his reign. Parliament had failed to make this grant in 1625, but Charles I had continued to collect the tax anyway, prompting parliamentary protests in 1626, 1628 and 1629.
Notes. This response to Richard Corbett’s “The wisest King did wonder when hee spy’d” achieved a circulation almost as wide as Corbett’s poem. The poem offers a pro-Puritan and anti-episcopal response to Corbett’s earlier conflation of Puritanism with social and political radicalism (see McRae, Literature 175-78).

“An Answere to the same Lyne for Lyne”

The warrlike King was troubled when hee spy’d
His darling Absolons aspiring pride.¹
His Majestie may more disdaine to see
Some Preist that would bee King aswell as hee.
A sadd presage of danger to the land,
When Prælats strive to gett the upper hand,
Where Prince and Peare the Clergie must obey,
Where laymen may those Teachers teach the way,
When Prym and Prinn, even Jourdan² may define
What Prelat’s hetrodox, and what divine.
Pelagian broode, elder then Amsterdam,
Garland your Bull, court your Armenian Ramm,³
The commons, if they can, will clense their throats,
And make them with Buchanan⁴ sing clearer notes,
And teach them how that Parliaments and Kings
Can crush their Pride, and clippe their Eagles wings,
It is this Paritie⁵ must sett all right,
Then shall the Gospell shine like Phœbus⁶ bright,
True Protestant Religion is the thing
Wee must reare up to honour Church and King.
Against the Papists wee should have the day,
If some blinde Bishops stood not in the way,
But they will finde a tricke to hold their Pride
Though Tonnage Poundage never bee deny’d.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 153v-154r

Other known sources. Corbett, Poems 83; Corbett, “Richard Corbett’s” 32; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 75r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 117; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 71r; BL Add. MS 29607, fol. 1r; BL Add. MS 35331, fol. 30v; BL Add. MS 61683, fol. 67r; BL MS Harley 6383, fol. 34v; BL MS Sloane 1479, fol. 47v

1 The warrlike King...aspiring pride: allusion to the story of Absalom’s revolt against his father, King David (2 Samuel 13-20).

2 Prym and Prinn, even Jourdan: John Pym, William Prynne and Ignatius Jordan. Pym was a leading anti-Arminian MP; Jordan a notoriously Puritan MP; and Prynne a Puritan polemicist and pamphleteer.

3 Pelagian broode...Armenian Ramm: the exact meaning of this knotty couplet is unclear. Pearl and Pearl suggest that “broode” “may be the Dutch broeder, brother”, and argue that “the phrase may be an elaborate pun to mean that the Dutch ‘brother’ who follows the doctrines of Pelagius (the fifth-century British monk who denied original sin and predestination: in Calvinist eyes a precursor of Arminius) accepted a heresy which was even older than Amsterdam, whereas an elder he served even the papal bull and the Arminian Ramist” (39 n.34).

4 Buchanan: George Buchanan, sixteenth-century Scots Calvinist resistance theorist.

5 Paritie: equality in Church government. Walter Yonge’s copy has “purity” (BL Add. MS 35331; Pearl and Pearl 39 n.35.)

6 Phæbus: the sun.

7 Tonnage Poundage: tonnage and poundage was a customs levy usually granted by parliament to a king for life at the beginning of his reign. Parliament had failed to make this grant in 1625, but Charles I had continued to collect the tax anyway, prompting parliamentary protests in 1626, 1628 and 1629.
Notes. The title of this poem alludes to the Commons’ session of 11 June 1628, in which MPs debated whether the House should formally name the Duke of Buckingham in their Remonstrance to the King as the cause of the grievances afflicting the nation. Many of the speakers listed in the poem—and some of the language and arguments attributed to them—can also be found in the surviving parliamentary diaries’ accounts of the 11 June debate (see Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4.245 ff.). Some lines in the poem, however, allude to speeches made during earlier debates. The more common version of this poem does not include the final twelve lines found in our chosen source. Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 (6.245-246) prints a copy from University of Edinburgh Library MS Laing III 493, fols. 30-31, and cites another copy in Dr. Williams’s Library, London, MS R.M. 31 E. The Laing copy lacks the final twelve lines of our chosen version, but does include extra passages (of eight and six lines respectively) at two points in the middle of the poem. We have included these lines in the notes.

“Upon the nameinge of the Duke of Buckingham the Remonstrance”

Excuse me Eliott if I heare name thee
the tyme requires itt since fewe honest bee
and learned Selden for thy pregnant witt
to be then named lett itt not seeme unfitt
I shall not spare to put you two in one,
since honest Longe hath made the motion

tis due you to the world be understood
more then Roomes Cato, hee who dust be good
When Cesar must be badd for the greate duke
feares nothinge more then the severe rebuke
tis Buckingham wee doe not feare the woord
for Cooke to name him now hath found record
what though that Beecher will their words relate
and Spencer take exceptions to dilate
Jordane who neere did sweare nowe moveth that
Hele have a bill against his Spanish hatt
hee doth not love his clothes, protests the man
was made the Dukes of an Armenian
and doth beleve the tother will stay fort
before he gets the place hee seekes at Court
but May makes mouthes, and tells you as a freind
to name the man were not to woorke your end
and why saith Mr. Bish I never reade
but of one namelesse and hee indeed
to hell did goe, as you shall plainly finde
in Luke the Sixt one damned of the kinde
Quoth Captaine Charles you are mistooke that’s flatt
his name was Dives I can tell you that
but Mr. Nicholas speaks uppon his word
twas those imployed, who did abuse his lord
brave Mansell tells them they were cowards all
Imploid to Calles and first their generall
not soe quoth Sir John Maynard I knowe more
and will you tell that you neere heard before
there was a forte built on a Nook of land
twas cald Pomfall bravely by Spaniards mand
hee at the fort as tis to many knowne
two thousand shott did make, nere hurt a stone
but they all runn away and to be shorte
bravely Wimbleton he then tooke the forte
Sir Edward Giles as angry said that hee
would have him named, as it was fitt to bee
and Valentine clappinge his hand on his brest
stoutly resolves that soe hee thinks itt best
this prejudiciall judgment Kinge afords
even as Sir Elliott did expresse his words
but pardon pray the rime for the pretence
and take his meaninge for his little sence
for sure it was, because hee had not dyn’d
which made him that his witts hee left behind
for there from 7 till 7 came againe
wee fastinge satt, which well might tame his braine
the dreames expired the flocks are safely kept
for ever since Sir Nethersall hath slept
longe may hee sleepe and never wake againe
untill that his Bellweather hath Conquerd Spaine
But Willy Diggs, alasse was sicke that day
his doubtfull minde could not indure the fray
And soe was Roringe Robin for well hee did foresee
for speakinge truth that chidden he should bee
and honest Howtham that some cake had gott
Cookes angry dogge did eate itt every Jott
when hee inraged did fall upon his skin
fearinge leaste else hee might have bitt his shin
then holy Lawrence tells a heathen fable
of Jove and Junoes daughter marrigable and still in zeale turnes upp the white ofs eye
as if he ment to fetch them from the sky
then Viscount Slygo tells us a longe story
of the supply, as if he suinge John Dory thats not the pointe quoth Littleton the stoute
read but the order himselfe will see hees out
up starts Ansley at every turne and moved
will you condeme the D befort be proved
Nay saith bawlinge Dawson I will sacrafice my life for him, and out of the dores hee flyes
For Mr. Speaker you in danger are
and if the Dunkerks come they will you scare
here att the windowes they will plucke you out
if that on London bridge they keepe not scout
all that longe while satt Wentworth at the barr
bravely expectinge the issue of the warr
till att the last hee sawe that the report
will keepe him longer att that hungry sport
but lastly Wainsford the question well did frame
and valliently put in his gratious name
then little Jackson rored itt out well moved
as if his sides were bell mettle approved
tell mee who could say more then hee
that range the forebell att the subsidy
of pluckinge of the maske from the Kings eye
thereby to see the Kingdoms misery
But when the D the cause should be exprest
who could say lesse, his clapper was at rest
when Sir Andewre Corbett had given him a sapp
Sir Thomas Bromley then throwe upp his capp
But Robin Harley cried soft I pray Sirs
for on this point I thinke wee ought to stay Sirs
And for Gods wisdome thinke uppon Ephetion
whether itt be fitt to putt itt to the Question.

Source. BL MS Harley 6057, fols. 52v-53v

Other known sources. Proceedings in Parliament, 1628, 6.245-46; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 110; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 100v; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 40r; BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 154v; Folger MS V.b.277, fol. 98r; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 13

Eliott: Sir John Eliot, MP for Cornwall, a leading critic of Buckingham in 1626 and 1628, and the architect of the 1628 Remonstrance.
John Selden, MP for Ludgershall, Wiltshire, lawyer and antiquarian. Walter Long, who made the motion to name Buckingham as the cause of the evils enumerated in the Remonstrance. M. Porcius Cato, Roman politician and leading Stoic, who fought against Julius Caesar in the civil wars. Cato committed suicide rather than be captured by Caesar. probable scribal error; read “durst” or “darst”. Sir Edward Coke, leading MP and former Lord Chief Justice under James I. Sir William Beecher, MP and a Clerk of the Privy Council (and thus likely to report the speeches in the Commons to the King and Council). for Richard Spencer’s speeches against naming the Duke, see Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 6.248, 266. Ignatius Jordan, the notoriously Puritan MP for Exeter. None of the diarists records a Jordan speech in the 11 June debate on the naming of the Duke. i.e. Arminian; a follower of the anti-Calvinist Dutch theologian Arminius. The rise of Arminianism in the English Church was one of the evils attributed to Buckingham in the Remonstrance. Sir Humphrey May, who argued against naming the Duke (see, e.g., Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4. 246). Edward Bysshe. Charles Price. One diarist’s report helps clarify the exchange between Bysshe and Price. In the report, Bysshe states that, “I think the Duke will take it for a dishonor if he be not named. I never heard of any man without a name but one, and that was the rich man in the Gospel”. Price counters, “The gentleman has mistaken his text, the man’s name was Dives” (Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4.268). The two are alluding to the parable of Dives and Lazarus in Luke 16.19-31 (not “Luke the Sixt”). Edward Nicholas, a Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Admiralty. Nicholas spoke in defence of Buckingham on 11 June and during other debates on the charges against him. Sir Robert Mansell, MP and former Vice-Admiral of the Narrow Seas. These lines refer to a speech Mansell made on 6 June 1628 during the Commons’ discussion of the failed Cadiz expedition of 1625. Mansell blamed the failure of the expedition on “error and want of judgment” in the planning,

16 *Sir John Maynard*: Maynard spoke on the Cadiz expedition during the debate on 6 June 1628. The details in the next seven lines mostly correspond to the diarist’s account of his speech in *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.160.

17 *Pomfall*: i.e. Puntal.

18 *Wimbledon*: Edward Cecil, Viscount Wimbledon, the commander of the Cadiz expedition.

19 *Sir Edward Giles*: the diarists do not record a speech by Sir Edward Giles on 11 June.

20 *bee*: the Laing MS copy includes an extra eight lines at this point. They run as follows:

   But Onslow, as engaged, often moved  
   For want of other sense, to have it proved.  
   When Marten failed in his philosophy,  
   Scudamore replied, it was necessity,  
   The cause of these effects, which if removed  
    (As for his honor sake it him behooved),  
   Favors should come alone; so Griffith spake,  
   Much to no purpose, few did notice take.  

(*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 6.245). The MPs named in these lines are Sir Richard Onslow, Sir Henry Marten, Sir John Scudamore and John Griffith (a client of Buckingham).

21 *Valentine*: Benjamin Valentine. The surviving diaries do not record Valentine speaking during the 11 June debate, but these lines might refer to his widely-copied speech of 5 June in which he “protests he fears this great man has soldiers every place to cut our throats” and moved the House “to have him voted...the common enemy of the kingdom” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.125).

22 *Sir Elliott*: variant sources read “Sir Estcourt” or “Sir Escot” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 6.245). This is Sir Giles Estcourt who, during the 11 June debate, ventured that, “We go about to tax the King’s judgment in taxing this man thus”. Sir John Eliot rebuked Estcourt and demanded he go to the bar to answer for this imputed charge against the House. Estcourt offered a face-saving explanation for his words, and an apology (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.247).

23 *the dreames...Conquerd Spaine*: allusion to Sir Francis Nethersole’s speech of 12 April 1628, in which he told the Commons of his dream of the previous night: “Methought I saw two fair and goodly pastures. The one an enclosure, the other common. The common had a fair flock of sheep in it. The enclosure had only a goodly bellwether [‘the leading sheep of a flock’ (*OED*)]. I found there was a
division betwixt these grounds by a great deep ditch, and a narrow, narrow bridge to join them together. I saw the bellwether hasting to the common to invite the sheep to eat with him, but the narrow bridge hindered his passage. Whereupon a poor sheep said, ‘There is no means for him to pass. Let us all lie down upon our bellies, that the bellwether may pass over us’” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 2.434-35).

24 *Willy:* probable scribal error; read “wily”.

25 *Diggs:* Sir Dudley Digges.


27 *Howtham:* Sir John Hotham. The meaning of the anecdote in this and the following three lines is obscure.

28 *Cookes:* it is not clear whether this is a reference to Sir Edward Coke.

29 *holy Lawrence:* perhaps Lawrence Whitaker, MP and Clerk of the Privy Council. There appears to be no account of this “heathen fable” in the surviving diary reports of the Parliament. The poet uses anti-Puritan language—noting that Whitaker “in zeale turnes upp the white ofs eye”—and this fits with Whitaker’s reported speeches that indicate he was, at the least, a fervent anti-Papist (see, e.g., *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.151).

30 *Jove and Junoes daughter marrigable:* Jove and Juno were king and queen of the gods, and their daughter Hebe or Juventas, goddess of youth, was married to Hercules. Without evidence of the actual speech, it is difficult to apply these mythological allusions to contemporary political circumstances. One possible link is that Hebe was displaced as cupbearer to the gods by Ganymede—to whom Buckingham was often compared in the early 1620s. Alternatively, the allusion could be to Elizabeth, the daughter of James I, who had married Frederick V, Elector Palatine, a leader of the beleagured Protestant cause on the continent.

31 *Viscount Slygo...of the supply:* Sir John Scudamore held the Irish title of Viscount Sligo. This refers to Scudamore’s speech of 5 June, in which he argued that to win the King’s love the Commons should move ahead with the subsidy grant to the Crown (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.120).

32 *John Dory:* a popular ballad (see Simpson 398-400).

33 *Littleton:* there were two Littletons in the Commons in 1628, Edward and Thomas. A “Mr. Littleton” responded to Scudamore’s attempt to move consideration of the subsidy on 5 June (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.121).

34 *Ansley:* Sir Francis Annesley. The allusion is to his remarks on 5 June (*Proceedings in Parliament,
the D: the Duke of Buckingham.

Dawson: Sir George Dalston.

flyes: variant versions include the couplet, “And Valentine, clapping his hand on’s breast, / Stoutly resolves, yea now I think it best”, here rather than earlier in the poem (e.g. BL MS Sloane 826).

Mr. Speaker: Sir John Finch was Speaker of the Commons in 1628.

Dunkerks: pirates based in the Southern Netherlands port of Dunkirk, who preyed on English shipping in this period.

Wentworth: Sir Thomas Wentworth, MP for Yorkshire.

Wainsford: Christopher Wandesford. These lines probably allude to Wandesford’s remarks on 11 June (see Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4.268).

Jackson: Sir John Jackson. If Jackson spoke on 11 June, the diarists did not record his speech.

the D: the Duke of Buckingham.

Sir Andrewe Corbett: during the 11 June debate, Sir Andrew Corbet endorsed Wandesford’s conclusion that Buckingham’s excessive power “and the abuse of it has been the cause of those evils that have befallen us” (Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4.268).

Sir Thomas Bromley: Sir Thomas Bromley was MP for Worcestershire. His speech (or cap-throwing) on 11 June is not recorded in the surviving diaries.

Robin Harley: Sir Robert Harley, MP and Master of the Mint. During the 11 June debate, Harley was reluctant to name the Duke in the Remonstrance because he felt they could still reform him and “make him a good instrument of the good of the kingdom” (Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4.266).

Ephestion: the OED defines “ephestian” as domestic as opposed to foreign. Perhaps the meaning here is that Harley is asking MPs to ponder the domestic consequences of their actions.
Notes. Presented as Buckingham’s riposte to the charges levelled at him by the House of Commons, this libel not only incorporates some of the complaints from the Remonstrance, but also adds to them allusions to other, even wilder, allegations against the Duke. The poet’s impersonation of Buckingham’s arrogant tone and assertions of invulnerable superiority nicely capture contemporary fears about the dangerously overmighty favourite (McRae, Literature 135-36). In one source this poem is attributed to I.S. (Bodleian MS Ashmole 38). This is possibly a reference to James Smith, the attributed author of a later libel on Buckingham, “You auntient Lawes of Right; Can you, for shame”.

“The Copie of his Graces most excellent Rotomontados sent by his Servant the Lord Grimes in answere to the Lower house of Parliament. 1628.”

Avaunt you giddie-headed Multitude,
And doe your worst of spight: I never su’d
To gaine your Votes, though well I know your ends
To ruin mee, my Fortunes, and my Frends;
Which had I fear’d, how easie had it been
By quick prevention to avoyde your teene,
And eas’d your tedious Journies, Speeches, Witts
At first, by once prohibiting the Writts
That calld you hither to a good intent,
Not cause a brabling confus’d Parliament?
For in my power it was (maugre each Foe)
To say it should, or it should not bee soe.
Or fear’d I yet your Malice or your spight
(Too weake poore Men at once mee to affright)
Is not my Power as great, and eake the same
To send you home as wise as when you came?
Tis not your threat to take mee from the King
That on my passions worketh any thing;
Nor questioning my counsells or commaunds,
How with the honour of the State it stands,
That I lost Re, and with such losse of Men
As scarcely Time can e’er repaire againe
Shall aught affright mee; Or the care to see
The Narrow Seas from Dunkirks cleere and free;
Or that you can inforce the King beleive
I from the Pirats a third share receive;
Or that I correspond with forreyne states
(Whether the Kings Foes or confederates)
To plott the Ruine of the King and State,
As er’st you thought of the Palatinate;
Or that 500 thousand pounds doe lye
In Venice Banke to Spaine his Majestie;
Or that 300 thousand more doe rest
In Dunkirke for the Arch-duchesse to contest
With England, whensoe’re th’occasion offers;
Or that by Rapine I fill up my coffers;
Nor shall you ever prove I had a hand
In poisoning of the Monarch of this land,
Nor the like hand by poison to intox
Southampton, Oxford, Hamilton, Lenox;
Nor shall you ever prove, by Magick charmes
I wrought the Kings Affection, or his harmes,
Or that I need Lambes Philters to incite
Chast Ladies to give my fowle lust delight;
Nor feare I if tenn Vitri were heere,
Since I have thrice tenn Ravillacks as neere.
My power shalbee unbounded in each thing,
If once I use these words: I, and the King.
Seeme wise, and cease then to perturb the Realme,  
Or strive with him that sitts and guides the helme,  
I know your Reading will informe you soone  
What creatures ’twere that barkt against the Moone, 11  
I’le give you better counsell, as a Frend,  
Coblers their latchetts 12 ought not to transcend.  
Meddle with common matters, common Wrongs,  
To th’ howse of Commons common things belongs,  
Th’are extra sphæram 13 that you treate of now,  
And Ruine to yourselves will bring, I vowe,  
Except you doe desist, and learne to beare  
What Wisdome ought to teach you, or your Feare,  
Leave him the Oare that best knowes how to rowe,  
And State to him that best the State doth knowe.  
If I, by Industry, deepe Reache, or Grace,  
Am now arriv’d at this or that great place,  
Must I, to please your inconsiderate Rage,  
Throwe downe my Honours? Will naught ells asswage  
Your furious Wisedomes? True shall the Verse bee yet,  
There’s noe lesse Witt requir’d to keepe then gett.  
Though Lambe bee dead, 14 I’le stand, and you shall see  
I’le smile at them that can but barke at mee.  

From Non-such 15 June 21. 1628.  
Yours as you use him

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 157r-159r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 57r; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 44; Bodleian MS Locke c. 32, fol. 1r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 113; BL Add. MS 47126, fol. 138v; BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 80v; CUL Add. MS 79, fol. 47r; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 69v; Hatfield House, Salisbury MS 140, fol. 126r; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.157
1 *Rotomontados*: i.e. rodomontades; boastful speeches.


3 *Ree*: allusion to Buckingham’s failed 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré. The parliamentary Remonstrance noted the “miserable disasters and ill success that has accompanied all your late designs and actions”, and asserted that, contrary to Buckingham’s reports of only “a few hundreds” dead at Ré, the real number of casualties was “six or seven thousand” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.315).

4 *Or the care...cleere and free*: the Remonstrance blamed Buckingham for the failure to guard the Narrow Seas, allowing the Dunkirk pirates to raid English shipping with impunity (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.316).

5 *As er’st you thought...Palatinate*: allusion to rumours that Buckingham had connived in the fall of the Palatinate to Catholic forces earlier in the decade.

6 *Arch-duchesse*: the Archduchess Isabella, ruler of the Spanish Netherlands.

7 *Nor shall you ever...Hamilton, Lenox*: allusion to the widely circulated charges, initially made in a 1626 pamphlet, *The Forerunner of Revenge*, by James I’s former physician, George Eglisham, that Buckingham had poisoned the King and several courtiers. Eglisham accuses Buckingham directly of murdering the King and James Hamilton, Marquis of Hamilton. He also hints at evidence that Buckingham also poisoned Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton and Ludovick Stuart, Duke of Lennox. Eglisham does not explicitly allege Buckingham had killed Henry de Vere, Earl of Oxford, but the rumour could be connected to Eglisham’s allusion to “the bruit” (i.e. rumour) that “went through London...that all the noblemen that were not of Buckinghams faction should be poysoned, and so removed out of his way” (C2r). In their 1626 attempt to impeach the Duke, the House of Commons had accused Buckingham of “transcendent presumption” in meddling with James I’s medical treatment. The 1628 Parliament did not return to the charge.

8 *Lambes Philters*: love potions prepared by the astrologer-physician and convicted witch John Lambe, who was widely believed to be in Buckingham’s employ.

9 *Vitrii*: a variant reading, “Vitryes” (Hatfield House MS Cecil Papers Cecil Papers 140), suggests that “Vitrii” is a corrupt (or confusingly latinized) form of the plural of Vitry, the name of a captain of the royal guard for Henri IV of France at the time of his assassination in 1610 (Mousnier 24).

10 *Ravillacks*: allusion to François Ravaillac, the Catholic assassin who murdered King Henri IV of France in 1610.

11 *barkt against the Moone*: to bark against the moon like a dog means “to rail uselessly, especially at those in high places” (Brewer 79).
latchets: latchets are thongs used to tie shoes. To “go beyond one’s latchet” is a proverbial phrase for meddling with matters that do not concern one (OED).

extra sphæram: beyond or outside the sphere; i.e. beyond parliament’s competence.

Though Lambe bee dead: John Lambe was murdered in the streets of London on 13 June 1628.

Non-such: the royal palace at Nonsuch, Surrey.
Notes. John Lambe—physician, astrologer, convicted witch and rapist, suspected quack, and probable confidence artist—was murdered by a crowd in the streets of London on 13 June 1628. For at least a couple of years, contemporary rumour had assumed that Lambe was in the service of the Duke of Buckingham, providing the favourite with magical potions and charms that were allegedly used to seduce women and to maintain his hold on royal favour. News reports of Lambe’s murder suggest the murderous mob was venting its violent hatred of Buckingham onto the body of his surrogate. The poem is discussed by McRae (Literature 139-140).

“An Epitaph on Dr Lambe”

Here Dr Lambe, the conjurer lyes,
Against his will untimely dies
The Divell did show himselfe a Glutton
In taking this Lambe before he was mutton
The Divell in Hell will rost him there
Whome the Prentises\(^1\) basted here.
In Hell they wondred when he came
To see among the Goats a Lambe.\(^2\)

Source. Huntington MS HM 116, pp. 96-97

Other known sources. BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 37r; BL MS Harley 6918, fol. 83v

\(^1\) Prentises: contemporary records suggest that apprentices made up a substantial portion of the crowd that murdered Lambe.

\(^2\) To see among the Goats a Lambe: a relatively witty pun alluding to Christ’s parable of the Last Judgement (Matthew 25.31-46).
Notes. This poem was not necessarily written on the occasion of John Lambe’s murder, since in some sources it is untitled, and so might easily be applied to another person (e.g. BL MS Sloane 1489). It is therefore possible that a traditional satiric epitaph was appropriated, by at least one scribe, for the specific purpose of attacking Lambe.

“On Dr Lambe”

If heav’n rejoice, when men leave off to sinne;
If hell rejoice, when it a soule doth winne;
If earth rejoice, when it doth loose a knave;
Then all rejoice, now thou art in thy grave.

Source. BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 38r

Other known sources. BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 10v; Folger MS E.a.6, fol. 3r; Folger MS V.a.160, p. 63; Folger MS V.a.180, fol. 79r; Folger MS V.a.275, p. 177; Folger MS V.a.319, fol. 4v
Notes. In the only known source, the commonplace book of William Davenport, this poem on the murder of John Lambe is immediately followed by another on the same subject (“Heare lyes the Impostar Lambe”), and after the latter is inserted the initials “E.K.”, who is the attributed author of a number of poems in this collection. It is unclear, however, whether this attribution is intended to apply to both poems on Lambe.

“Uppon Doctor Lambe”

For Lambe go ringe some bell
well killed nere coleman street
his soule I hopes in hell
where he and’s Lorde must meete.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 60r

coleman street: a major street in the City of London. Lambe was chased by the crowd down Coleman Street, and was eventually killed nearby on Old Jewry.

Lorde: i.e. Buckingham.
Heare lyes the Impostar Lambe
Ladie Wyssard brought him hither
hee’s gon to the devills Dambe
to stay, till his Loarde come ther.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 60r

Notes. In the only known source, this poem on the murder of John Lambe is attributed to “E.K.”.

1 Impostar: some contemporaries feared Lambe possessed real occult or demonic powers; others believed him to be a fraud.

2 Ladie Wyssard: perhaps a corruption of Lady Windsor. Lambe had been convicted in 1622 of bewitching Thomas, Lord Windsor, and rendering him sexually impotent.

3 his Loarde: i.e. Buckingham.
Oiii10 Our state’s a Game at Cards the Councell deale

Notes. Versions of this epigram, which can be dated to the middle of 1628, vary in subtle yet significant ways. The version selected here, as well as being clearly dated, is one of the better texts in its representation of power struggles in the state. The poem is discussed by McRae (Literature 144-45).

“This was writt 2 moneths before his death”¹

Our state’s a Game at Cards the Councell² deale
The Lawyers shuffle & the Clergie Cutt
The King wynnes, from the loosing publique weale³
The Duke keepes stakes, the Courtiers plott, & putt
The Game i’th stock,⁴ & thus the Citty⁵ Jumpes
Still Crosse, for why? Prerogative⁶ is Trumpe.

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 174v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 136; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 13v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 11v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 31; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 119; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 6v; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 100r; BL Add. MS 22118, fol. 5v; BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 56r; BL MS Sloane 1458, fol. 24v; NLS MS Advocates 19.3.8, fol. 1v; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 74; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 80r; Folger MS V.a.319, fol. 26v; Folger MS V.a.322, p. 50; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 46

Oiii10

¹ writt 2 moneths before his death: i.e. two months before Buckingham’s death. Buckingham was assassinated on 23 August 1628.

² Councell: i.e. the Privy Council.

³ publique weale: public good.

⁴ putt / The Game i’th stock: in card games, the “stock” is the term for “the portion of the pack of cards which is not dealt out” (OED).
5 *the Citty*: i.e. the City of London.

6 *Prerogative*: i.e. the royal prerogative; the King’s power to act in certain areas without restraint.
Notes. This epigram expresses one of the most potent anxieties of the later 1620s—the fear that Buckingham, not Charles, was the real ruler of the state. The poem is discussed by McRae (Literature 142-43).

“On the Duke 1628”

When onely one doth rule and guide the shipp,
Who neither Card nor Compasse knew before,
The Master Pilot and the rest asleepe,
The stately shipp is splitt upon the shore,
But they awaking, start up, stare, and crye,
Who did this Fault? Not I, nor I, nor I
Soe fares it with a great and wealthie State
Not govern’d by the Master, but his Mate.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 181r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 152; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 120; BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 82v; BL MS Harley 791, fol. 69r; BL MS Sloane 1454, fol. 25v; Folger MS V.a.262, p. 163

Card: chart or map.

Master Pilot: the King.
Notes. Although undated, this verse seems to belong to the months prior to Buckingham’s assassination, during which fantasies of the Duke’s violent demise began to take definite shape. The poem depends on a hunting metaphor and a pun on Buckingham’s name—rendering it as Buck-King-of-Game—that allow the poet to imagine the Duke’s bloody death. Holstun (160) has a brief but astute reading of the poem that stresses the degree to which the King is implicated in the attack on Buckingham, and notes the possibly regicidal urges barely concealed in the poem’s final four lines. See also McRae, Literature 126-27.

“Upon the D. of B."

Of Brittish Beasts the Buck is King
His Game and fame through Europe ringe,
His horne exalted, keepes in awe
The lesser flocks; his Will’s a Lawe.
Our Charlemaine takes much delight
In this great beast soe faire in sight,
With his whole heart affects the same,
And loves too well Buck-King of Game.
When hee is chac’d, then ’gins the sport,
When nigh his End, who’s sorry for’t?
And when he falls the Hunter’s gladd,
The hounds are flesh’d, and few are sadd:
The Forresters say, Hee alive
The tender thicketts nere can thrive,
Hee doth soe barke and pill the trees,
Thus wee for Game our profitt leese.
The huntsmen have pursu’d this Deare,
And follow’d him with full careere,
But such his craft, and such their lott,
They hunt him oft, but take him not.
A Buck’s a beast; a King is but a Man,
A Game’s a pleasure shorter then a span:
A beast shall perish; but a Man shall dye,
All pleasures fade. This bee thy destinie.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 184v-185r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 103

Oiii12

1 Buck: the male deer.

2 His horne exalted: a sign of victory or triumph—the phrase is biblical in origin (see, e.g., 1 Samuel 2.10).

3 Charlemaigne: Charlemagne or Charles the Great; here meaning Charles I.

4 Buck-King of Game: i.e. Buckingham.

5 barke and pill: strip, plunder, pillage.

6 The huntsmen: probably alluding to the MPs who tried and failed to bring Buckingham down in 1626 and 1628.
Notes. Using the same pun and hunting metaphors as “Of Brittish Beasts the Buck is King”, this libel presents another fantasy of Buckingham’s death, again probably written in the spring or summer of 1628.

To hunt the Doe I have refu’sd
Which is a sporte by Greate men u’sd.
Yett shall I love to heare a Cry
Of hounds when Buck-in-game shall dye.

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 174v

Other known sources. BL MS Egerton 2026, fol. 12r
Notes. This poem on the dissolution of parliaments cannot be dated with absolute precision. The allusion in the first stanza to a parliamentary grant of five subsidies suggests that it may have been composed either after the 26 June prorogation of the first session of the 1628 Parliament, or after the dissolution of the Parliament following the second session early in 1629. During the first session, after extracting concessions from the King in the form of a reluctant royal assent to the Petition of Right, the Commons had voted to grant Charles five subsidies worth of taxation.

The Parliament of late hath oft been broken;
Whence divers men have diversly thus spoken.
Because the Parliament at once did give
Five Subsidies, they could not after live
Upon their meanes; thence came it (out of doubt)
That it did breake, and proved banke-route.

An other it to steele did thus compare;
Which heated oft, and quench’\textsuperscript{t}, is brickle ware;
The Parliament hath oft bee in a heate,
And hath bee ene quench’\textsuperscript{t} as oft; but by this feate,
’Tis growne to bee so brickle now att last,
That it doth breake in two, at every blast.

One did express his judgment by a Fable;
There were two potts, the one was strong and able,
An iron pott; the other was but weake,
A Pott of Earth, and apter so to breake.
These undertooke a jorney both one way,
But that of iron did so oversway,
That th’Earthen pott did alwaies goe to wracke,
Hitting, or hitt, it still receiv’d a cracke.
This to bee likely cannott bee deny’d,
And so hee left it of, to bee apply’d.  

Source. BL MS Harley 4955, fol. 85v

Oiii14

1 *The Parliament...in a heate*: alluding to the frequent and often contentious meetings of parliament in the 1620s.

2 *brickle*: brittle.

3 *to bee apply’d*: the poet refuses to apply the fable to contemporary political circumstances. At least two readings of the fable are plausible. The first would identify the strong “iron pott” as the King, whose clashes with parliament (the “Earthen pott”) resulted in injury to parliament, not monarchy. The second would identify the “iron pott” as the favourite Buckingham, whose clashes with parliament left him unscathed, and parliament under the King’s displeasure.
Oiii15 A thinge gott by candle light

Notes. This riddling verse is probably a libel on Sir Richard Weston, Chancellor of the Exchequer since November 1621, who was appointed Lord Treasurer in July 1628. The riddle suggests that the target was a financial servant of the Crown—thus the references to “budgett”, “dispurser”, “every purser”, and “Packhorse to the state”—and perhaps uses “Westerne” as a pun on Weston.

A thinge gott by candle light
Noe gentleman & yett a knight
Vertue and vice mixt both together
Noe starke knave nor honest neither
Great Georges budgett the kinges disburser
A Westerne plague to every purser
Packhorse to the state, a needlesse evill
The landmans plague the seamans devill
Resolve me this & all in one
And then my riddle is undone

Source. Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 47
P. The Buckingham Assassination (1628)

On 23 August 1628, in the Greyhound Inn on Portsmouth High Street, a disgruntled, melancholic infantry lieutenant, badly wounded during the 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré, twice passed over for promotion to captain, and owed over eighty pounds in back pay, plunged a cheap knife into the heart of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Gasping an astonished oath, the great favourite fell to the floor, dead, while the assassin retreated unobserved through the ensuing chaos to the inn’s kitchen where he would eventually surrender to the Duke’s men with the calm admission that “I am the man”. He was John Felton, the forty-year-old scion of a minor gentry family from Suffolk that had fallen on hard times. Angry that Buckingham had ignored his case for promotion, and increasingly desperate as he became ever more short of cash, Felton had come across a copy of the 1628 Parliament’s Remonstrance against the Duke and had thus come to believe that his private sufferings were but a small part of the sufferings the whole nation had endured under the favourite’s corrupt rule. To kill the Duke, Felton imagined, would be an act of personal and national redemption. Before setting out for the Greyhound Inn, therefore, Felton had written and then sewn into his hatband two apologies for the murder: in them, he insisted that he had acted as a patriot, a gentleman and a soldier. He had struck the blow for the public good.

The impact of Buckingham’s assassination was immediate and immense, utterly transforming the English political landscape. While the King retreated to his chambers, grief stricken, news of the murder spread across the country, inspiring spontaneous and often reckless outbursts of joy. The assassin was taken under armed guard from Portsmouth to the Tower of London, where he was repeatedly interrogated, possibly under torture, about his motives and accomplices. For three months the authorities attempted to uncover the conspiracy they were sure lay behind the Duke’s murder, but the assassin insisted he had acted alone. By late November, the investigation had run its course and Felton was at last put on trial for Buckingham’s murder. Tarred by the authorities as a wicked, atheistic criminal who had acted solely to avenge his personal grudges against the Duke, Felton was convicted and sentenced to death. Two days later, on the gallows at Tyburn, he confessed before a crowd of onlookers, and openly repented his crime. After he was hanged, Felton’s body was cut down, carried to
Portsmouth and then strung up again to rot in chains.

The assassination, and the trial and execution that eventually ensued, triggered a massive outpouring of political verse, some of which was printed 150 years ago by F.W. Fairholt (Poems and Songs Relating to George Villiers), and a more complete collection of which is now published here for the first time. We have grouped the poems into three subsections. The first consists of an array of mock epitaphs for the Duke, combined with a variety of generically and stylistically ambitious poems couched as dialogues between the murdered Duke and several infernal interlocutors, or as wracked confessions uttered by the Duke’s ghost from its new abode in hell. Celebrating—and by implication legitimating—the assassination, many of these verses rake over the charges that had dogged Buckingham in the last few years of his life. In their lines, we meet again all the elements of Buckingham’s libellous persona: the witch, the papist, the poisoner, the sexual predator, the monopolist of power, the perverter of justice, the social upstart, the seller of offices, the breaker of parliaments, the betrayer of the Protestant cause, the incompetent villain of the Ile de Ré, the seducer and deceiver of kings.

Our second subsection contains the smaller, but in many ways even more powerful, collection of verse primarily concerned with or addressed to John Felton. The poems celebrate Felton as Buckingham’s perfect antithesis: as a patriot hero, the nation’s martyr, the epitome of martial manliness and self-sacrifice, the heir of the divinely inspired Israelite assassins and of the republican patriots of ancient Rome, the man whose bravery had liberated king and nation from Buckingham’s perverted rule. Alongside their hymns to Felton, a number of these verses also elaborate explicit and occasionally quite legalistic defences of the assassination, now reimagined not as a murder but as an execution of the will of divine justice upon a nefarious criminal.

The third and final subsection collects poems that offer very different responses to the assassination. Some contemporaries were profoundly ambivalent about the manner of Buckingham’s demise, and a small group of poems (including two well-known pieces by James Shirley and Owen Felltham) wrestled openly with the event’s moral and political complexities. Several other poets—including Thomas Carew and Sir William Davenant, who would later become major participants in Caroline court and literary culture—took a straightforwardly
hostile view of both the assassination and the celebrations that followed it. Others still composed fulsome epitaphs on the murdered Duke, attempting to wrest Buckingham’s reputation free from the accumulated grime of years of libellous assault. And finally, some writers inveighed directly at the libellers who had rejoiced at the Duke’s death, identifying amidst the hosannas to the heroic Felton the dangerous noise of religious dissent, popular credulity, lower-class disorderliness, and anti-monarchical politics.

In a pathbreaking essay, Gerald Hammond identified in these warring poems clear symptoms of “the country’s fragmentation” as “sensibilities became dissociated” (49). Recent work has added to this perceptive diagnosis, discovering in and around the assassination evidence of a profound political crisis. Many of the poems celebrating the assassin or the assassination assumed that Buckingham’s murder would instantaneously ease the political tensions of the few past years, reuniting king, people and parliament, and reinvigorating a militant English Protestantism. Yet the poems also reveal how little chance this hope of redemptive transformation ever had of materializing. Beneath explicit avowals of loyalty to the throne, there lurked unresolved questions about the King’s responsibilities for his favourite’s misrule and fears about his intentions for the future. Sometimes these anxieties pushed quite radical sentiments out into the open. Ranged against the libellers’ fears for a nation beset by popery and court corruption, were eloquent voices preoccupied with a different threat, the threat to monarchy, order and hierarchy posed by popular, puritanical and republican political impulses. The libels and the counter-libels thus bear eloquent witness to the perilous state of the nation at the end of Buckingham’s life, a nation that was in many ways teetering on the brink of a bitter, and potentially unresolvable, ideological crisis. Since Hammond’s work was published, several scholars have offered interpretations of a number of the poems in our collection. The bulk of the commentary has come from literary critics, and includes a major study of representations of Felton by James Holstun (158-186), and important briefer assessments by David Norbrook (50-58) and Andrew McRae (Literature esp. 71-75, 133-34). Political historians have been slower to give these materials the attention they deserve. For now, there are readings of several libels in Alastair Bellany’s essays (“Raylinge Rymes”; “Libels in Action”), and in his unpublished doctoral dissertation (“The Poisoning of Legitimacy?” ch. 11). A forthcoming study by Bellany and Thomas Cogswell will offer a major reassessment of the
assassination, making extensive use of the libels and counter-libels (*England’s Assassin*).
Pi Mocking Buckingham

Notes. Our chosen version of this widely circulated prophetic couplet was discovered among the papers of George Willoughby, a London scrivener who had business dealings with Buckingham’s assassin John Felton. The copy, scrawled onto a petition by one of Willoughby’s clients, included the note that the poem was “made presently upon the death of Doctor Lambe” (died 13 June 1628), indicating that the verse was—or at least was believed to be—in circulation before Buckingham’s murder, even if some, like John Rous, did not get a copy until after the event. The authorities’ investigations into how Willoughby obtained the couplet reveal some of the ways short libels of this type could circulate orally and in script across social and literacy boundaries in London (PRO SP 16/114/32, 119/25, 119/30).

lett Charles & george doe what they can
yet george shall dye like Doctor Lambe

Source. PRO SP 16/114/32

Other known sources. Rous 26; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 100r; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 25v; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 22r; CUL MS Gg.4.13, p. 106; PRO SP 16/119/25; PRO SP 16/119/30

Pi1

1 Doctor Lambe: John Lambe, astrologer-physician, convicted witch and presumed associate of Buckingham, was murdered by a London mob on 13 June 1628.
Notes. Chronograms, which work by assigning numerical values to letters, were a popular contemporary genre with a vaguely prophetic import. This chronogram is of the Latin version of “George, Duke of Buckingham” (“Georgius Dux Buckinghamiae”). By writing the name in Roman script so that “U”s are “V”s, and then assigning numerical values to those letters that correspond to Roman numerals (I [1], V [5], X [10], C [100], D [500], and M [1000]), the chronogrammer discovers the year “1628” hidden in Buckingham’s name. One version of this chronogram and verse (BL MS Harley 4931) states explicitly that they were devised “before his death”.

GeorgIVs DVX BVCKInghaMIae

Sith number with thy name doth thus agree
This yeare shall fatall prove to state or thee.

Source. Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 80r

Other known sources. D’Ewes, Autobiography 1.389; Wentworth Papers 303; BL MS Harley 4931, fol. 9r; CUL MS Dd.11.73, fol. 67v; Folger MS V.b.275, fol. 220r
Notes. This version of the Buckingham 1628 chronogram is closely related to “Sith number with thy name doth thus agree”; however, the differences are sufficient to warrant treatment as a discrete item. Some sources have only the first of the two couplets, and in one source the poem is attributed to John Marston (Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 19 and p. 25).

GeorgIVs DVX BVCKInghaMIæ

MDCXXVIII

Thy numerous name great George, expresseth thee

But XXIX I hope, thou ne’re shalt see.

When in his name Anno Domini doth appeare,

Feare not him, nor his lambe, for their deaths are neare.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 100r

Other known sources. Rous 25; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 19 and p. 25; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 198r; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 25v; BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 55v; BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 181v

1 MDCXXVIII: 1628.

2 XXIX: 29.

3 his lambe: John Lambe, the astrologer-physician, convicted witch and presumed associate of the Duke, was murdered by a London mob on 13 June 1628.
Notes. We cannot identify a precise composition date for this anagram, which may in fact pre-date the assassination. The anagram is incorporated into the post-assassination verse “A yere of wonder to the world was 88”, and survives as an independent work in two contemporary manuscripts.

“Anagramma”

GEORGIS.VILLERIVS.
REGIS.VVLGI.ILLVSOR
prince and people deluder

Source. BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 55v

Other known sources. CUL MS Dd.11.73, fol. 69r

Pi4
Notes. This poem comments on and combines the Buckingham 1628 chronogram, two lines from verses that typically accompanied the chronogram, and the “Georgius Villerivs” anagram. The final product is a prophecy of Buckingham’s death, imagined significantly as a providential deliverance comparable to the defeat of the Spanish Armada forty years earlier. Whether the prophecy pre-dates or post-dates the assassination is uncertain.

“Chronogrammata”

“Gorgius dux Buckinghamia. 1628”

A yere of wonder to the world was 88.¹
What wonder shall we expecte from 28.
If fate to name doth answere thus in numbers
Then in this yere shall sure appeare some wonders
sith number with thy name do thus agree
this yeere is fatall to the state or thee
for not thy chronogram alone is fearefull
But thy Anagram with it is direfull. {Georgius Villerus
{Regis, Vulgi, Elusor.²

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 96v

Pi5

¹ A yere of wonder...was 88: 1588 saw the defeat of the Spanish Armada, an occasion still commemorated in 1620s’ England as a spectacular example of God’s providential deliverance of the Protestant nation.

² Regis, Vulgi, Elusor: “deceiver of the King and the people”.

810
Notes. This couplet depends on the pun on the surname of Buckingham’s associate John Lambe, the astrologer-physician and convicted witch murdered in London in June 1628. The “Wolfe” is Buckingham, and the shepherd who kills him is John Felton.

“On the D.”

The Shepheards struck, The sheepe are fledd,
For want of Lambe the Wolfe is dead.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 185r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 74r

Pi6

1 the D.: the Duke.

2 Lambe: John Lambe.
Notes. This couplet alludes to earlier violent fantasies of Buckingham’s death that also used the metaphor of the hunt to imagine the destruction of the “Buck-in-game” (see, e.g., “Of Brittish Beasts the Buck is King” and “To hunt the Doe I have refu’sd”). The sole extant copy of this couplet is in William Davenport’s commonplace book.

Thus Buck-in-game,¹ Felt-one² did soone abate

his pryde; the troble, off our English state

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 71r

¹ Buck-in-game: the pun is on the buck, or male deer, being hunted (in the game), and Buckingham.

² Felt-one: i.e. Felton. The couplet’s logic and transcription demand this be read as a pun. One possible reading of the pun would force us to paraphrase the couplet thus: “Thus Buck-in-game, being felt (here meaning something like ‘detected’), one man did soon abate his pride, which had been the trouble of our English state”.

Pi7

Pi7 Thus Buck-in-game, Felt-one did soone abate

Notes. This couplet alludes to earlier violent fantasies of Buckingham’s death that also used the metaphor of the hunt to imagine the destruction of the “Buck-in-game” (see, e.g., “Of Brittish Beasts the Buck is King” and “To hunt the Doe I have refu’sd”). The sole extant copy of this couplet is in William Davenport’s commonplace book.

Thus Buck-in-game,¹ Felt-one² did soone abate

his pryde; the troble, off our English state

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 71r

¹ Buck-in-game: the pun is on the buck, or male deer, being hunted (in the game), and Buckingham.

² Felt-one: i.e. Felton. The couplet’s logic and transcription demand this be read as a pun. One possible reading of the pun would force us to paraphrase the couplet thus: “Thus Buck-in-game, being felt (here meaning something like ‘detected’), one man did soon abate his pride, which had been the trouble of our English state”.

Pi7
Notes. Missing pages in the manuscript mean we only have an abruptly truncated version of this poem. What remains in the fragment, however, suggests that we can date the poem to the period after Buckingham’s assassination in August 1628. The past tense of the opening clause suggests that the sickness caused by Buckingham has now been cured, and in all likelihood the rest of the poem would have continued on to describe how, after parliament and the King had failed to do so, John Felton’s actions bled the patient and cured the nation’s disease.

“Other verses made of the said Duke about the same time”

England was sick, a plewresey\(^1\) posset her

a raging greife did long molest her

Two senates to fynde out this sore long sought\(^2\)

& found a member\(^3\) neare the head,\(^4\) was naught

full fraught with blouddy humors,\(^5\) sweld so high

the head was scarcely seene when it stood by

To cure this bodie straight it was decreed

this ulcerated member needs must bleed\(^6\)

It was so faire, that though the head did see

it caus’d the greife, & fear’d the remedie,

Source. CUL MS Gg.4.13, p. 106

\(^1\) plewresey: in contemporary usage, “a pleurisy” could refer either to the chest ailment (caused by an inflammation of the sacs around the lungs), or more generally to the existence of dangerous excess.

\(^2\) Two senates...long sought: reference to the attempts by the 1626 and 1628 Parliaments (the “Two senators”) to remove or curb Buckingham’s power through impeachment (1626) and a Remonstrance to the King (1628).

\(^3\) a member: a part of the body; here signifying Buckingham.
the head: here signifying the King, Charles I.

bloody humors: in classical medicine, blood was one of the four essential fluids or humours in the human body. An imbalance in the bodily humours, in this case an excess of blood, would cause sickness.

To cure this bodie...must bleed: bloodletting was the common cure for humoral excess.
Notes. The sole known version of this poem is found in a manuscript that also contains a copy of the religious scholar Sebastian Benefield’s commentary on the biblical book of Amos. Depicting Buckingham variously as the overgrown branch of the vine, the worm, the ravenous beast, the weeds corrupting the biblically resonant “vineyard” of the nation, this poem interprets (and legitimizes) the Duke’s assassination as God’s providential intervention to save his suffering Englishmen. In this context, the assassin Felton is reduced to the walk-on role of the husbandman, the agent of God’s larger purpose. The poem concludes with the fond hope of national renewal in the wake of Buckingham’s death, a strain of optimism found in other writings from the period that naïvely imagined Buckingham’s removal as the cure for all of England’s ills.

Lord, what are wee, that thou shouldst thus respect
The sonnes of men? that thou shouldst still protect
This Land of ours, this Vineyard of thine owne
This Englands Eden, wherein thou hast sowen
Thy Word, the tree of life, and as it were
Hast fenc’t it round with walls of seas, loe here
We blesse thy name, and in these sacred layes
Open our lipps to speake thy glorious prayse:
And now, mee thinks our eyes behould thy power,
Thy judgements lord, our hearts ar not to tower
Soe highe as them to reach; but loe we see
Thou prunest the vineyard as it pleaseth thee.
That branch that did of late oretop the rest,
And with his fruitlesse weight the stemme opprest
That worme that eate the stocke, and spoyled the fruite,
Or else devoured it like a ravenous bruite,
That spreading weed, which choakt the corne, that tare
Which grew soe fast, and did soe much impayre
The soyle, in harvest loe the husbandman
Doth weede him out, and with the shortest spanne
Affords him time, and cuts him of that all
Might take example of his sudden fall
And now, O Lord, sith thou hast prun’d thy vine
Preferre the roote with that same hand of thine
That is Allmightie, lett the branches spring
And in a thousand fould her fruit forth bring.
Soe when thou commest unto thy Vineyard, thou
Maist see th’encrease, and lett thy blessing flow.

Source. BL MS Sloane 1199, fol. 70v

Pi9

1 *this Vineyard*: this may allude to Christ’s parable of the vineyard (e.g. Matthew 21.28-46).

2 *Eden*: the earthly paradise (Genesis 1-3).

3 *thou hast sown / Thy Word*: i.e. established the true religion, Protestantism.

4 *the tree of life*: the Tree of Life was located in the garden of Eden (Genesis 2.9), but here refers to the Word, and thus the Protestant religion, that will bring salvation.

5 *layes*: songs.

6 *tare*: a type of weed that features prominently in Christ’s parables of the sower and “the tares of the field” (Matthew 13).
Notes. Buckingham was buried in Westminster Abbey on 18 September 1628, in a subdued, tense and occasionally chaotic nocturnal ceremony. Couplets like this one reveal much of what troubled Buckingham's mourners: for many, if not most, of Buckingham's contemporaries, his death was a time not for grief but for celebration.

“Upon his Funerall”

Beehold this Obsequie: but without teares;
The birth of all our Joy, and grave of feares.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 181v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 197

Obsequie: funeral rites.
**Notes.** This deliciously economical epitaph mocks the excessive list of offices and titles—“places”—that Buckingham had accumulated in his thirteen years as a royal favourite and has now taken with him to his early grave.

“This little Grave embraces
One Duke and twentie places.”

**Source.** BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 181v

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 145
Notes. This is one of a number of libels that allude to Buckingham’s supposed last words, a curse let fall at the moment of the dagger’s impact. For some contemporaries, the Duke’s dying oath was further confirmation of his moral failings. The godly Simonds D’Ewes, for instance, noted that, “it might have been wished that his end had not been so sudden, nor his last words mixed with so impious an expression” (Autobiography 1.382). Holstun briefly explores how this “brilliant epigram...prefigures the way in which radical sectaries would infuse everyday social and political life with chiliastic energies during the next three decades” (181).

“Upon the Dukes death”

The pale horse of the Revelation

Hath unhorst the horseman of our Nation,
And given him such a kick on his side
(At Portesmouth) that hee sware and dy’d.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 181v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 197; Huntington MS HM 116, p. 82

1 The pale horse of the Revelation: “And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him” (Revelation 6.8).

2 kick on his side: Felton stabbed Buckingham in the chest.

3 Portesmouth: Buckingham was assassinated in the south coast naval town of Portsmouth.

4 hee sware: some reports suggest the oath was “God’s wounds”.

Pi12
Notes. Like “The pale horse of the Revelation”, *this epitaph makes much of Buckingham’s alleged dying words.*

“Upon the Death of the Duke of Buckingham, who was stabbd An° 1628. was made this Epitaph.”

Here lies Leachery, Treachery, Pride,
That swore Gods Wounds, & so he died.

Source. BL MS Harley 4931, fol. 9r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 102v; CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 71r
Notes. Contemporary readers may have recognized that they could change this epitaph’s meaning by altering its punctuation. This sole known extant version is punctuated to read as a libel, yet a reader could easily turn the verse into a commendation. For example, the opening four lines could be repunctuated (and thus rewritten): “Here lies great George the Glory of our state, / Noe way Our Kingdome did him hate. / Wrong did he non, he writed ever, / Disloyall was he counted never”. In this manuscript, the first six lines are on one page, and the final couplet at the top of a later page. The poem is discussed by McRae (Literature 49).

“Upon the Duke of Buckingham”

Here lies great George the Glory of our state
Noe way, Our Kingdome did him hate,
Wrong did he, non he writed,¹ even²
Disloyall was he counted, never
Faithfull he was, in any thing
Unto his countrie, and to his Noble King
He did deceave, both Rome, & spayne³
Then wish him Now alive againe.

Source. Huntington MS HM 116, pp. 47-50

1 writed: i.e. righted.
2 even: probable scribal error; read “ever”.
3 Rome, & spayne: the charge here is that Buckingham was an agent for the Roman Catholic interest, led spiritually by the Pope in Rome and geo-politically by the King of Spain.
Notes. This epitaph focuses primarily on Buckingham’s perceived betrayal of the European Protestant cause during the opening decade of what would become the Thirty Years’ War.

“Epitaph”

Great Buckingham’s buried under a stone
’Twixt heaven and Earth not such a one,
Pope and Papists Freind, the Spaniards Factor, ¹
The Palatines bane, ² The Dunkirks Protector, ³
The Danes disaster, ⁴ The French kings intruder, ⁵
Netherlands oppressor, ⁶ the English deluder,
The Frend of Pride, the Peere of Lust
Th’avaritious actor of things unjust.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 182v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 143

¹ Pope and Papists...Spaniards Factor: Buckingham is here charged as the friend of the Roman Catholic Church and its followers, and as an agent for the Spanish who were understood by many Englishmen to be the military and political arm of the Catholic cause.

² The Palatines bane: i.e. the Palatine’s curse. Buckingham is blamed here for the continued sufferings of the Calvinist Frederick V, Elector Palatine, his wife, Charles I’s sister Elizabeth, and the German lands they once ruled. Frederick had accepted the Crown of Bohemia after the Protestant rebellion there in 1618, and as a consequence was driven from his ancestral lands by Catholic forces in 1620-21 (see Section N). Despite both diplomatic and military efforts, the English Crown had been unable to restore the Palatinate.

³ Dunkirks Protector: the port of Dunkirk in the Spanish Netherlands was the base for pirates who preyed constantly on English shipping during this period. As Lord Admiral, Buckingham was held responsible by some parliamentary critics for the English failure to deal with the Dunkirk problem.
The Danes disaster: in 1625, Christian IV, the Lutheran King of Denmark, intervened on the Protestant side of the Thirty Years’ War to disastrous effect. The English—despite Charles I’s wish to aid his relative—failed to assist the Danes, just as they had failed to assist the Palatinate.

The French kings intruder: Buckingham led the English war effort against France in 1627-28, and commanded the ill-fated 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré outside La Rochelle.

Netherlands oppressor: the Protestant Dutch United Provinces renewed their war of independence against Spain in 1621, with virtually no military assistance from the English. A vocal body of English opinion believed that the English should fight side-by-side with their Dutch Protestant brethren.
Notes. One source attributes this libellous epitaph to John Felton (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26). While we can be almost certain that Felton himself did not write the poem, the attribution may suggest one contemporary’s willingness to impute Felton’s actions to his horror at the favourite’s crimes enumerated in poems like this one.

“Epitaph”

Pride lies heere, Revenge and Lust,  
Sorcerie\(^1\) and Averice, all accurst:  
A great one base, a rich one poore,  
Hee that consum’d the Kingdomes store,  
Alive and dead of all good abhorr’d,  
Because that all Ill doe hee dar’d.  
The Law to death had him condemn’d,\(^2\)  
Hee Death and Law both then contemn’d;  
His life not lov’d, nor mourn’d his death,  
Cause long hee drew condemned breath,  
Hee sinfull liv’d, and dy’d with shame,  
His flesh now rotts, soe Buckingham.  
(O sodaine change) Heere doth hee lie,  
That feareles livd dyd fearfullie.  
Hee was not sick: What did betide?  
A stroke was given, hee swore\(^3\) and dy’d.  
Hee’s gone all say: O but whither?  
Birds of a winge flie together:  
Lambe\(^4\) was sent a place t’out-looke,  
And where Lambe is there’s the Duke:  
Now their Villanies they doe scann,  
Lambe the Doctor, Duke the Man;  
After-times their tricks will shew,
Not one of thousands now that know,
And then to this shall added bee,
’Gainst justice liv’d they, soe did dye.

**Source.** BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 182r-v

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 196; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 33v

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1 *Sorcerie:* charges linking Buckingham to the practice of demonic witchcraft hinged on two of the Duke’s relationships: with his mother, Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham, who was often casually branded a witch; and with his alleged associate, the astrologer-physician and convicted witch John Lambe.

2 *The Law to death...condemn’d:* this, of course, was not technically true, but some contemporaries took the House of Commons’ 1626 impeachment of Buckingham as equivalent to a judicial sentence that had never been executed.

3 *hee swore:* some reports claimed that Buckingham’s last words were the oath “God’s wounds” (see “The pale horse of the Revelation” and “Here lies Leachery, Treachery, Pride”).

4 *Lambe:* John Lambe, murdered by a London mob on 13 June 1628.

5 *’Gainst justice liv’d they:* this phrase may refer generally to the crimes of the two men, but it may also allude to the actual judicial sentences against them: Buckingham’s impeachment by the Commons in 1626, and Lambe’s convictions (both pardoned) for witchcraft and rape.
Notes. In a mere fourteen lines, this libellous epitaph manages to allude to a diverse array of Buckingham’s alleged transgressions, religious, administrative, fiscal, military and sexual. The poem is discussed by McRae (Literature 46-47).

“Epitaph”

Fortunes darling, Kings Content,
Vexation of the Parliament,
The Flatterers deitie of State,
Advancer of each money-mate,¹
The divells Factor² for the purse,
The Papists hope, the Commons Curse,
The Saylors Crosse, the Soldiers greife,³
Commissions blanke,⁴ and Englands theife,
The Coward at the Ile of Ree,⁵
The bane⁶ of noble Chivalrie,
The night-worke of a painted dame,⁷
Confederate with Doctor Lambe.⁸

All this lies underneath this stone,
And yet (alas) heere lies but one.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 183r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 143

¹ money-mate: this term is obscure, but presumably refers to men who would bribe Buckingham for office or advancement.

² Factor: agent.
The Saylors Crosse, the Soldiers greife: Buckingham was frequently blamed for the miseries endured by English soldiers and sailors during the military mobilization of 1624-28. These included not only the sufferings experienced during the hapless military campaigns, but also a chronic shortage of pay and provisions.

Commissions blanke: perhaps “a nullifier of commissions”. The exact nature of the commissions in question is not clear, but they may be military (Buckingham’s appointments as officers were frequently controversial) or commissions to act in a judicial role, such as a Justice of the Peace.

The Coward at the Ile of Ree: allusion to Buckingham’s alleged cowardice as commander of the 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré. Some of the rumoured acts of cowardice were aired by the libels on Ré collected in Section 0.

bane: curse.

The night-worke of a painted dame: this line is somewhat obscure. “Night-work” is literally work done at night, but often with a sinister or immoral overtone; a “painted dame” is a woman wearing cosmetics, with cosmetics often symbolizing deceit, the sin of pride, and sexual corruption. We can suggest at least two possible readings: the first would treat the line as an allusion to Buckingham’s alleged sexual transgressions (i.e. he spends his nights with whores); the second would treat the line as an allusion to Buckingham’s mother—Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham, frequently vilified as a witch, papist and whore—whose “night-worke” (i.e. sexual activity) produced the Duke.

Doctor Lambe: John Lambe, astrologer-physician, convicted witch and Buckingham’s alleged associate.
Notes. Like “Fortunes darling, Kings Content”, this epitaph economically weaves together a wide array of charges against the late Duke. The poem also uses Buckingham’s scandalous reputation as a poisoner—his “trade” was “Murther”—to legitimate the assassin Felton’s morally and legally troubling decision to take the law into his own hands.

“Epitaph”

Heere lies a gratious graceles Peere,
Of King belov’d, to ’s countrie deere,¹
That did both Foot and horse commaund,
And beare the sway by Sea and Land;²
To death which many thousand sent³
Ere hee receiv’d the death hee lent.
Nor Law nor Justice had to doe
With what his Will consented to,
Nor was there any question made
With him of Murther:⁴ ‘twas his trade:
And will his Ghost bee angrie trowe⁵
If any other⁶ should doe soe?
Can any thinke his scholler naught
For doeing that himself hath taught?
But he that killd this killer thus,
Did it to save himself and us:
Thus farr then with him wee’l dispence,
Hee did it in his owne defence,⁷
Besides, his Act redeem’d agen
Great multitudes of honest Men.

Then all the Fault, and all the Wrong
Was, that hee let him live soe long.
Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 183r-v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 144; BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 82r; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 22

Pi18

1 deere: pun on the double meaning of “dear”, as cherished and as costly, with the implication that although Buckingham was cherished by his king, he was costly to his country.

2 That did both Foot...and Land: Buckingham was Lord Admiral and commander of the English army during the war with France in 1627-28.

3 To death which many thousand sent: news reports estimated the English casualties suffered during the 1627 expedition to the Île de Ré in the thousands.

4 Murther: the murders in question were the alleged poisonings of James I and a handful of rival courtiers. The charges were first levelled in George Eglisham’s 1626 pamphlet, The Forerunner of Revenge, and later repeated in many libels.

5 trowe: true.

6 any other: i.e. Felton.

7 Hee did it in his owne defence: i.e. if Buckingham was a mortal threat to the whole nation (including the assassin), Felton acted in self-defence and was thus no murderer.
Notes. This slightly opaque epitaph is difficult to date with precision. If the allusion to “his gaudie tombe” refers to the splendid monument to the Duke erected by his widow in the Henry VII chapel in Westminster Abbey, then this verse must date from the era of the tomb’s construction and completion in the early 1630s.

Had our great duke bene Joseph then might we
have left a roll to our posteritye
Like the Dynasties old:¹ but now that roome
must empty stand, only his gaudie tombe
Shall keep that epithet & title still
Duke in opposing goodnes great in ill.

Source. Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 8

¹ Had our great duke...Dynasties old: Joseph, the son of Jacob, was the progenitor of one of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 49.22-26). These lines appear to imply that Buckingham’s early death prevented him from establishing a sizeable tribe of his own, unlike Joseph, who was described as “a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall” (Genesis 49.22). At his death, Buckingham left two children, and a son was born posthumously in 1629. Statues of his children appear on Buckingham’s funeral monument in Westminster Abbey.
**Notes.** In the poem “Away, away, great George, o come not here”, Buckingham’s shade laments that “each Letter of my Name shalbe / A Theame for their Invencions, to let flee / Abroad to all the World, even my black Deeds”. This cleverly worked acrostic is a neat example of what he meant.

“An Acrostic”

Great potent Duke, whom fortune rais’d soe high,
Even to the height of greatest Majesty;
Our Admirall\(^1\) admir’d, not for his birth
Regarded;\(^2\) now is dead, & of noe worth,
Gone with his fame to blisse, or what is worse,
Ever to live, or die in damned curse.
Vile is thy name, worse were thy ends,
Ill were thy acts, few were thy freinds,
Lust rul’d thy heart, pride did the sway,
Life loath’d thy breath, Felton did the slay.
Even such thou wert, just was thy fate,
Rais’d from the dust, pulld from thy state.
Soe now adeiw, brave Duke, not Englands freind:
For want of letters, heere I am to end.

**Source.** Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 102v

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1 *Admirall*: Buckingham was Lord Admiral.

2 *not for his birth / Regarded*: Buckingham’s relatively humble—if nevertheless gentle—family background was a target for his critics throughout his ascendancy. This poem repeats the slur later, when describing the Duke as “Rais’d from the dust”.

---
And art thou dead! who whilome thought’st thy state
To bee exempted from the power of Fate!
Thou, that but yesterday (illustrious bright,
And like the Sunne) did’st with thy pregnant light
Illuminate inferior Orbs! Shall death
Bereave thee, in a moment, of that breath
Whereby soe many liv’d? Did not thy hand
Monopolize the glorie of this land?
Did not thy smiles or frowns make Princes kneele?
Did not thyne Enemies thy Vengeance feele?
Did not thy Atlas^2 shoulders seeme to beare
The pleasant burthen of this hemisphere?
Or was thy power lesse in the watrie world?^3
For, whether forreyne Armes, or billowes curl’d
Conspir’d the Merchants wreck; did they not bring
To thee a sweet and peacefull Offering?
The Sea thy power (her Neptune)^4 oft did feele,
Her fomie clouds submitting to thy keele.^5
What though, Mars-like, to Pallas thou didst yeild?^6
Yet thou of Venus^7 ever had’st the Feild.
The Nymphes,^8 whose browes bright wreathes of honour twine,
Judg’d thee to bee a Man neere halfe divine,
And freely would expose unto thy pleasure
The curious virtues of their hidden treasure.

Notes. This verse marries the conventional theme of the sudden death of a great man, with several specific allusions to Buckingham’s scandalous reputation for lust, excess and luxury. The poem ends with the relatively sympathetic, though theologically awkward, hope that Buckingham might eventually be saved after a thousand years of suffering in purgatory.
Of honour, power, and pleasure, thou mightst bee
To all the world a just Epitomie.
Yet thou, even thou, like other Men art dead,
And to th’infernall shade thy spiritt’s fledd;
Which thou had’st sooner done, if Men had thought
By such a wound thy death might have been wrought.
Where’s now thy Riches, power, thy splendour, lust?
And though extracted from ignoble dust,
Yet thou, like Lucifer, did’st still aspire,
And scorn’dst those hopes that did not mount thee higher.
Where’s thy Ambition, Pollicie, and Hate?
Thy Pleasures to thy soule incorporate;
Thy curious fare; unlimited excesse?
The splendour of thy Ivorie Pallaces?
What boots it that the worlds farr Ends for thee
Made contribution to thy Luxurie?
Where bee thy Frends, thy hopes, thy favour; which
Might both thy self and many more enrich,
Had’st thou not play’d the Prodigall, and spent
Without foreseeing of this dire event?
All these have left thee, like a blast or breath;
And thou, now swallowed by the Jawes of death,
For all thy quondam power, thy Name shall bee
For ever hatefull to Posteritie.
Yet I could wish one thing for thee, belowe,
In those infernall shades where thou do’st goe,
Thou mightst a Purgatorie finde, wherein
A thousand yeares might expiate thy sinne,
By purging those deepe staines, and vices fowle,
Which in thy life-time did infect thy soule,
That soe, at last, thou mightst enjoy that blisse
Where our Creator and Redeemer is.

**Source.** BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 178v-179v

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 198; PRO SP 16/114/70; Huntington MS HM 198, 1.159

Pi21

1 *whilome:* once.

2 *Atlas:* in classical mythology, Atlas supported the heavens on his shoulders.

3 *Or was thy power...watrie world:* allusion to the power and profits that accrued to Buckingham as Lord Admiral.

4 *Neptune:* Neptune god of the sea.

5 *keele:* the bottom timber of a ship, running from stern to bow.

6 *What though...thou didst yeild?:* Mars was the god of war; Pallas Athena, a goddess of wisdom and war. This line might be a general comment on Buckingham’s military adventures and their failures, but it might also allude more specifically to the incident in Book 5 of Homer’s *Iliad,* in which Mars (Ares) is wounded in the battle for Troy by the Greek warrior Diomedes and the goddess Athena.

7 *Venus:* goddess of love.

8 *Nymphes:* goddesses. In this and the following three lines, these nymphs are the ladies who succumbed to Buckingham’s sexual charms.

9 *extracted from ignoble dust:* Buckingham’s relatively humble (yet gentle) social origins had long been a focus of criticism.

10 *Lucifer:* Satan, driven from heaven for his pride and ambition.

11 *Thy curious fare:* the exotic foods served at Buckingham’s banquets.

12 *boots:* benefits.

13 *quondam:* sometime.

14 *Purgatorie:* the Roman Catholic Church taught that purgatory occupied a middle place in the
afterlife, between heaven and hell, and that sinners sent there would suffer and pay the price of their sins before ascending to heaven. English Protestants believed purgatory to be a popish fiction.
Pi22 Pale death, with Iron hand, hath struck a blowe

Notes. Densely crammed with biblical and classical allusions, this poem is particularly concerned with Buckingham’s thoroughly corrupt exercise of political power and patronage.

“A Satyre on the D. of B.”

Pale death, with Iron hand, hath struck a blowe,
And in Earths duskie Cabbin sunke belowe
A little world, that deem’d to sore more high
Then his horizon, or the fleeting skie.
His Courting Lady-hand, with mickle ease
Disastrouslie could spann our Albion Seas:
Our brasen Wall daunc’d on the brinish Wave,
Thinking, through him, Europa to outbrave.
He usd the meanes: For with his darting Eyes
(More then the Basilisks or Babells Spies)
Whatso’er intended, or wheresoever meant,
Chamelion like, hee slilie would prevent.
The Brittaine Crownetts and the Clergies bookes
Were vaild or burnt at’s Ganimedian looks.
A Kingdomes Councell fix’d, entirely one,
Were with a smile impugn’d by him alone
Our bright sunne-sett, and orient morning sunne
This Syren hath eclipsed and o’re-runne:
Parents made childlesse, children lost their Syres,
Worthies their honour, just their good desires:
The poore were polled, the rich were neatly shav’d
The dastard mounted, and the stout outbrav’d;
Blockheads made Bishops, when the reverend Gowne
Like Homer waited for his smile or frowne,
Barons Bankerupts, and Shop-men Barons made,
Knaves Knights, the course of auntient Knighthood stay’d.
The yealding nature of a pious King,
Whose worthie praises through the world doe ringe,
This Mans excessive power too much abus’d,
And by abortive means before not us’d,
That hee might mount Favorites honey tasted,
Whilst others vitall powers by poison wasted.  
Oh heavens! What doe I? Alas, hee’s dead,
And’s burd’nd soule untimely from him fledd.
Burie his Faults. Ile say no more then: Why?
Soe much in zeale to warne Posteritie
That all Icarian flights are vaine,  
And thunder-shaken from his waine
Shall Phaeton slide, The hoast not rest
Till Achan die, and Gibbions beast
Shall prove a Goad and thornie sting,
And happilie repentance bring;
And know Promotion at his best
Findes death in earnest, not in jest.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 180r-181r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 200

Pi22

1 D. of B.: Duke of Buckingham.

2 Courting Lady-hand: although a number of specific readings of this phrase are possible, the general intent is to effeminize Buckingham and thus implicitly to explain why his military adventures, alluded to in the following lines, were so disastrous.

3 mickle: great.
4 *Albion:* English.

5 *Our brasen Wall:* this phrase literally means “our brass (or strong) wall”, and refers to the English navy which Buckingham had commanded as Lord Admiral.

6 *Basilisks:* the eyes of the basilisk, a mythical serpent-like creature, killed all who looked into them.

7 *Babells Spies:* the story of the building of the tower of Babel is told in Genesis 11. In this context, Babel is probably a synonym for the Catholic threat, and thus Babel’s spies are Catholic spies.

8 *Chamelion like:* the ability to shift appearances like the chameleon lizard.

9 *The Britaine Crownets:* the coronets worn by the English and Scottish nobility, who had to submit to Buckingham’s power.

10 *vaild:* removed.

11 *Ganimedian:* the adjective derives from the name of the mythical Trojan boy Ganymede, kidnapped by a besotted Zeus and taken to serve as his cupbearer on Olympus. Ganymede was commonly used as a term for a homosexual sodomite, and had been applied to Buckingham by libels attacking his relationship with King James I (see Section L).

12 *Syren:* the sirens were sea nymphs whose songs could charm any who heard them.

13 *polled:* plundered.

14 *dastard:* base coward.

15 *stout:* brave, manly.

16 *Blockheads made Bishops...smile or frowne:* the political meaning of these two lines is clear enough; the poet is lamenting Buckingham’s corrupt control of patronage and promotion within the English Church. Incompetents were made bishops, and clerical hopes for promotion depended solely on Buckingham’s personal favour or disdain. The allusion to Homer is obscure, though it is probably drawn from the rich tradition of speculation about the epic poet’s life and times.

17 *And by abortive means...poison wasted:* allusion to the allegations that Buckingham had secured his position at court by poisoning several courtiers and King James I. The allegations were first made explicitly in George Eglisham’s 1626 pamphlet, *The Forerunner of Revenge*, but quickly became a routine part of libellous attacks on the favourite.

18 *all Icarian flights are vaine:* Buckingham’s phenomenal ascent is compared here to the classical story of the flight of Icarus, who flew too close to the sun with wings sealed with wax. Icarus’s fall,
when the sun melted the wax, is used here as a parable of the inevitable downfall of the aspiring court favourite who rose too high.

19 And thunder-shaken...Shall Phaeton slide: the myth of Phaeton, commonly used by contemporaries to describe the perils of surrendering royal authority to ill-qualified favourites, describes how Phaeton persuaded his father Phoebus, god of the sun, to allow him to drive the chariot (“waine”) of the sun for a day. Phaeton was unable to drive the sun safely and was struck dead by Jove’s thunderbolt to prevent the sun crashing into the earth.

20 The hoast not rest / Till Achan die: the story of Achan is told in Joshua 7. After Joshua’s conquest of Jericho, his follower Achan stole an “accursed thing” from the ruined city. God punished Achan’s sin by allowing the armies of the City of Ai to defeat Joshua’s troops (“The hoast”). Only after Joshua discovered Achan’s offence and killed him was God’s wrath assuaged. The implication here is that only after Buckingham’s justly merited death would England—and English military might—flourish again.

21 Gibbions beast...repentance bring: the allusion, in this context, is a little obscure. It may refer to the biblical account of the punishment (hence the reference to the “Goad”—a whip or scourge—and “thornie sting”) given to the city of Gibeon. In Joshua 9, the Gibeonites trick Joshua into guaranteeing them protection from his campaign of military conquest. Joshua, obliged to spare their lives, opts in retribution to reduce the Gibeonites to the status of “hewers of wood and drawers of water”: “Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen” (Joshua 9.23). Alternatively, it is possible that the phrase might refer to “Gideon’s best”, which could stand for the select force of 300 Israelite troops who, under the command of the Judge Gideon, defeated the overwhelming force of the Midianites (Judges 7-8).
Great Gorge, and art thou gonne?

Great Gorge, and art thou gonne?
t’were childishe for a man to moane
for one soe well departed.

thou hast thy countrys free good wille
although it’s plaine, thou livinge still
to her was hollowe harted.

I will not slander one that’s dead
to saye that Buckinghame is fledd
to any place off reste,

Or that hees in cælestiall sleepe
or Christians true for him doe weep
or holy crosse him bleste,

Yett I am sure hele ryse againe,
I will not saye to eternall paine
which he soe well deserved.

Coulde not the reliques off his Lambe
or his owne deere Idolatrous Damme

From Felton him preserve.

But I will leave this censure free
to any that will Judge for mee
how god hath him disposed;

I am pleased; he lived and dyed moungst French
he wanted but a Madride wench
his eyes, for to have closed.

Source. CCR0 MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 69r
reliquices: the relics of saints, and thus objects of specifically “popish” veneration.

Lambe: Dr. John Lambe, astrologer-physician, convicted witch and presumed associate of Buckingham.

own deere Idolatrous Damme: Buckingham’s mother (“Damme”), Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham, was a known Catholic convert and thus, in Protestant eyes, “Idolatrous”.

he lived and dyed moungst French: although this line refers generally to Buckingham’s moral foreignness, it may also allude specifically to his travels in France as a young man and during his court ascendancy, his military expedition to France in 1627, and to the fact that in the room with him when he was assassinated were several prominent Huguenots, there to consult with Buckingham about the relief of La Rochelle. The “french” was also common slang for syphilis.

Madride wench: like the similar allusion to the “Madrille wench” in “Oure crossrow’s turnd, a signe off monstrous luck” (like this poem, only found in William Davenport’s collection), this seems to refer to Buckingham’s alleged sexual adventures in Madrid in 1623.
Notes. Like so many of the libellous epitaphs addressed to the Duke, this poem integrates a broad selection of the scandalous charges that had been circulating at least since the mid-1620s. These charges range from the sale of offices to the breaking of parliaments, from corruption and incompetence as Lord Admiral to the poisoning of his political enemies. The poet’s pointed complaints about Buckingham’s treatment of the City of London and its citizens suggest that this verse might be the work of a Londoner.

“On the death of Georg Duke of Buckingham”

Thou that on topp of Fortunes wheles did mount
  that on mens’ shoulders wonted wast to rid
art summond now to yeelde upp thyne account
  & answer for thy treacherie & pride
Thou must appeare beefore a righteouse Judge
  ('tis none of those that weere of thine owne makeing)
to shew the cause why commons did so grudge
  against thee with loude cries and hearts akeing
Thou must not hope for tryall at Kings bench
  nor at the barr of common pleas appeare
the one doth say thou smelst too much of French
  the other thinks hee bought his place too deare
Thy selfe from judgment yet thou canst not hyde
  thy case shall not bee seene by learned Cooke
before the cheepest Judge thou must be tryde
  who will afright thee with his glorious looke
There thou must show an execrable thing
  how thou so savage a wicked wretch could bee
to kill thy sacred soveraigne lord and king,
  that had so honored & exalted thee
Bee sure there thou questioned must bee
for Richmond Oxford Marquesse Hambleton for thy false dealing at the Ile of Ree
for brave Southampton & his noble sonne
Thou must make answer for thy admiralls place
wherin from native place thou didst purloyne
to thyne owne mother Brittaynes great’st disgrace
great store of shipps of ordinance and coyne
Lett who will search all moderne histories
yet by his reading hee shall never finde
in anie man so manie treacheries
loyall to bee, whom Princs love should binde
Thou daily stood’st in feare of Parliaments
the lower house thou never could’st endure
which caus’d them broken upp in discontents
but now the lowest house will keepe thee sure
Faire London, ever to hir kings most kinde
at all times past theire wants for to releive
could no tyme anie frendly favour finde
thy envyous mynde still stryveing her to greive
A citizen that cravd what thou didst owe him
if hee unto thy presence weere admitted
On him thou lookdst as if thou didst not know him
or for his boldness hee was straight committed.

Source. Bodleian MS Dodsworth 79, fol. 158v

Pi24

1 rid: i.e. ride.

2 none of those...thine owne makeing: Buckingham wielded immense influence over all appointments to office during the 1620s.
3 Kings bench: the court of King’s Bench, located in Westminster Hall, was the chief court for Crown prosecutions at common law.

4 common pleas: the court of Common Pleas, located in Westminster Hall, was “par excellence” the court for civil actions between private parties, especially for cases which involved property” (Aylmer 45).

5 the one doth say...too deare: presumably a reference to the two Lord Chief Justices of King’s Bench and Common Pleas, Nicholas Hyde (appointed 1627) and Thomas Richardson (appointed 1626). The two lines incorporate a pair of charges against Buckingham: that he “smelst too much of French”, which puns on “French” as foreign and Catholic, and “the french”, slang for syphilis; and that he sold judicial offices. One contemporary noted that the “Lord Chief Justice’s place of the Common Pleas lay void a term to see who would give most. It stood at £30,000 a great while. Serjeant Richardson gave 14 M (i.e. £14000) for it”. Other news reports stated that Richardson gave £7000 or £17000 (Proceedings in Parliament, 1626, 4.349 and n.64).

6 learned Cooke: Sir Edward Coke, former Lord Chief Justice.

7 the cheefest Judge: i.e. God.

8 There thou must show...Marquesse Hambleton: allusion to the charges—first levelled in the 1626 pamphlet, The Forerunner of Revenge, by a former royal physician, George Eglisham—that Buckingham had poisoned James I and several rival courtiers. Eglisham accused Buckingham of murdering the King and James Hamilton, Marquis of Hamilton, and hinted also that he poisoned Ludovick Stuart, Duke of Lennox, who held the English title of Duke of Richmond. Eglisham did not explicitly allege that Buckingham had killed Henry de Vere, Earl of Oxford—as claimed in “Avaunt you giddie headed multitude”—but Eglisham had noted the rumour that all Buckingham’s enemies were to be poisoned.

9 false dealing at the Ile of Ree: allusion to charges of Buckingham’s misconduct during the 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré (see Section O).

10 brave Southampton & his noble sonne: in 1624, Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, and his eldest son James, led a troop of English volunteers to assist the Dutch against the Spanish. Both father and son became ill in the Netherlands and died. Several verse libels and George Eglisham’s 1626 pamphlet, The Forerunner of Revenge, alleged that Buckingham had poisoned Southampton.

11 Thou must make answer...ordinance and coyne: reference to Buckingham’s alleged corruption and misconduct as Lord Admiral, which formed part both of the impeachment charges and the Remonstrance against him in the 1626 and 1628 Parliaments, respectively.

12 Thou daily stood’st...discontents: Buckingham was the subject of parliamentary attacks throughout
the 1620s, particularly in 1626 and 1628, and was frequently blamed for the Crown’s decisions to dissolve or prorogue the assemblies.

13 the lowest house: i.e. hell.

14 Faire London...for to releive: the cash-strapped English Crown frequently received loans from London mercantile interests.

15 committed: imprisoned.
Notes. This poem ranges widely in its allusions, beginning with a scene from Herodotus and ending with the refrain to a popular anti-Buckingham song from 1627.

“On the duke of Buckingham”

What once was said by valiant Tomyris

to mightie Cirus haveing lost his head

applied to thee will not bee thought amissse

for thou more worthie blood then hee hast shedd

The witch thy mother that old rotten drabb

with hir inchantments & her conjuring tricks

could not defend thy bodie from the stabb

nor keepe thy soule from Acharon & Stix

Thanks to our God for thou art well dispatcht

I trust that shee thy ghost shall shortly follow

more plotts by damme and sonne weere never hatcht

pretending faire but haveing hart most hollow

And now that thou art dead wee will rejoyce

and meerly spend the time both night and daie

the fidlers boy that hath the lowdest voyce

shall sing thy song the cleane contrary waie

Source. Bodleian MS Dodsworth 79, fol. 158r

Pi25

1 What once was said...lost his head: Herodotus reports the speech of the Massagetae Queen Tomyris over the corpse of Cyrus, King of the Persians, killed in battle c.530 BC. “After the battle Tomyris ordered a search to be made amongst the Persian dead for the body of Cyrus; and when it was found she pushed his head into a skin which she had filled with human blood, and cried out as she committed this outrage: “Though I have conquered you and live, yet you have ruined me by treacherously taking my
son. See now—I fulfil my threat: you have your fill of blood” (1.214).

2 *more worthie blood...hast shedd:* the worthy blood here is that of James I and several court nobles allegedly poisoned by Buckingham in the mid-1620s. The poisoning allegations were first levelled in George Eglisham’s 1626 *Forerunner of Revenge*, and later circulated in libels and other underground media.

3 *The witch thy mother:* Buckingham’s mother, Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham, was a known Catholic and rumoured witch.

4 *drabb:* whore.

5 *Acharon & Stix:* Acheron and Styx, two of the rivers of Hades, the classical realm of the dead.

6 *damme:* mother.

7 *the fiders boy...cleane contrary waie:* the notorious libellous ballad against Buckingham, “Come heare, Lady Muses, and help mee to sing”, performed by fiddlers at Ware and at Staines in the spring of 1627, includes the refrain, “The clean contrary way”.

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847
Notes. Like “What once was said by valiant Tomyris”, this libel’s conclusion alludes to the infamous ballad against Buckingham, “Come heare, Lady Muses, and help mee to sing”, which includes the refrain, “The clean contrary way”. The opening three lines depend in part on a pun on grace, as both divine grace and the appropriate form of address for a duke.

If good mens graces in heaven with them abide,
Then sure the Duke his Grace is stept aside.
All rimers now make Musick of his Grace;
’Twere noe good part to play upon the base.
What fidlers sung, now all may freely say,
The Duke is gone, the clean contrary way.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 104r

Pi26
**Notes.** This is the longer of two poems written as dialogues between the murdered Buckingham and Charon who, in classical mythology, was the ferryman of the dead across the rivers of the underworld (cf. “At Portsmouth Duke I will no longer staye”). This libel is milder than most, opening with Charon intending to take Buckingham to “Elysium” (though that hope is later seemingly contradicted), and concluding with a theologically problematic—essentially Roman Catholic—suggestion that the Duke might eventually rise to heaven after a period of punishment in purgatory.

“A Dialogue Betweene Charon and the D.”¹

Great Duke, which art commaunder of the Seas,²
Make haste to Portsmouth,³ if thy highnesse please;
For there my boate is ready to convey
Thy soule to the Elizeum:⁴ come away.

Duke.
Whose is that voice that soundeth in myne eare?
Meethinks ’tis Carons: See, hee doth appeare.
Who sent thee, Caron, that thou makst such haste
For to remove my blisse, to have mee plac’t
Among the Furies,⁵ that ne’re see bright day?
But I must goe: Caron calls, Come away.
Come Felton then, and execute thy will,
Who are prepar’d great Georges blood to spill.
Yet, give mee leave, before I see my end,
One poore Petition through the skies to send,
For to sollicite him that rules the heaven,
And that my spotted soule may bee forgiven.

Charon.
Thou art too tedious, and dost stay too long:
Noe time is lent thee. Come: you must among
Those that on earth could finde noe time to pray
Till I come for them: Therefore come away.
For if thy conscience doth not thee accuse,
In that thy God and King thou didst abuse;
Then make noe question of thy doeing well,
Thy soule shall onely passe with mee through hell,
Where thou content must bee to stay a while,
To clese thy conscience, which thou didst defile:
And if from thence to blisse thou finde a way,
Thou leave shalt have: But now I will not stay.

Duke.

Then farewell Joyes: Ile bee content to dwell
A thousand yeares in Purgatorie\textsuperscript{6} or hell,
Soe that I may at last but purchase heaven,
And rest with him whose blood for mee was given.\textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{Source.} BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 187v-188r

Pi27

1 \textit{the D.:} the Duke.

2 \textit{commander of the Seas:} Buckingham was Lord Admiral of England.

3 \textit{Portsmouth:} Buckingham was assassinated in the naval town of Portsmouth, on the south coast of England.

4 \textit{the Elizeum:} the Elysian fields, the dwelling place of the blessed souls in the classical underworld.

5 \textit{Among the Furies:} the three avenging goddesses known as the furies were usually described as dwelling beneath the underworld and being responsible for inflictmg torments on the damned. This destination seems to contradict Charon’s opening suggestion that he was to take Buckingham to “the Elizeum”.

6 \textit{Purgatorie:} the middle place between hell and heaven in which, according to Catholic belief, the souls of the dead could suffer for a period of time to pay off the debts of their accumulated sins.
Protestants believed that purgatory was a “popish” fiction.

7 *him whose blood...given:* i.e. Christ.
**Notes.** This poem is the shorter of the two surviving dialogues between Buckingham and Charon, ferryman of the dead (cf. “Great Duke, which art commannder of the Seas”). The last three speeches (i.e. the last six lines) may be unique to our chosen source.

“The Admiralls ferriman, Duke Buckingham”

Charon. At Portsmouth  Duke I will no longer staye

my boat’es at hand, nowe therfore come awaye,

Duke. Who calls greate George? (Charon.) tis Charon that comanunds

thy guilty ghost to goe him none withstands.

Duke. but whither must I goe? (Charon.) to land at Styx

from whence you had your stratagems and trickes.

Duke. nay prithee stay, sweete Charon, thou shalt see

that if George lives, then all shall come to thee.

Charon. pish come I saye! my boate shall stay for none.

thy sweete perfumed sins will fill’t alone,

yf not thy Titles. (Duke.) Sure thou’lt stay a while

that I may Charles a little more beguile

Charon. No no I cannot, Felton make no delaye

if thou lov’st Charles send me proud George awaye

Duke. Am I of sea & land that greate Commaunder

when this small boate doth scorne I should command her

sweete pleasures, honors, titles, fortune brittle,

Adieu, I have no title to a tittle.

Charon. ho, ho! now welcome George; no soule shall more

For thesee twelve moneths be lanched from this shoare

but see my bottome sinkes whence comes this weight

Duke. Greate Brittaines burdthen is thy heavy freight

Charon. then use thy art Charon to gaine the strand

this wood till nowe was ne’re so basely man’d.
Source. BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 56r-v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 13v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 19r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 14r; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 103r; BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 188r; BL MS Harley 791, fol. 57r; St. John’s MS K.56, no. 22; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 42v; Rosenbach MS 240/7, p. 60

Pi28

1 *Portsmouth:* Buckingham was assassinated in the southern English town of Portsmouth.

2 *Styx:* a river in Hades, the classical realm of the dead.

3 *pissh:* an exclamation of contempt.

4 *Titles:* Buckingham held a number of titles in addition to his dukedom, including Earl of Coventry and Baron Whaddon. His list of offices was longer still.

5 *of sea & land...Commaunder:* Buckingham was Lord Admiral and the commander of English armies at the Île de Ré in 1627.

6 *a tittle:* a tiny amount.

7 *strand:* shore.
Notes. The version of this poem printed in the 1644 pamphlet Hell’s Hurlie-Burlie is titled “The Duke of Buckingham’s last voyage, written a little before his death”. However, given its subject matter, and its thematic connection with other “Buckingham-in-hell” poems, the libel was most likely composed after the assassination.

“Upon the D. of B.”¹

Make haste I pray, launch out your shipps with speed,
Our noble Duke had never greater need
Of sodaine succour, And those Vessells must
Bee his maine help; For there’s his onely trust.
Alas! our English Navie is too poor²
To serve his turn alone; hee must have more:
Nyne more brave barques³ besides will help him well,
And make him shew more hideous then hell:
For thither sure his Voyage next will be,
Better for England then the Ile of Ree.⁴
The Furies⁵ that can like himself dissemble,
Will either feare indeed, or seeme to tremble,
To heare a thunder then theirs one Note higher
And see even hell it selfe ore-spitt with fire.
O Lucifer,⁶ thou must resign thy crown;
For thou shall meet a Duke will put thee downe.
Hee hath a sinne, besides the deadly seaven,⁷
More then e’er hell found out, to make them eaven;
For which (O hell-hounds) if you doe not grant
Him place, you will for ever want
Your greatest consort. Let there bee a dearth
Of fire in hell, as there is heere in Earth,
Only through him,⁸ And soe noe doubt there shall
If hee once come to bee your Admirall.\(^9\)
But why should I perswade you to bestow
The place and honour on him, that you owe?
His Highness shall commaund it, And his Port
O’er-sway the greatest Noble in your court.
Hee shalbee King there, Sitt in the Kings Throne,
Or ells commaund the King; and thats all one.
Nor shall the Theefe free favours there inheritt
By any guift of yours, but by his meritt.
Alas, poore Feinds, I grieve at your disgraces;
For you must lose your Offices and places;
And doe the best in all your powers to doe
Hee will have all, and that too little too.
But why should this bee knowne in hell? perchance
The Furies would denie him Entrance,
And Pluto,\(^{10}\) fearing to bee overcome
At his owne weapon, not afford him roome
In his best Pallace. And shall mortall Men
Bee troubled with his countenance agen?
Noe. Divells take your due: For, if there bee
One you can claim in all the world, Its hee.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 185v-186v

Other known sources. Hell’s Hurlie-Burlie 6; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 201; PRO SP 16/114/68

Pi29

1  D. of B.: Duke of Buckingham.

2  our English Navie is too poor: allusion to Buckingham’s alleged corruption and mismanagement of naval affairs as Lord Admiral.
3 *barques:* ships.

4 *Ile of Ree:* Buckingham commanded the costly and disastrous 1627 military expedition to the Ile de Ré (see Section O).

5 *The Furies:* the three avenging goddesses who dwelt beneath Hades, the classical realm of the dead, and inflicted punishments on the damned.

6 *Lucifer:* Satan, the ruler of hell.

7 *the deadly seaven:* the seven deadly sins are pride, wrath, envy, lust, avarice, gluttony and sloth.

8 *Let there bee...Only through him:* allusion to the dangerous shortage of gunpowder in England. The 1628 parliamentary Remonstance against Buckingham included a section on the shortage, which it described as “a strange improvidence (we think your Majesty will rather call it treachery)” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.315).

9 *Admirall:* Buckingham was Lord Admiral of England.

10 *Pluto:* ruler of Hades.
No sooner had the worlds most happy knife
Took from the world the most unhappy life,
But straight th’infernall Rout began to roare,
In hell was never such a noise before:
Silence proclaim’d, to th’utmost gate they post,
Which open’d, they admit his Graces Ghost.
Th’inferior Fiends, that horror lov’d so much,
Trembl’d at first sight, his aspect was such,
But noting the free welcome to him given,
By him, that for his pride was thrown from heaven
His fellowship with laughter all allow,
If ever there were joy in Hell, ’twas now.
After much complementall curtesie
Betwixt the Admirall of Styx and hee,
Along to Plutoe’s court they passe in state,
(In what he living lov’d still fortunate)
A guard of Feinds and Furyes led the way,
I’ the shape of men at armes in battell-ray,
Much like our Citie Souldiers, lately prest,
T’attend his Highnes to my Lord Maiors feast.
Pride went before him, ever in his sight,
Lust on his left hand, murther on his right,
Ambition rode, though pride & he were twins,
Consorted with the other deadly sins
When neere to Pluto’s palace-gate he came,
Who should he meet withall but Dr. Lambe,
Who comning towards him, with cap in hand,
The company began to make a stand,
And note his gesture; when with bended knee,
Welcome O high and mighty Prince, quoth he,
Great Marquesse, Earl, and Duke of Buckingham.
His Highnes answering; thanks learned Lam,
On went the Doctor without Prohibition,
Of all his Titles making repetition,
Wherein he utter’d such a deal of geare,
As made the Devill himself even stink to heare,
And frighted Spirits of mean ranck and fashion,
Who took his spect to be a Conjuration.
His huge high stile gone over, the Duke bowes,
And of his language with his look allowes;
Lam still proceeds, and thus delaies his Grace:
O thou (of men most worthy of this place)
Wheres thy deare mother, thy rare mother, tell,
(For the word good must not be nam’d in hell)
Will she be still her grandsir Devills debter?
Hath she not yet perform’d the task he set her?
Or are there in the world against her will,
More honest Nobles to be poysnon’d still?
At this his Highnesse (smiling) bad him hold;
More fire the Devills cried, the Duke’s acold.
Now’s the place enter’d that th’Infernalls call
The King of lower Tartaries black Hall:
At th’upper end, great Pluto sate in state;
The Duke (admitted) with majestick gate, walk’d toward him, posses’d with constant hope
T’obtain the grace he once receiv’d o’th’ Pope; Twice by the way he bow’d, then kneeled down
Kist his cloven foot, and show’d his own ball’d crown; His Majesty of hell smil’d at the sight,
And all the rest o’ the rabble laught out-right. Rais’d from his knee, and question’d, he relates
His horrible abuse of times and States,
Cales he makes mention of, and so goes on To’s plot of Rochells sad destruction,
Wherein so horrid was the tale he told,
It made th’amazed hearers seem acold.
From first to last, I could expresse it heere, But ’tis too harsh for any Christian eare
Valour he had no doubt, that did not shrink To act what others are afraid to think.
The story ended, Pluto (blushing) rose,
Having before nere heard such truths as those:
Though thy bad actions (thus he spake) are such As might amongst us merit more than much,
Yet since thy fates have suffer’d thee to tell, (Perhaps against thy will) the truth in hell,
Away with him, he cry’d: the cursed crew, Without more words, their Masters meaning knew,
And hence they hurri’d straight the wretched thing, A shadow now, that lately rul’d a King.

Source. *Hell’s Hurlie-Burlie* 7-8
1 *Rout:* crowd.

2 *aspect:* appearance, look.

3 *him, that for his pride...heaven:* Satan was cast from heaven for rebelling against God’s rule.

4 *the Admirall of Styx:* perhaps intended as a reference to Charon, the ferryman who brought the souls of the dead across the River Styx into Hades, the realm of the dead. On the other hand, this may refer not to a specific denizen of Hades, but simply to the figure who held the same office of Admiral that Buckingham had held in England.

5 *Plutoe’s:* Pluto was the ruler of Hades.

6 *battell-ray:* i.e. battle array; prepared for battle.

7 *Much like...Lord Maiors feast:* the “guard of Feinds and Furyes” are here compared to the armed bands of the City of London who accompanied “his Highnes” (which might refer either to the King or, sarcastically, Buckingham) to a feast held by the Lord Mayor.

8 *the other deadly sins:* the seven deadly sins included (in addition to pride and lust mentioned here), envy, avarice, gluttony, anger and sloth.

9 *Dr. Lambe:* John Lambe, astrologer-physician, convicted witch and suspected associate of the Duke, had been murdered by a London mob in June 1628.

10 *Marquesse, Earl, and Duke of Buckingham:* Buckingham held all three titles; he was created Earl in 1617, Marquis in 1618 and Duke in 1623.

11 *all his Titles:* Buckingham held several aristocratic titles in addition to his dukedom, including Earl of Coventry and Baron Whaddon.

12 *spect:* look, appearance.

13 *mother:* Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham.

14 *More honest Nobles...poysion’d still?:* allusion to the widely reported allegations that Buckingham had poisoned James I and several prominent courtiers. In *The Forerunner of Revenge*, the 1626 tract that first explicitly made these allegations, George Eglisham implied that Buckingham’s mother had assisted in the poisoning of King James.

15 *Tartaries:* Tartarus was deep below Hades in the classical underworld, but was often used as a synonym for the underworld as a whole.
gate: i.e. gait; bearing.

T'obtain the grace...o'th’ Pope: allusion to Buckingham’s supposed allegiance to and support from the papacy.

ball’d crown: this unique reference to Buckingham’s bald head may allude to the Duke’s supposed fondness for wigs.

Cales: i.e. Cadiz. The allusion is to the failed 1625 naval expedition to Cadiz, organized, though not commanded, by Buckingham.

plot of Rochells sad destruction: the allegation here is that Buckingham deliberately worked for the fall of Huguenot La Rochelle to the Catholic French. Buckingham’s disastrous 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré had been designed to relieve La Rochelle, as had the abortive 1628 mission led by Buckingham’s brother-in-law William Feilding, Earl of Denbigh. Buckingham was preparing another expedition to La Rochelle at the time of his assassination.

lately rul’d a King: the libel ends with a provocative claim about the extent of Buckingham’s power in England.
Pi31  Great Duke, Although I little am acquainted

Notes. Rich in classical allusions, this poem is unique to William Davenport's collection.

“In Ducem”¹

Great Duke, Although I little am acquainted,
with all the crymes, wherewith thy soule it² taynted:
yet doe thy faults, constraine my tender muse,
to curse his harte, that did us all abuse:
Where is thy devill, and thy Doctor Lambe?³
that purchased the, with Charles, so great a name:
what are they gone, unto the Stygean Lake?⁴
and would thee so unkyndlye now forsake?
No no they went,⁵ but to prepare a seate
For thee accordinge to thy great estate;
Pluto⁶ proclaymed had a sollemme feaste
and bade thy soule to be cheefest gueste:
Oh strange at first, to get soe great promocion
with dis:⁷ (I saith) it was for pure devocoun,
thou bare to Lucyffer;⁸ then thinke off this
that Felton, meritts everlastinge bliss,
who caused thee, to gayne that exaltacion
and sent thee to such a place off recreacion,
theire maiste thou use, thy magyke and thy charmes,
thy spells, and figures,⁹ can doe litle harme:
with Sysyphus, theire maiste thou rowle the stonne,¹⁰
Or els with Tantalus,¹¹ goe make thy moane:
Yett all too litle for thy soule to feele,
Ixivion, shall sett thee on his rowlinge wheele;¹²
Oh: might thy soule, but come againe and tell,
the paynes and travells, that it had too hell:
it would require some Homer,\textsuperscript{13} to endyte,
and all the Poets sett a worke, to wrytte,
with pens of steele; theire Inike\textsuperscript{14} the Ocean sea,
theire paper, all the leaves that springe in Maye:
but since it comes not; as I best can foarde,\textsuperscript{15}
Ile shew you, all it’s progres in a worde:
When it arryved in the Stygean baye,
Caron\textsuperscript{16} expected then a mightye paye;
to pass it over; which the soule soone spyed,
about it middle, at that tyme was tyed
a girdle, wich was off great woorke and pryze,
called Treacherie: wich did the churle\textsuperscript{17} suffyze.
A boarde they went; Caron began to rowe,
but to remove it, he had much adooe,
the soule so sinfull, waied the boate soe downe,
that Charon stood in feare the boate should drowne,
then rose the surgess,\textsuperscript{18} over all the brime,
it botes\textsuperscript{19} them not to practyse, then to swimme,
for they had drenched bene in that vaste floode,
but Pluto ayminge, alwayse at his good:
was wandered past the bankes off Cocytus\textsuperscript{20}
towards Stixe Lake, when that it happened thus,
and seeinge both of them soe nighe bespent,
it forced Dis, theire case for to lament:
since both were servaunts true without controule;
Charon had brought him manye a welcome soule,
And Gorge, as willinge came, as any other
which made the devill, adopte him for his brother:
hee toake his soul, and Proserpine,\textsuperscript{21} it cherishte,
that but for them, through the weight off sins had perishte:
err that it could attayne th’apoynted place,
wich Radamanthe out off a speciall grace,
att the solocytinge off Docter Lambe,
ordayne for it gainst it thither came.
Thus have I shewed you in a worde or towe,
the progress straunge, wich some maye judge untrew,
off Villeir’s soule, from this our Brittish Ile,
to pale Avernus in a litle whyle;
Mægera and Alecto make it myrthe
for Treacherie committed here on earth:
but yett before I make a fynall ende,
his vice, not vertue, needes I must commende,
Iff Conjurarions, Carrecters and spells,
Circles, and figures, furies, feends of hell;
and all enchauntments, were off any merrytte
then might thy soule, Elyzean Joyes enherrytte:
 wee weptt dere Duke: and soung a dolefull sounge,
because thou lived amounge us, here soe lounge
but now thou art gonne, our Joyes beginne to dubble,
hopinge thy lyke will never more us troble:
Caynns deare blessinge, light uppon thy harte,
Oedipus Joyes unto thy soule reverte:
soe Duke, no otherwyse my leave I take,
but unto God this sole request doe make;
to villyffye all men off thy condiciones
and keepe our Charles, under his saffe tuition.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fols. 70v-71r
In Ducem: “On the Duke”.

it: probable scribal error; read “is”.

thy devill, and thy Doctor Lambe: John Lambe, astrologer-physician, convicted witch and alleged associate of the Duke, was sometimes dubbed “the Duke’s devil”. However, while this line could be read as “Doctor Lambe, thy devil and thy doctor”, the plural “they” in the next line but one implies that “thy devill” is not Lambe but a second person. One possible candidate is the Irishman Pierce Butler, who fled England in 1626 after the Commons began investigating stories that he had given Buckingham some kind of magical amulet which would keep him in royal favour.

Stygean Lake: the lake of Styx in the classical underworld.
	hey went: John Lambe was murdered by a London mob in June 1628. The line implies that the other “devill” was also dead by this time.

Pluto: ruler of the classical realm of the dead.

dis: i.e. Dis; another name for Pluto.

Lucyffer: Satan.

thy magyke...and figures: Buckingham allegedly used sorcery to maintain his power; usually this charge is connected to Buckingham’s relationships with John Lambe and his mother, Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham.

Syxyphus...rowle the stonne: in the classical underworld, Sisyphus was punished by being forced in perpetuity to roll a stone up a hill only to watch it roll back down again.

Tantalus: in the classical underworld, Tantalus was punished by being tormented with hunger and thirst while having water and food in sight but forever just beyond his grasp.

Ixion...rowlinge wheele: in the classical underworld, Ixion was punished by being chained to a perpetually rolling wheel.

Homer: the ancient Greek epic poet. Book 11 of Homer’s Odyssey includes descriptions of Sisyphus’ and Tantalus’ torments in the underworld.

Inike: i.e. ink.

foarde: i.e. afford; perform.

Caron: Charon was the ferryman whose boat brought the shades of the dead across the rivers of the
Notes. This dialogue between the shades of Buckingham and his alleged client, John Lambe, the infamous astrologer-physician and convicted witch who had been murdered two months before the Duke, manages to encompass a larger than usual indictment of Buckingham’s alleged crimes as favourite. Although there is no reason not to assume that the poem dates from the time of Buckingham’s assassination, the only known version is in an eighteenth-century manuscript, containing a handful of pieces on Buckingham and Felton.

Lambe. Away, away, great George, o come not here:
   For then in torments thou must bear a share.
Duke. Oh now its too late: Thy Councill’s all in vaine:
   The Castle so long besiegd’d at last is tane.
   Thow shouldst have told me this, before that I,
   By Murther, *Pride*, *Lust*, & fowle Treacherye
   Had spotted my white Soule: but then didst thou
   Uphold me in my sins; *for which I now*
   Am damn’d, & have the Lande of Canaan *lost,*
   And in the Depth of deepest Miseries tost.
   Then whether should I goe, but where thow art?
   That of my Paines as Pleasures *thow must take Part.*
L. Goe hence I say: if Plutoe *once drawe neare,*
   Thy Titles, *nor thy Honours shall not beare*
   Thee from his ravening Pawes.
D. *Alas! the’re gone,*
   And e’re this Time dispearst: not one alone
   Shall ever have agayne soe many Honours
   Heapt on his Head; which to me were false Banners.
   Yet Titles, Honours, Places, Charles his Love,
   My Life to spare could not stout *Felton move:*
   His powerful Hand hath sett my Spirit free,
And sent my Soule to endles Miserye.
O Famous Felton! thy Valour yet I love;
But of thy heedles Deed do not approve:
Because thou leftst me neither Time nor Space,
To call to God for Mercie, Pardon, Grace:  
Nor yet to Charles, my honoured Lord & King,
To beg his Pardon, & confes each Thing,
That I gainst him, his Kingdome, & his state,
That either heretofore, or now of late,
I have attempted, or intended to act,
As well as that I have done: yet your Fact
I know’s approv’d of all; for that all did
Hate me; & though at sometimes close they hidd
The Rancour of their Malice, yet now at last
They let their Sluices ope, which runnes at waste.
I know each Letter of my Name shalbe
A Theame for their Invencions, to let flee
Abroad to all the World, even my black Deeds,
Which from their black Penns shall receive black Weeds.
My deeds on Seas, in Countrey, Court & Cittie,
Shalbe unto their Song the finall Dittie.
On Seas, from first to last they’le discant on
The Honour in Argiers Voyage wonne:
When as stout Mansfeild, by my stronger Hand
Was made retorne again into this Land;
Which did more Hurt unto the English Nacion,
Then since the Fabricke of the World’s Creacion.
For then the Turks made Havocke of our men,
And Shipps, & none would spare; which proved then
A Disadvantage to our Kingdom: Next
That to Cales, when as proud Cicill vext,
When Essex for his Life was forc’d to fly;
Or else as Cales great Gates most basely die.  
By me, they say, the Pallatinate was lost,
And when fresh Supply should be gone, I crost
It; & kept backe the Ayde;  
at last I sent
Brave Oxford over, unto whose Life I lent
Some few Dayes, & then did take it from him,
With Southampton’s,  soe I confes my Cryme.
A Navie was prepar’d, & richly mann’d,
Where Neptune’s  angrie Waves being past, we land
At Martin’s Iland; where landing, march, intrench,
Assault, retreate our men were fain: Revenge
Then came too late: the best Commanders gone,
And many brave Soldier was lying tread uppon
Together with Shipping of our men; even all
Doth make me call’d, a treacherous Generall.
Yet I came Home, when betters farr wer slaine,
And for their Valour more Honour they may claime.
Yet Charles was glad to see me in England’s Shore:
Yet People’s Countenance shew’d what in Heart they bore.
And now the last Ayde which to poor Rochell went,
Was thought in Earnest; but in Jeast ’twas sent.
All this the seas cann witnes of my Crime.
But leaving these, then come to our owne Clyme,
And in the Countrey shewe my Deeds sett forthe,
How that I rackt their Rents  to twice their Worth;
Tooke from them what I pleas’d, & to others gave it;
And all must be as I myselfe must have it.
In which I farr surpassed all before,
And for one bad Deed here, there was a Score.
For what with Poyson, Treason & base Treacherie,
My Deedes, like Night, would darke the very skie.
Whoe was it there, except great Charles alone,
That did not to me bend even to the Ground?
Such was the over-topping Topp of my
Ambicion: but at last being come thus high,
I had a Fall: but not in Charles his Love;
For that is firmly placed, & will not move;
Untill his Eyes shall opened be, & finde
All my fowle Deedes that I have left behinde
Doe clearly manifest as well to him, as other,
That with the Charmes & Magicke of my Mother,18
I have bewitcht his Senses, soe that he
Could not my Treason nor Offences see,
That I committed in Country, Court & State:
Nor in Religion how I sett Debate.19
And how of Justice I have sold the Place
Unto the Badd, whoe soe altered the Case,
As pleased me, or best serv’d for my Ends:
Nor how I have enrich’d my base-born Friends.
In Cittie eke20 their Cryes breakes ope the Gates,
And for their Fortunes doe declare their Hates,
To me, for that I fetcht, & never meant to pay:
Which now hath brought their States unto Decay.
And since, dear Lambe, by the I had this Arte,
To cozen King and Kingdome, Its fitt I smarte.
And since we have liv’d in Pleasure both together,
God’s just in all, which will not now let us sever.
England farewell! thy Curse I ame sure I have;
And in Abundance they will fill my Grave.
What care I for them! here then ends my Labour,
That as liv’de, soe I dyed in Charles his Favour.
Murther: the allusion is to Buckingham’s alleged poisonings, specified in detail later in the poem.

then didst thou...my sins: Lambe was alleged to have provided magical assistance to facilitate Buckingham’s murders and sexual conquests.

Lande of Canaan: the promised land; in this case, heaven.

Pleasures: this may be meant to refer generally to the pleasures Buckingham enjoyed as favourite; however, there may also be a specific allusion to the sexual pleasures that Buckingham was alleged to secure using Lambe’s love potions.

Plutoe: ruler of the classical underworld.

Thy Titles: Buckingham held several aristocratic titles in addition to his dukedom.

stout: brave, manly.

Because thou leftest me...Grace: Buckingham’s complaint, that Felton’s knife left him no time to repent his sins, was echoed by a number of contemporary observers.

each Letter...for their Invencions: apparent allusion to the composition of acrostic libels (see, e.g., “Great potent Duke, whom fortune rais’d soe high”).

Argiers Voyage...to our Kingdom: reference to the unsuccessful 1620-21 naval expedition led by Sir Robert Mansell (here, somewhat misleadingly, referred to as “Mansfeild”) against the Muslim pirates (“Turks”) based in Algiers.

Next / That to Cales...basely die: reference to the failed 1625 naval expedition to Cadiz led by Edward Cecil, Viscount Wimbledon. The specific incident alluded to concerned one of the English commanders, Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex, who was forced to halt an assault on Spanish ships because of the failure of the main fleet to lend him timely support.

By me, they say...the Ayde: allusion to the failure of the English to prevent the loss of the Palatinate—the ancestral lands of James I’s son-in-law Frederick V, Elector Palatine—to Catholic forces in 1620-21, and to the English Crown’s subsequent inability to achieve their restoration. The reference to a failure to grant “fresh Supply” may point to the tragically underfunded English expeditionary force under the command of Ernst von Mansfelt, sent to liberate the Palatinate in 1624-25, but decimated by hunger and disease before it could reach German territory.
Brave Oxford...Southampton’s: Henry de Vere, Earl of Oxford, assumed command of a regiment of Palatine troops in the United Provinces in May 1624, but died in June 1625 at The Hague. Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, died at Bergen-op-Zoom in November 1624, after leading a group of English volunteers to fight for the Dutch against the Spanish. George Eglisham’s 1626 pamphlet, *The Forerunner of Revenge*, alleged that Buckingham had poisoned Southampton, while several libels levelled the charge that he had poisoned Oxford.

Neptune’s: Neptune was the god of the sea.

A Navie was prepar’de... may claime: reference to Buckingham’s 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré, and to the heavy casualties suffered by the English during the siege of, failed assault upon and disastrous retreat from the island citadel of St. Martin (see Section O).

Ayde which to poor Rochell...sent: reference to the abortive late April 1628 mission to relieve the Huguenots of La Rochelle. The expedition was commanded by Buckingham’s brother-in-law, William Feilding, Earl of Denbigh.

erckt their Rents: raised rents excessively.

Charmes & Magicke of my Mother: the Duke’s mother, Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham, was a known Catholic and was frequently alleged to be a witch.

in Religion how I sett Debate: perhaps a specific allusion to the 1628 parliamentary Remonstrance’s charge that Buckingham was responsible for the rise of anti-Calvinist Arminianism in the Church of England.

In Cittie eke: in the City of London also.
Notes. In the only known source, this poem is transcribed among a series of libels on Buckingham’s death.

“Another”

My honour, favour, life, & all
Upon a string did hang, though small,
Yett strong; for proofe, noble Peeres
Could never break’t for many yeares
Yett honour, favour, life is ended,
And all the plotts, that were entended.
But what did all this ruine bring?
A fatall knife did cutt the string.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fols. 102v-103r
Notes. In one source (Bodleian MS Ashmole 38), this popular poem, with its trenchant references to Buckingham’s suspected religious unorthodoxy, is attributed to John Heape (to whom the same collection also attributes “And art return’d againe with all thy Faults” and the sympathetic epitaph on the Duke, “Honor, worth, greatnes, and what part so ere”). Some versions begin with the final couplet, and follow with other lines from earlier in the poem (e.g. BL MS Egerton 923). At least one version also adds an extra couplet at the end: “He that in treason his delight doth take, / By treason likely his owne end doth make” (Bodleian MS Tanner 465).

“I that my countrey did betray,
Undid that King that let mee sway
His sceptre as I pleas’d; brought downe
The Glorie of the English crowne;
The courtiers bane, the countries hate
An agent for the Spanish state,
The Romists Frend, the Gospells Foe,
The Church and Kingdomes overthowe,
Heere a damned Carcasse dwell,
Till my soule returne from hell:
With Judas then I shall inherit
Such portion as all Traytors meritt.
If heaven admitt of Treason, Pride, and Lust,
Expect my spotted soul among the just.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 185v

Other known sources. Rous 29; Trevelyan Papers 3.172; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 14; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 13r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 196; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 78r; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 103r; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 27r; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 38r; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 45v; BL MS Sloane 1199, fol. 70r; CUL MS Dd.11.73, fol. 67v; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 315; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 318
1 *Prosopopeia*: i.e. prosopopoeia; “A rhetorical figure by which an imaginary or absent person is represented as speaking or acting” (*OED*).

2 *the D.*: i.e. the Duke.

3 *The courtiers bane*: contemporary meanings of bane include both “curse” and “murderer”.

4 *Judas*: i.e. Judas Iscariot, betrayer of Christ.
Notes. This poem is presented as the Duke's letter from hell to his mother, Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham.

Mother

My humble dutie done, I crave
Your best constructions, in that yow have
Not heard of mee, since that I sawe yow last
When I to Portsmouth\(^1\) went from yow in hast.
The voiage for Rochell,\(^2\) which was then intended
Is stayd, another begun, which now is ended.
For at Don Plutos\(^3\) Court I am arrived
Where unexpected honors, I have atcheived
For when I first sett foote in Pluto’s Hall
There was a strang Comotion, and with all
Ignatius\(^4\) to depose they readie were,
Who had sate there enhroniz’d manie a yeare
As Heire-apparant unto Pluto’s Crowne.
But now the guiltie Ghostes will have him downe.
Soe soone as Hildebrand\(^5\) of this had heard
Hee makes all freinds; hee came to be prefer’d,
But John the two, and twentith\(^6\) him withstood.
As Hildebrand, hee thinkes himself as good.
Then manie Turkes, and Emperors putt in
And all of these, did thinke the daie to winne.
Celsus, and Paracelsus\(^7\) both, they sweare
They were much wrongd that they were not the Heire.
But all theis hurli-burlies ended were
Soe soone as newes was brought that I was there.
Then all of them consult, and some resolve

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\(^1\) Portsmouth
\(^2\) Rochell
\(^3\) Don Plutos
\(^4\) Ignatius
\(^5\) Hildebrand
\(^6\) twentith
\(^7\) Paracelsus
On me those hopefull honors to devolve.
Soe that I was proclay’md without debate
As heire-apparant to th’ infernall State.
Therefore untill yow come, I doe reserve
A place next to my self, which yow deserve.
Our learned Doctor Lambe, and worthie freind
To yow himselfe his service doth comend.
It seemes, that I, and hee by his relation
Came both one waie to Plutos habitacion.
Hee is my Secretarie, and doth deale
In all the actions, which I would conceale.
Your presence heere, I greatlie doe desire,
For to preferment straight yow maie aspire.
Don Pluto long hath liv’d a single life
Who knowes but hee may choose yow to his wife.
If this twixt yow, and him proceed, wee maie
Our kindred to preferre, have easie waie.
Thus hoping of your health, begging the same
I rest

your loving Sonne
Geo: Buckingham.

Ab Inferis die proximo
post obitum.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2026, fol. 64r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 103v; CUL Add. MS 42, fol. 37r

Pi35

1 Portsmouth: Buckingham was murdered in the south coast town of Portsmouth.

2 The voyage for Rochell: Buckingham was preparing an English expedition to relieve the Huguenots
of La Rochelle at the time of his assassination.

3  *Don Plutos*: Pluto, ruler of the classical underworld realm of the dead, is here given the Spanish honorific of “Don”.

4  *Ignatius*: Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Catholic order of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, a group widely demonized in Protestant polemic as the most dangerous agents of Catholic Counter-Reformation.

5  *Hildebrand*: Pope Gregory VII, leader of the eleventh-century Gregorian Reform movement in the Church, and a fierce advocate of papal power against secular authority.

6  *John the two, and twentieth*: John XXII was a powerful early fourteenth-century pope.

7  *Celsus, and Paracelsus*: Celsus was an ancient Roman authority on medicine, Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim) an iconoclastic sixteenth-century authority on medicine, magic, astrology and alchemy.

8  *Doctor Lambe*: John Lambe, astrologer-physician, convicted witch and alleged associate of the Duke, who was murdered in June 1628.

9  *Our kindred to preferre*: the excessive rewards—titles, offices, lucrative marriages—showered on the Villiers kindred were a common source of contemporary complaint against Buckingham (see Section 1).

10  *Ab Inferis die proximo/ post obitum*: “From Hell, the day after his death”.
Notes. Presented as the murdered Duke's posthumous confession, this extremely ambitious three-part poem effectively recapitulates Buckingham’s crimes through a loosely biographical account of his rise, triumph and ultimate fall. Holstun offers a reading of the poem as part of an exploration of how the assassination poems “repeatedly evoke the language and forms of Renaissance tragedy” (183).

“Upon the Duke”

The Argument
The Argument is cold and sencelesse clay,
A breathles subject, very night and day,
The cold too furios, hot Ambition speaks.
The senceles to the sensuall (breathles) breaks
Silence, and preacheth unto mortall breath,
Day of the night, and night is taught of death.
Suppose but then you heard his Umbra’s crie,
Instructing all from Slave to Majestie.
Stay (Mortalls) then, in’s name, at whose commaund
Sol’s restlesse spheare did quickly stopp and stand
As fixt, and lend mee your Attention:
Happie the Eares that suck in such prevention
Of future Evills. Had I hearkened to,
Or well observ’d (as wise men now will doe
My Storie) the fresh and obvious Fates
Of soveraigne and domestique Potentates
Knitt up in blood, I might have hearkened still
To better secrets, of my Makers will,
Than State-Pollicie, and so shin’d true
Honours Starr, to follow, not to eschue.
Then patiently addresse your ears awhile,
Oh heare mee not with a remorselesse smile
At myne extorted plaints; but rather greive
You are as I, Sonnes of deluded Eve. 4

Protasis 5
No sooner had discretion brought mee in
On this worlds Theater, with naked chinne, 6
E’re Art had squar’d my rough opinion
To fitt mee for a Monarch’s Minion, 7
Or prie into the Arke of State Affaires, 8
Or to descend 9 true Honours craggie staires,
Or furrough on the churlish Ocean, 10
Or tread a march in warlike motion,
Or Pietie (the soule of all the rest)
Had taught mee first to love my countrie best;
But affectation of a higher state
(The sinne that first of all the heavens did hate)
Tooke up my utmost thoughts; And, of my time
On Earth, I spent the very pith and prime
In the pursuite thereof, And on that Theame
By day I studied, and at night did dreame,
Wasting the lampe of comtemplation
On present good, whilst Moderation
And Mediocritie in Earthly things 11
(Which the sweetest contentation brings)
I view’d as Mottoe’s of dejected mindes:
Tis poore Philosophie that noething findes
But bare Notions of some good heereafter:
This moved Epicurus 12 unto laughter:
But through the open Gate of all Excesse,
In Luxurie and Voluptuousnes,
To tread the broad path of a stately dance,
With Musique, Banquetts, and a Ladies glance,
This did I think the Milkie way\textsuperscript{13} to bliss:
The straite and narrow Path I strove to misse.
With this bad sophistrie\textsuperscript{14} my list’ning will
Was quicklie caught, and snared fast, untill
Nature her Forces did combine with Art
To gett possession of my Soveraignes heart
(The Center) whence I meant to stretch the Lynes
Of my desires (Ambitions) and designes
To the Circumference of earthly fame,
Still coveting a great (not a good) Name.
For Fates, or Philtres,\textsuperscript{15} worse direction,
Wonne my disposers\textsuperscript{16} deare Affection
That I was entertain’d with great applause;
And though, on my part, shape\textsuperscript{17} was all the cause,
Yet was I lodged like some Oracle
In’s Royall heart, and sett on Pinnacle
Of honour; whence, with the perspective glasse
Of favour, I behelld the flower and grasse
Of worldly Pompe; the smooth delightfull plaines
Of pleasures, treasures, offices and gaines,
Promotions hills, and the risinge bancks
Upon the River of Rewards and thanks.
And what I saw, I seized on. More yet;
I saw and searcht the Royall Cabbinett
Of seacrets, And from his rich Wisdomes Myne
I digg’d those Gemms that made my Actions shine.
My dexteritie in state passages,
My splendour in forraigne Ambassages,
My large Revenues, and extreme Expence,
Whether of Bountie or Magnificence,
With those high Favours to my kindred done,\(^1^8\)
Were by the beames dispersed from his sunne
Of rare Learning, and Liberalitie,
Exceeding my desert or quallitie
But Goodnes powred on a gracelesse heart
Like wholesome herbe to Poison doth convert
In the Vipers brest, Not halfe soe hatefull
To heaven or Earth, as is the man ungratefull.
And such was I. For that Iberian Fox,\(^1^9\)
That Balaam that layd England stumbling blocks,\(^2^0\)
Warn’d mee of my most slipperie condition,
Much subject unto Majesties suspition
And distast: which soon would gett strong head,
If once Affection were but altered,
Upon my Fault, Or some seducing Face,
As in myne and my Predecessors case
Fell out;\(^2^1\) Soe that it were discretions deed
To have two Kings to Frend\(^2^2\) upon a need,
That if I were collapsed in disgrace,
I might be sure of a retyring place.
To this old Sirens song\(^2^3\) I did agree;
And to bee sure of two Frends I made three;\(^2^4\)
For true assurance of whose loves fruition,
I did requite it with a blanke commission,\(^2^5\)
With other courtesies which were noe lesse
Than meritorious, As his Holinesse\(^2^6\)
Knowes well enough. Thus I from favour drew
Disloyaltie; and having gotten new
Supporting hopes, cast off the old one cleane,
And on the yonger Propp began to leane
Thus was I haunted with distracting charmes,
To seek new Arts t’increase my Native harms.
Now underpropt from my deserved fall,
And well defended by the Cædar tall
From Justice stroke (which sought and sued long
For some redresse of groaning Subjects wrong)
The Flood of my Ambition swelld soe high,
It overflow’d the bankes of Modestie,
And with the torrent of unbridled will
Swept all away, It spared not to spill
The lives and blood of myne own country men,
And if I loved One, I hated Tenn,
Like to that Tyrant that would often boast
To make and marr Mankinde hee studied most.
Nor was I read in Spanish Politiques,
Onely I learn’d some of the Guises tricks.
Thus was Justice topsie turvie turn’d,
The Commons greived, and the Gentrie mourn’d:
And for my Peeres (they were not my compeeres
Though farr my betters both in blood and yeares)
I galled and gulld their noble spiritts,
And with whisp’ring scandaliz’d their Meritts:
Yet, coadjutors to my Ends I found:
Of English Nobles, all were never sound.
Thus did my Pride upon Oppressions Winges
Surmount all Presidents that Storie sings.
But as the Comets borrowed fires light
Blazeth more, and shineth farr more bright
Then the true fier of the fixed starr,
Because it is removed farr
From sight; Soe my Ambitions blazon
Gave a brighter lustre to bee gaz’d on
By purblinde worldlings, then true honour gott
By due desert, free from Revenges shott.

Catastrophe

But, oh, the candle of my Glorie’s out,
The Comet’s vanisht, And Astraea’s skout,
Inexorable Nemesis, blood-hound
Of direfull fate, long hunted, lurking found
Mee under the covert of dissimulation,
And hipocrasies abomination,
Covered with a glorious pretence
Of the distressed Rochellers defence.

Oh gross contempt to heavens connyving Eye,
And to my Masters sweet simplicitie.
But had I stabd Don Olivares dead,
Or the French Cardinall basely poisoned,
It had been better, then thus to despite
And plott the Ruine of heavens Favourite,
Reform’d Religion: Oh, my Sinons Art,
To seeme to bee and not to bee in heart;
Of all Impieties, suparlative;

Had this sinne not been myne, perhapps alive
I had been still, and to olld Age remayn’d,
Although myne honour was most fowlie stayn’d

With other crimes: For, Mercies Influence
Drops of the pretious Balme of Indulgence
Upon the deepest sin-stabbd souls, save those
Who are Truths seeming Frends, yet Foes:
Such halting, juggling, and newtralitie,
Sure is the greatest sin in qualitie.
For see Manasses in Idolatrie,
In Witchcraft, in bloodshed, and in tyranny
Deeplie plung’d, and in a desperate case;  
Yet whilst hee was, in heart as well as face  
Averse to truth, hee mercie found at last,  
His Errors heald, and all his sorrowes past.  
But oh, Beehold fourth Henry, the French King,  
The warning-Peece of Princes, wavering:  
Oh! See his hopes, come to the highest flood,  
Ebbing (like mine) soe sodainly in blood.  
And thus, I, Cacus-like (Monster of Men)  
Was dragg’d, and haled from theevish denne  
Of lying and Equivocation,  
Winding, and false tergiversation,  
But the Herculean power and force  
Of justice; which (before I was a corpse)  
Had, in the courts of heaven and Earth, complain’d  
Shee was soe Nose-wip’d, slighted and disdain’d,  
Under honours cloake so closely muffled,  
And in my rare Projects soe shuffled,  
That noble courage ’gan to faint and reele,  
And faith it self the very symptomes feele  
Of base despaire, to see the monstrous birth  
Of Nimrods race swarme on our English Earth.  
But I my self gan stronglie to conclude,  
The Lambe th Almighty Lyon could delude,  
And that my Artlesse deere Medea’s Art  
Divine decrees could frustrate quite, and thwart.  
This Impunity Presumption bredd,  
Atheisme lurkes in a presumptuous head.  
But oh! The glittering sword is now unsheath’d;  
The Witches With by Vengeance hand is wreath’d.  
Justice (like Tamerlayne) hath now display’d
His sable flagg, since Mercie was repay’d
Thus with contempt; And now (alas) too late
I finde and feele what ’tis to prove ingrate.
To grace my countrie and my Soveraigne,
What late I feared most, now full faine
Would come to (Parliament), and soone submitt
On knees unto my poorest Opposite,
And for their honours sake bee much more bolld
To spill my blood, then I was to gett their golld.
O happie, yea thrice happie is the corpse
Dissociated by the Axe, Nor worse
Is to bee thought their constellation
Whom the Rope calls unto Meditation
Of dissolution; O Mercy rare,
To feed the pamper’d flesh with crusts of care,
And sorrowes soppes, steeped in Angells Wine
(Teares) for transgressions: Who would repine
At such diasaster! when mutuall Greife
Presented to the soule, yealds some Releife
To the fainting spiritt, And dearest loves
Are oft exchang’d with kisses, teares, and gloves
At parting; whilst the Tenor sadlie tolls,
Begging sweet pardon for their fleeting souls.
But I, ah, lamentable wretched I
(Favours Mirror) not soe favourablie
Dealt with as the pinion’d, shack’ld slave,
Nor once permitted to intreate or crave
Forgivenes, Nor my dying hands or Eyes
Once to lift up unto th’offended Skies,
But sodainly thus to bee snatchd away
From Frends, and hopes, and such a golden Pray:
Oh sad Catastrophe, Oh dismall houre,  
Wherein one stabb cut off the thredd and flowre  
Of life and Age: Oh broken confidence  
In any creature subject unto sence:  
Oh my sweet Millions, goodlie Treasures:  
Oh all my profitts, dignities, and pleasures,  
Like to the dust by sodaine Whirlwinds caught,  
Disper’st and scatter’d, even with a thought:  
Oh bitterest dissociation:  
Oh depth of Justice, Retalliation,  
For their bellowing blood which lowdlie cries,  
Ree was a most perfidious Enterprize,  
Prologue unto Rochells woeful Storie,  
Sounding Brittaines shame, and Babells glorie:  
Nor is the sorrow least of all the other,  
That, for my death, none saies, Alas my Brother.  
Nay hearke; The thundring Jubile of Joy,  
Ecchoyng from the mouth of every Boy,  
At my destruction: But, oh the Gall;  
My Murtherer’s lamented. Hearke! they call  
Him, Noble Roman; second Curtius;  
Undaunted Scævola; that dared thus  
T’expose himself, to torment, shame, and death,  
To spoile his countries spoiler of his breath.  
Oh Miserie! Where are you then, my Lords,  
Whose tongues were lately sharper then your swords?  
What! Not a word? Oh strange silentium:  
And you, my black-mouthed Prophetts; what all dumbe?  
You that of late such Metaphysiques tolld,  
The Kings Prerogative could turne to gold  
All it toucht, like the tatter’d Chymists stone:
Howle my tragick fall, in a mournfull tone
Come write my Elegie: Oh scorned hearse,
(Like to my name) not graced with a verse,
Nor one white line? O strange Antipathie;
Heavens and Hearts are all at odds with mee.
Go, temporizing Frends then, write your owne
Black Epitaphs: yourselves learne to bemoane:
Sing your own Dirges to your guiltie soules:
Goe croking Froggs into your wonted holes
Of carnall confidence: but yet, bee sure
Long you shall not subsist safe or secure:
Th’all-searching hand will finde and pull you thence:
The hornes of th’Altar were a poore defence
For bloodie Joab. Justice hath begun:
Some Frends (I feare) must bleed ere shee hath done.
Who naked crimes with favour’s figg-tree-leaves
Hopeth to hide, his wretched soul deceives,
As silly Bird is cousin’d with lyme-twiggs,
Or Fancie with your Lordshipps Perrywiggs.
Farewell to Favours; bidd them first adiew,
And then (like shadowes) they will follow you.
Learne him to feare that can your glories drowne,
And make you wretched with one cloudie frowne.
I sent Aurora breathing from the East:
I must bee gone: Faine would I tell the rest,
To rapp your mindes with Admiration,
What my intentive cogitation
Dalli’d with; And who were of the knott
That did with me my Stratagems complott.
But time prevents. I will remaine your debtor,
Till the Post comes with the next false letter.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 171r-178r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 145

Pi36

1 his Umbra’s: his ghost’s.

2 in’s name: in His (i.e. God’s) name.

3 at whose commaund...As fixt: in the book of Joshua, God stops the sun (“Sol’s restlesse spheare”) in its tracks, thus prolonging daylight and allowing Joshua’s army to complete the slaughter of the Amorites (Joshua 10.12-14).

4 Sonnes of deluded Eve: Buckingham’s shade here addresses his audience as fellow sinners, all descendants of Adam and Eve whose transgressions brought original sin into the world.

5 Protasis: in Greek drama, the protasis was the introduction to a play. It was followed, in theory, by an epitasis and a conclusion, the “catastrophe”. This transcription of the poem includes a heading for the catastrophe but not for the epitasis.

6 naked chinne: i.e. without a beard. A beardless chin could signify youth in general, but could also hint at effeminacy.

7 Minion: favourite.

8 the Arke of State Affaires: the secrets of state—usually known by their Latin term, arcana imperii—reserved in principle only for the King and his closest counsellors.

9 descend: “ascend” is a better reading (Bodleian MS Malone 23).

10 furrough on the churlish Ocean: sail the rough seas. Buckingham became Lord Admiral in 1619.

11 Moderation...in Earthly things: Buckingham here recounts his rejection of the fundamental moral principle of the Golden Mean, articulated in Aristotle’s Ethics and long since absorbed into Christian teaching, which holds that moderation (“Mediocritie”) in all things is the key to the virtuous life.

12 Epicurus: ancient Greek philosopher, some of whose followers argued (distorting Epicurus’s actual
teachings) that the pursuit and enjoyment of sensual pleasure was the supreme good.

13 *Milke way*: the *OED* gives three contemporary definitions of “Milky Way”: the galaxy, a glistening path to heaven, and “a region of a woman’s breast”. The latter two seem to work best here.

14 *sophistrie*: i.e. sophistry; “specious but fallacious reasoning” (*OED*).

15 *Philtres*: magical potions.

16 *my disposers*: the King’s; here referring to James I.

17 *shape*: physical appearance.

18 *high Favours to my kindred done*: the rewards—of title, office, lucrative marriages and lands—showered on Buckingham’s kin were a source of considerable contemporary critique (see Section 1).

19 *Iberian Fox*: i.e. Spanish fox; in this case probably the notorious Spanish ambassador to England, Don Diego de Sarmiento, Count Gondomar.

20 *That Balaam...stumbling blocks*: Gondomar is compared here to Balaam, who appears in different guises in scripture, both as a corrupt, false prophet, and (in Numbers 22-24) as a heroic figure who, at God’s urging, refused the request of King Balak of the Moabites to curse the Israelites. The particular allusion here is to the negative image of Balaam in Revelation 2.14: “But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication”.

21 *As in myne...Fell out*: Buckingham recalls how Gondomar warned him how easy it is to supplant one royal favourite with another, alluding to how Buckingham himself had displaced James’s previous favourite, Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, in 1614-15.

22 *To have two Kings to Frend*: Gondomar advises Buckingham to acquire a second royal protector—the King of Spain—as insurance against losing James I’s favour.

23 *this old Sirens song*: i.e. Gondomar’s advice. Classical mythology described the songs of the sirens as irresistibly seductive.

24 *I made three*: this seems to mean that Buckingham added a third protector, who appears in this case, as the following lines indicate, to have been the Pope.

25 *I did requite...blanke commission*: i.e. Buckingham thanked his sponsors by giving them free rein to act in England as they wished. “[B]lanke commission” here probably means something like a “*carte blanche*”. 

889
his Holinesse: the Pope, Buckingham’s “third” friend.

And well defended...groaning Subjects wrong: royal authority (“the Cædar tall”) protected Buckingham from parliamentary attempts to bring him to account in 1626 and 1628.

It spared not...country men: possibly an allusion either to the poisoning allegations against Buckingham or to the lives lost during the Ré expedition of 1627.

that Tyrant: “Lewis 11 of France” (marginal note). Louis XI was a notoriously devious monarch.

the Guises: the Guise family led the ultra-Catholic factions during the sixteenth-century French wars of religion.

compeeres: this could mean “equals” or, perhaps more likely in this case, “companions”.

coadjutors: assistants.

Presidents that Storie sings: “the precedents that history records”.

blazon: heraldic shield.

purblinde: in contemporary usage, this could mean either partially or totally blind.

Catastrophe: in Greek drama, the catastrophe was the conclusion of a play.

Astraea’s skout: scout of the goddess of justice.

Nemesis: goddess of vengeance, punisher of crime, and here clearly an agent of justice.

glorious pretence...Rochellers defence: at the time of his murder, Buckingham was preparing a fleet to sail to the aid of the beleaguered Huguenots of La Rochelle.

Don Olivares: Gaspar de Guzmán, Count-Duke of Olivares, was the chief minister of Philip IV, King of Spain.


Sinons Art: the art of deceit. Sinon was the Greek prisoner who convinced the Trojans to let the Trojan horse into their city; he later helped release the Greek soldiers from the horse under cover of night. The implication here is that using Sinon’s skills of deception, Buckingham had connived in the ruin of Protestantism.
For see Manasses...all his sorrowes past: allusion to the biblical story of the Israelite King Manasseh, who is depicted in 2 Kings 21 and 2 Chronicles 33 as an idolater who “used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards” (2 Kings 21.6), and who “shed innocent blood very much” (2 Kings 21.16). The account in 2 Chronicles, however, records that, held as a captive in Babylon, Manasseh repented and prayed to God. After God restored him to his throne, Manasseh destroyed the idols he had erected (2 Chronicles 33.11-20).

Beehold fourth Henry...sodainly in blood: Henri IV of France had converted to Catholicism in 1593 in order to secure the French throne. The implication of these lines is that the King’s 1610 assassination was a punishment for this religious betrayal.

Cacus-like: in classical myth, the thieving giant Cacus was eventually killed by Hercules.

Equivocation: the use of deliberately misleading language. In contemporary understanding, the masters of equivocation were the Catholic priests who believed that, under interrogation, it was licit to say one thing while meaning another.

tergiversation: literally, back-turning, but with implications of betrayal and deception.

But: probable scribal error; read “By” (cf. Bodleian MS Malone 23).

Nose-wip’d: mistreated, insulted, disdained.

Nimrods race: the biblical Nimrod was “a mighty one in the earth” and “a mighty hunter”, the founder of cities (Genesis 10.8-12). In this period, Nimrod was often taken to be a tyrant.

The Lambe: this is almost certainly a pun on the name of John Lambe, the notorious astrologer-physician and convicted witch who was believed to be an associate of the Duke.

my Artlesse deere Medea’s Art: Medea, the spurned wife of Jason, was known for skill in magic and poison. Buckingham’s “deere Medea” is presumably his mother, Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham, who was commonly accused of witchcraft by the Duke’s critics.

With: i.e. withe; a wand of willow.

Justice (like Tamerlayne)...His sable flagg: in Christopher Marlowe’s Tamburlaine the Great, Part One, the near-Eastern warrior-king Tamburlaine flies a black (“sable”) flag to signal his intent to slaughter his enemy without mercy (see, e.g., the speech of the Messenger, 4.1.47-63).

O happie...Of dissolution: these lines introduce a lengthy section of the poem in which Buckingham laments that his sudden assassination left him no time to repent before death, a troubling point that was admitted even by those who praised Felton’s actions. In this opening, and in the lines that follow, the Duke compares his lot unfavourably with that of condemned felons—whether sentenced to die by
beheading (“Dissociated by the Axe”) or by hanging (“the Rope”)—who were usually given spiritual
counsel before their death to prepare them for a public confession and repentance.

56 *the Tenor:* a type of bell.

57 *Justice, Retalliation...Babells glorie:* suggestion that Buckingham’s death avenged the blood of
those who died during the disastrous 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré, the failure of which led to the
continued suffering of the beleagured Huguenots of La Rochelle. “Babells glorie” presumably refers to
the glory of the Catholic enemy.

58 *Curtius:* Mettius Curtius threw himself into a chasm in the Roman forum as a patriotic sacrifice for
the city.

59 *Scævola:* after being captured in an attempt to assassinate the leader of Rome’s enemies, the patriot
hero Mucius Scævola thrust his own right hand into a fire, so amazing his intended victim that he
released him and eventually negotiated peace with the Romans. The link between Felton and Scævola is
also made in “Why: is our Age turn’d coward, that no Penn”.

60 *silentium:* silence.

61 *my black-mouthed Prophetts...All it toucht:* Buckingham here laments the silence of those who
might have been expected to become his apologists. By identifying these “black-mouthed Prophetts”
with those who had recently made elevated claims for the scope of the royal prerogative (the royal
power to act above or beyond the law), the poet may be alluding to the preachers—in particular, Robert
Sibthorpe and Roger Manwaring—who had given controversial sermons in 1627 defending the royal
authority to levy the extra-parliamentary forced loan.

62 *Chymists stone:* i.e. the alchemists’ stone, that would transmute base metals into gold.

63 *Oh scorned hearse...one white line?:* commendatory elegies were customarily attached to funeral
hearse.

64 *temporizing Frends:* fair-weather friends.

65 *The hornes...For bloodie Joab:* King David’s nephew Joab was killed, on Solomon’s orders, for the
murders of Abner and Amasa. Attempting in vain to escape his fate, Joab had “fled unto the tabernacle
of the Lord, and caught hold on the horns of the altar” (1 Kings 2.28-34).

66 *lyme-twiggs:* twigs coated with a sticky form of sap known as lime and used to trap small birds.

67 *Perrywiggs:* i.e. periwigs; wigs.

68 *Aurora:* goddess of the dawn.
69  *Pegasus*: mythical winged horse.
Notes. Unlike most of the “Buckingham-in-hell” libels, this striking and lengthy (though possibly incomplete) poem depicts the Duke in a horrifyingly realistic—rather than a comic or classicized—hell. Although the poet lays bare many of the favourite’s sins, he does not dwell on specifics and arguably generates a certain amount of sympathy for the tormented sinner.

“The Duke of Buck: his Ghost”

Ye gasty Spiritts that haunt the gloomy night
With fearfull howlings all approach my sight
Lett your sad shreeks like Mandrakes fatal groanes
m’assistants bee t’expresse the depth of moanes
and with Infernall Tapers round this place
that each eye may behould my dismall face
and there those bloody caracters unfould
engraven in envy and ambitious mould
O let each Accent with compassion pearce
the Brazen Bulwark of this Universe
That whilst my glowing tongue shall scorch your ears
your hearts may thawe into a dewe of Teares.

From pitchy darknes and eternall woes
Greifes Laborinth, where gnashing sorrowes flowes
From fyery draggons, and from croaking Toades
With dyrefull yellings, ecchoing dolefull Oades
From loathsome stench of feinds, from flashing flakes
from fearfull shadowes and from poysned lakes
From darkest dungeon of hells deepe Abisse,
where joy’s unknowne, but all confusion is,
Loe my poore soule (exil’d to broyling flames
and doom’d to crall in everlasting streames
of woe and bitternes) from lowest grave
(through that seald priviledge wee damned have
to walke in death; till those immortall steynes
hatch’t in the bosome of our youthfull veynes
be purg’d from of the earth) with horror sounds
(then those prodigious Ecchoes which rebounds
from the fell Nightbirds\(^5\) tunelesse beake) salutes
the Machine of this world; which prostitutes
her knees, to things degenerate from kinde
things mortall seeing, but immortall blinde.
I Caytiffe\(^6\) now, not long since wing’d with fame
made glorious by that stile of Buckinghame
the Eye of Kings; chief Steeresman to a state
Imperious; in honour fortunate
A sceptre Scociate,\(^7\) a Soveraign deere
the Loadstarr\(^8\) of Great Brittaines hemisphere
Fixt in a Royal cave, for none to see
but the transparent Eye of Majestye
Like uncarv’d pumice in a file of pearle
A Prince, a duke, a Marquesse & an Earle
A Count, a Viscount, Lord & Knight\(^9\) and all
of vyolent birth; but of more vyolent fall
Who kick’t at heavens bright browe with scornefull heele
making Olimpus\(^10\) stoope, and Atlas\(^11\) kneele
As if in Phoebus\(^12\) chaire he meant to Raigne
and court bright Cinthia\(^13\) in great Charles wayne\(^14\)
and with the gods from Pole to Pole rechase
Heaven’s starry Nimphs,\(^15\) along the Milky rase\(^16\)
Much like that Piramyde by Gyant built,
Whose furious pride att heaven did run a tilt
Striving to scale Joves Towers,\(^17\) make gods to yeild
and pitch the collours in Elizeums feilds\(^18\)

Even soe my thoughts, back’t on, with strong desire
Like Lebanon’s tall cedars still aspires
For as the Nurse the little babe doth shew
first how to stand, then by degrees to goe
Soo nature taught mee, ere I gan to rise
being prompt by subtile art, to Nimrodize
Till that my wings reaching supernal Thrones
singeing thei’re plumes against the burning zoanes
Downe tumbled Pelion, uppon Ossa steepe
and both on Icarius in Icarian deepe
Thus when I deem’d my acts by fortunes cherish’t
my Anchor broke, and all my fortunes perish’t
Oft by aspiring wee assume to gett
but thereby prove unto ourselves a Nett
For when securite had dul’d desire
Which with scorching had pass’d ambitious fyre
Even in the bloome and springtide of my dayes
Fearlesse of wrath and gardlesse of my wayes
Amid’st my imperfecions full of bread,
heaven showred contagion on my fearing head
barring mee out those lasting dores of glorye
and shutt mee in this fearfull Consistorye
Whose utmost secretts to relate and tell
the strange inactures of our bayfull cell
O man ’twould make thee horidly to looke
as if with some revengefull Plannett strooke
disbulke thy Microfine make thy bloud
start from thy azure channells like a flood
shatter thy soule to atomes, change thy sight
like to the sheeted visions of the night
but these ymmortall blazons are forebidd
To carnall intellects and therefore hidd.
Thou greate directresse of the night stand still
till I have gorg’d each yawning eare with fill
of direfull storye, make each stepp a station
till I have consumate this sadd Narration
And all yow hoast of heaven withdrawe your eyes
least from theire vengefull frontletts should arise
more horride deluges of cominacion
against this wretched compound of damnacion

Oh what is man whose Origine and birth
Conceives their structure from a clodd of earth
from a poore abject mould his some of life
a living death a magozine of strife
Indeede the soule it is Etheriall
extract from breath, eterne, which never shall
suffer corrupcion, else were sinners blest
and in the end our sins should fynde a rest
If voyd of reason with the soulesse creature
we should reteyne, but only sense & feature
would I had been a beast, to bee noe more
Or still lock’t upp in Natures unknowne store
within those inesentiall shades of peace
before conception gave my life increase
Oh heaven most cruell to ordayne creation
the harbinger and prologue to damnacion
To snatch att fraylty by the Infant heele
and dash her braines ’gainst hell with hands of steele
was I unto my parents acts agreeing?
Or did I seale consent unto my being?
punish th’offenders, let the act goe free
offences without actors cannot bee
But sin takes life and soe it chaunces
the roote being wither’d, still survives the branches
Thus I of our first parents sin partaker\textsuperscript{34}
did reassay\textsuperscript{35} to justle with my Maker
Till all the elements did gaze with wonder
to heare the heavens rebound with earthly thunder

Oh ye Inhabitants on th’Elizean dales\textsuperscript{36}
and did I c’leap\textsuperscript{37} yow cruel? reason fayles
and they were words on passions anvile forg’d
temper’d with drugs of woe & so disgorg’d;
Ye girded mee with wisdomes swadling cloathes
to knowe the Thistle from Vermillion Rose
T’have shun’d the perill of that poysoonous grape
when hell did court mee in an angells shape
Had grace stept in ’twixt me and Satans kisse
I had been rang’d among the Saints ere this,
presented Orizons;\textsuperscript{38} to greate Johva’h’s\textsuperscript{39} shrine
and chaunted Halleluiah to the Tryne;\textsuperscript{40}
But when the gods did lend their hand to save mee
I grapled fast what hell and nature gave mee,
Till sinne through custome cauteriz’d my soule
makeing lardge passage in’t; I dranke that boule
Of Hecatts triple ban;\textsuperscript{41} scorn’d prohibition
made my heart thunderproof gain’st all contrition
On gloryes ayery topp I strive to fix
the standard of my hopes, there to commix
the fullnes of my will; though to attaine it
I harrow’d\textsuperscript{42} (hell) I would throug hell to gaine it
Oh sacriledge to heaven, when humane reason
thus tray tors ’gainst her self with blast of treason
O nature most accur’st thus to assay
with sugred pills, thy Infant, to betray
the bosome suckling which thy paps did cherish
thy selfe hath slaughtered by thy hands did perish
Most like a Stepdame, with Hyena’s guiles steeping foule murder under fawning smiles
But though thy face to veiwe presents noe steynes
yet sable sins lurke in thy purple veynes
From fayrest flowers strong poyson oft proceeds
and fayrest shows, oft harbour fowlest deedes
O would Cymerean darknes had possest thee
when first to my composure thou addressed thee
My pensill had bin guiltlesse of thy forme
if metamorphis’d to the vilest worme
And I in concaves of my Mothers wombe
had chang’d my Mansion to a peacefull Tombe.
I emulate the happines of Flyes;
the least of Natures wonders, in what wise
they spend the little breviate of their tyme
in harmlesse solace, subject to noe cryme
and when the destinies have clipt their wings
from their interments no memoriall springs
Noe swelling eylidds, nor obsequious rites
theire dust no marble cerements invites
Noe weeping Elegye, noe mournfull freind
about theire funerall hearses doe attend
Noe sting of conscience doth affright their grave
in Brasen volumes they their Quietues have
In mirth they live, peace they dye, & than
they are noe more; but ’tis not soe with man
When our portent is com’d, that we must goe
it is our entrance into greater woe.
The dawne and solstice\textsuperscript{53} of our days are sinn
and with our Autume doth our feares beginne
Oh lett that day bee subject of all scorne
wherein they said there is a Manchild borne
and lett it from all light exiled bee
least it disteine lights native puritye
Let darknes shadowe it and vayle of Night
with direful apparitions dread each sight
Whil’st howling doggs the night crow and the drake\textsuperscript{54}
to Goblins, Goasts and Fayryes musicke make
And buzzing Screechowles, boding ruthfull things
beating each casement with theire fatall wings
and lett theire Echoes like to passing bells
in order chime my ever dying knells.

What bleareyde Plannett, gloring on my birth\textsuperscript{55}
Could not even then returne mee to the earth
O may it bee a gazing stock to all
and beare the bitter curses of my fall
May it bee ever out of course and jarre
and by a nickname called the wandring starre
Let heaven make warre against it & on earth
Let wolves with howlings chardg it with my birth;
My life is made the glasse, the Schoole, the booke
wherein each eye may learne may reade, may looke
O lett it drawe from thence a brinish sea
and stretch compassion to the highest kea
and with my carcase I beseech you all
graunt my yet living name a funerall.
When first my name in Englands corte was spred
and in the eares of all men registred
unto some humble cottage would I’d gone
remote from sorrowe, to have liv’d alone
or in oblivions darkest cell, to have
turn’d Anchorite, and digg’d myself a grave
And with Heraclitus bewayld our ages
whose present acts, their future woes presages
Would on tymes swiftest wings I had been borne
into some desert, helpless and forlorn
and there both night and day ever to weepe
till age should charme me with eternall sleepe
Would I had led my life uppon the playnes
guiding my flocks ’mong’st other Shepard swaines
and there worn out my little phyle of dayes
chaunting my pretty lambs with roundelayes then had my acts, and with my acts my name perish’t togeather, and escaped shame.
But wounds past cure cannot be film’d with care
but every thought still adds unto despaire
What the impartiall preassign’d to bee
Inviolat standeth, as the Medes decree,
Mortalles may strive and striving often gayne
but when gainst heaven they strive, tis all in vayne.
Now did my glorye spred its goulden wings
and by the sacred influence of Kings
like to the flowers in continewall prime
Covers the face of Brittaynes beauteous clyme
As some portenteous figure in the Ayre
(precedent to some Omen) doth declare
The fearce occurences of strange events
drawne the eyes of all the Elements
as wondergazers and attendants on it,
Whil’st each conjecture ruminates uppon it.
Soe flock’t togeather all the kingdomes eyes
Contract as in one browe to my arrise;
Not dreaming that my blazing did prefate\(^62\)
a declination to theire palmye state
or my advauncement groundwork and imition\(^63\)
to Murders, Treasons, Incest\(^64\) and ambition.
But as a huge and massy cannon, if
rays’d on the sommett of some towring cliffe
with greater vyolence and more commaund
batters all opposicions that withstand
his potent vollyes, whilst the neighbouring rocks
start att the roare of his Cyclopean shocks\(^65\)
and with the terror of his thunder fills
the feilds, the valleyes and the lesser hills;
Soe I advaunced by a Regall powre
on each repugnant Thunderbolts did showre
subduing Heroes to my conquering beck
setting my foote on each retorting\(^67\) necke
that durst presume to paralell my grace
or cover mischiefe with a better face.
Greate Albions Monarch\(^68\) whose divinest hand
first fix’t my foot steppes uppon gloryes land
(whereto I rush’t as to a second birth)
where every hillock was perfum’d with mirth,
each sprigg was gould, each feild a spangled mead\(^69\)
bestraw’d with dyamonds and with a purple spred
whose glittering paths my servile\(^70\) heele unus’d
to tread with majesty, I base abusd
deceaving him whose heart was foe to guile
guilding my Temples with a Judas\(^71\) smile
And as the kidd which pastimes on the plaines
forsakes the tender dugg, the wanton traines
of bubling founteines and the honyed feild
with abundance doth her fatness yeild
And battons on some craggy mounteyne, where
the eye of safety never slept, but feare
Fills hope with desperacion; I soe did I
Clyming to chaunge honnors for Soveraignity
But two things lack’t to perfect my renowne
the countryes favour, and the kingdomes crowne
Oft att the Throne I peeped through my spheare
but then the sunne did in myne eyes appeare
whose burning splendor sealed on my face
made hopings frustrate of that glorious place.
My name that scarce ere while could ratifye
a positive knowledge in the meanest eye
Which irrespect, att most vulgaritye
free from commerce of popularitie,
Coop’d in oblivion with those wretched bratts,
Bratts on whome triumphing fortune conculcates
As if confined to her boundlesse hate
by power of some irrevocable fate.
I but of late in Midnights mantle caught
from publique speculation, where noe thought
borne with Mercurian wing in my pursuite
or humane eye could ever prosecute
Nor did my revolucions once surmise
this gloomy sett, should ever hope for rise
Loe now the glorious god of day awakes
and from my feete these darkened fetters shakes
Lights from his Chariott, and with powerful charmes
Clipps Hyacinth’s in his sacred armes
Now greate Apollo on my cheeke doth laugh
and every knee bowes to the golden calfe
I daunce on honnors goulden mounting topp
a Prince my scociate, and a King my propp
Elbowe my betters and my equalls sleight
as the proud Eagle doth the Region Kyte
The statelye pynes and Cedars of the feild
submissive homage to my greatnes yield
The little fountaines pratling to the wayles
telling of Buckingham each other tayles
Each optique passed this ravish’t from the deepe
desperations Sea, begins to creepe
and fynding motion through that sacred fyre
sent from Majesticke rayes how to aspire
direccions foggy vapours doth deride
Striving with Dedal to bee dyefyd
and made although a peacefull Empyres scarr
in majestys bright heaven a regnant starr
And now ambition swelling to her brim
Conniving deluges to each rotten limbe
of the distracted state, burst’s forth & rages
to th’utter ruine of ensuing ages
And least those now blowne sparks of wanton will
whose ardor each superbious act doth fill
with vigirous flames, should hide in their creacion
through want of nutrimentall applicacion.
I lur’d unto my fist an ayry crewe
of fawning Cicophants, that could renew
And with their oyley bellowings reinsense
the wayning light of my concupisence
Vertue I made a Curtezan to vyce
wherewith being masked might the more entice
Gloryes Pavillion changed to a sty
e of loathsome lust, and base Hipocrisy
I pluck’t the Lillyes from fayre honnors bedd
and planted seede of Draggons in their stedd
Transform’d theire beautye to deformed hewe
the Rose to Nettle & sweete Tyme to Rewe.

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fols. 6r-10v

1 Mandrakes fatal groanes: when pulled from the ground, the mandrake plant was supposed to emit a horrific scream that could strike unwary listeners dead.

2 Tapers: candles.

3 Brazen: literally brass, or hardened.

4 crall: i.e. crawl.

5 the fell Nightbirds: the screech owl’s.

6 Caytiffe: i.e. caitiff; villain.

7 A sceptre Scociate: an associate of a sceptre; a king’s associate.

8 the Loadstarr: i.e. the lodestar; the pole or guiding star, by which sailors navigated.

9 A Prince...Lord & Knight: Buckingham held numerous aristocratic titles (including Earl, Marquis and Duke of Buckingham, Viscount Villiers, Earl of Coventry, and Baron Whaddon), as well as a knighthood.

10 Olimpus: Mount Olympus, the seat of the gods.

11 Atlas: in classical myth, Atlas held up the heavens.

12 Phoebus: god of the sun.
Cinthia: goddess of the moon.

Charles wayne: “Charles’s wain” (wagon) was a group of seven stars in the Great Bear constellation.

Heaven’s starry Nimphs: female goddesses.

Milky rase: i.e. the Milky rays; alluding to the galaxy the Milky Way, or, more generally, to a heavenly path. The phrase could also have a sexual connotation, alluding to the female breast.

that Piramyde by Gyant built...Joves Towers: in the classical myth of the giants’ war with the gods, the giants attempted to scale Mount Olympus by piling Mount Pelion upon Mount Ossa.

Elizeums fields: the Elysian Fields, the realm of the blessed souls in the afterlife; here meaning heaven.

Lebanons tall cedars: “For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan” (Isaiah 2.12-13).

to Nimrodize: to act like a tyrant. Nimrod is depicted in Genesis 10:8-12 as “a mighty one in the earth” and “a mighty hunter”.

supernal: on high; heavenly.

Downe tumbled Pelion, uppon Ossa steepe: Pelion and Ossa were the two mountains the giants attempted to pile upon each other to scale Olympus during their war with the gods.

Icarius in Icarian deepe: in the classical myth, Icarus flew too close to the sun which melted the wax holding on his wings, plunging him to his death in the waters below, thereafter known as the Icarian Sea.

inactures: the OED hesitantly defines “enacture” as a “carrying into act, fulfilment”.

bayfull: baleful; or, perhaps, full of baying, the howling of dogs.

with some revengefull Plannett strooke: in astrological thinking, to be under the influence of a revengeful planet.

disbulke thy Microfine: obscure. In context, it should refer to another type of severe bodily reaction (possibly the shedding of skin) that would occur if the true nature of hell were revealed to the living.

azure channells: blue veins.
29 blazons: sights, shows.

30 Thou greate directresse of the night: the moon.

31 frontletts: foreheads.

32 cominacion: i.e. commination; threat of divine punishment.

33 eterne: eternal.

34 of our first parents sin partaker: all humans were understood to have inherited original sin from Adam and Eve.

35 reessay: try again.

36 th’Elizean dales: the Elysian Fields, resting place of the blessed in the afterlife; heaven.

37 c’leap: i.e. clepe; call.

38 Orizons: prayers.

39 Johva’hs: i.e. Jehova’s; God’s.


41 Hecatts triple ban: the triple curse of Hecate. Hecate was a three-headed goddess of the underworld, patron of demons and instructor in witchcraft.

42 harrow’d: plundered.

43 paps: breasts.

44 Hyena’s guiles: the hyena was associated with falsity and treachery.

45 sable: black.

46 Cymerean: in classical myth, the Cimmerii lived in a land enshrouded in darkness.

47 composure: making, composition.

48 emulate: envy, aspire to.

49 cerements: shrouds for the dead.
Brasen: brass.

Quietues: i.e. quietus; rest.

Portent: doom.

Solstice: mid-point.

Drake: serpent, dragon.

What bleareyde Plannett...birth: astrological theory contended that the dominant planet (here “gloring”; shining or glowering) at the time of a child’s birth would influence the child’s destiny.

Anchorite: hermit.

Heraclitus: an ancient Greek philosopher.

Roundelayes: songs.

Film’d: covered up.

What the impartiall preassign’d...in vayne: presumably a reference to the divine predestination of human fates. Predestination is immutable, like the laws (“decree”) of the Medes and Persians (see Daniel 6.8).

As some portenteous...ruminates uppon it: the analogy is to a portent, an aberrant occurrence in nature that was presumed to presage some future event or calamity.

Prefate: preface, or perhaps predict.

Imition: i.e. immission; introduction to, insertion in.

Incest: unlike murder, treason and ambition, this charge was not usually levelled at Buckingham.

Cyclopean shocks: some mythic traditions assert that the one-eyed Cyclops giants gave Zeus his thunderbolts, while others depict them as workers in the god Vulcan’s metal forge. Both traditions might therefore explain the noise to which this line alludes.

Beck: gesture of command and control.

Retorting: resisting, refusing.

Greate Albions Monarch: James I.
mead: meadow.

servile: Buckingham’s relatively humble (yet undoubtedly gentle) social origins were a target of much criticism.

Judas: i.e. Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Christ.

dugg: udder, teat.

traines: currents.

popularity: in early seventeenth-century political discourse, “popularity” could often imply popular rebelliousness.

conculcates: tramps under foot.

Mercurian wing: the god Mercury, messenger of the gods, was often depicted with winged sandals.

god of day: Apollo-Phoebus.

Clipps: embraces.

Hyacinth’s: Hyacinth was a Spartan youth loved by Apollo.

the golden calfe: the golden idol worshipped by the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 32).

a Prince: Prince Charles.

the Region Kyte: the scavenger bird (kite) of the sky.

The statelye pynes and Cedars: the great and powerful; the English nobility.

wayles: i.e. wales; waves or currents.

optique: unclear; perhaps “eye” works best.

Dedal: Daedalus, whose invention of wings allowed him to fly free from captivity in Crete.

superbious: arrogant.

Gloryes Pavillion: the royal court.

sweete Tyme to Rewe: the herbs thyme and rue. Thyme is sweet, rue bitter.
Pii Celebrating Felton

Pii1  Anagram on John Felton

Notes. The surviving anagrams on John Felton discover politically resonant messages in the scrambled letters of the assassin's name. Here the poorly anagrammed name resolves into one of the basic arguments of contemporary pro-Felton writings, that Buckingham's murder was not a crime.

John Felton: NO FELLON

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 12v
Pii2 Anagram on John Felton

Notes. This anagram alludes to Felton’s image as a patriot martyr, steadfast in his duty and willing to suffer the consequences of his deed. Many contemporaries noted, for instance, that Felton had refused to escape after the assassination despite the plentiful opportunities afforded by the chaos that ensued.

JOHN PHELTON

Oh flye not!

Source. Court and Times of Charles I 1.390
**Notes.** Like a number of contemporary writers, this poet imaginatively reconstructs Felton’s motives for murdering Buckingham. Felton himself wrote a number of statements justifying and explaining his actions; the most widely circulated were two arguments that he had transcribed and sewn into his hatband before killing the Duke. Copies of the two statements follow this poem in the manuscript. Holstun (179) briefly explores the poem’s “bold workmanship” and its “casuistically strained combination of condemnation and forgiveness”.

“1628 Felton’s dreame Aug. 22th being the night before the murder”

Felton, awake, & cheare thyselfe from sorrow,
Thy hand must strike the Duke, & that to morrow;
The heavens have spoke it, & soe ’tis decreed,
Their praiers are heard, thou only mak’st him bleed.
Feare not thy strength, thou only art sett on
By him, whose Justice doth attend thy doome.
Lambe gott the start, & yett how e’re it fell,
He spurres for kingdomes, though it be to hell.
Thou must o’rethrow his plott, and tydings bring,
He mist his marke, to aime at Irelands Kinge.
The deed is done, the countries good is Felton,
Both heard, & seene, & trusted, now is smelt on.
Go forward in the action, doe not stand,
’Twere better two suffer, than all the land.
Next favourite is Holland, in whose place,
Rich meritts honour farre above his grace.
If Rich were next, this truely dare I say,
Riches would crowne the land that day.
Pray heavens graunt pardon, & thy selfe assure,
The countries service striveth to procure
The day ne’er ending with praiers joyn’d with thine,
T’obtain forgiveness for the bloody crime.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 102r

Pii3

1 Lambe gott the start: Buckingham’s alleged associate, John Lambe, convicted witch and rapist, and notorious astrologer-physician, was murdered by a London mob in June 1628.

2 He: i.e. Buckingham.

3 to aime at Irelands Kinge: Walter Yonge’s newsdiary entries in the days following Buckingham’s assassination recorded reports that the Duke had been planning to sail with an army to become Viceroy of Ireland (BL Add. MS 35331, fol. 24v).

4 Felton: the poet puns here on “Felton” and “felt on”.

5 Next favourite is Holland...that day: these somewhat knotty lines depend on a pun on the family name of Henry Rich, Earl of Holland, thought by some observers to be Buckingham’s natural successor as court favourite. The lines can be read to imply that a different “Rich”—by which the poet probably meant Holland’s elder brother Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick, a leading Puritan and oppositional peer—was better suited for this kind of power.
Notes. This poem defends Felton’s actions as “noe murther but an Execution”, the exercise of justice on a poisoner who had murdered “right, religion, pyetye”. Like a number of anti-Buckingham poets who had to wrestle with Charles I’s responsibility for his favourite’s misrule, the author of this verse is pulled toward some fairly critical remarks about the King in his concluding couplet.

“In Obitum Ducis”

The heavens approve brave Feltons resolution
that breath’d noe murther but an Execution
in stabbinge him that stab’d a world of wightes
with poyson not with poyniards; which were lightes
to th’Cloudy state of our eclipsed nation
late tortured by an upstart generation
of snakeish vypers with their spawny broode
which had no sence of Ill noe touch of good.
Thus hath the will of justice murthered thee
that murthered right, religion, pyetye:
The lawes in force agayne for hees in hell
that broake those spyders webs composde soe well
Oh that our prince those lawes would foster more
then should we flourish as we did before.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 13v

Pii4

1 In Obitum Ducis: “On the Death of the Duke”.

2 wightes: people.

3 stab’d a world...with poyniards: allusion to the charge, first levelled in George Eglisham’s 1626
*Forerunner of Revenge*, that Buckingham had poisoned King James I and several other prominent courtiers. A “poniard” is a type of dagger.
Some say the Duke was gratious, vertuous, good

Notes. This defence of Felton is more playful than is typical, arguing that if Buckingham was as virtuous as his apologists asserted, Felton did him a favour by sending him to his eternal heavenly rewards ahead of schedule.

“On Felton’s killing the Duke”

Some say the Duke was gratious, vertuous, good,
And Felton basely did to spill his blood.
If that were true: What did hee then amisse
In sending him more quicklie to his blisse?
Pale death seemes pleasing to a good Mans Eye,
And onely bad-men are afrayd to die.
Left he this Kingdome to possesse a better?
Why Felton then hath made the Duke his debter.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 188v

Other known sources. Rous 29; Trevelyan Papers 3.172; Wit Restor’d 58; Bodleian MS Ashmole 47, fol. 31r; Bodleian MS Dodsworth 79, fol. 158r; Bodleian MS Douce 357, fol. 18v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 19r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 195; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 78v; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 102v; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 27r; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 45v; BL MS Harley 791, fol. 57r; BL MS Lans. 498, fol. 141v; CUL Add. MS 42, fol. 37v; CUL MS Dd.11.73, fol. 67v; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 12; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 318
Notes. This remarkable poem offers a legalistic and a providential defence of the assassination, and concludes with the stunning and rarely voiced claim that not only an individual king, but also monarchy itself, is subject to divine justice. Holstun (179-181) offers an important extended analysis.

“Upon the Dukes Death”

The Duke is dead, and wee are ridd of strife,
By Feltons hand, that tooke away his life.
Whether that Fact were lawfull or unjust,
In two short Arguments may bee discust:
One: Though the Duke were one whom all did hate,
Being suppos’d a Greivance to the State,
Yet hee a subject was, And thence wee draw
This Argument, Hee ought to die by Law.
Another: Were hee Traytor most apparant,
Yet hee that killd him had noe lawfull warrant,
But as a Murtherer hee did it act,
And ought himself to die for such a Fact.
These bee the Arguments, than which shall need
Noe more to prove it an unlawfull deed.
Now, for an Answere, justly is objected,
When Law was offer’d, it was then neglected:
For when the Commons did, with just intent
Pursue his Faults in open Parliament,¹
The highest Court of Justice, soe supreme
That it hath censur’d Monarches of the Realme,
There might his Grace have had a legall triall,
Had hee not it oppos’d with strong deniall.
But hee then scorn’d, and proudly sett at nought
The howse, and those that him in question brought.
Therefore when Law nor Justice takes noe place,
Some desperate course must serve in such a case.
A rotten Member,² that can have noe cure,
Must bee cutt off to save the body sure:
Soe was the Duke: For when he did withstand
The auntyent course of Justice of this land,
Thinking all meanes too weake to cast him downe,
Being held up by him that weares the crowne;
Even then, when least hee did expect, or know,
By Felton’s hand God wrought his overthrowe.
What shall wee say? Was it Gods will or noe,
That one sinner should kill another soe?
I dare not judge; yet it appeares sometime
God makes one sinner ’venge anothers crime,
That whenas Justice can noe hold-fast take,
Each others ruyne they themselves should make.
But howso’re it is, the case is plaine,
Gods hand was in’t, and the Duke striv’d in vaine:
For what the Parliament did faile to doe,
God did both purpose and performe it too.
Hee would noe threatnings or affronts receive,
Nor noe deepe Pollicies could him deceive,
But when his sinne was ripe, it then must downe
Gods Siccle spares not either King or Crowne.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 189r-190r

Pii6

¹ For when the Commons...open Parliament: allusion to the attempt by the 1626 Parliament to impeach Buckingham.
Member: body part.
Notes. Felton is here represented as a patriot martyr, whose deeds had freed a subjugated nation from an enervating, emasculating humiliation.

“In commendacion of Felton’s fowle murther of the D.”

Why: is our Age turn’d coward, that no Penn

Dares weeping mourne thy glorie? Are all Men

Doom’d to dull Earth at once, that thy great Name

Must suffer in their silence, and thy Fame

Pant to flie higher then their endles hate,

Who toyle to kill thy memory, and bate

The glorie of thy Act? Shall Rome canonize

Him, that to save her did but sacrifice

A single hand, a Martire? Shall not wee,

(If Rome did soe for him) doe more for thee?

That when Crown’d Victorie (growne almost white

On Albions loftie Cliffs) had tane her flight

Into some uncouth corner of the world,

And seated in her roome pale feare, and hurld

Distraction through the land; When every Man

Seem’d his soules coffin, leane and wanne

With expectation of his End; When Wee

(Whom, for soe many yeares, proud France did see

Disposers of her borrowed Crowne) were made a prey

To her high scorne. Oh! who can name the day

(And feeles not a salt deluge in his Eyes)

Wherein such clowdes of sighes and groanes did rise

As dimm’d the sunne; which then amazed stood

To see Alleagiance firmly writ in blood,
Sluc’d from our slaughter’d friends? A day wherein
The heat (rash Duke) of thy ambitious sinne
Unmann’d such noble spirts, that old time
Must lift his hoarie head aloft, and clime
The rockie Monuments of Kings, to finde
Their Equalls: yet thou must stay behinde,
On purpose left, by the malitious Foe,
To doe more harme in peace than warrs could doe,
To trample on their Ruine, and create
Mischiefs, more killing Plagues, to ruinate
Us and our Children; When, unhearted, Wee
Saw all this threatned; but yet could not free
Our vassall’d state: Then (Felton) did the Land
Receive a speedie cure by thy just hand:
Thou stabd’st our Desolation with a stroke,
And in one blowe didst free us from the yoake
Of forraine bondage, That, to buy our Peace,
Unconduit’st all thy blood, and did’st not cease
Till thou hadst wrought thy unexampled deed
Of our Redemption, and hadst made him bleed
That grasp’d the Lives and Fortunes of us all,
Which thou hast timely rescu’d by his Fall.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 190r-191r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 203; BL Add. MS 5832, fol. 197r

\[1\] the D.: the Duke.

\[2\] bate: abate; diminish.
Shall Rome canonize...a Martire?: allusion to the Roman republican patriot hero Mucius Scaevola who, having been captured while attempting to kill the leader of Rome’s enemies, thrust his right hand into a fire, so amazing his intended victim that he released him and eventually negotiated peace with the Romans. On the Felton-Scaevola comparison, see too “The Argument is cold and senselesse clay”.

Albions: England’s.

When Wee...To her high scorne: reference to the humiliation of the English at the hands of French forces during Buckingham’s 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré. The contrast is between the current national humiliation, and England’s military triumphs during the Hundred Years’ War, when the kings of England claimed—and for some years obtained—the French throne. The lines that follow continue to refer to the Ré disaster.

vassall’d: enslaved, subordinated.

the yoake / Of forraine bondage: by alluding to the Exodus story of the Jews’ liberation from Egyptian bondage, this phrase not only turns Felton into a latter-day Moses, but also suggests that Buckingham had worked to subject England to the power of her Catholic enemies, the Spanish and the French.
Immortal Man of glory, whose brave hand

Hath once begun to disenchaint our land

From Magique thrallldome. One proud Man did mate

The Nobles, Gentles, Commons of our state;

Struck Peace and Warr at pleasure, hurld downe all

That to his Idoll Greatnes would not fall

With groveling adoration: Sacred Rent

Of Brittaine, Saxon, Norman Princes spent

Hee on his Panders, Minions, Pimpes, and Whores

Whilst their great Royal Offspring wanted dores

To shutt out Hunger, had not the kinde whelpe

Of good Elizas lyon gave them helpe.

The seats of Justice forc’d say, they lye,

Unto our auntient English Libertie.

The stain of honour, which to deeds of praise

And high atchievements should brave spiritts raise,

The shipps, the Men, the money cast away

Under his onely all confounding sway

Illiads of greife, on topp of which hee bore

Himselfe triumphant, neither trayn’d in lore

Of Arts or Armes: yet in a hautie vast
Debordment of Ambition, now in haste
The cunning Houndhurst must transported bee
To make him the Restorer Mercurie
In an heroick painting, when before
Antwerpian Rubens best skill made him soare,
Ravisht by heavenly powers, unto the skie
Opening, and ready him to deifie
In a bright blissfull Pallace, Fayrie Ile,
Naught but illusion were we, till this guile
Was by thy hand cut off, stout Machabee;
Nor they, nor Rome, nor did Greece ever see
A greater glorie to the Neighbour Flood.
Then sinke all Fables of old Brute and Ludd,
And give thy Statues place. In spight of charme
Of Witch or Wizard, thy more mighty Arme,
With Zeale and Justice arm’d, hath in truth wonne
The prize of Patriott to a Brittish Sonne.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 191v-192r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Douce 357, fol. 17r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 207; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 74v; BL Add. MS 5832, fol. 196v; BL Add. MS 21544, fol. 128r; BL MS Egerton 2026, fol. 64v; V&A MS F48.G.2/1, item 3; Huntington MS 198, 1.158

Pii8

1 mate: probably checkmate, as in chess.

2 Sacred Rent...Pimpes, and Whores: these lines accuse Buckingham of spending royal revenues—the inheritance amassed by England’s ancient and medieval rulers, the Britons, the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans—on his favourites (“Minions”), and on his whores and their procurers (“Panders” and “Pimpes”).

3 Whilst their great...gave them helpe: allusion to the sufferings of the Elector Palatine, Frederick V, and his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of James I, following their expulsion from Bohemia and from their
ancestral lands in the Palatinate in 1619-1621. Frederick and Elizabeth eventually found refuge under Dutch protection at The Hague. The “kind whelpe / Of good Elizas lyon” that assisted the Palatines were the Dutch heirs (“whelpe”) of the Netherlands rebels (the Netherlands were often cartographically represented as a lion) against Spain, rebels who had been aided by Elizabeth I (“good Eliza”).

4. *The seats of Justice...English Libertie:* this couplet charges Buckingham with corrupting the legal system, and conniving in forms of arbitrary government that violated English liberties.

5. *The stain of honour...or Armes:* allusive reference to Buckingham’s calamitous leadership of the English war effort, 1625-28. “Iliad”, as used in the phrase “Iliads of greife”, may mean “a long series of disasters” *(OED).*


7. *The cunning Houndhurst...heroick painting:* reference to an identifiable portrait of the Duke, painted by the Dutch artist Gerrit Van Honthorst in the spring and summer of 1628, which depicted Buckingham in the guise of the god Mercury, presenting the seven liberal arts to Apollo and Diana, represented as Charles and his Queen, Henrietta Maria.

8. *Antwerpian Rubens...Fayrie Ile:* this almost certainly refers to Peter Paul Rubens’ “Apotheosis of Buckingham”, painted between 1625 and 1627 and hung on the ceiling of Buckingham’s London residence at York House. The painting depicts the Duke being carried up into the sky.

9. *stout Machabee:* Felton is here compared to the Macabees, who in the second century BC led the Israelite resistance movement against attempts by their Syrian overlords to eradicate Judaism. “Stout” means brave.

10. *Fables of old Brute and Ludd:* the mythic version of the origins of Britain, enshrined in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s twelfth-century narrative history, attributed the founding of the nation to Brutus, a descendant of the Trojan hero and legendary founder of Rome, Aeneas. According to Geoffrey, King Lud enlarged and renovated Brutus’s city “Troynovant”, on the site of modern London, renaming it Caire-Lud or Lud’s town.

11. *In spight of charme...of Wizard:* allusion to Buckingham’s supposed use of witchcraft—whether supplied by his mother, Mary, Countess of Buckingham, or his alleged associate, the convicted witch John Lambe—to secure his hold on power.
Pii9  

Immortal man of glory, whose stout hand

Notes. This acrostic shares an almost identical first line with the longer poem “Immortall Man of glorie, whose brave hand”. The allusion to “new studied torments” suggests that this verse was prompted in part by the news that the authorities intended to torture Felton to elicit a full confession of his supposed co-conspirators.

I mmortal man of glory, whose stout\(^1\) hand
O ne lustfull creature hath cut from our land
H ave patience for to suffer, for thy name
N or time, nor hower ever shall defame.
F ear nere possest thy manly brest
E ach torment that thou sufferest bringest rest.
L et ther new studied torments use cruilty
T is to ther shame, ads glory unto thee
O h may thy soul rest in blest peace secure
N o matter what thy body here endure

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 12v

Pii9

\(^{1}\) stout: brave.
Notes. On 26 October 1628, Attorney-General Robert Heath questioned Ben Jonson as the suspected author of this widely circulated poem on the assassin Felton. Jonson admitted having read the verses at the antiquarian Sir Robert Cotton’s house, but assured Heath that he was not the author. “Common fame”, Jonson confessed, attributed the poem to the Oxford scholar, Zouch Townley (Original Papers 72-73). On 14 November, John Pory informed Joseph Mead that Townley, “a minister of rare parts, that should have come into the Star Chamber, ore tenus, for writing of verses ‘To his confined friend, Mr. Felton,’ is got safe over to the Hague where some say he will print an apology for the fact” (Court and Times of Charles I 1.427). A number of sources (see list below) transcribe the final four lines as a discrete poem; one, the commonplace book of Sir John Perceval, probably compiled c.1646-49 while Perceval was a student at Magdalene College, Cambridge (BL Add. MS 47111), transcribes lines 11-20 as a discrete poem. Bellany (“Libels in Action” 108) reads the poem as a subversion of the authorities’ punitive rituals that had been designed to demonize the assassin, while Barton (315-17) offers an appreciation of the poem’s Jonsonian style.

“To his confined Friend, Mr Felton”

Enjoy thy Bondage; make thy Prison know
Thou hast a Libertie thou canst not owe
To those base Punishments; keep’t entire, since
Nothing but guilt shackles the Conscience.
I dare not tempt they¹ valient blood to whay,²
Enfeebling it to pittie, nor dare pray
Thy Act may Mercie finde, least thy great Storie
Loose somewhat of its Miracle and Glorie.
I wish thy Meritt, labourd Crueltie;³
Stout Vengeance best befittes thy Memorie.
For I would have posteritie to heare,
Hee that can bravely do, can bravely beare.
Tortures seeme great in a Cowards Eye.
’Tis no great thing to suffer, lesse to die.
Should all the clowdes fall out, and in that strife,
Lightning and thunder send to take my life,
I would applaude the Wisdome of my Fate,
Which knew to valew mee at such a rate,
As at my Fall to trouble all the skie,
Empting upon mee Joves full Armorie.⁴
Serve in your sharpest Mischiefs: use your Rack;⁵
Enlarge each Joint, and make each sinew crack:
Thy soule before was streightned,⁶ Thanke thy doome,
To shew her vertue shee hath larger roome.
Yet, sure, if every Arterie were broke,
Thou wouldst finde strength for such another stroke.
And now I leave thee unto death and Fame,
Which lives, to shake Ambition with thy name:
And if it were not sinne, the Court by it
Should hourely swear before the Favourite.
Farewell: for thy brave sake wee shall not send
Henceforth Commaunders Enemies to defend:⁷
Nor will it ever our just Monarch please
To keep an Admiral⁸ to loose our Seas.
Farewell: undaunted stand, and joy to bee
Of publique sorrow the Epitomie.
Let the Duke’s name solace and Crowne thy thrall:⁹
All wee by him did suffer, Thou for all.
And I dare boldlie write, as thou dar’st dye,
Stout¹⁰ Felton, Englands Ransome, heere doth lye.
If idle Passingers aske, who lies heere,
Let the Dukes toomb this for Inscription beare.
Paint Cales and Ree:¹¹ Make French and Spanish laugh,
Add Englands shame, And there’s his Epitaph.
Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 192v-193v

Other known sources. Court and Times of Charles I 1.427; Wit Restor’d 56; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 51r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 14v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 91; Bodleian MS Malone 21, fol. 4r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 205; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 34r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 142, fol. 42v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 199, p. 62; BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 63v; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 86r; BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 42v; BL Add. MS 47111, fol. 4v; BL MS Egerton 2026, fol. 65r; BL MS Harley 6383, fol. 28v; BL MS Harley 6931, fol. 48r; BL MS Harley 7319, fol. 2r; BL MS Sloane 1199, fol. 74v; BL MS Sloane 1792, fol. 114v; BL MS Sloane 4178, fol. 63r; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 29r; V&A MS F48.G.2/1, item 3; Beinecke MS Osborn Box 12 no. 5, fol. 18v; Folger MS V.a.97, p. 21; Folger MS V.a.125, fol. 11r; Folger MS V.b.43, fol. 33v; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 11; Huntington MS HM 198, 2.152; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 45; Rosenbach MS 240/2, fol. 93r

Known sources of shorter version. Bodleian MS Don. b.8, p. 212 and p. 368; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 26r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 153, fol. 10r; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 40r; BL MS Egerton 2026, fol. 12r

Pii10

1 they: probable scribal error; read “thy”.

2 whay: in this context, the whey is the watery part or serum of the blood.

3 labourd Crueltie: torture. Reports were widespread that Felton was to be or had been tortured in the Tower of London.

4 Joves full Armorie: thunderbolts were the weapons of Jove, the king of the gods.

5 Rack: an instrument of torture that inflicted great pain by forcibly stretching the victim’s limbs.

6 streightned: cramped, confined, imprisoned.

7 Commaunders Enemies to defend: Buckingham was popularly blamed for the failures of the military expeditions under his command, in particular the 1627 expedition to Ré, the disastrous outcome of which was attributed to Buckingham’s cowardice, incompetence and treachery (see Section O).

8 Admiral: Buckingham had been appointed Lord Admiral in 1619.

9 thrall: captivity, suffering.

10 Stout: brave.
11 *Cales and Ree*: the two great failed military expeditions of the 1620s: to Cadiz in 1625 and to the Ile de Ré in 1627. Buckingham commanded the latter in person and was responsible for planning the former.
Sir, I your servant, (who have sett you free)

Christ's freeman am, your Prisoner though I bee
Have one good boone to be begg of our good King:
Not libertie, nor life, nor noe such thing:
But that you would Gods Mercie magnifie,
For that salvation hee hath wrought by mee.
For know (great Charles) how high thou honour'd art
To bee but King of Mee, of soe stout heart.
One Angell slew one night (none left alive)
Of hundred thousands fower-score and five.
I, with one stroke, thy Kingdomes all, and thee,
With Millions (slaves) have sett at libertie.
When David had Goliah cast to ground,
How full was Israels campe with joyfull sound?
Their cause was lesse: your Joy, let it be more,
Though I a thousand deaths should die therefore.
If I had lives to lose, or daies to end,
I would them all in such like service spend:
All deathes I would contemne, my lives all being,
My God to honour, my countrie free, and King.
I know what Phinees did; and Hebers wife,
And Ehud, Israells Judge, with Eglons life:
And I did heare, and see, and know, too well,
What Evill was done our English Israell:
And I had warrant seal’d, and sent from heaven
My worke to doe: And soe the blow is given:
Heere I may suffer: Sing I shall doe there;
And now condemn’d; then quit 6 I shall appeare.
And must I die? yet shall I live againe:
To dust I must; but I shall rise to Raigne.
My death is due to him who gave mee life:
And when I die, I pray may die all strife.
A happie life and death was graunted Mee,
To live for Peace, and die for Liberty.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 195v-196r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 33r

Pii11

1  boone: favour.

2  stout: brave.

3  One Angell slew...fower-score and five: allusion to the destruction of the Assyrians: “And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand” (2 Kings 19.35; cf. Isaiah 37.36).

4  When David had Goliah...ground: reference to the boy David’s defeat of the Philistine giant Goliath (1 Samuel 17).

5  I know what...with Eglons life: having been compared to David, Felton is paralleled with three further divinely sanctioned assassins of foreign or tyrannical foes: Phineas, who averted God’s wrath from the Israelites by slaying the Midianitish woman and the Israelite who had brought her (Numbers 25); Jael (or Yael), wife of Heber, who assassinated Sisera, commander of the tyrant Jabin’s army, by driving a nail into his skull (Judges 4.17-24); and Ehud, raised up by God to assassinate the Moabitish tyrant Eglon (Judges 3.12-30).

6  quit: acquitted.
Notes. Formal legal proceedings against Felton were delayed while authorities endeavoured in vain to track down the conspirators they were convinced had helped the assassin plan his crime. Eventually, the authorities abandoned the search and on 27 November 1628 Felton was tried for murder in the court of King's Bench, convicted and sentenced to death. The poet—who is identified in at least one source as James Smith (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37)—challenges the justice of this verdict and subverts the meaning of Felton’s execution. On Smith, see Raylor 55-56. On the poem, see discussions by McRae, who examines its use of legal and political discourse (Literature 133-34), and Norbrook, who notes how the poet took “the instruments of [Felton’s] punishment and sublimated them into spiritual ornaments” (57).

“On Feltons Arraignement”

You auntient Lawes of Right; Can you, for shame,
You, the late Bondmen of great Buckingham,
That at his beck hurl’d Justice round the Orbe
Of Indirection, and could afford
Noe pleasing Plea to the afflicted sence,
Noe remedy to Wrong, but Patience.
Can you (I say) speake death in your decrees,
To one whose life procur’d your Liberties?
Or you, late tongue-ty’d Judges of the land,
Passe sentence on his Act, whose valient hand
Wrencht off your Muzzells, and enfranchiz’d all
Your shackl’d Consciences from one Mans thrall?
But O! his Countrie! What can you verdict on?
If guiltie? ’Tis of your Redemption.
And if there can bee honour in a sinne,
His well Complotting starrs have wrought him in,
Thy fetters (ransom’d England) and thy Feares,
Triumphant, Trophie-like, stout Felton wears
On him like seemely Ornaments, They deck
His Armes and Wrists, and hang about his Neck
Like gingling⁶ Braceletts, And as rich they bee;
So much the cause can alter Miserie.
But wherefore liv’st thou in thy doomes suspense?
The Tyrant Law has double violence:
For all thy fellow Saints have waited long,
And weared time with expectation.
It is thy End that must begin thy Glorie,
No finis shalbee period to thy Storie.
Dye bravely then: For, till thy death be writt,
Thy honour wants a Seale to perfect it.
With peacefull praiers to heaven wee’l waft thy soule,
While every Bell thy Funerall shall toll,
Then each choice spirit ring thee to thy grave,
And with their shouts fright Eccho⁷ from her cave.
Next, write thyne Epitaph. Now, from your Spring
Post, Post yee Sisters, and help Mee to sing,
Lest my unskillfull muse should faile in painting
The worth of one whom Jove⁹ was proud in sainting.

Epitaph
Loe, heere he lies, that with one Arm could more
Than all the Nerves of Parliament before.¹⁰
A Kingdome drunke, and death around it hover’d,
Hee pluckt the sicklie Plume,¹¹ and it recover’d.
    Then England turn Idolatrix¹² at his shrine,
    That lost his owne life for restoring thine.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 194r-195r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 31r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 208
1 Arraignment: an arraignment is a formal preliminary stage in a criminal trial, but the word was often used to refer generally to the trial itself.

2 Bondmen: servants, slaves.

3 beck: command.

4 thrall: bondage, captivity.

5 stout: brave.

6 gingling: i.e. jingling.

7 Eccho: in classical mythology, the nymph Echo lost physical form to become only an echo.

8 Now, from your Spring...to sing: the poet here calls upon the nine Muses (“yee Sisters”) to come from their home near the Castalian spring on Mount Parnassus, to help him write Felton’s epitaph.

9 Jove: king of the gods; here meaning God.

10 that with one Arm...Parliament before: i.e. Felton alone was able to achieve what parliament had attempted but failed to achieve in 1626 and 1628—Buckingham’s removal.

11 Plume: literally a feather, and here figuratively presenting Buckingham as a kind of poisonous adornment that had to be plucked off if the nation was to revive.

12 Idolatrix: idol worshipper.
Notes. This combination of two Latin anagrams on Felton’s name with an explanatory poem urges the assassin to maintain his resolve in the face of death.

Anagra: Iohannes Feltonus
    Non sine fato lues

Idem
    En fas luenti honos
    on the same

Feare not brave Felton sith it is thy fate
that fatall stroake thy life must terminate
Looke in thy name, ah tis thy fate to dy
So fame with fate must bee thy destiny.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2421, fol. 18r-v

Pii13

1 Non sine fato lues: “you suffer not without fate”; i.e. “your destiny is to suffer”.

2 En fas luenti honos: “Behold, honour is the destiny/reward of suffering”.

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936
Pii14  Sorrow and Joy at once possesse my brest

Notes. This poem is written in the assassin’s voice—indeed the copy in BL MS Sloane 826 is attributed to him—and functions as a kind of imagined gallows speech, subverting the political message of the assassin’s rather conventional repentance, delivered from the scaffold at his execution on 29 November.

“Feltons Farewell”

Sorrow and Joy at once possesse my brest.
How can such Contraries together rest?
I greive my Frends and Countrie thus to leave.
I joy I did it of her Foe bereave.
My greife is private, as of flesh and blood
My Joy is publique: ’Tis a publique good.
Let none lament my losse: For, you shall finde,
By losse y’have gained in another kinde.
Since hee that Caused all your Ill is gone,
Ne’re mourne for him that good could doe to none,
But onely pray propitious heavens would send,
For him soe great a Foe, as great a frend.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 193v-194r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 33v
Notes. After Felton’s execution on 29 November 1628, the King ordered the assassin’s body to be hung in chains outside Portsmouth. This is the first, the most widely circulated, and the best of three poems inspired by the King’s decision. Crum (1.357) and Holstun (184 n.219) document a contemporary attribution to “H: Ch:”—Henry Cholmley—but the evidence for this (which appears to depend solely on BL Add. MS 15226) is dubious. The attribution to Cholmley appears not at the end of this poem, but at the end of the following poem in that manuscript, “Here uninterrd suspends, (doubtes to save”, which was written in response to this one (McRae, Literature 72 n.97). Holstun also notes that Bodleian MS Ashmole 38 attributes the poem John Donne, “an indentification”, he insists “we should not reject out of hand”. A number of copies (e.g. Bodleian MS Malone 23) end with a Latin quotation from Lucan’s Pharsalia, “Coelo tegitur qui non habet urnam”, which Holstun renders as, “The Heavens Cover the Graveless”. Several scholars have written on this poem: G. Hammond (65-66) offers a brilliant reading of a “formidable piece of writing”; Holstun (184-86) explores its complex political resonances and literary techniques; Norbrook (55) analyzes the republican energies generated by the poem’s allusion to Lucan; Bellany (“Libels in Action” 109-110) focuses (like Hammond) on the poem’s subversion of the state’s punitive rituals, and elsewhere sketches the dynamics of the three-poem debate on the meaning of Felton’s hanging in chains (“Raylinge Rymes” 306-07); and McRae (Literature 72-75) notes how the libel’s “provocative challenge to authorized meanings prompts a more searching analysis of the institutions and ideologies which set those meanings in place”. For a modern edition, see Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse (148-49).

“Felton’s Epitaph”

Heere uninterr’d suspends (though not to save
Surviving frends th’expences of a grave)
Feltons dead Earth; which to the world must bee
Its owne sadd Monument. His Elegie
As large as Fame; but whether badd or good
I say not: by himself ’twas writ in blood:
For which his bodie is entombd in Ayre,
Archt o’re with heaven, sett with a thousand faire
And glorious diamond Starrs. A Sepulchre
That time can never ruinate, and where
Th’impartiall Worne (which is not brib’d to spare
Princes Corrupt in Marble) cannot share
His Flesh; which oft the charitable skies
Embalme with teares; doeing those Obsequies¹
Belong to Men shall last; and pittyng Fowle²
Contend to beare his bodie to his soule.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 197r

Other known sources. Wit Restor’d 56; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 20; Bodleian MS CCC 328, fols. 11v and 62r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.53, fol. 9r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 12v; Bodleian MS Malone 21, fol. 4v; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 210; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 114r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 147, p. 40; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 53r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 199, p. 56; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 71v; BL Add. MS 15226, fol. 28r; BL Add. MS 47111, fol. 4v; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 26v; BL MS Egerton 1160, fol. 241v; BL MS Harley 3511, fol. 18v; BL MS Harley 6057, fol. 6v; LCRO MS DG 9/2796, p. 10; St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 28r; Folger MS V.a.97, p. 8; Folger MS V.a.125, fol. 12r; Folger MS V.a.319, fol. 1r; Folger MS V.a.322, p. 27; Folger MS V.b.43, fol. 34r; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 27; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 319; Rosenbach MS 240/7, p. 82

¹ Obsequies: funeral rites.

² Belong to Men…pittyng Fowle: in our chosen source this line is almost certainly corrupt; read “Belong to men. Which last’s, till pittyng foule” (Bodleian MS Tanner 465), or “Belong to Men shall last; till pittyng Fowle” (Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse).
Notes. This poem is a direct, line-by-line response to the popular poem on John Felton, “Heere uninterr’d suspends (though not to save”), and is ascribed in the only known manuscript source to “H: Ch:” (probably Henry Cholmley). It is discussed by McRae (Literature 74-75).

Here uninterd suspends, (doubtles to save
hopefull, and freindles, th’expences of a grave
Feltons curst corps, which to the world must bee
I’ts owne fowle Monument his Elegie
wider then fame, which whether badd or good
Judge by himself, bee-smear’d in faultles blood,
For which his bodie is intombd i’th Aire
Shrowded in Clowds, blacke as his Sepulchere
Yet time is pleas’d; and thine partiall worme
Unbribd to Spare, this wretches wretched Urne
His fleshe which ever memorable Skyes
Enbalme, to teache us and Posterities
T’abhorre his fact: shall last till Harpies¹ fowle
through Stix² shall dragge, his Carkas to his sowle.

Source. BL Add. MS 15226, fol. 28r-v

1 Harpies: mythological winged female monsters.

2 Stix: a river in the classical underworld; the reference here implies that Felton’s soul is in hell.
Notes. Whether this poem pre-dates or post-dates the far-better known “Heere uninterr’d suspends (though not to save” is impossible to determine. The poem does, however, closely echo the political sentiments of that poem, and opens with a paraphrase of the line from Lucan’s Pharsalia which is sometimes appended in Latin to versions of the more widely copied work.

“On John Felton”

Wants hee a grave whom heavens doe cover? was hee
Unfortunate in his Catastrophe?
Because hee did not trust a marble stone
With that which needs not feare oblivion
No, no, his tombe like to his fact is high
Outspringing ægips pride; the deity.
That heaven should be his tombe ’twas thought most meet
Ah, heaven his tombe, the aire his winding sheet
A roome then it no lesser could suffice
The actor of so great an enterprise
Which were just or unjust bad or good
Whats that to any blood repayed blood
Whose carcasse for the crawling wormes too good
Doth gorge the Eagells and the faulcons brood
Here felton hung a spectacle of dread
A pendant sword ore proud ambitions head
Whom here the winds embalme with fragrant sents
To whom sad clouds contribute their laments
And time each night upon his tombe presents
   A thousand lights which burnes till day appeare
   And then his requiem sung by winged quiers.

Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 76v
Other known sources. Bodleian MS CCC 328, fol. 63v; Beinecke MS Osborn Box 12 no. 5, fol. 20r

Pii17

1  Wants hee a grave...cover: “they obtaine / Heavens coverture, that have no urnes at all” (Lucan N7r).

2  ægips pride: the pride of Egypt; excessive pomp and arrogance.

3  winding sheet: the cloth sheet wrapped around a corpse before burial.
Notes. This epitaph exemplifies the contemporary urge to present Felton as a heroic patriot martyr, and like many other contemporary works it naively implies that Buckingham’s death would end the friction between king and parliament that had flared up during the mid- and later-1620s.

“Felton’s Tomb-stone”

Is Felton dead? It’s that hee did desire;
Hee needs no Tomb-stone for remembrance sake.
As for his Act, the world must still admire,
Enough to make all Buckinghamians quake.

   His valour great did prove a Roman spirit, ¹
   And by their lawes a thousand heavens meritt.

He did endeavour by one stroke to make
The King and Commons (by him put asunder)
Joyne all in one, and resolution take
To mend all things unto the worlds great wonder.

   Such was his love, pursuing their desire,
   Hee fear’d not death, by Gallows, Rack, ² or Fire.

Now farewell (Felton) take this to thy rest,
Thy fame, thy Name, thy worth doth still abound,
And by Repentance thou are surely blest, ³
And to that end ten thousand praier hast found.

   Where Courage great, for Kingdomes good, is seen,
   That Man is rare, and lasting fame doth winne.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 196v

¹ Roman spirit: i.e. the spirit of the Romans in the age of the republic. Felton was compared to Roman
republican heroes like Scaevola and Curtius in a number of contemporary poems.

2 *Rack:* an instrument of torture. Reports that Felton had been tortured were widespread, and inspired a number of powerful pro-Felton libels (e.g. “Enjoy thy Bondage; make thy Prison know”).

3 *And by Repentance...blest:* Felton did in fact repent his crime in his speech from the gallows on 29 November 1628.
Notes. In the only known source this poem immediately follows “Great Gorge, and art thou gonne” (attributed to “E.K.”), and it is introduced with the note: “The same Author writt these tow Lynes uppon Felton before his death”.

Here Lyes the bonnes off him that did
A thinge, that undone, god forbidd.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 69r
Pii20 Awake, sad Brittaine, and advance at last

Notes. In at least one source, the final two lines of this epitaph on Felton are transcribed as a discrete poem (Bodleian MS Tanner 465).

“On the Duke and Felton”

Awake, sad Brittaine, and advance at last
Thy drooping head: Let all thy sorrowes past
Bee drown’d, and sunke with their owne teares; And now
O’re-looke thy Foes with a triumphant brow.
Thy Foe, Spaines agent, Hollands bane, Romes freind, ¹
By one victorious hand receiv’d his end.
    Live ever, Felton: thou hast turn’d to dust,
    Treason, Ambition, Murther, ² Pride and Lust.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 188v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Dodsworth 79, fol. 158r; Bodleian MS Douce 357, fol. 18r; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 195; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 27r; CUL MS Gg.4.13, p. 106; TCD MS 806, fol. 511v

Known sources of the shorter version. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 102v

¹ Thy Foe...Romes freind: this line encapsulates some of the most damaging contemporary charges against Buckingham, that he was an enemy to the Protestant English nation, the curse (“bane”) of England’s natural allies, the Protestant Dutch, and an abettor of both Catholic temporal power (“Spaines agent”) and the Catholic Church’s quest for religious domination (“Romes freind”).

² Murther: allusion to Buckingham’s alleged poisoning of James I and of other courtiers, an accusation first explicitly levelled in George Eglisham’s 1626 Forerunner of Revenge.
Notes. This acrostic verse, inspired by the widely circulated prophetic chronogram discovering the fatal year 1628 in the letters of Buckingham’s name, is far more sympathetic to the Duke than most elaborations on the prophecy, and is clearly hostile to his assassin. Given the importance of the Roman “V” to the chronogram, we have not regularized the usage of “U” and “V” in this poem, as we have done elsewhere in this edition.

Chronogramma, Anno 1628, obiit.
GeorgIVs DVX BVCKInghaMIæ

Malignant characters that did portend
D uke=murthering Fate & his untimely end
C onstrain’d to die, that would have liv’d & tought
X antippus³ like but that fell⁴ Felton brought
V ncertaine projeck to a certaine end.
V aine are designes, where one doth of his freind
V surpse too much,⁵ (him) foes doe countermine
I n breife the world applaudes this last designe
I t was his death, but now hee’s dead & gone
I ll having heard of many; felt but one.

Source. BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 41v

Chronogramma…BVCKInghaMIæ: the chronogram assigns numerical values to the letters corresponding to Roman numerals in Buckingham’s latinized name—Georgius Dux Buckinghamiae, George Duke of Buckingham. The numbers add up to the year of his death (“obiit”), 1628 or MDCXVIII.

tought: probable scribal error; “fought” is a more logical reading.

X antippus: Xantippus was the commander of the Athenian fleet at the victory over the Persians at
Mycale in 479 BC. The implication is that if Buckingham had lived to lead the planned expedition to La Rochelle, he too might have returned victorious.

4 *fell:* cruel, savage, deadly.

5 *one doth...V surpse too much:* the “friend” here is probably King Charles.
Notes. This equivocal epitaph on Buckingham is accepted as the work of James Shirley. G. Hammond (64) briefly discusses the verse, arguing that “Shirley’s little poem is probably the best thing written about Buckingham”.

Heere lyes the best and worst of Fate
Two Princes love,¹ the Peoples hate
Great Envies feare, the Kingdomes eye
A Man to shape an Angell by
   His owne lives wonder, pale deathes glorie,
   The great Mans volume, all tymes storie.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 195

Other known sources. Shirley 62; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 88, p. 59; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 45v; Beinecke MS Osborn Bagott Papers Chest 1, no. 16

¹ Two Princes love: Buckingham was the favourite of two kings, James I and Charles I.
Dearling off Kings, Patrone off armes,
Muses protector, who from harmes
Did sheild professores off them twaine,
Lyes heere by a base Soldier Slaine
And by poetasteres cankred breath
Dyes everie day a lingring death:
Be silent malice from henceforth,
And know detractione from his worth
(off Kings off Mars, off Muses lov’d)
Is onely from such spirits mov’d,
As love not Kings and would advance
Base Cowardise and Ignorance.

Source. First and Second Dalhousie Manuscripts 189

1 Muses protector: patron of the arts.

2 base Soldier: John Felton was a lieutenant during the 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré. “[B]ase” here may simply mean morally vile, but it has a social resonance too: Felton was from an obscure and socially precarious branch of a Suffolk gentry family.

3 poetasteres: poetaster, “a writer of poor or trashy verse” (OED). Contemporary stereotypes of libellers depict them as incompetent poets.

4 Mars: the god of war.
Notes. Framed as a direct response to “Felton’s Freindes”, this poem directly engages with a number of the arguments, and some of the language, used to legitimize the assassination.

“To Felton’s Freindes”

You braveing spirits (not brave) inflam'd from hell
You that like wyle Toades with poysone swell
And sure would burst, had you not found a vent
By which your vennome to the world is sent.
What shall I call you Romanes, that’s too good
For in their glorie their Religion stood,
Theire gods with bloody acts were hyghlye pleas’d
And with the greatest mischief best appeas’d,
But you although unworthilye assume
The name of Christians, yet you doe presume
To teach even Christ himselfe a Doctrine newe
And hatefull, which he neither taught nor knewe,
Due patience & obedience are not bitts
To curb your stubborne Jawes; your Noble witts
Will onelye yeeld the raynes to headdye will,
And this your new commandement, Thou shalt kill?
For this a glorious name hath Felton gott
In your vayne Heaven; &’s a Patriott.
Confirm’d on earth, & that he maye be crown’d
God must the author of this deed be found.
Go on kind Infidells cleare Feltons name,
 Yourselves shall serve to be your Countryes shame.
By setting up a Statue to adore
A crying murder never knowne before.
In Civill England; ever it was thought
Connivence was too much with what was naught,
But god must patronize your cursed deedes,
And work revenge for you who ever bleedes,
Had Moyses led you & not gott the daye,
Or if constrayned had shortned you of paye,
Moyses should neere have brought you neare the Land
Of promisse; for some consecrated hand
Should have bestowed a period of his lyfe
And then have made an Idoll of the Knife
That gave the wound,³ No King I feare shall live,
That dare a favour do or office give,
Without your leave; Since you have Sainted heere
Him that would Fredome by although so deare,
As with dampnacion; yet if you saye noe
You are his Judges & it must be soe.
Lawe & Religion both give place to you,
But lett him looke that noe remorce he shew
Least you unsaint him; for your discontent
Will not permitt that any such repent⁴
For which I surelye doubt when most you want
That blessed guift repentance, Heaven will scant⁵
Such needfull grace; & justlye will permit
That you shall headlong fall into the pitt,
Where unrepented, sinne due wages gaynes
And where your King of disobedience⁶ reignes.

Source. LCRO MS DG 9/2796, pp. 1-4

Other known sources. “Two Unpublished Poems” 238
braveing: boasting.

bitts: the bit is the bridle mouthpiece used to control a horse.

Had Moyses led...gave the wound: these lines argue, facetiously, that if Moses, the divinely inspired liberator of the Jews from Egyptian bondage, had, like Buckingham, commanded in battle and lost (as Buckingham did at the Ile de Ré in 1627) or had been unable, like Buckingham, to pay the troops what they were owed, then some assassin would have killed Moses and been celebrated for it.

But lett him looke...such repent: Felton did in fact repent his deeds in his speech from the scaffold on the day of his execution.

scant: withhold.

King of disobedience: Satan.
Notes. Under no illusion about the moral compromises demanded by a successful career at court, and acutely aware of the favourite’s role to deflect criticism from the King, this poem nonetheless presents Buckingham as a man of virtue, and chides the political arrogance of his parliamentary critics.

“An Apologie, in memorie of the most illustrious Prince George Duke of Buckingham”

I did not flatter thee Alive, and nowe
I might be thought to late to fix my vowe
Upon thy shrine, If I had other end,
Then for respect of honor, to defend
And vindicate thy Fame, from th’envious breath
Of fowle detraction, smileing in thy death
Noe modest penn will vex thy grave; but there
Will rather make oblation in a teare;
I am not yet ingag’d, or fondlie ledd
In loud Hiperbolies thy cause to plead
My plume soars not above its native straine
Truth walketh safest in the humble plaine.
I sing not Rhodes made great by Villars name
Nor Palestine whence Beaumont takes his fame.
The things wee did not, and the blood that flowes
From noble Ancestors, Hee onely owes
That vertuous is himselfe, and crownes the storie
Of his great Grandsire, by his proper glorie,
A subject worthier sweetest Poets verse
Then all the Armorie that gilds thy hearse;
The vertues of thy mynd rais’d thee more highe
Then this great length of style wee call thee by
Too true thy fate was hard, to knowe these tymes
Where nothing is of note, besides our crymes
Where nobler vertue is, or not regarded
Or is mistaken, or is ill rewarded:
And where the Ulcerous breath of Malecontent
Turnes into poison what was truely meant,
And measures deepest Councells of the State
By their events which still are ruled by fate
(As what’s in Chamber of the Starrant decreed\textsuperscript{6}
Should bee A like by all on earth Agreed)
The Vulgar els would sing thy worth and praise
Thy highe endeavours upon holy daies
Sing funerall dirges to thy name, and spend
Theire deep tongu’d Mouths unto another end.
It is a destinie belongs to State
Him whome the Prince doth love, the people hate,
Whose indigested humors ever are
In opposition unto what is rare
And what they cannot apprehend, doe hate
Taxing him most, who’s greatest in the State
Which wise kings knowe, and what it is to have
A Favorite, whose office is to save
Their goverment from blame, as what’s amisse
The fault bee not there owne; but counted his
O burthen’d state of Favorits, that must
Not onely make themselves; but others just.
Noe doubt hee had his faults, but who are cleere
First throwe the stone,\textsuperscript{7} soe it will soone appeare
That his weere but of Natures brittle mould
Which being common are the best untould
The Court creates fewe Saints, who theire deserves
A mediocritie\textsuperscript{8} of vertue serves
As what is counted vertue in A cell\(^9\)  
Is held perhaps A vice, by them that dwell  
In Princes pallaces, where all things goe  
Not as they are, but what they are in showe  
Where to bee great is good, els little found  
But empty caske,\(^10\) wild looks, and fruitles sound  
Which was noe character of thine, who wer’t  
A frend to all in whome was found desert  
And who loves vertue in another, still  
Doth vertuous things, or wanteth of his will  
Who shutt them selves from grace, must not expect  
That they bee courted, where they use neglect  
To have theire merrit priz’d at such A rate  
As but to right them, Greatnes must abate.  
A Favorite should have enoughe to doe  
To grace all that deserves and woo them too;  
Those men cry downe the Favour of A king  
Who keepe noe longer tyme then hee doth sing  
Besides who sits in that highe circle, throwes  
His smyles not allwaies on the purple rose,  
But doe wee therefore blame the Sunn whose heat  
Produceth cockle\(^11\) there in stead of wheate  
Els howe hee lov’d all noble spiritts best  
Those Armes may witnes, and that royall brest  
That did receive his coole, and latest breath  
By bloodie hand under Arreast of death  
Though he not soe suddaine; but his Angell might  
Take him upon his wings, in his highe flight  
Then, what is gain’d pale Envie heere? but some  
Moore choller for the Angrie day of doome  
When wilt thou blush? hadd’st thou but any grace
Even with the Roses taken from his face
Though not soe much his owne, as of two kings
Who crops the flower, the stemme whereon it springs
Must also suffer. O it is too bold
To strike whome Princes in their Armes enfold
Whose sacred persons noe small dainger runn
When such excessse is in their bosome done,
Whereon if Princes but reflect, they will
Emptie they veynes, that doe these cesternes fill
Deplore th’effects; but blame those maisters, who
Inspire th’Assassines such foule deeds to doe
Proscribing Men, when for none other ill
A Sacrifice to expiate theire will.
As to bee of the Cabbinet, is but
To deale the cards some leaprous hand must cutt
If such the State of Princes bee to have
Theire Grace the Beere to laud men on their grave
Their case is not soe rich, but that it weere
Much better bee their subjects once A yeare
To ryfle all theire Actions, and cast downe
The men they cannot relish with A frowne
In case they are not th’object falce, on whome
They thus discharg’d, till they come neerer home.
Doth it with Monarchie in sequence fall,
The comons thus should doe? and undoe all
Give lawes unto theire kings, they may not smyle
Without an Act of parliament the while,
Then to deface what heerein little was
The gracefull modell of that greater masse
A peice whome Nature framed with such Art
As was througheout, noe fault in any part
Was soe much more to aggravate th’offence
That Heaven had bene on him at such expence
And where some have affirmed the Soule to bee
Mixt with his Mould in such A Simpathie
As by the bodies structure wee may knowe
The disposition of the mynde, if soe
Noe doubt his Soule, that lodg’d therein was faire
Like as the Inne to which it did repaire
And that the harmonie in him was such
As Orpheus\(^{16}\) made when hee his lyre did touch
By which and other Arts of court weere gain’d
All noble harts which hee with love mainetain’d
That hee could not reclame the vulgar presse\(^{17}\)
The fault was not his owne but of successe
Great Lord mylynes doth now fall short, but ere
Th’inconstant yeare runn out his course, I darr
Sing thy Lord praise, and in full verse proclame
Since thou wer’t taken hence, this state is lame
Nor shall the vurgar therefore chyde my verse:
But runn to pay their Teares upon thy hearse.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 123-27

Piit5

1 *oblation*: offering.

2 *I sing not Rhodes...his fame*: here the poet refuses to praise Buckingham for the great deeds of his ancestors, a Villiers and a Beaumont (Buckingham’s mother was Mary, daughter of Anthony Beaumont). Although the specific allusions are not entirely clear, two possible candidates are Philippe Villiers de L’Isle-Adam, an early sixteenth-century Grand Master of the Knights of Rhodes, and Robert (sometimes known as de Beaumont), 4th Earl of Leicester, who went on crusade with Richard I (the Lionheart) in the late twelfth century.
his proper: his own.

the Armorie that gilds thy hearse: aristocratic funeral hearses were typically adorned with heraldic devices and family coats-of-arms.
	his great length...call thee by: allusion to the long list of Buckingham’s titles.

in Chamber of the Starres decreed: determined by the stars (in astrological thinking), or, more generally, determined by the heavens. There may also be a pun here on the court of Star Chamber.

but who are cleere...throwe the stone: allusion to Christ’s comment to those about to stone a woman for adultery, that “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her” (John 8.7).

A mediocritie: a middling amount.

cell: monk’s or hermit’s room; thus a place of religious virtue.

emptie caske: presumably a reference to the excessive consumption of drink at court; but may also pun on “caske” and “casque” (helmet).

cockle: a weed that grows in cornfields.

two kings: James I and Charles I.

those maisters...expiate theire will: presumably an attack on those MPs whose 1628 Remonstrance against Buckingham was cited by Felton as motive for the assassination.

As to bee...hand must cutt: this image anticipates the ensuing charge that by attempting to bring down Buckingham, the Commons was in effect staking a claim to control the King’s freedom to govern in the way he saw fit. Thus to be “of the Cabbinet” (in the King’s Privy Council), under parliament’s desired way of doing things, would be to play with a deck of cards already cut by another (“leaprous”; i.e. lower-class and diseased) hand.

Beere: i.e. bier; tomb.

Orpheus: in Greek myth, Orpheus played the lyre so beautifully that he charmed all who heard it.

presse: crowd, mob.
Notes. This poem, addressed to the libellers—the "snarling Satyrs"—who celebrated Buckingham’s murder, invokes contemporary stereotypes of libels (raw in style, unreliable in content, socially disreputable and "popular") to help delegitimize the posthumous attacks on the Duke and the concomitant lionization of his assassin.

"Thalassiarclæ Manium Vindiciæ"¹

Yee snarling Satyrs,² cease your horrid yells
O’er this sad hearse, all such prodigious knells³
Be hush’t, and tongue-ty’d; but yet if your rymes
For issue itche, goe lash the petulant tymes
With whipps in salt, and sulphur steep’d the⁴ need
A scorge to urge them either blush, or bleed.
And tell me men of misaffected braines,
What starr wrought your misguidance to these straines
Of sawetooth’d sarcasmes against the ghost of him
Whose hart did in a purple deluge swim?
Is’t not enough to see a villaines steele
Gall’d⁵ in his gore? Doth’t not suffice to feel
His wounds wyde orifice, or viewe a flood?
Cannot ah! cannot all this satisfie
But you must wound his posthume memorie
And retransfix his Manes⁶ with the dint⁷
Of sharpe invectives? Men (if men) of flint
Or adamantine hart strings know ’tis base
And fitly Emblems the dead lyons case
With whose beard-haires the fearefull Hares did play
Or neere alludes those yelping currs,⁸ which bay
The midnight Moone caroching⁹ in her sphare
Toward the counter-pacers.¹⁰ can you heare
The ill tun’d organs of some tongues to chyme
Peans of joy in honor of a cryme
Soe horrid and piaculer, yet lett the spiritt
Of passion paulle, and with them call’t a meritt,
Why? this is more then vice did ever doe
To love the Treason, and the Trator too.
Suppose him (as your fancie shap’s him) ill
Leacher, and treacher; or what ere you will
In sootie language style him (though I knowe
You many, most, or all, such notions owe
To banques of common creditt; and are found
To take them upp at third, or fourth rebound)
Yet, shall a phrenzi’d Miscreant that pretends
His countries good (mixt with sinister ends
Of private spleenie hartburns) darr to carve
Revenge to his owne trencher? May hee starve
(who ere that catiffe be) approves the dyett
Which murther cook’d with sauce of blood & ryott.
I doe not wooe, nor court you to deplore
His lives breife sceane, or sadde deathrights more
Then that Hee had soe fewe short minutes given
To cast, and clere the audit-booke of heaven;
I knowe the tydes of some ranke Gall swell highe
Cause Jove soe longe affected Mercurie
And that his deepe ingagements in the Myene
Of seacreet state, did warily declyne
The damp of popular lungs; but lett this race
of ulcer’d spiritt (giving o’re the chace
Of Priviledg’d Fame beyond death’s verge) returne
And cease to cast foule urin to his urne
Lest they styrr hornetts: For, eclipsd Sunns
Result with double shaddowes; and their runns
A thunderbolt with lightning. Nor do I
derpricate His, but theire worse destiny
For what, if they (or one that basely shrouds
His face in foggs of thicke Tobacco clouds)
Shall pace the suburbes with aspurgal’d newes
And sprinkle Pasquills in the Burse, or Stewes
Alas! those gloewormes, elfe-fire flashes shall
But like faint sparkles, on danke tinder fall.
When there Producer (after all the throwes
Of his obstruct Minerva) never showes
The spurious issues Parent, his great name
Shall Lawrell-like even crackle midd’st the flame
Of scorching calumnie, and Tyme relate
How rich hee dy’d in styles of powerfull state
Soe trodden greatnes shall ascend still higher
And dyeing lamps with mounting flames expire.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 128-130

Other known sources. BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 21r

Piii6

1 *Thalassiarchiæ Manium Vindiciæ*: “The Vindication of the Admiral’s Ghost”.

2 *snarling Satyrs*: i.e. Buckingham’s libellers.

3 *knells*: the sounds of funeral bells; here, the noise of the libellers’ verbal assaults, over the Duke’s dead body.

4 *the*: probable scribal error; read “they”.

5 *Gall’d*: probably intended literally as a reference to the knife penetrating the Duke’s body (one meaning of “gall” is “to break the surface of”), but perhaps also invoking a figurative meaning, to “vex,
harass, oppress” (OED).

6 retransfix his Manes: stab again his ghost, his shade.

7 dint: blow.

8 currs: vile dogs.

9 caroching: literally, riding in a carriage; here, more loosely, meaning travelling, journeying.

10 counter-pacers: the Antipodes.

11 piaculer: i.e. piacular; sinful, wicked, requiring atonement.

12 treacher: traitor.

13 phrenzi’d Miscreant: i.e. Felton.

14 pretends...private spleenie hartburns: critics of Felton (including the prosecution at his trial) commonly made this allegation. Felton indeed had personal grievances against the Duke; in particular, he blamed Buckingham for repeatedly blocking his promotion from lieutenant to captain.

15 trencher: plate.

16 catiffe: i.e. caitiff; villain.

17 deathrights: i.e. death rites.

18 that Hee had soe fewe...of heaven: even some of those who welcomed Buckingham’s death were troubled by the fact that the assassination left the Duke no time to repent his sins before dying.

19 Gall: bitterness.

20 Cause Jove soe longe affected Mercurie: the god Mercury was the messenger for Jove, the king of the gods. Here Jove is the English king, Mercury the favourite Buckingham.

21 Myene: i.e. mine.

22 damp: noxious exhalation.

23 popular: the people’s. In seventeenth-century usage, “popular” also had connotations of seditious or unruly.

24 verge: boundary, range, jurisdiction.
aspurgal’d: i.e. asperged; sprinkled.

Pasquills: libels.

the Burse: generally speaking, a meeting place for merchants; in seventeenth-century London, “the Burse” referred either to the Royal Exchange or the New Exchange.

Stewes: brothels.

elfe-fire: will o’ the wisp or “ignis fatuus” (foolish fire); a deceitful thing.

his obstruct Minerva: this curious phrase probably means something like “his impeded wisdom”; Minerva was the goddess of wisdom.

Lawrell-like: the laurel leaf was believed to repel lightning.
Piii7  Heere lyes thy Urne, O what a little blowe

Notes. In one source, this poem is attributed to “W. Hemmings” (Bodleian MS Malone 23). J.A. Taylor plausibly identifies Hemmings as William Hemminge, a satirist with anti-Puritan leanings (“Two Unpublished Poems” 237-38, 238 n.20).

“A Contemplation over the Dukes grave”

Heere lyes thy Urne, O what a little blowe
Has lay’d our Buckingham soe highe soe lowe!
Does all thy greatnes take up noe more roome
Then what a Begger must enjoy? noe Tombe?
Noe hearse? noe monumentall pride? but all
As ruinous about thee as thy fall?
Sadd spectacle of greatnes; onely blést
In death noe Pagan nowe will curse thy rest
Noe not that Man of darknes, whose intent
Was to robb God of a commaundement
And make a murther lawfull, Thou do’st lye
Safer in dust then in thy Princes eye
For ther’s a Fate belonging unto kings
That whome they most affect, are hated things.
A Cobler, or a Broome-man may enjoy
That daingerous thinge call’d Frend without anoy
And when their labour, and the day expire
Drinke out their harvest by a seacole fyre.
The soldiour has his frend too, and his pay
When hee cann gett it, and drinks out that day
Yet noe man envies these, but the crown’d head
Has his affection aw’d, and lymited
Even by these beasts of Love, that thinke it fashon
In kings to have affection, and not passion
How poore is majestie? marke! in this thinge
The subject is more soveraigne then his King
I cann enjoy a frend till he’s tane hence
By natures lawe, not lawelesse violence
But in the smyle of Kings there lyes such fate
That to be lov’d, is to be ruinate.
I have thy hand to’t Felton writt in blood
(The Character of hell) to prove this good
And it is writt in heaven too, wher thou’t fynd
 Howe much thou’st wrong’d thy Maker, how mankind.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 130-32

Other known sources. “Two Unpublished Poems” 239-240; LCRO MS DG 9/2796, p. 5; Beinecke MS Osborn Bagott Papers Chest 1, no. 16; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 16

1 fall: a variant version includes here the couplet: “How pale thy honours look, and all thy paint / Of varnished glory now how dull, how faint” (Beinecke MS Osborn Bagott Papers Chest 1).

2 that Man of darkness: i.e. Felton.

3 Broome-man: street-sweeper.

4 seacole: i.e. sea-coal; mineral coal as opposed to charcoal.
Notes. After originally circulating in manuscript, this marvellously complex poem was eventually printed by its author, Owen Felltham. Interesting readings of various facets of Felltham’s ambivalent assessment of the assassination can be found in Pebworth (Owen Felltham 97-99), G. Hammond (62-63), Holstun (178-79) and Norbrook (54-55).

“In Buckinghamiae Ducem. ultimo Aug: 1628”

Sooner I may some fixed statue be
Then proove forgetfull of thy death and thee.
Can’st thou begonn soe quickly? Can a knife
Lett out soe many titles, and a life?
Nowe Ile mourn thee. Oh that soe huge a pyle
Of state should passe thus, in soe small a whyle!
Lett the rude Genius of the giddie traine
Bragg in a furie, That it hath stabb’d spaine,
Austria, and the skipping French, yea all
Those home-bredd Papists, that would sell our fall,
Th’ecclips of two wise Princes judgements, more
The waste whereby our land was still kept poore
I’le pittie yet; at last thy fatall end
Shott like a lightning from a violent hand
Taking the hence unsumm’d. Thou art to me
The great example of Mortalitie.
And when the Tymes to come shall want a name
To startle Greatnes; heere is Buckingham
Fall’n like a Meteor: and its hard to say
Whether it was that went the strainger way,
Thou, or the hand that slue thee, thy estate
Was highe, and hee was resolute bove that,
Yet since I hold of none engag’d to thee
Death, and that liberty shall make me free.
Thy Mists I knowe not, If thou hadd’est a falt
My Charitie shall leave it in thy vault
There for thyne owne accompting: ’tis undue
To speake ill of the dead, though it be true,
And this, even those that envy’d thee confesse
Thou hadd’st a mynd; a floweing noblenesse
A fortune, frends, and such proportion
As call for sorrowe, thus to be undone.
Yet should I speak the Vulgar, I should boast
Thy bold assassinate, and wish all most
He weere noe Christian, that I upp might stand
To praise th’intent of his misguided hand
And sure when all the Patriots in the shade
Shall ranke, and theire full musters theire be made
Hee shall sitt next to Brutus, and receive
Such bayes, as heath’nish Ignorance can give
But then the Christian checking that, shall say
Thoughe hee did good, hee did it the wrong way
And oft they fall into the worst of ills
That act the Peoples wish, without theire wills.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 132-33

Other known sources. Felltham 2.6; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 20; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 51v; Bodleian MS Douce 357, fol. 17v; Folger MS V.a.125, fol. 1r; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 7

Piii8

1 In Buckinghamiae Ducem. ultimo Aug: 1628: “On the Duke of Buckingham, the last day of August, 1628”.

2 soe many titles: while many libellers made fun of the excessive list of the Duke’s titles, Felltham’s
tone here is more astonished than mocking.

3 Lett the rude Genius...still kept poore: in these lines Felltham alludes to many of the charges commonly levelled against Buckingham: that he was in league with England’s Catholic enemies, both external (Spain, Austria and France) and internal; that he had deluded the judgements of his royal masters (James I and Charles I); and that his riotous excess had impoverished the nation.

4 unsumm’d: uncounted, not summed up; perhaps unsummoned.

5 Mists: perhaps mistakes, errors.

6 'tis undue...thoughe it be true: a commonplace moral saw held that one should speak nothing of the dead unless it was complimentary.

7 speak the Vulgar: speak what the common people say. Just as he associates the criticism of Buckingham with the “rude Genius” of the lower orders, Felltham links support for Felton to vulgar opinion.

8 Brutus: i.e. Marcus Brutus, the assassin of Julius Caesar.

9 bayes: laurels, the leaves of which were used to make crowns of victory.

10 without theire wills: “without Laws will” (Felltham).
Yet weere Bidentalls' sacred, and the place
Strucken with Thunder was by spetiall grace
Neere after trampl’d over; if this blowe
That struck me in my height, and laid me lowe
Came from the hand of heaven lett it suffice
That God requir’d noe other sacrifice.
Why doe you bruise a reed, as if your rodd
Could wound mee deeper then the hand of God?
Who doe you judge mee ere the Judgement day
As if your verdict could Gods Judgments sway?
Why are you not contented with my blood?
For hate of mee, why make you Murther good?
Hee that commends the fact doth it againe
And is the greater Murtherer of the twaine
Highe, and revealed Mallice that can’st drawe
Heaven out of hell, and checke Gods proper lawe
Nadab and Abihu that thus accord
To offer your strainge fire before the lord
Take heed ’twill burn you, ’tis a daangerous thing
Hee that doth blesse a murtherer kills a king.
I nowe have past your pikes, and seene my fate,
My princes favour, and the peoples hate
Strong blearey’d hatred, whose repyning sight
Feede all on darknes and doth hate that light
Shewes any goodnes in mee. Was I all
Massa Corrupta,\textsuperscript{5} and Stigmaticall?\textsuperscript{6}
Was I all ill? Yet those that ript me\textsuperscript{7} found
Some of my vitalls good; some inwards sound.
I had a hart scorn’d dainger, and a braine
Beating for honor; life in every vaine
Nor was my liver tainted: but made blood\textsuperscript{8}
That might have serv’d to doe my countrie good
Had not you lett it out. Nor was my mynd
Soe fix’t on getting as to make me blynd
And to forgett my Honor, or my Frend
Witnes those now who need noe more depend,
And those whose merritts I have made and rais’d
Will find out something more that may be prais’d
All doe not mourne in jeast, ther’s some one eye
Shedds tears in earnest when it sawe me dye.
And whatsoever their remonstrants\textsuperscript{9} make
I never lost my selfe but for their sake.
That God forgive them, for the rest Ile say
I lov’d the King and realme as well as they.


Other known sources. Eliot 101; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 142; Bodleian MS Dodsworth 79, fol. 162r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 15r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 57; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 97r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 62, fol. 35r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 153, fol. 9v; BL Add. MS 19268, fol. 32r; BL Add. MS 25707, fol. 160v; BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 78v; BL MS Harley 6383, fol. 27v; CUL MS Gg.4.13, p. 109; LCRO MS DG 9/2796, p. 7; Beinecke MS Osborn Bagott Papers Chest 1, no. 16

\textsuperscript{1} Bidentalls: the Romans considered the spot where lightning had struck—the bidental—to be sacred. The bidentals were consecrated by sacrifice and walled off.
2 *who:* probable scribal error; “why” (Eliot).

3 *Nadab and Abihu... 'twill burn you:* Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, “offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord” (Leviticus 10.1-2).

4 *repyneing:* i.e. repining; complaining, discontented.

5 *Massa Corrupta:* “a corrupt mass”.

6 *Stigmaticall:* worthy to be branded; villainous.

7 *those that ript me:* Buckingham was disembowelled *post mortem* in Portsmouth to allow for embalming. His heart and innards were buried in St. Peter’s Church, Portsmouth.

8 *made blood:* the liver was believed to manufacture the body’s blood.

9 *remonstrants:* probably an allusion to the Remonstrance against Buckingham passed in the 1628 Parliament.
Reader stand still and read loe heere I am

That was of late the Mightie Buckingham
God gave me first my blessing,¹ and my breath
Two Kings² their favours and a slave³ my death
My Fame I clame, and therefore I doe crave
That thou Two Kings beleive before a slave.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 140

Other known sources. Eliot 102; Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 142; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 97r; Bodleian MS Dodsworth 79, fol. 161v; Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 19r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 15v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 97v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 153, fol. 10r; BL Add. MS 18044, fol. 81r; BL Add. MS 25707, fol. 161v; BL Add. MS 29996, fol. 70v; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 40r; BL MS Egerton 2026, fol. 12r; BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 60r; NCRO MS Westmorland (A) 6.vi.I, fol. 11r; NLW MS 5390D, p. 429; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 15

¹ blessing: cf. “being” (Eliot).

² Two Kings: James I and Charles I.

³ a slave: i.e. John Felton. This derogatory term not only helps exaggerate the gulf between the kings who promoted Buckingham and the assassin who murdered him, but may also allude to Felton’s somewhat precarious social status as the scion of an obscure branch of a Suffolk gentry family.
Notes. Couched in Buckingham’s voice, this poem memorably establishes a series of links between the assassination and its celebration, on the one hand, and pagan cults of human sacrifice and antimonarchical politics, on the other.

“George Duke of Buckingham to that part of his Countrie-men who are worst affected to his life & memorie A Funerall Prosopopæia.”

Our countrie Merry England (once so styl’d)
Great & Brave nation, never was defyl’d
With trecherous assassinate, till nowe,
A publique Murther staines the publique browe
I was displeasing by the common fate
Of Favorites of kings; I was your hate
Yee have my blood in sacrifice prophane
A private hand hath lawless vengeance tane
Upon my life, and wreck’t your mortall wrath
And beyond that (I hope) it nothing hath
If blood soe shedd shall not asswagement give,
Why did yee not much rather lett me live?
The Altars of Busiris never heere
Blacke Egipt made to blush; nor allwaies deere
Diana did appease; Men Scythia slew
And Affricks Saturne did his beames imbrewe
In blood of Babes, as Taranis in gall
Her kingly syre sawe Iphigenia fall
A virgin-victime; and there was a tyme
When humane Heccatombes engrav’d this clyme
With healthes of blood drunke to infernall Elves
But both the Druids rites, and Druids selves
The Romans banisht, and did purge our Isle
And all their Empire from a cryme soe vile.
But those of you, who blesse the Murtherers hand
(Against all lawes) and each where gazing stand
About his picture,\(^{10}\) as an Idoll sett
Humanitie (alus) too much forgett
And make it see, as if from Hell againe
That superstition weere return’d to raigne.
Is Moloch\(^{11}\) Brittaines God? you then doe well
To celebrate the deeds of night, and hell
Is Druidisme come backe? Then Rome did ill
To drive it hence, if Just it be, to kill
An unattainted and untryed Peere
Lett kings bewarr That Doctrine striketh neere
Ordain’d selfe-arbiters to please, and such
As would old Patriotts seeme, ascribing much
To th’antient Pagan schooles of Greece & Rome
Who liveing under Monarchies become
Hott popularians,\(^{12}\) and in crosse of kings
Love Cantons, Leagues, and states\(^{13}\) as better things.
Returne to Natures sence, the Man putt on
With generous sighes; and since the deed is done
O lett my wyde wound be th’eternall grave
Both of your Ire, and of his guilt who gave
That thunderbolted blowe; and may noe age
Behold the like againe upon our stage.
The topp, and the topp gallant of my style\(^{14}\)
The common Envie weere of Albions Isle\(^{15}\)
My plumes of titles weere in my crest of fame
The fanns to coole good will, and spight t’inflame;
Those blazing lures of flyes, the blynding skreen
Wise Providence, and headlong waies betweene
Meere stands for vanitie; a grove to hyde
Their ambuscado’s who noe light abyde
That weight too great, made me there Atlas fall
Few please a Multitude, and none please all.
My youth and two kings favours well might make
Great Buckingham forgett, and much to take
Above his strength, who finds he was a man;
And be unto him such in all yee cann.
The rest lett others care for, who survive.
Myne Exit wants applause: But if alive
I had remain’d, and still king Charles my frend
My merritt should have woo’d a fairer end
For to recover favour was the scope
Of all my counsells, as it was their hope
Or on myne owne sword in the sight of all
You should have seene me voluntarie fall:
For life allreadie was become to bee
A greivance and A burthen unto mee;
Untill I had by noblest proffe made knowne
That Buckingham was yours, or not his owne
These my last vowes Heavens witnes it, are true
Soe under goe my clouds, and bidd adiewe.

Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 135-38

1 Prosopopeia: i.e. prosopopoeia, “A rhetorical figure by which an imaginary or absent person is represented as speaking or acting” (OED).

2 The Altars of Busiris: in the Hercules legends, Busiris, a ruler of Egypt, sacrificed to the gods any foreigner who entered his kingdom.
nor allwaies deere / Diana did appease: the goddess Diana was a huntress and deer were sacred to her.

Men Scythia slew: ancient historians described the Scythians as a savage people.

Affricks Saturne...blood of Babes: the god Saturn was said to have devoured his own children, thus imbruing (defiling) his “beames” (probably “eyes” here) with the “blood of Babes”.

Taranis in gall: according to hostile Roman commentators, the ancient Gauls offered human sacrifices to their thunder god Taranis.

Her kingly syre...A virgin-victime: King Agamemnon attempted to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia to appease the wrath of the goddess Artemis/Diana.

humane Heccatombes: mass human sacrifices.

Druids: the priests of pre-Roman Britain and Gaul. Roman accounts alleged that the Druids performed human sacrifice.

his picture: a number of contemporaries allude to a picture or pictures of Felton. The one extant engraving of the assassin—depicted standing, with boots spurred, his hat under his left arm, and a dagger poised in his right hand—is entitled “The lively Portraiture of John Felton who most miserably kil’d The right Honorable George Villiers Duke of Buckingham: August ye 23 1628”. The copy owned by the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, is reproduced in Wolfe (image 9).

Moloch: i.e. Molech; an ancient Middle-Eastern deity to whom children were sacrificed (see, e.g., 2 Kings 23.10; Jeremiah 32.35).

popularians: courtiers of the people, seditionists and, in this context, republicans.

Cantons, Leagues, and states: names for early modern republican polities; e.g. the Swiss (“Cantons”) and the Dutch United Provinces (“states”).

The topp...of my style: this line uses nautical terminology (the top and top-gallant are parts of a ship’s mast) to connote the elevation of Buckingham’s status that prompted such envy.


ambuscado’s: ambushes.

Atlas: in classical mythology, Atlas held aloft the heavens.

two kings: James I and Charles I.
Notes. Like several poems, this defence of Buckingham invokes the dictates of charity and refutes the credibility of “Common fame”. More interestingly, perhaps, the poet also invokes memories of Buckingham’s short-lived reputation in the mid-1620s as an anti-Spanish hero.

“A charitable censure on the death of the D. of B.”

What! shall I say now George is dead
That hee’s in hell? Charitie forbidd.
What though hee’s damn’d by Common fame,
Yet God’s Eyes may behold noe staine.
What though hee was infect with sinne!
What Man on earth lives not therein?
Shall wee therefore limit Gods power?
His Mercie’s seen at the last houre.
If to the Kingdome hee did harme,
Yet thy tongue still thou oughtst to charme.
Great Charles in him beheld not it,
For thee to taxe him it is not fitt.
Envie cease, and give him his due,
Speake of him what thou know’st is true,
And for one good deed let him meritt
To have his badd silence inherit:
Call but to minde that deed in Spaine,
For which thou once didst live¹ his name,
If all were badd, yet that alone
Should make thee now his death bemoane.²

Then Felton, sure thou art too blame,
By whose strong hand our George was slaine.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fols. 183v-184r
Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 139

Piii13

1  *live:* probable scribal error; “love” (Bodleian MS Malone 23) is a preferable reading.

2  *And for one...his death bemoane:* these lines refer to Buckingham’s supposed efforts to extricate Prince Charles from Spain (and from a widely feared marriage to the Spanish Infanta) in 1623. In the year or so after Charles and Buckingham’s return from Spain, the favourite was hailed as an anti-Spanish hero (see Sections N and O).
Who ever lov’d man vertuous,
Stout,\textsuperscript{1} liberall,\textsuperscript{2} wise, industrious,
Or to the arts a matchles frend
Laments (thrice honor’d Duke thy end)
And lett him knowe what ere hee bee
Would highely praise mortallitie
Must faigne some person in a man
Just like to that of Buckingham
A Soule inricht with soe much good
As kings (not Commons) understood
Fond Mallice doe what ere thou cann
Tyme will bewaile brave Buckingham
To that most sadd, and mournefull name
His life hath added such a Fame
That to expresse to future yeares
his worth, his Fate, his Maisters teares
Hee needs noe Funerall, nor verse,
But his owne Name writt on his herse.

\textbf{Source.} Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 140-41

\textbf{Other known sources.} BL MS Harley 6383, fol. 27r

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Stout}: brave. This epithet was often used to describe Felton.

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{liberall}: generous.
Notes. Like many posthumous defences of Buckingham, this poem represents libels on the Duke as the work of the socially base and the intellectually credulous. At the same time, the poem (like “What! shall I say now George is dead”) alludes to Buckingham’s actions in Spain in 1623 and the popular credit they (temporarily) earned him. Our chosen source ascribes the poem to “T. Aloff”.

“On the Duke of Buckinghams death”

When Poets use to write men use to say
tis for preferment or some other pay
They sell their witts which basely flatters those
Whome they themselves but for base¹ people knowes
Or els for som affection or some kine²
Against ther conscience thus doe sinne
Perhaps the same they will impute to me
Though for a gloss I pleade integritie
But let them knowe these by base respects I scorne
Or to inslave my Muse which free was borne
I was a stranger to this noble peere
No kiff,³ nor kinn, nor followers name did beare
whose worth (I must confess) needs not my praise
Yet who loves vertue must the vertuouse raise
Lest base detraction to the future age
Should cloude ther glory: wisemen did presage
That these (who weary of him) would repent
A second worse; a fortune incident
To discontented folke. But why dost
Blurr these my leines with ther inconstancy
And leave the sacred subject whose deere fame
Merits the palme of an eternall name
Nature herselfe to shew her workemanship
Blushs, having scene her self, her self outstript:
Which to perfection that it might be brought
Fortune begann to add what could be thought
Art lik’t the frame, which to adorne throughout
Indew’d^4 it with her riches rounde aboute
These heavenly powers when they had given boone^5
Presents it to erthly, which as soone
Enthral’d themselves under his brave commande
Soe, did the sea that both together stand
And at his becke,^6 yet proud that they might beare
A burthen of such worth, fell out & sware
Eternall enmitie, least each might have him
But heaven (the umpire) to the earth it gave him,
Which swelling with the glory of that prize
Scornd his old levell, doth on tiptoes rise;
Which Neptune^7 grev’d, & yet desir’d to kiss
The hallowed earth which shrind him; Thamisis^8
Each winter, spring he sends to visit him
& pay the tribute of his eies (waxt dim
with weeping) then takes leave yet comes againe
To take new farwell, but tis in vaine
He must returne, thus doth his greef appeare
He groans & murmers then he dropps a teare
As witness of his losse. And shall all these
Teach us to know his worth, & we not please
Once to behold what heaven & earth admired?
How many nations weare ther him desir’d
To crowne his years with adoration? we
what we possesse dispise, but eagerly
Hunt after trash, & guesaw^9 novelty
Some may object he hath us all undone
we’ve cause to curse him every mothers sonne,
Peac wretches peace, can peasants comprehend
Statlik actions? if ther lords commend
(Land lords I meane) the basest groome that lives
Calling him noble, whoe’s he that straight gives
Not addition to his words? the period
Of your conceipts then rests on him (the god)
To whome I leave you, But the graver sort
I dare presume, contemne there base report
who well conceive the slander they have mad
to kepe theyr tongs inure, tis envies trade
which yet despight ther malice must confess
He brought from Spaine our Englands happiness,
A worke of meritt, then they cried blest peere
our lives, and all is thine we hold most deare
But what good deeds we doe ar writt in sande,
What bad (though donne by chance) in Marble stande
Men now oure actions judge, by ther event
But will heare nor see our good intent
Could these detractors thy designes upbraid
For want of grounde? had not ther sinnes betrayd
Thy prosperouse fate & glory every way
But sure they could not what so ere they say
Which makes them rave insteade of argument
And when they most complaine, most innocent
They prove thy actions, which thou bee’st dead
Good men approve, and wise have hallowed,
Whose judgments all men judge most worthy thee
Applauding them adore thy memorie.
Source. BL MS Sloane 542, fols. 15r-16r

Other known sources. Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 384

Piii15

1 base: low-born; immoral.
2 kine: i.e. kin; tie of kinship.
3 kiff: i.e. kith; friend or acquaintance.
4 Indew’d: i.e. endued; covered, dressed.
5 boone: benefit.
6 becke: command.
7 Neptune: god of the sea.
8 Thamisis: the River Thames.
9 guesaw: i.e. gewgaw, a showy trifle (Rosenbach MS 239/27 reads “guegaw”).
10 inure: i.e. inured; practised.
11 He brought from Spaine...most deare: allusion to the popular celebration of Buckingham after he had brought Prince Charles (safely unmarried) from Spain in 1623 (for which, see Sections N and O).
Notes. This ambitious poem combines a number of themes, ranging from attacks on popular perceptions of the Duke, to an unusually heightened depiction of the immense scope of Buckingham’s power as a favourite. The verse concludes with a forceful evocation of Buckingham’s virtue, courtesy and bravery, and an appreciation of his physical and spiritual beauty.

Might Teares Revive thee I could wish to be
Dissolvd & melted like to Nyobe
But just conceived Rage, & bitter woe
Drye up the brackish streames they cannot flowe.
And can it be amidst thy troups one Arme
Could plot such mischeife & enact such harme?
Maye such a massacre be wrought & He
Not Thunderstrooke by th omnipotencie
Where was Joves Lightining when this deede was done
how chance his Arme shrunk not, grew deade & num?
Ah powerfull God forgive wee ought not prye
Into thy hidden secret Mistery
Wee cannot knowe the suns transparent beames
By his own face but by his guilding streames
Too glorious soe Gods Judgments are, & showne
In their effects, by which his pleasure’s knowne,
World-famed Cesar fetching his Renowne
Far from those parts where scarce proud Rome was knowne
Heaping up wealth & Glory to the state
By publique hands was slaine, & publique Fate
Greatenes howere acheivd doth drawe along
Envy & malice from the stupid throng
The Knyges People whoe beloe doe vew
Things done above doe alwaies judge untrue
Treason to them if’t be put home & done
Is cald faire Justice, when the Righteous doome
If it fall shorte they terme it Policy
And a waie to Roote out true Nobilitie
Under this last fell this same Lord with them
That hate noe facts but as they hate the men
But wiser saye that truly judge these times
It was the peoples Scandall not his Crimes
In this confusion did the Kings choyce hand
Set him above his foes, gave him command
And power by which he got the day
of the inconstant multitude, for they
Began to find now virtues in the Man
The Honord Greate and matchles Buckingham
Where was the man amongst us did not then
Call him both Greate and Good, I & condemne
Their censures by thy Judgment when thy eye
Alone could chuse such worthe & dignity
Whoe was held wise that did not seeke to hold
A place from him, all Fathers that were old
Thought it Inheritance enough to give
Their children if he knew them, for to live
For thou hadst raisd him to that Eminency
That but thy selfe none was soe greate & high
Ah dreaded Lord did ever one day see
Any in woe and Glory like to thee
Evn as Apollo in his burning throne
Thow shinst at morne for men to gaze upon
The daies & Howers on each hand did attend
Expecting when thou wouldst employment send
The seasons did awaite thee, Heate and Cold
Autumne and Spring yeares Months daies manifold
All seemd at thy direction, Nobles bow
The Gentry are ambitious but to knowe
What is thy pleasure And the yeomen stand
More ready to obey then thou comand
Thy howse did seeme a Temple thither flye
The People all to know their destiné
Nor doth the Marygold with more devotion
Attend the sun then did the coarte thy motion
And can such distance be twixt Life and Death
And doth all Pompe forsake as with our breath
Shall wee bring back noe more unto the Tombe
Then what wee brought from our poore Mothers wombe
doe all our spangles leave us at the grave
And shall wee have noe more then vassalls have?
And doe the wormes smell out noe difference
Betwixt Perfumes high prise & meerely sence
how dare they venture on an Honord skin
Mighty and Lorded: Noble all within
Ah vaine conceipts the king can have noe more
Of Birth and Death then Beggars at the dore
Nor God nor Nature doth respect a Person
For State or wealth but for Religion
Naie our best freinds like Bees refuse that flower
Which death hath but usurpt one little hower
Thy mighty Pallace had not roome for steps
That did attend thee, nor soe many becks
Hadst thou as they had waies to put them to
And could one stroke these glories all undoe
Thow seemst another Atlas of our State
The World upon thy able shoulders sate
One hand held Spaine, another hand held France\(^1\)
Doubtfull to which thy Army should advance
In expectation did both Kingdomes stand
On which should fall thy fatall firebrand
Ships were prepar'd for sword, & ships for fire
And hardy men to act thy high desire
For without boast wee may averre for soothe\(^2\)
England hath men whose valor's canon proofe
Our Kingdomes Body did crye out for warre
And art thou then condemned to prepare
Wee have noe walls but seas nor forts for Rest
But what's conteyned in a valiant brest
Better then meete a Foe, then staie at home
And enterteine th'Enemy with our owne
Whoe warres abroad doth on advantage playe
But they that fight at home, have but one daye
Nor are our actions judgd by the event
They best deserve that doe the best attempt
It lyes not in our power to make the end
God only doth in that our arts commend
In peace He was all Grace & Curtesy
Noble and full of magnanimity
Whether his hat or sword did more imply
his able hand deserves a History\(^3\)
As full of valor as of curteous parts
Th one conquering, th other sealing harts
What durst he not unlesse fowle injuries
As farre from them as farre from cowardise
Warre tooke not from him Mildnes, nor soft peace
A virtuous & courageous Haughtines
Stout harted Ajax\(^4\) and the wise Ulisses\(^5\)
In this full man might have enjoyd their wishes
Nor was the Grecians sacrifise drawne on
With greater showts & approbation
When they let out their walls to let that in
old Priamus himselfe encouraging
Then this greate Duke when to the feild he came
As if he were their Life their Fate their flame
That thow hadst outside more then common men
I shall not neede to trouble much my Pen
To set it downe, each eye will find a tounge
To blase abroad thy knowne Perfection,
To me, me thought thow didst appeare as one
Whome nature made for men to gaze upon
That shee must fix their eyes to boast hir Arte
Symetry and Beauty framing every parte,
And yet I had not time to note each linn
Soe I desird to knowe what was within
But then as I have seene a cabinet
Soe rich with pearles, with sparckling Jems soe set
That other Jewell I expected none
When sodainely unto my eyes there shone
A Jewell soe exceeding rare and bright
That all unwares it tooke away my sight
Which seemd all flame all fire as if each stone
Were a full sun at height in his horrison
Soe did thy Inward virtues take away
All thought of that same gawdy flesh & claye
compared with thy sowle thy bodies frame
did then like brasse & rust upon the same
nor could I avoe my selfe to make retorne
To leave that sight for which we now all mourne
But all these praises are but like sweete meate
Which at a deere freinds funerall wee doe eate
Memorialls of our losses, therefore reape
My sadder muse, & lett him rest in peace.

Source. PRO SP 16/114/69

1 *Nyobe*: after her fourteen children had been slaughtered by the gods Apollo and Diana, the grieving Niobe was metamorphosed into a rock that shed tears.

2 *brackish*: darkened, muddied.

3 *amidst thy troupes*: Felton was a lieutenant in the expeditionary force that went under Buckingham’s command to the Ile de Ré in 1627.

4 *Joves Lightining*: Jove, king of the gods, used the lightning bolt as a weapon. Here the poet is wondering why Felton’s deed was not immediately followed by divine judgement on the criminal.

5 *World-famed Cesar*: i.e. Julius Caesar, assassinated in 44 BC.

6 *Knoges*: scribal error; read “Kynges”.

7 *doome*: judgement.

8 *Apollo*: the sun god.

9 *spangles*: literally, the glittering metallic strips decorating costumes; figuratively, the earthly pomp and splendour nullified by death.

10 *vassalls*: used here in a general sense to connote inferiors, the low-born.

11 *becks*: commands.

12 *Atlas*: in classical mythology, Atlas held up the heavens.

13 *One hand held Spaine...France*: at the time of Buckingham’s death, England was at war with both Spain and France.
soothe: i.e. sooth; truth.

Whether his hat...deserves a History: this couplet establishes a theme that is then extended over the next few lines, that Buckingham was an exemplar both of courtesy—here symbolized by his mastery of the range of coded gestures for the removal and replacement of the hat—and of skill in battle—here symbolized by his swordsmanship.

Stout harted Ajax: Ajax was a Greek hero in the Trojan War, brave (“Stout harted”) but not wise.

wise Ulisses: Greek hero of the Trojan War, Ulysses (or Odysseus), known for his cunning.

Nor was the Grecians...himselfe encouraging: allusion to the fateful moment when the Trojans brought the wooden horse—ostensibly left as a religious sacrifice by the Greeks—into their city. “Priamus” is King Priam of Troy. The poet is probably thinking of the cheering and singing described in Virgil’s *Aeneid*, book 2.

linn: probably a poetic contraction of “lineament” (a portion of the body).

avoe: i.e. avow.

sweete meate...wee doe eate: dinners were a traditional accompaniment of funerals.
Notes. This Buckingham elegy, attributed in the only known source to "Mr AT" is especially notable for its references to libellers, depicted as snakes who bite what "once they kist", and as cannibals who feed on the dead Duke’s remains.

“On the Death of the Duke of Buckingham”

Death come thy selfe and let thy Image sleepe
Her quiet face and comick action keepe
Nor with strain’d lookes and gestures night by night
Thy tragedyes ere thou canst act recite
Let ies not blindfold search the booke of fate
And sleeping our misfortunes antidate
Growst thou so feeble men must now ly still
And thou strike twice before thy dart can kill
Must shadowes and dumb showes in ambush lye
To wound the spirrit ere the body dye
Then men most wretched and of men much more
Then all the rest, the deprived poore
Ours was the night though rich men gott the day
And must sweet sleepe our bedfellow betray
Our secret store and all times issue bee
Our mortall foes and leave no minuet¹ free
The morning dreames and midnight visions flye
A soule prepar’d for any tragedy.
Something mee thought did something to my eyes
That made mee sleeping see the destynyes
Sett in an Amphitheater design’d
By no man’s hands, nor by a wall confin’d
But free and open as the æthereall skye
Bounded alone by the beholders eye
Clowdes were their cloathing here and there made fast
With a small starr that sullen beames forth cast
The plannetts lent their aery actors light
And for ther scenees they borrowd blackes of night
A shewer\(^1\) of threads each to a spindle ty’d
Like a small rayne fell thicke on ery\(^3\) side.
Which never left twisting and turning round
Till most made dewes as they aproacht the ground
Some broke before some att the very touch
Some scarce halfe full some that were fil’d too much
All that lay still and soe forbore to spin
Our mother earth strayt gap’t and tooke them in
Amoung the rest one lookt so cleare so bright
As round about it cast a liberall\(^4\) light
On whose outside no æquall eye could looke
But every turne and ev’ry motion tooke
Soe gentle too as toucht one would have thought
The silkworme onely on that web had wrought
And yet soe firme as felt one might bee bould
Rather then thread to say t’was wire of gold
Nice virgins fear’d t’was part of that same shower
That onrebuickd once pierct a golden tower\(^5\)
Mirsirs\(^6\) beleev’d theire Mamon did descend
And chimists welcom’d their long look’d for frind\(^7\)
Travellers thought the fam’d fleece\(^8\) scarce so fayre
And lovers tooke it for their mistrisse hayre.
Poets would wright upon no other theame
Supposing it a flexible sun beame
Not what, but whose ambitious now to know
The Fates\(^9\) that seldome such a secrrett show
Open their bookes and in their lists of names
That lovely thread I found was Buckingams
Million of harts and myriads of eyes
Lighting upon it coverd it like flyes
Till one a sodayne one could hardly tell
Why ore wherefore thousands dropt of and fell
Transform’d to snakes biting wher once they kist
Aloft they bus’d, but now beloy they hist
Rays’d by this spell out of the stygian lake
Swifter then thought a fourth fell fury brake
Arm’d with a blade that in a trice dispatcht
That web the world must longing leave unmatcht
Atropos scorning her prefixt decrees
Should stoupe to human mutabilityes
Snatcht up her sheeres intending in a rage
For that one stroake to leave an empty stage
Cinthia drew back; and mercury let fall
His charming rod as of no use at all
Venus afresh bewayld Adonis slaine
As twice alive and now new dead againe
The sun rose slowly and made hast to bedd
And fiery mars never apear’d so redd
Tost lightning flasht out of the thunderers eye
And Saturne walkt like a sad mourner bye
Nature cry’d out and up sterne Justice stept
Ceres lay downe Heaven and the graces wept
An universall compound shriek and shoute
As if the worlds great soule were new breath’d out
Startle’d my senses then a sodayne ill
Apear’d as dismall as the sound was shrill
With sad presages frighted from my bed
A rumour rays’d confusd of Duke and dead
Looking and lisoning I walkt on perplext
Till I had heard such comments on that text
As made me with Deucalions race of men
Rays’d out of stones newly reviv’d againe
Ore thoese men monsters which though armed sprung
From dragons teeth wanted a killing tounge
Some wer to that excess of bounty growne
They freely gave him faults that were their owne
And some to shame him with such slips began
As to have mist hee had bin more then man
Some were so æquall to his actions still
They would condemne whether good or ill
And some were so with vigilance possest
When hee was dead they would not let him rest
But did (like Anthropophagi) entreate
His very corps as if they kill’d to eate
Amoung these weeds some eares of corne were found
That hung their heads after his fell to ground
Some Flowers soe full of Heavenly dew they bent
Under their load though they retayn’d their sent
Some tempers taken from the truest steele
That still the touch of the lov’d loadstone feele
But that faire mirrour in whose spotlesse breast
Hee left an Image of himselfe impreast
To whome all trees that in the garden grow
Sett by that cædar are meere shrubbs in show
All corne but chaff all flowers in garden sett
Smelt but like crowfoote to that violet
What hands held up what folded armes acrosse
What sighes breathes she after her Deare Lords losse
Mee thinkes I see her like an Alpe of snow
Melt till her teares in to a torrent grow
Then by degrees the calme resemblance take
Not of a river but a standing lake
Which if no frindly Diety bee bent
To turne in to a christall monument
Like Arethusa she will shyly run
To worlds unknowne and meete the new sett sun
Ore the mayne sea strive with her teares to swell
Like sad Cornelia when her Pompey fell.
I like poor Codrus that can onely picke
Up here a stone and ther a little sticke
To build an Alter and to make a blaze
That a rude winde may soone put out ore rayse
Wish him a pile that sett on fire may light
His darkend fame thourogh detractions night
And obeliske that might his urne convoy
Shining in gold up to the gods halfe way
And when his tombe shall like a Trophy rise
glorious enough to putt out envyes eyes
Such Epitaphs and Elegies as sung
By a sweet muse may silence slanders toungue.

Source. Huntington MS HM 904, fols. 49r-52r

Piii17

1 minuet: scribal error; read “minute”.

2 shewer: i.e. shower.

3 ery: i.e. every.

4 liberall: generous.
5 Nice virgins fear’d...pierct a golden tower: allusion to the myth of Danae who, though locked in a
tower by her father, was nevertheless impregnated by Zeus/Jove in the form of a golden shower.
“Onrebuickd” here is “unrebuked” (unchecked).

6 Mirsirs: i.e. misers.

7 And chimists welcom’d...look’d for frind: allusion to alchemists, who endeavoured to turn base metals
into gold.

8 the fam’d fleece: the golden fleece of classical mythology.

9 The Fates: the three goddesses who determined the fate of things and individuals: Clotho, Lachesis
and Atropos.

10 bus’d: i.e. buzzed.

11 the stygian lake: the lake of Styx in the classical underworld.

12 fell: cruel, fierce.

13 fury: the furies were avenging goddesses who punished the dead in the afterlife.

14 Atropos...sheeres: Atropos, one of the fates, was often depicted carrying the shears she used to cut
the thread of life.

15 Cinthia: Cynthia, goddess of the moon.

16 mercury let fall / His charming rod: the messenger god Mercury carried a staff or caduceus.

17 Venus afresh bewayld Adonis slaine: in classical myth, the goddess Venus became besotted with the
beautiful youth Adonis, who was killed by a boar.

18 mars: god of war.

19 the thunderers: i.e. Jove’s.

20 Saturne: ancient king of the gods, father of Jove.

21 Justice: the goddess Astraea is probably implied here.

22 Ceres: goddess of the earth, corn and argiculture.

23 the graces: the three goddesses of beauty.
24 *Deucalion's race of men...stones:* after a destructive flood sent by Jove to punish the wickedness of mankind, Deucalion and his wife created new men and women from stones.

25 *those men monsters...From dragons teeth:* allusion to the myth of Cadmus, who sowed the teeth of a dragon, from which there grew armed men.

26 *slips:* errors.

27 *Anthropophagi:* cannibals.

28 *loadstone:* i.e. lodestone; magnet.

29 *that faire mirrour:* introduces a passage on Buckingham’s widow, Katherine.

30 *crowfoote:* typically a name for the buttercup.

31 *if no frindly Diety...christall monument:* probably an allusion to the myth of Niobe, who, having lost her fourteen children, was metamorphosed into a weeping stone.

32 *Arethusa...new sett sun:* the nymph Arethusa, running from the river god Alpheus, became a fountain on the island of Ortygia.

33 *Like sad Cornelia when her Pompey fell:* Book 8 of Lucan’s *Pharsalia* (sig.P3v ff.) describes how, in 48 BC, the Roman leader Pompey was assassinated as he approached the Egyptian shore in a boat. Pompey’s wife Cornelia witnessed the murder from a separate boat further out at sea. Katherine Villiers did not witness her husband’s murder, but she was elsewhere in the same building when the crime occurred.

34 *I like poor Codrus...put out ore rayse:* the poet here compares himself to Pompey’s follower Codrus. According to Book 8 of Lucan’s *Pharsalia*, Codrus retrieved Pompey’s decapitated body from the sea and, using driftwood and borrowed fire, improvised a funeral pyre for the remains.
Notes. In one source, this poem is attributed to “Dr. Lewis” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26). Another variant preserves only the first six lines, and titles the abbreviated poem “On a Learned Nobleman” (Bodleian MS Sancroft 53). The poem’s conclusion celebrates the birth of Buckingham’s posthumous son, Francis Villiers, which implies that the verse was completed after Francis’s birth in April 1629.

“To my Lord Duke of Buckingham his memory”

Hee that can reade a sigh, or spell a teare,
Pronounce amazement, and accent wilde feare,
Or get all greif by hart; hee, onely hee,
Is fitt to reade, or write thy Elegie.

Unvalued Lord! whoe wer’t so hard a text:
Writt in one age, but understood ith’ next.
Write Elegyes, for those that dye: my Lord
(Though halfe the age wear Feltons) can afford
Vertue enough, for to survive the rage
Of a tumultous & self-cursing age;
Nor greives it mee, the Cittie-wives are slacke
To mourne for thee in clarrett or burnt-sacke:¹

Whoe for their husbands doe not use to weepe:
Unlesse the wyne be hott, and they drunck deepe.
Their children shall lament thee, when they knowe
What t’was to loose such bloud, and loose it soe.
’Tis yet too soone for them to knowe; such things,
As Buckingham, none can esteeme but kings.
And you² (shame of your nation) whose bold strife
Is to pourtraict a monster backe to life;
That hee may live within a fewe yeeres pawse
The witnesse of your curse, That was the cause,
Yow that cann prayse applaud, you that cann paynt
Such a prodigious villayne to a Saynt
And while yow think’t Idolatry to glaunce
Upon a bleeding Crucifix by chaunce;
Can yett create an Idoll divell t’adore,
And deck your Oratryes with such store. 3
Yow that would kill his dust, doe yow not see
Howe god derydes your wickednes: whilst hee
Hathe given those ashes life, and made his tombe
Of posthume issue, 4 such a fruitlefull wombe.
See yow not howe the Phenixe 5 is renew’d
And to him from his death, more yeers accru’d!
Yow tooke him hence, when he had spent for yow
Thirtie fyve 6 carefull yeers; heaven would renew
His lease; and send him to a wilfull thronge
An Infant backe agayne, t’expound the wronge,
His innocency felt, when the beleefe
Of a deceyvll 7 world, sign’d their owne greife.
Should I bewaile thee then? or byd myne eyes
Write on thy joyfull cradle, Elegyes?
When I assured am this short disguise
Of Infancie, wherein oure feare-drown’d eyes
Discover thee, cann at the furthest last
Not above twenty yeeres, and then thy fast
Sprouting and growing glory will in strength
(Though short nowe) yet be writt agayne at length.
When the uncoozend 8 world shall all confesse
Thou wert sent backe to earth agayne, to blesse
Thyne Enemies and to revenge their all,
By blessing them once more against their will.
Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fols. 37v-38r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 60; Bodleian MS Sancroft 53, p. 46

1 *To mourne for thee...burnt-sacke*: wines (“clarrett”, “burnt-sacke”) were traditionally served to mourners at funerals.

2 *you*: the “you” addressed in this and the next eleven lines are the English people who have celebrated Buckingham’s death (“kill[ed] his dust”) and turned the assassin Felton into their “Idoll divell”.

3 *And while yow think’t...such store*: the poet accuses Felton’s supporters of turning the assassin into an idol and of decorating their places of prayer (“Oratryes”) with his image (presumably his engraved picture). The poet implies that these Felton-worshippers are (stereotypically hypocritical) Puritans, who are just the kind of people so obsessed by the dangers of Catholicism that they would label as idolatry even an accidental glance at the kind of religious images (here a “bleeding Crucifix”) found in Catholic churches.

4 *posthume issue*: Buckingham’s son Francis was born after his father’s death, in April 1629.

5 *Phenixe*: i.e. the phoenix, the mythological bird that could miraculously regenerate itself.

6 *Thirtie fyve*: Buckingham was murdered five days before his thirty-sixth birthday.

7 *deceyvll*: i.e. deceitful.

8 *uncoozend*: i.e. uncozened; undeceived.
Notes. This poem is addressed to Buckingham's posthumous son, Francis, who was born in April 1629.

Nourishd with sighs and frights, and form'd with fears,
And then baptized in thy mothers' tears;
What canst thou prove but wonder, and a chief
(Of all thy fathers foes) terror and grief?
To thy grieved mother joy, to crown her tears
with an unpractiz'd cure of all her fears?
Then teach these eyes again (blessed child) to smile:
as never let another cloud beguile
Us of the Comfort of those glorious beams:
nor let such suns as those set in sad streams.
Instruct her tears to smile by thy sweet power:
As when the sun vouchsafes to guild a shower.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 38r-v

1 'thy mothers': reference to Katherine Villiers, Duchess of Buckingham.
Notes. This is one of two elegies on Buckingham written by Thomas Carew, who was to become one of the preeminent court poets of the 1630s. (See also “Reader when these dumbe stones have told.”) Both poems were published in Carew’s 1640 Poems and both are analyzed perceptively by G. Hammond (51-53). Carew depicts Felton as a “Cloudy sullen soul” animated by “blinded zeale”, a phrase that links the assassin to a pejoratively imagined Puritanism. The concluding lines may refer to the magnificent monument erected to Buckingham in Westminster Abbey by his widow, Katherine Villiers, Duchess of Buckingham. If this is so, the poem may not have been finished until the time of the tomb’s completion in the early 1630s.

“On the Duke of Buckingham”

When in the brazen leaves of fame
the life, the death of Buckingham
Shall be recorded, if Truths hand
Incize the story of our land,
Posterity shall see a faire structure, by the studious care
of two Kings' raised, that did no lesse their wisedome then their power expresse;
By blinded zeale, whose doubtfull light
made murders scarlett robe seeme white,
Whose vaine deluding phantomes charmed
A Cloudy sullen soule, and armed
a desperate hand thirsty of blood,
Torne from the faire Earth where it stood;
So the Majestick fabrick fell
his actions let our Annalls tell,
wee write no Chronicle; this pyle weares only sorrowes face and style,
which even the envy which did wayte
upon his flourishing estate
turned to soft pittie of his death,
now payes his Hearse; but that cheape breath
shall not blow heere, nor th’unpure brine
Puddle those streames that bathe this shrine.
These are the pious obsequies\(^3\)
dropt from his Chaste wives pregnant eyes
In frequent shewers, and were alone
by her congealing sighes made stone;
on which the Carver did bestow
these formes, and characters of woe,
So hee the fashion only lent
whilst she wept all the Monument.

**Source.** BL MS Harley 6917, fols. 20v-21r

**Other known sources.** Carew, *Poems* 96; Carew, *Poems of Thomas Carew* 57; Bodleian MS Don. b.9, fol. 33r; Rosenbach MS 1083/17, fol. 65r

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1 *brazen:* brass, brass-like.

2 *two Kings:* James I and Charles I.

3 *obsequies:* mourning rituals.
Reader when these dumbe stones have told
in borrowed speech what guest they hold
thou shalt confesse, the vaine pursuite
of humane glory yeelds noe fruite
but an untimely grave, if fate
could constant happines create
her ministers fortune and worth
had here that miracle brought forth;
They fixt this Childe of honour, where
noe roome was left for hope, or feare
of more or lesse, so high so great
his growth was, yet so safe his seate;
safe in his Loyall heart and ends,
safe in the Circle of his friends,
safe in his native valiant spirit,
by favour safe, and safe by meritt;
safe by the stampe of nature which
did strength with shape and grace enrich;
safe in the cheerefull courtesies
of flowing gesture, speech and eyes,
safe in his bounties which were more
proportion’d to his minde then store;
Yea though for vertue he becomes
involved himselfe in borrowed summes
safe in his cares, he leaves betray’d
noe friend engaged, noe debt unpay’d;
But though the starres conspire to shower
upon one head the united power
of all their graces, if their dyre
Aspects must other breasts inspire
with vicious thoughts, A murd’rers knife
may cutt, as here, their darlings life;
who can be happy then if nature must
to make one happy man make all men Just?

Source. BL MS Harley 6917, fol. 21r-v

Other known sources. Carew, Poems 98; Carew, Poems of Thomas Carew 58; Bodleian MS Don. b.9, fol. 33v; Rosenbach MS 1083/17, fol. 65v

Piii21
Notes. This elegy, which provocatively attempts to link the popular celebration of the assassination to the threat that Puritanism posed to monarchy and hierarchy, is accepted as the work of Sir William Davenant. G. Hammond (54-55) briefly but persuasively situates the poem within the era’s growing ideological divisions. Interestingly, our chosen version differs quite significantly from that in BL Add. MS 33998, which is used as the basis for the only modern edition of the poem. (Significant variations are documented in footnotes.)

“An Elegy on the Duke of Buckingham”

Noe Poets triviall rage that must aspire
And highten in his song by enforc’t fire
Shall his loud Dirges mix with my sad Quire
Such sell their Teares like Inke for sordid hire
And he that husbands greife that his dull sight
And moisture spends but on thy funerall Night
T’augment the bauling Showre, when onely good
And noble eyes shall thaw into a flood
Doth want the naturall touch, he mournes by Art
His breast containes a Pibble not a Hart

Buckingham! (ô my Lord!) soe may I find
(With strickt endeavour of my sight) the wind
That veiwlesse moves about the world, as thy
Great soule now wandring in the purple sky;
It hath shooke of this mortall coyle, the rage
Of those who were but Chollericke with age;
Or with a drunken flux of Gall; which still
Like to their slimy Phlegme they did but spill
To make the ground more slippery, for thy foot
But thou ne’re movd’st but where thou took’st new root.

I am noe Chronicler, nor can impart
Unto the world in smooth ore-coming Art
Thee and thy worth; but yet ere Fames hot breath
Is mix’d with cooler Ayre that spoke thy death,
I will pronounce what thou wert found in, warre
Heare then, from forth thy Mansion in yon starre
A souldier sing; whose numbers flow and rise
As if he bath’d his Temples in his Eyes
And not in mighty wine. O happy those
Whose humble sorrowes reach but to loose Prose.

In deeds that appertain’d to warre & blood
Not the lofty Memnon when he withstood
Priams tall sonnes did shew such noble rage
His heat noe violence could tame, nor age
Yet when you courted him the gentle winde
That cooles the Lipps of Queenes was not soe kinde
His breath would then, like spices in their Smoke
Perfume the neighbour Aire, till it did Choke
Your greedy sence; then leave you rapt to prove
Which was more strong, his anger or his love.

Luxurious sleepes and surfeitts that have made
This Nation tame, and spoil’d the glorious Trade
(Loud Iron warre!) he did dismisse the Court,
And taught our silken youth a noble sport
The soft and whispring Lute he straight strucke dumbe
With noise and made them dance unto the Drumme
He lov’d to walke in powder, in blew Mists
Where some for wealthy Braceletts on their Wrists
Did were Chain’d shott; there danger taught him more
Then all the flattered worthy’es knew before.

But oh you harsh false starrs! when he was fitt
For Active discipline, you did permit
A Leprous hand to touch his hart; and so
Encreasd your lights, but darkned us below.
Whilst warme Idolaters that onely bow
To their fraile Mettall, and the industrious Plough
Picke from the Act a subtill Providence
Which their Wealth guards from their owne heires expence

Now rare divinity! since the precise
Doe relish murder as a sacrifice
Dull easy Faith and Ignorance no more
Shall flatter crooked Bondage as before
Predominance shall cease; the Sonnes of men
Shall now enjoy equallity agen;
For ruminate (o triviall Fooles!) if high
Heroique Princes, are constrain’d to dye
By oblique force whilst your Religion too
Applauds the Act, what will become of you?

But where are now his plumed Troopes? those high
Cedars, which tooke swift growth but in his Eye?
Those gilded Flatterers too that did torment
Their Active Lungs, t’indeavour a consent
An Eccho to his speech? are they all fledd?
Will none imploy their Lipps to sooth him dead?
O fond Ambition! that can nere survive
The warmth of flesh, and serv’d but whilst alive
Whom supple knees adore for secrett ends,
Greatnesse many followers hath but few friends.

Yet know sweet Lord: when the last day shall doome
The world thou needst not creepe into thy Tombe
Nor wrap thy Person in a sulphurous Cloud
Nor strive to hide thee in th’unweildy Croude
Of sinners lost, for those that knew desart
Did rather chide thy Titles then thy heart.
   Thy Dutchesse\(^1\) spends the treasure of her Eyes
In hope some Northerne blast, may strait surprise
The Teares which if congeal’d thy earthy part
Is then entomb’d in pearle, yet know my Art
Out climbs her reach, shee may advance thy Herse
But Fame shall sing thy story in my Verse
Let a dull souldier greet thee with a groane
I heard thy death and Clapt my Corslett\(^17\) on
For a distracted rage did soe inflame
My powrfulfull blood, wonder soe shooke my frame
That but the Iron sheet did fast Combine\(^18\)
My flesh, my Ribbs had started from my Chine.\(^19\)

**Source.** BL MS Egerton 2725, fols. 79r-80v

**Other known sources.** Davenant 272; BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 41r

\(^1\) bauling: bawling.

\(^2\) mortall coyle: the turmoil of life.

\(^3\) Chollericke: i.e. choleric; angry. Given the allusions to gall and phlegm that follow, Davenant may literally be referring to the excess of the bodily humour of choler that was thought to trigger an irascible temperament.

\(^4\) flux of Gall: discharge of gall (bile); hence bitterness.

\(^5\) Phlegme: one of the four bodily humours.

\(^6\) It hath shooke...took’st new root: these lines do not appear in the version in BL Add. MS 33998.

\(^7\) numbers: verse.

\(^8\) the lofty Memnon...Priams tall sonnes: Agamemnon was commander of the Greek armies during the
war with Troy, and killed Isus and Antiphus, sons of the Trojan King Priam (Homer, *Iliad* book 11).

9 *powder*: i.e. gunpowder.

10 *were Chain’d shott*: i.e. wore on the wrists chain-shot (two balls chained together used in naval warfare to destroy masts and rigging).

11 *expence*: at this point, the version of the poem in BL Add. MS 33998 includes a couplet which strengthens Davenant’s anti-Puritan critique, and begins with his indictment of those from the lower orders who had interpreted the assassination in providential terms: “Their Poets drinke Towne Breath, t’infuse some Qualme / That may Convert the story to a Psalme”.

12 *the precise*: contemptuous term for the self-proclaimed “godly”, also known by the opprobrious nickname “Puritans”.

13 *you*: at this point, the version in BL Add. MS 33998 includes the following lines, that locate the dead Duke in the Elysian Fields, the realm of the blessed souls in the classical underworld: “Sleepe, sleepe my Lord, and while the Scythians boast / In bloud, doe thou permitt no prattling ghost / To tell thee, in the smooth Elysian playne, / Beneath some pleasant hedge, their rash disdayne”.

14 *high / Cedars*: great men; the figure of speech derives from the biblical “cedars of Lebanon”.

15 *doome*: judge.

16 *Thy Dutchesse*: Katherine Villiers, Duchess of Buckingham.

17 *Corslett*: body armour.

18 *Combine*: unite with; here with the connotation of contain or restrain.

19 *Chine*: backbone, back.
Q. The Castlehaven Scandal (1631)

On 25 April 1631, Mervin Touchet, 2nd Earl of Castlehaven, was tried before a jury of his peers assembled at a specially convened Court of the Lord High Steward. He was charged with horrific crimes. The prosecution claimed that Castlehaven had arranged for his second wife—Anne Stanley, daughter of William Stanley, Earl of Derby, and widow of Grey Brydges, Baron Chandos—to be raped by a servant, Giles Broadway. The prosecution also contended that Castlehaven had committed sodomy with another of his manservants, Florence (or Lawrence) Fitzpatrick. Despite serious problems with the evidence against the Earl, some of which he exploited in his vigorous self-defence, the jury of twenty-seven peers of the realm found Castlehaven guilty on both charges. He was executed for his crimes on 14 May 1631, beheaded on Tower Hill.

The Castlehaven case was by far the most sensational aristocratic scandal of the 1630s, determinedly prosecuted by a king intent on enforcing much stricter codes of sexual morality. Cynthia Herrup has brilliantly reinterpreted the case in a recent study and has persuasively reconstructed the prosecution’s interpretation of Castlehaven’s crimes as threats to the patriarchal order. “The Castlehaven trial”, she writes, “despite the unimportance of its defendant (or perhaps because of it), became a canvas upon which an entire palette of social anxieties could be exhibited” (86-87). Six verse libels written in the wake of the scandal survive. The most popular—an epitaph written in Castlehaven’s voice—replicates the Earl’s defence in court, charging his wife with adultery and conspiracy against him. A second verse supports some of the epitaph’s allegations, while two others—written in the voice of the aggrieved Countess—directly counter them. Two other poems dwell on the performance of justice in the Castlehaven case, one mocking the proceedings and noting the legal weaknesses in the prosecution’s case, the other praising the proceedings and vilifying Castlehaven’s monstrous transgressions. Herrup (120-23) offers a concise and convincing reading of the libels and (160-64) prints modernized copies of the surviving poems.

We have relied on Herrup for a number of references to additional copies of the libels, in manuscripts which we have not been able to check. These manuscripts are: NCRO MS IL 3337;
WCRO MS 413; TCD MS 731; Beinecke MS Osborn b.125; Beinecke MS Osborn b.126; Beinecke MS Osborn b.196. Unfortunately, some of Herrup’s references do not include folio or page numbers.

Q0
Notes. As Herrup notes, this libel on the proceedings and arguments during Castlehaven’s trial, “lampooned not Castlehaven, but the trial itself”, and “would not have reassured any reader’s faith in the integrity of either the judges or the attorneys” (122, 123).

My Lord high steward his grace
with many a rich mace
Came guarded into the Palace
And with a pair of scales did weigh
each word he did say
to keep his oracon in ballace

2 To tell you noe lye
Hee lik’d the Canopie
soe well, and the chayre hee sate in
that my lord high steward still
tis thought with a good will
hee could have beene contented to have beene.

3 The Redd flappe of the Lawe, next
was to handle the text
and his part was to open the doore
But marke the disaster
My lords grace his master
had taken up all before

4 The Attorney now beganne
upon his leggs to stande
extollinge the happines of the Kinge
That had lived soe many yeares
and not one of his peares
had committed soe vile a thinge.

5  And trust me twas strange
   of all that great range
   that sate it out that day
   that not one of them all
   should at some tymes falle
   wander or goe a-stray

6  Hee used much scripture text
   which many ther perplext
   whoe did not thinke it possible
   That a man of his trade
   whoe soe much profitt had made
   Should bee soe well redd in the bible

7  But the oration was witty
   and truly twas pitty
   Hee did noe longer stand
   For by the quotations in the Lawe
   hee shewed hee was not rawe
   in matters that then weare in hand

8  The Solicitor most wise
   did lift up his eyes
   and to my Lord steward his grace
   And in spite of his Majestye
   for and his great Canopie
   did looke him full in face

9  Then hee declared
   what might have beene spared
   that the fault was abominandum
And was beholdinge many wayes
to the old English phrase
Sir Reverence non nominandum

10 The prisoner nowe
had leave to shewe
concerninge the rape of his wife
How that hee did it not
but conceived it a plott
to take away him and his Life

11 But alas twas in vayne
himselfe for to straine
since the Judges delivered it Plano
that to knowe by the tuch
was eaven just as much
as if it had beene in Ano

12 Its thought their trunke hose
did alsoe suppose
that in concubilu cum faeminis
ther might bee a rape
if lust made an escape
per ejectionem seminis

13 But sure in this case
noe dishonor to the place
competent judges they weare none
For by the closenes of their beard
t’was more then to bee feard
they weare Eueneuchs every one.

14 Sir Thomas Fanshaw Ile sware
above all that weare there
by noe meanes must bee left out
for hee fasted 12 howres and more
and 2 daies beeore
to bee able to turne round about.

Source. NCRO MS IL 3338, fols. 1r-2r

1 *My Lord high stewart*: with the House of Lords not in session, Castlehaven was tried by his peers in a specially assembled Lord High Steward’s court. The Lord Keeper, Thomas, Baron Coventry, presided over the trial as Lord High Steward.

2 *many a rich mace*: seven sergeants-at-arms, each carrying a ceremonal mace, processed into the trial ahead of the Lord High Steward.

3 *Pallace*: Castlehaven was tried in Westminster Hall.

4 *Hee lik’d...hee sate in*: the Lord High Steward presided in a canopied chair of state.

5 *The Redd flappe of the Lawe*: probably the King’s Serjeant, Sir Thomas Crew, who opened the case for the prosecution.

6 *My lords grace...all before*: Lord High Steward Coventry delivered an opening speech before the prosecuting attorneys began the case. The implication here is that Coventry’s speech had preempted some of the prosecution’s message.

7 *The Atturney*: Sir Robert Heath, Attorney-General, and chief prosecutor.

8 *that great range*: i.e. the twenty-seven English peers assembled as Castlehaven’s jurors.

9 *The Solicitor*: Sir Richard Sheldon, Solicitor-General, the third prosecutor, whose speech concluded the case against Castlehaven.

10 *abominandum*: to be abhorred.

11 *Sir Reverence non nominandum*: the exact meanings and origins of this “old English phrase” are not clear. Literally it appears to be “Sir Reverence Not-to-be-named”.

1017
The prisoner...and his Life: Castlehaven vigorously defended himself before the court, insisting that the allegations were part of a conspiracy by his wife and son to destroy him and seize his property.

But alas...in Ano: this stanza focuses on one of the central weaknesses in the prosecution’s case against Castlehaven, their inability to prove, as the law seemed to require, that penetration had occurred in the alleged act of sodomy. Florence (or Lawrence) Fitzpatrick, the servant with whom Castlehaven had allegedly committed sodomy, confessed that Castlehaven had “spent his seed but did not penetrate his body” (qtd. in Herrup 61). Significantly, only fifteen of the twenty-seven peers voted to convict Castlehaven on the sodomy charge.

trunke hose: short, often silken, breeches.

Its thought...per ejectionem seminis: this stanza also focuses on weaknesses in the prosecution case. According to the strict legal definition of the crime, rape, like sodomy, required penetration. Giles Broadway, the servant whom Castlehaven had allegedly ordered to rape the Countess, insisted that although he had ejaculated during the rape he had not penetrated the victim. The stanza implies that the royal legal officials argued that the actions confessed—ejaculation (ejectionem seminis) during a non-penetrative sexual encounter with the woman (in concubilu cum faeminis)—did in fact constitute a rape.

Eueneuchs: i.e. eunuchs.

Sir Thomas Fanshaw: Clerk of the Crown, and chief clerical officer of the Lord High Steward’s Court.
**Q2 Romes worst Philenis, and Pasiphaes dust**

*Notes.* Of all the Castlehaven libels, this verse most nearly approximates the moralizing horror found in the prosecutorial descriptions of the Earl’s alleged crimes. The poet insists that Castlehaven’s sexual offences are, without the aid of royal justice, simply inexplicable, transcending even the worst acts recorded in classical mythology and biblical history. In our chosen source, this poem is attributed to “Jo: R:”.

“Uppon the Lord Audleys Convictio Aprill 1631”

Romes worst Philenis, and Pasiphaes dust
Are now chast Fictions and noe longer lust
This wilder age hath monstred out a sinne
That vertues them and saints an Aretine
Scorning to owe a studied vice to times
example burnes out with more noble crimes
Such as weake Gibeahs Fire, or that loose Flame
Lot durst not looke at, want a sinne to name
This blacker engine is soe hardly scand
That vertue hath not witt to understand
How sinne can bee soo learned, that man should know
To rape himselfe and make one rape proove too
That lust should grow more barren than the grave
it merrits, for to a wise man, and slave
And how at one’d a strange incestuous love
Should both a Father and an husband proove
That soe high blood should prompt soe base a spirit
To gett an heir...to disinheritt
If yet thy chast beleife cannot discerne
The monster Know a King will make thee learne
whose justice thus the riddle doth untue
was such a crime for such an earle must dye
And yet this sinne above dispayre may sit
Since ther’s a King\textsuperscript{11} can pardon it

Source. Bodleian MS Ashmole 47, fols. 88v-89r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 67; Bodleian MS Rawl. A. 346, fol. 141v; Beinecke MS Osborn b.125, fols. 38r

Q2

1 Lord Audleys: this is technically incorrect. Lord Audley was the title of Castlehaven’s son, James Touchet.

2 Romes worst Philenis: the lesbian Philaenis, attacked in several epigrams by the Roman poet Martial.

3 Pasiphaes: in Greek myth, Pasiphae, wife of King Minos, lusted for and then mated with a bull, later giving birth to the Minotaur.

4 Aretine: Pietro Aretino, author of the most notorious works of Renaissance pornography, the Sonnetti lussuriosi (1527) and the Ragionamenti (1534-36).

5 Gibeahs Fire: allusion to the biblical story of a travelling Levite’s stay in Gibeah, where his concubine was brutally raped and murdered (Judges 19).

6 Lot durst not looke at: allusion to the story of God’s destruction of the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19). God allowed Lot and his family to flee Sodom before its destruction. As they fled, Lot’s wife looked back at the burning cities and was turned into “a pillar of salt” (Genesis 19.26).

7 blacker engine: “black...Ænigma” is a variant reading (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97).

8 To rape himselfe...proove too: reference to Castlehaven’s crime in commissioning the rape of his own wife. The line suggests that this bizarre action meant that Castlehaven was not only in effect raping himself, but also making one rape—Giles Broadway’s actual physical assault on the Countess—into “two” rapes, one by Broadway, the other (by proxy) by Castlehaven.

9 That lust should grow more barren: perhaps an allusion to Castlehaven’s alleged sodomy with his servant, Fitzpatrick.

10 To gett an heir his blood to disinheritt: one of the allegations against Castlehaven was that he had encouraged a servant, Henry Skipwith, to sleep with the Earl’s own daughter-in-law, Lady Audley, in order to produce an illegitimate heir.
a King: “a higher King”—i.e. God—is a variant, and preferable, reading (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97).
Q3 I neade noe Trophies, to adorne my hearse

Notes. This widely circulated epitaph on the Earl of Castlehaven inverts the meanings pinned to his case by the prosecution. As Herrup notes, the poem “reduced the relationship of Castlehaven and the Countess to that of cuckold and adulteress. Gone were rape and sodomy, disinheriance and patriarchal irresponsibility...The verse portrayed the Earl as helpless, not monstrous; the willful evil belonged to the Countess” (121). The poem exists in many variant versions. The version we have chosen, from William Davenport’s commonplace book, adds a concluding couplet not typically found in other copies of the poem. One copy forms the final lines of an otherwise unique poem on Castlehaven, which we therefore treat below as a discrete text (see “My life is done my heart prepard for death”). And the last two lines of most versions of the poem (“Who will take such a Countess to his bedd / that firste gives hornes, and then cutts off his head”) were, at least once, copied out as a discrete verse (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26). The poem also elicited at least two answer-poems, written in the voice of Castlehaven’s wife (see “Blame not thy wife, for what thy selfe hath wrought” and “Its true you need noe trophees to your hearse”), and a number of manuscripts include copies of both the epitaph and one or other of the responses.

“An Epitaffe on the Earle of Castelhaven Mervine Touchett. set on his Tombe. after his beheadinge. 1631.”

I neade noe Trophies, to adorne my hearse
my wyffe, exalts my hornes¹ in everie vearse:
and plaste them hath, soe fullie on my tombe
that for my armes,² there is noe vacant rome.

Who will take such a Countess to his bedd
that firste gives hornes, and then cutts off his head:
Servaunts, a sonne, and wyffe wich I did wedd,
have layde poore Mervine here without a headd.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 72r

Other known sources. Bodleian MS CCC. 327, fol. 32v; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 58r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 87v; Bodleian MS Rawl. A. 346, fol. 142r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 21r; BL Add. MS 5832, fol. 222v; BL Add. MS 22118, fol. 29r; BL Add. MS 22591, fol. 89r; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 38v; BL MS Egerton 2725, fol. 110r; BL MS Harley 738, fol. 328r; BL MS Sloane
1446, fol. 64v; CUL Add. MS 335, fol. 54r; NCRO MS IL 3337, p. 9; NCRO MS IL 3338, fol. 2v; St.
John’s MS S.32, fol. 32r; WCRP MS 413, fol. 401; TCD MS 731; Beinecke MS Osborn b.125;
Beinecke MS Osborn b.126; Folger MS V.a.124, fol. 18v; Folger MS V.b.50, p. 547; Folger MS E.a.6,
fol. 3r; Huntington MS HM 116, p. 122; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 386; Rosenbach MS 243/4, p. 161

Q3

1 my hornes: i.e. cuckold’s horns.

2 my armes: Castlehaven’s coat-of-arms. Heraldic devices were commonly added to tomb monuments.
Notes. This unique poem, copied at the end of several pages of documents on the Castlehaven case, incorporates the widely circulated “I neade noe Trophies, to adorne my hearse” as its concluding lines. The main body of the poem takes the form of a versified “last-dying speech”, the statement of faith and repentance expected from a convicted felon awaiting execution. The poet seems to have deliberately crafted this speech to allow the possibility of alternative readings, dependent upon one’s interpretation of the term “flesh and blood”. The Earl’s lament at his betrayal by his “flesh and blood” could be read as an admission of his guilt, acknowledging the root of his crime in his inability to temper his bodily lusts. A more compelling interpretation, however, would identify Castlehaven’s wife and son as his “flesh and blood”, and thus take the poem as an attack on their malice. The latter reading, of course, is strengthened by the addition of “I neade no Trophies, to adorne my hearse” at the end of the verse.

My life is done my heart prepar'd for death
My trust in God who first did give me breath.
My saviour Christ hath paid my debt, and I
Am free from death and hell eternally.¹
And yet my heart from sorrow is not free
To thinke that my owne flesh should injure mee.
My flesh and blood from flesh and blood is parted,
Wee once were one but now are double hearted.²
My ill from evill sprong and malice wrought
My sinnfull action which was first in thought.
And what remaines in after age to blame mee
My flesh and blood did worke my death to shame mee
Ah whorish flesh what more is to bee knowne
To thy disgrace more then to name mine owne.
I need noe Tropheys to adorne my hearse
My wife exalts my hornes³ in every verse,
And placed hath soe fully on my tombe,
that for my armes⁴ is left no vacant roome.
Who would take such a Countesse to his bed,  
That first gives hornes and then cutts of his head.

Source. BL MS Lans. 491, fol. 229v

Q4

1 *My life is done...hell eternally:* the convicted felon was supposed to offer a theologically correct testimony to his hope in salvation. Castlehaven—a suspected Catholic—made a declaration of his Protestant faith at his execution. The statement in this poetic version would also pass Protestant muster.

2 *My flesh and blood...hearted:* punning on divergent meanings of “flesh and blood”. Castlehaven’s own “flesh and blood” (i.e. body) is parted from his familial “flesh and blood” (i.e. his wife and son), as a result of an unnatural division between them (signified in the term “double hearted”).

3 *hornes:* cuckold’s horns.

4 *armes:* Castlehaven’s coat-of-arms. Heraldic devices were commonly added to tomb monuments.
Q5 A proud cuckold tollit cornua

Notes. In the sole extant copy, this verse runs immediately after “I neade noe Trophies, to adorn my hearse”. Although these lines clearly continue in the same vein as the more-widely circulated epitaph, both their language and the scribe’s separation of these lines from the preceding verse suggest that this best is best considered as a discrete poem.

A proud cuckold tollit cornua.¹
I would not have my wife exalt my horne.
Keepe on your Masque & hide your eye
For with behoulding it I dye,
for yf your piercing eyes I see
Their worse than Basiliskes² to mee.

Source. Huntington MS HM 166, p. 122

Q5

¹ tollit cornua: “lifts his horns”.

² Basiliskes: reference to the mythical serpent that could kill by its look.
Q6 Blame not thy wife, for what thy selfe hath wrought

Notes. This is one of two answer-poems, written in the voice of Castlehaven’s wife, responding to the epitaph “I neade noe Trophies, to adorne my hearse”. Herrup argues that both answer-poems “reversed the epitaph’s moral trajectory”, and “reinstituted images created during the trial by the King’s officials” (122).

“The Ladyes answere”

Blame not thy wife, for what thy selfe hath wrought
Thou causd thy hornes in forcing me to nought¹
   For hadst thou beene but human, not A Beast
   Thy Armes had bene Supportors to thy Creast
Nor needst you yet have had A Tombe, or Hearse
Besmear’d with thy sensuall life in verse
   Who then would take such A Lord unto her bedd
   That to gaine hornes himsefe, would loose his head

Source. BL Add. MS 22591, fol. 89r

Other known sources.² St. John’s MS S.32, fol. 32v; WCRO MS 413, fol. 401

Q6

¹ Thou causd...nought: this line restates the accusation that Castlehaven had cuckolded himself by encouraging his servant Broadway to rape the Countess.

² Herrup (160) notes that copies of either this or “Its true you need noe trophees to your hearse” accompany copies of the Earl’s “epitaph” in BL MS Lans. 491, fol. 229v; Yale Osborn MS b.126; and TCD MS 731.
Q7 Its true you need noe trophees to your hearse

Notes. This is the second of two answer-poems responding to—and challenging—the epitaph “I neade noe Trophies, to adorne my hearse”.

“An answere”

Its true you need noe trophees to your hearse
Your life beinge odious farr beneath all verse
Nor wast your wife who came chast to your bedd
which did you horne, your owne hands horn’d your head;¹
Twas fitt your head should off then as all conster²
That you who livde soe, should soe dye a monster.

Source. Rosenbach MS 239/27, pp. 386-87

Other known sources.³ CUL Add. MS 335, fol. 54r; WCRO MS 413, fol. 401

Q7

¹ your owne hands horn’d your head: i.e. Castlehaven had cuckolded himself by engineering the rape of his wife by the servant Giles Broadway.

² conster: construe.

³ Herrup (160) notes that copies of either this or “Blame not thy wife, for what thy selfe hath wrought” accompany the Earl’s “epitaph” (“I neade noe Trophies, to adorne my hearse”) in the following manuscripts: BL MS Lans. 491, fol. 229v; Beinecke MS Osborn b.126; and TCD MS 731.
William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, was troubled by libels throughout much of his turbulent career, and his letters and speeches offer some of the most striking testimony on the effect of such works. Writing to Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, in 1637, he moaned: “What do you think will become of me, when I am thus used?” (Works 7.372; Cogswell, “Underground Verse” 277). Yet, in contrast to the wealth of surviving libels on other early Stuart public figures, it is immediately striking how few poems on Laud survive. Indeed this section, which gathers together miscellaneous manuscript libels from the 1630s (apart from those on the scandal surrounding Mervin Touchet, Earl of Castlehaven, which are gathered separately in Section Q), includes just four on Laud: two from the late 1620s, and two dating from roughly three years after his 1637 lament on his use at the hands of libellers. This begs the critical question of what happened to libelling in the 1630s. As the material in the present section demonstrates, the practices of the preceding decades appear to have changed considerably within the period of a few years, affecting both the quantity and characteristics of libels.

Libelling in the 1630s was informed by apparent changes in both literary and political cultures. In literary culture, the practice of circulating verse in manuscript form certainly continued; indeed a considerable number of surviving early Stuart verse miscellanies date from the early 1630s, and some of these represent our best sources for the present edition (Hobbs 148). But while miscellanists were busy collecting libels that were up to thirty years old, their volumes provide considerably less evidence of contemporary libelling. Perhaps this is in part due to the changing tastes of those men and women compiling miscellanies; newsletters, by comparison, continued to report the activities of libellers (e.g. BL Add. MS 11045, fol. 6v). Nonetheless, it is almost incontrovertible that poetry of the 1630s, at least as it is represented in verse miscellanies, rarely engaged with politics in the explicit manner that is familiar from a reading of earlier libels. Although literary historians have taught us to read political nuances in what might otherwise appear to be apolitical works (e.g. Sharpe, Criticism and Compliment; Marcus), there is little question that poets in this period tended to eschew the bold political statements of the preceding decades.
This shift aligns with changes in political culture. While it would be a huge overstatement to claim that there was no political conflict in the 1630s, it is less controversial to state that there were far fewer immediate occasions or contexts for libels than in previous decades. Notably, Charles I’s Personal Rule (1629-1640) meant that there were no parliaments, and therefore no authorized fora for political debate. Moreover, the conditions of peace that prevailed throughout most of the decade made politics somewhat less fraught with controversy than had been the case in the 1620s. And finally, Laud’s comments notwithstanding, the 1630s did not have a single dominant statesman, in the manner of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, or George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Arguably, in these conditions expressions of political disquiet assumed other forms, that the parameters of this edition do not encompass. For instance, some of Laud’s most troubling critics were situated in provincial centres, and were focused on disputes that were primarily (though not entirely) local in character. A well-known Colchester libel on Laudian altar policy provides a good example of this (SP 16/229/123; Walter 171-75). Furthermore, criticism of English politics was undoubtedly a subtext of much comment on international events, as evidenced by the poems that circulated after the death of the Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus, who was perceived by many as a hero of militant Protestantism (e.g. King 77; Rous 74 and 75; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fols. 51r-57v).

Libels were also changing in character in the 1630s. In fact is possible that the most damaging “libels” were assuming forms other than the familiar manuscript poems of earlier decades. The Puritan writers who troubled Laud more than any others, John Bastwick, Henry Burton and William Prynne, wrote in prose and chose illicit print circulation. Despite the inherent risks attendant upon this choice—the three men were severely punished after a notorious Star Chamber trial in 1637—it achieved for them a far greater political impact than any manuscript poem. Similarly, a number of political ballads were brought into print in these years, despite the strictures of censorship (e.g. Firth, “Ballads on the Bishops’ Wars”). Other “libels” in this period may have circulated beyond the elite milieu of the verse miscellany. Laud, for instance, refers to a crude yet effective kind of cartoon; the Lord Mayor of London sent him:

a board hung upon the Standard in Cheap, and taken by the watch (the thing, I mean, not the man), a narrow board with my speech in the Star Chamber nailed at one end of it, and singed with fire, the
corners cut off instead of the ears, a pillory of ink with my name to look through it, a writing by—
‘The man that put the saints of God into a pillory of wood, stands here in a pillory of ink’ (*Works* 7.371).

Laud’s speech in the Star Chamber trial of Bastwick, Burton and Prynne, printed at the “commaund” of the King (Laud, *Speech* t.p.), is here pilloried, in an act that is at once pointed in its intent and demotic in its intended audience. By comparison, those libels that did circulate in the established medium of the miscellany, and that we include in this section, tend to avoid such bold political statements. Some are local and occasional: such as the piece on the curious death of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (“Reader, Ile be sworne uppon a booke”), or that lamenting England’s military timidity (“Come arme thy self brave England”). Others have more in common with libels of the Restoration, with their salacious focus on the sexual lives of courtiers (“See what a love there is betweene”; “A health to my Lady Dutchess”).

The final poems in the section date from 1640. While the reins of censorship were at this point on the verge of collapse, some poets were still writing for manuscript circulation, in ways that developed upon early Stuart poetic conventions. The poems below are included because they survive in manuscript sources. When set alongside printed polemic from the early 1640s, however, they represent merely the tip of an iceberg.

R0
Notes. Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, was an active statesman and poet in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. In September 1628, at the age of seventy-four, he met a violent death, which becomes the subject of this poem. A few months before his death, Greville added a codicil to his will granting annuities to many of his dependants, but neglecting an old servant named Ralph Haywood. Subsequently, Haywood confronted his master, and in the course of a heated exchange fatally stabbed him with a sword, and immediately afterwards took his own life. This event caused much comment, but elicited only one known libel. Moreover, this libel is notable for its lack of any political content, dwelling instead on Greville’s alleged parsimony (for which there is no other contemporary evidence).

“On the death off the Lord Brookes”

Reader, Ile be sworne uppon a booke
here lyes the right vyle the Lord brooke
who, as I have a soule to save
did not deserve to have a grave.
For, would I might never gое further
he was accused off a horrible murther,¹
because it was thought, he begane
to cutt, one Raphe Stewarde his man;²
wich for my parte, by gods glydd³
I beleve he never did,
Ile naturde he was, eles let me nere wagge,
For he was never knowen, to lend his frend a nagge,
and would to heaven that I were fledd,
iff he locked not upp clippinges off bread,
besides, I would I never might stirre more
but for charge, he had lyen with a whoore
and it would make a man verie sicke
to thinke, how ill he rewarded the musicke;
naye, there be a huge companie that think
he writte noe legacies, for sparinge off Inke;
and I protest as I hope to live
off all thinges on earth he loved not to give;
soe costive he was, and wearie of shifte
that he would not helpe himselfe, at a dead lyfte;
he calde his executer, Raggamuffine
because he was soe expensive, as to buy a Coffine;
for I praye (quoth he, to what intente
should wormes be well howsed that never paide rentte;
and by this blessed light that shines,
he thought itt verie simple, to pay tythes to Devines;
and when he was dyinge he disputed at large,
whether, his soule, might travell without charge,
and juste as his soule, was about to begonne,
because, corne was deare, he eate browne bread att Communion;
solitarie, he was, for goinge alone,
noe bodie would goe with him, but that’s all one;
to fagotte in winter, by Dragon & Bell,
most men are off opinion he went to hell;
well, I would I might never goe out of this roome)
he will be verie melancholly, at the day off Doome.

Source. CCRO MS CR 63/2/19, fol. 72r

1 he was accused...murther: the accusation of “murther” is at best figurative, given that Haywood committed suicide after fatally wounding Greville. In the context of the poem, which charges Greville with outrageous parsimony, Haywood’s actions become an almost unavoidable consequence of Greville’s failure to provide for his servant. Hence, according to the poem’s strained logic, Greville commits murder.
2 *Raphe Stewarde his man:* i.e. Ralph Haywood, Greville’s servant. He may have been known as “Raphe Stewarde” because of his likely role in Greville’s household.

3 *gods glydd:* unclear; possibly the poet intended “God’s ‘lid” (i.e. “God’s eyelid”), a colloquial oath of the time.

4 *costive:* literally “constipated”; also, figuratively, “niggardly, stingy”.

5 *to fagotte in winter...Bell:* unclear.
R2 Surely the face of thinges is alter’d much

Notes. This poem, targeting Laud’s theological opinions, is transcribed on a page headed “1629”.

“on B.pp Laude. epig.”

Surely the face of thinges is alter’d much
when ancient tenents[1] now are nothing such
as what they weare before, How comes this evill
that what God should have Men give to the Devill
for where Men gave to God both laud and prayse
Laud’s given to th’Devill now, in these our dayes.

Source. Folger MS V.a.319, fol. 26v

R2

1 tenents: i.e. “tenets”.

1035
**R3 Vainglorious man who can your witt applaude**

_Notes._ Laud became Chancellor of the University of Oxford in 1630, after a contested and somewhat controversial election.

“On Bp Laud being chosen Chauncelor of Oxford”

Vainglorious man who can your witt applaude
That stretch so farre to get a little Laude.
Did nature erre? or on set purpose try
To shew her power in such a prodegie
Shee, untill know, nere croun’d (as I could reade)
So vast a body with soe small a head
yet Oxford in thy choise th’art partly blest
For of the thing that’s bad a little’s best.

_Source._ Folger MS V.a.97, p. 5

_Other known sources._ Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 31
R4  Come arme thy self brave England

Notes. This poem may be dated from a statement in the third stanza, that England has been poorly defended for twenty-seven years. Since it implicitly targets the Stuart kings, comparing them unfavourably to Elizabeth, the poem was almost certainly written in 1630, twenty-seven years after James I assumed the English throne. In this case the poem may also reflect on Charles’s decision in that year to end five years of war against Spain and France.

“A Song”

Come arme thy self brave England
Put on thin iron coate
And shake of dull securitie
Which made this Kingdome dote
For thou hast long clothed bin
In silken robes of peace
Which made our enymyes bragge & boast
And our passions cease.

When peace first entred Berwicke¹
And threw our bulwarks downe
Dismounted all our ordinance
That furnished the towne
And by this long continuance
It hath all most un donne us
Which makes our enimyes bragge and boast
And thinke to overcome us.

Our castles our blockhouses
That should affront our foes
Were kept this 27 yeares²
By pigens, pyes, and crowes
Or by some ancient beads man³
That scarce a flie could kill
While hee lies sleeping in the gate
A begger steales his bill.  

Our brass and Iron peeces
Are eaten up with rust
Insteed of balles and powder
Are cramd with durt & dust
And those that yet stand mounted
Are of soe milde condition
They dare not shoote against their foes
Tis out of their commission.

Faire Essex, Suffolke, Northfolke,
Prepared were to fight
But yet the theevish Dunkerks
Still rob’d us in our sight.
And is not this a shame
A greife and a vexation
That one poore paulyt lowsy towne
should trouble a whole Nation.

Wee kill them all in taverns
With oaths and bugbeare words
And in a drunken quarrell
Goe forth and shew our swords
And after this bravado
Come in and drinke againe
A health to the confusion of
The pride and power of Spaine.

And for this quaffing valour
A captaine hee is made
Because hee went into the feild
And shew’d his naked blade
Hee purchast hath a beaver
A buffcoate and a belt
To make a voyage ore the seas
To fetch a flanders felt.

God bless our noble K. and Queene,
And eke our Lady Besse
And send us better generalls
Then were in the last presse
And send us such commaunders
As in Elizas reigne
And then wee need not feare the Turke
The Devill or pride of spaine.

Source. BL MS Sloane 1792, fols. 74v-75v

1 When peace...Berwicke: sardonic reference to James’s journey in 1603 to assume the English throne, travelling from Edinburgh and crossing into England at the town of Berwick. James liked to be known for his commitment to peace.

2 this 27 yeares: presumably twenty-seven years from James’s accession in 1603.

3 beads man: in Catholic religious practice, a beadsman is a man employed to pray for the welfare of another. Here, the term signifies perhaps a man left as a kind of pre-Reformation relic, or perhaps more generally a harmless subordinate.

4 bill: slightly ambiguous, but probably referring to a weapon, similar to a halberd, used by both soldiers and constables.

5 Faire Essex...our sight: privateers from Dunkirk, a town held by the Spanish, troubled English
shipping in the late 1620s. Plans for a joint Anglo-Dutch attack on Dunkirk came to nothing.

6 And for this...hee is made: it is not clear whether these lines refer to a particular man.

7 beaver: face-guard of a helmet.

8 Because hee went...flanders felt: while the exact events (if any) behind these lines are unclear, the meaning is straightforward; the poet expresses indignation at those who put interests of trade above those of English Protestant militarism.

9 our Lady Besse: probably King Charles’s sister, Elizabeth, who became a symbol for those in England who desired a more militant foreign policy after she and her husband, the Elector Frederick, were driven into exile by Habsburg forces.

10 And send us...the last presse: presumably a reference to the last military mobilization, c.1627-28. A sardonic glance at the leadership of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, is probably intended.
Notes. This poem, like the following one (“A health to my Lady Duchess”) has an anachronistic air: more in accord with Restoration libels, which would focus insistently on sexual scandal and rumour. In contrast to libels of the 1620s, which constitute the core of the present edition, there is little overt political content to these poems. Nonetheless, given that Charles had effectively politicized sexual morality, constructing an ideal image of the family around his own family, one might well argue that the project of turning this mythology against him inevitably carries a political charge. While the poems focus heavily on the household of Queen Henrietta Maria, the scope of each is also broader than this. It is possible that the poem’s title, “The progress” alludes to an actual royal progress taken by the King and his court, such as that to East Anglia in 1634.

“The progress”

See what a love there is betweene
The K: & his endeared Queene,
And all their subjects love, & care,
Is fixed on this royall paire.

But did their Majesties select
Deserving persons to affect
Like to themselves, & not love all
The Court would soon bee very small.

With my Lord Duke¹ I must begin,
Cause I thinke hees free from sin
Of Lovers: yet hees not so stupid
But hee may bee a friend to Cupid.

Heres no Signoras² thats the reason:
To speake of Grandies pettie treason:
Hee had a fall, alas ’twas pittie
I wish’t had rather been the Citie.³
My Lord Marquesse with his good face,
Is come now to fill up a place,
Why hee wellcome: thers a good Table
Belongs to the Master of the stable.

Lord Chamberlaine has chang’d his mind
And in the Country was very kind,
Admitting chambermayds to his table,
But keeping Ladies from the fable.

Blame not his choice for hee learnd that
By his own Ladies loveing her cat
Tis fit, mee thinkee that hee at the least
As well as shee should love his beast.

My lord of Dorset has the renown
For mistresses in Court & Town,
Hee loves for beauty or for wit,
Cause hee’l bee sure the mark to hit.

But Dorset thou gin’st to decline
Every one must have a time,
Leave off poore man, thy date is past
And pleasures will give ore at last.

My Lord Carliles voluminous boord
And dishes in folio do affoord
Great entertainement to his friends
Whom virtue, or his wife commends.

But shee poore Lady must bee fed
With decimo sexto in his bed,
And takes no pleasure to read int
Because it is too small a print.

My Lord of Holland\textsuperscript{15} bears the bell,\textsuperscript{16}
In Cupids wars hee doth excell;
His Lady\textsuperscript{17} answeres not his gilltie\textsuperscript{18}
Though hee exceeds all for Civilitie.

As for my Lord it belongs to him
To see whos Ladies hee can win,
And of pleasure to take his fill
Hee has been good, I hope he will bee still.

Newport\textsuperscript{19} is pidling\textsuperscript{20} now, \\& then,
In company hees like other men.
Whats that to have a wench like the rest
Hee’le play his part as well as the best.

What ment you Mr Piercy\textsuperscript{21} by that
To throw away Don Lewis\textsuperscript{22} hat?
What was the cause of all those jarrs
Who should fight best in venus warrs.

Percy loves all but Lo dan Luce\textsuperscript{23}
Courts one alone, but wert his use
When he change sutes to change love too
Hee would have mistresses enough.

Lusty Lo: Goring\textsuperscript{24} cannot bee mist
For then should some want to be kist
Hees a smart lade, \\& in his brickes\textsuperscript{25}
Some thing he has that often prickes.

Judge him not by his lookes so old\textsuperscript{26}
Hees like a leeke as I am told
Hees head is gray, his blade is greene
And hees as active as at 18

Craven comes not to boast of bloud
What's ere defective his purse makes good,
Who would not then his mistres be
That is more Franck then two, or three.

But some say he does this to spare
For wives more costly then mistrisses are,
Besides if one please not his minde
Hee finds another thats more kind

Gandison too did there resort,
But yet his Mistres was not at Court,
Peace foole he must have more then one
Purging his reines keepes from the stone.

Porter did waite it was his turne
Meane time with jealousy he did burne,
Leave off this humour of Spanish blood
Tis thy wives vertue must make her good.

Gentle men waiters take your dish
And better then either flesh or fish
Dyet in common does not please
As a dainty private bit at ease.

The querries they ar still astride
Better then others they can ride
And Colte, Horse, or Mare can back
Ladies may use them if they lack.

The Pensioners have weapons too
Defend faire Ladies & pleasures doe
Theyr lusty men both stout & tall
Able at one game to beate all.

You ar well met good Doctor lister
Often y have given a great lady a glister
Your Pipe was good, shee could not refuse
But all things are the worse for use.

Next him follows Monsieur Plancy
Who often times makes much of Rancy,
Contemne him not his drugs ar good
His cordiall will breed good blood.

Oberlt you need not to complaine
You can let blood in the right veine
Take heede your Lancet be kept cleane
Least you do hurt you know what I meane.

My La: Dutchesse is still the same
And is a friend to venus game
Her choice betrayes who best doth like her
For by his haire he is a striker

Why Madam are you so profuse
Of your love to my Lo: don Luce
Or make him leave his sullen humour
Or leave him quite to cease the rumour.

My Lady Marquis stayd behinde,
In her husbands absence she is kinde
Use your time Madam to be no foole
Advise: the Courts a very good schoole.
Honestys worse then making faces
And is one of the greatest disgraces
That haps to a Lady faire and younge
She may be otherwise, hold thy tongue.

Denby shee is praysd by many
And holds her head as high as any,
Tis thought shees vertuous thats no matter
Ile not her more then others flatter.

She has a mayd knows all her mind
Whom she hates, and to whom shees kind
This mayd now chang’d to Mistris Easter
Without whose healp she cannot vest her.

Madam cryes preecher haste away
I know that Church doth for mee stay
The Proverbs true though very odd
Neerer the Church farther from God.

My exc’lent revent Lord Cary
Keeper o’th gloves to good Queene Mary
Town & Country shee followes the Court
Though never finds but little sport.

My Lady Kellegrew holds one well
For red and white shee doth excell
If she be courted now takes in snuffe
For shee hath very good season’d stuffe.

Crofts tale is easily told
For shee hath servants young & old,
Some ar to gray some ar to green
The last is still in most esteeme.

Seymer they say did love too much
And did the given saddle grutch
’Twas her own fault, had she been wise
Both saddle & horse had been her prize.

Poor Mrs Arden was not wise
To prick young Cupid in his thighs
I feare the boy in vengance had her,
Venus know where, but thats no matter.

Howard dared not a servant owne
Her love shee keepes from being known
Although shee thinks the world too blind
Yet allways Cat wil after kind.

Hanmer you ought for to retire
And not come to blow Cupids fire
Your tradings better as tis sayd
Then when at Court you were a mayd.

Her husbands glad poore man of ease
Entreats her to take whom she please
’Tis sayd he has horns but thats a gull
Hees the Court Calfe & not the Bull.

The Mother of the mayds allmost forgot:
Why? Shees obscure, I know her not
Shee came to Court cause shee was poore
Yet got her liveing easily before.

Madam Nurse sits at home & thinks
While her sonne goes abroad & drinks
Be merry Madam & safely laugh
For the still sow eates up all the draffe

Your daughters they ar proud as the Devill
Of all others thats the worst evill
It is their folly cause they advance
For all their witts were lost in Fraunce.

Caito comes in play with the rest,
And may prove as good as the best;
Keepe close for the honour of thy Nation
Lest wee call loosenes the French fashion.

Madam Vamtlet I pittie her case
Her daughters faire to supply her place
She ginns betimes no hurt in that
No danger is in lying flat.

The Gard he stamps, & stares, & sweares
But dares not touch a mayd fors eares
Because the Lords ar thereof found
And leaves them allwayes very unsound.

The Chambermayd to cover her dock
Wears of her La: things eene to the smock
The Lo: haven tane it up before
Knoweth the way to do it once more.

Our paper shall not know the Name
Of Priest or Bishop to proclaime
What ere gainst others wee attempt
Those sanctifyed persons ar exempt.

May thousand plagues both old & new
More then damnation ever knew
Fall heavy on him that denyes
Honour to Church & Monarchies.

Source. Folger MS V.b.110, pp. 88-90

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 264r


2 Heres no Signoras: possible allusion to Stuart’s connection with Spain. In 1632, on a visit to the continent, he was made a grandee of Spain of the first class.

3 To speake of Grandies...Citie: these lines are obscure. A variant of the final line has: “I wish, t’had rather bin in the citty” (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37).

4 My Lord Marquesse: James, Marquis of Hamilton.

5 Master of the stable: Hamilton was made Master of the Horse after the Duke of Buckingham’s death in 1628.


7 keeping Ladies from the fable: unclear; possibly “keeping ladies from becoming the subject of gossip”, and therefore a comment either on his discretion or his preference for “chambermaids”. Herbert had a reputation for sexual immorality.

8 his own Ladies: Anne Herbert (née Clifford), Countess of Pembroke.

9 My lord of Dorset: Edward Sackville, Earl of Dorset, Lord Chamberlain in Henrietta Maria’s household.

10 But Dorset thou gin’st to decline: Sackville was born in 1591.

11 My Lord Carliles: either James Hay, 1st Earl of Carlisle (d.1636), or James Hay, 2nd Earl of Carlisle. Since the former was known for his lavish hospitality, he is the more likely candidate, and this would help to date the poem to a time before his death.
voluminous boord...affoord: the analogy here is between the dimension of Hay’s hospitality and the size of books. A folio is the biggest, and typically the most expensive, size of book.

his wife: presumably the 1st Earl’s second wife, Lucy (née Percy).

*With decimo sexto in his bed:* the joke depends on a continuation of the analogy with the sizes of books, though here this is turned to bawdy effect. A decimo sexto is the smallest size of book.


*bears the bell:* takes the first place.

*His Lady:* Isabel Rich (née Cope), Countess of Holland.

gillitie: a variant, “agilitie”, is a better reading (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37).

*Newport:* Mountjoy Blount, Earl of Newport.

*pidling:* trifling; petty.

*Mr Piercy:* a variant, “Percy”, is a better reading (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37); probably Henry Percy, one of the Queen’s male favourites, and formerly her Master of Horse.

*Don Lewis:* a variant, “Don Luce’s”, is a better reading (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37); hence Randal MacDonnell, Lord Dunluce.

Percy loves all...Luce: a variant, “Percy loves all; but Lord Don Luce”, is a better reading (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37).

*Lo: Goring:* George Goring (Earl of Norwich from 1644). Like many of the figures mentioned in the poem, Goring had connections with the Queen, having served first as her Vice-Chamberlain, and subsequently as her Master of the Horse.

*brickes:* probably a strained form of “breeches”, in an effort to secure a pun with “prickes”. In fact, the scribe of Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37 tries “breeches”, but deletes this word in favour of “bricks”.

*Judge him not...so old:* Goring was born in 1585.

*Craven comes not...purse makes good:* William Craven, Baron Craven of Hampstead Marshall, Berkshire, was the son of a wealthy merchant. He paid the Crown £7000 for his peerage in 1627.

*Franck:* liberal, generous. There is also perhaps a pun on a name here (Francis or Frances), though this has now been lost.
Gandison: William Villiers, Viscount Grandison.

Purging his reines...stone: the bawdy joke depends on contemporary medical theory, which stressed the importance of regular flows of matter through the body. Here the expulsion of fluid from the kidneys (“purging his reines”) helps to prevent the development of kidney stones.

Porter: probably Endymion Porter.

Leave off...make her good: probably a reference to Porter’s mistress, a Spanish singer, and possibly also to marital difficulties experienced by him and his wife, Olive, a committed Catholic, c.1634.

Gentle men waiters: gentlemen attached to the court, to wait at the royal table.

The querries: equerries; members of the royal household charged with the care of horses.

The Pensioners: Gentlemen Pensioners, a group of gentlemen who acted as guards or attendants to the King on state occasions.

Doctor lister: Sir Matthew Lister, royal physician.

glist er: i.e. clyster; enema, suppository.

Pipe: literally, clyster-pipe, used for administering a clyster; however, the bawdy connotation here is obvious.

Monsieur Plancy: Pierre de la Plancy, son of the French royal midwife Mme. Peronne, and apothecary to Henrietta Maria.

Rancy: possibly a reference to Jacques Rancien, another servant to Henrietta Maria.

Oberlt: “Obert” is a variant (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37). He is clearly another physician; almost certainly Maurice Aubert, the Queen’s French surgeon.

Lancet: a pointed surgical instrument; here, the word carries obvious bawdy connotations.

My La: Dutchesse: Katherine Villiers (née Manners), Duchess of Buckingham and widow of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

Her choice...he is a striker: allusion to Katherine Villiers’s new husband, the red-headed Randal MacDonnell, Lord Dunluce, who succeeded as Earl of Antrim at the end of 1636, and married the Duchess in the same year. The fact that this poem describes the match (in the following stanza) as a “rumour” helps to date it to a time shortly before the marriage.
my Lo: don Luce: Randal MacDonnell, Lord Dunluce.


her husbands absence: James, Marquis of Hamilton. The line probably refers to the notoriously protracted delay between the couple’s marriage when he was aged fourteen and she seven, and the eventual consummation of the marriage eight years later. Alternatively, it may refer to the Marquis’s military expedition in 1631 to aid the Swedish Protestant King Gustavus Adolpheus.

denby shee is praysd by many: Susan Feilding (née Villiers), Countess of Denbigh, Mistress of the Robes for Henrietta Maria.

She has a mayd...cannot vest her: although it has not been possible to trace the particular maid, the poem’s point is clear enough. After the maid’s marriage (to a Mr. Easter; or “Ester” in a variant (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37)), the Countess is left unable to dress herself.

preecher: “prithee” is a preferable reading (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37).

Lord Cary...good Queene Mary: “Lady Cary” is a preferable variant (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37); Lady Thomasina Carew, the Queen’s Keeper of the Sweet Coffers (a role that involved responsibility for gloves).

My Lady Kellegrew: probably Mary Killigrew (née Woodhouse), wife of the courtier Sir Robert Killigrew the Queen’s Vice-Chamberlain between 1630 and his death in 1633; possibly Anne Kirke (née Killigrew), daughter of Sir Robert Killigrew, and herself a former Maid of Honour to the Queen, who was still active in the Queen’s household after her 1627 marriage (Poynting 167).

crofts tale: probably a reference to Cicely Crofts, one of the Queen’s maids of honour.

Seymer: Dorothy Seymour, one of the Queen’s maids of honour.

grutch: grate, gnash; in context, bawdy.

Mrs Arden: possibly Elizabeth Arden, one of Henrietta Maria’s maids of honour until her marriage c.1631-32; possibly Elizabeth’s sister Goditha, who succeeded Elizabeth as a maid of honour.

Howard...after kind: probably a reference to Elizabeth Howard, one of the Queen's maids of honour; possibly, instead, a reference Katherine (i.e. "Cat") Howard, who secretly married Lord George Stuart, Seigneur d'Aubigny, in May 1638

Hanmer: probably Dorothy Hanmer (née Trevor), a Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen. She married the
courtier Sir Thomas Hanmer some time in the early 1630s.

59 *Her husbands:* probably Sir Thomas Hanmer.

60 *hornes:* i.e. cuckold’s horns.

61 *Calfe:* fool; dolt.

62 *The Mother of the mayds:* the duty of the Mother of the Maids was to oversee the behaviour of the maids of honour (Poynting 164). The position was held until 1635 by Ursula Beaumont, widow of the playwright Francis Beaumont. Thereafter it was held briefly by Elizabeth Beaumont (probably a daughter of Francis and Ursula), then by Jane Temple.

63 *Madam Nurse:* Francoise de Monbodiac, Henrietta Maria’s nurse when she was young, who became a permanent fixture in her English household.

64 *her sonne:* Jean Garnier, son of Francoise de Monbodiac and her husband (also called Jean Garnier); the Queen’s Groom of the Privy Chamber by 1632.

65 *Your daughters...lost in Fraunce:* Francoise de Monbodiac and Jean Garnier had four daughters, three of whom married French courtiers.

66 *Caito:* or “Catto” (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37); probably Katherine, one of the daughters of Francoise de Monbodiac and Jean Garnier. She married Thomas Arpe in 1637. or “Catto” (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37). Untraced; perhaps a nickname.

67 *Madam Vamlet:* Madame de Vantelet, a “chamberer” (i.e. one of the married women who attended the Queen in her intimate situation).

68 *thereof:* “there often” is a preferable reading (Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37).

69 *dock:* colloquially, vagina or anus.
R6  A health to my Lady Duchess

Notes. Like the preceding poem (“See what a love there is betweene”), “A health to my Lady Duchess” has an anachronistic air: more in accord with Restoration libels, which would focus insistently on sexual scandal and rumour. While many of the poem’s targets have links to Queen Henrietta Maria, the poet seems principally concerned to survey the morality of the nation’s peerage. As would become a pattern in Restoration libels, the tone here is questionable: partly moralistic, and partly in the thrall of sexual gossip.

“A lybell calld the health to divers Lords & Ladies 1636”

A health to my Lady Duchess[1] [m. note: “of Buckingham”]
that loves redd hayr so well[2]
and to my Lord her husband[3]
that made her belly swell.[4]
A health to my Lady Marques[5] [m. note: “of Hamilton”]
that hath so good a grace
and to my Lord her husband[6]
with his ill-favourd face

A health to my Lady Arundell[7]
whose travailing days ar past[8]
and to my Lord her husband[9]
I hope t’will be his last.

A health to my lady of Kent[10]
with her fat bouncinge[11]
and to my Lord her husband[12]
that fucks my Lady Hunt[13]

A health to my Lady Pembroke[14]
that lookes so like a witche
and to my Lord her husband[15]
that so well indures the switche

A health to my Lady Essex who once had lost her fame
and to my Lord her husband
that is so ill at the game

A health to my Lady Dorsett that of gravity hath store
and to my Lord her husband
that gives his soule for a whore

A health to my Lady Warwick beeing made a Countess glories
and to my Lord her husband
that loves to tell strange stories.

A health to my Lady Lindsey that’s quickly moov’d to rage
and to my Lord her husband
that brought his child on the stage.

A health to my Lady Holland of wemen shee’s the best
and to my Lord her husband
that goes so neatly drest.

A health to my Lady Dover that was first wife to a citt
and to my Lord her husband
that hath more wrath than witt

A health to my Lady Denbigh that’s groome o’the stoole to her grace
and to my Lord her husband
whose nose has fyrd his face

A health to my Lady Carnarvan
that’s a pearl in eache mans ey
and to my Lord her husband
that will both sweare and ly

A health to my Lady Newport
that loves to play and dance
and to my Lord her husband
that rann away in France

A health to my Lady Desmond
with her frend shee loves to play
and to my Lord her husband
that’s oft sent out of the way

A health to my lady Portland
that was whipt to her marriage bedd
and to my Lord her husband
with his great loggerhead

A health to my Lady Wimbleton
but eightene years of age
and to my Lord her husband
that’s jealous of his page.

A health to my Lady Goring
in devotion shee’s not cooling
and to my Lord her husband
that hath gott all by fooling.
my Lady Duchess: Katherine Villiers (née Manners), Duchess of Buckingham and widow of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. At the time this poem was written, her recent remarriage to the younger Lord Dunluce was a topic of much discussion at court.

that loves redd hayr so well: allusion to Katherine Villiers’s new husband, Randal MacDonnell, Lord Dunluce, who succeeded as Earl of Antrim at the end of 1636.

my Lord her husband: Randal MacDonnell, Lord Dunluce.

that made her belly swell: probably a false rumour; Katherine bore no children in the course of her second marriage.


my Lord her husband: James, Marquis of Hamilton; prominent advisor to Charles on Scottish affairs.

my Lady Arundell: Alathea Howard (née Talbot), Countess of Arundel.

whose travailing days ar past: possibly a reference to the fact that, after twenty-eight years of marriage, she is past child-bearing age (i.e. the “travailing” of labour); possibly a reference to her own continental travels (notably, to Italy in 1623), and a reflection on the diplomatic missions undertaken by her husband, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, in the 1630s.

my Lord her husband: Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel.

my lady of Kent: Elizabeth Grey (née Talbot), Countess of Kent.

with her fat bouncinge: at this point, in accord with the poem’s puerile humour, a word is omitted from the manuscript.

my Lord her husband: Henry Grey, Earl of Kent and Lord Ruthin.

my Lady Hunt: possibly Lady Anne Campbell, wife of George Gordon, who became Marquis of Huntly in 1636 (although she did not have a significant presence at court).

my Lady Pembroke: Lady Anne Clifford, best known today as a writer, who was unhappily married to Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke.
my Lord her husband: Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke.

that so well indures the switche: possibly a muddled allusion to an incident in 1634, in which Herbert broke his staff over the back of Thomas May. But possibly merely invoking misogynist stereotypes of a shrewish woman domineering her husband, on account of Anne Clifford’s notoriously strong will.

my Lady Essex: Elizabeth Devereux (née Paulet), Countess of Essex.

who once had lost her fame: presumably a reference to a fresh scandal. In mid-1636 the Countess was accused, by relatives of her husband, of conducting an affair with Sir William Uvedale. A son she bore on 5 November—her first after six years of marriage—was widely suspected to be the illegitimate product of this affair, though Essex accepted it, albeit uneasily, as his own. The baby died just over a month after its birth, and Essex and his wife were thereafter permanently estranged.

my Lord her husband: Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex.

that is so ill at the game: clearly a sexual reference, which constructs an image of Essex based on the gossip and rumours generated by both his marriages. In 1613 he was divorced from Frances Howard, on grounds of his alleged sexual insufficiency (see Section F). The suggestion that his second wife’s baby had been fathered by another reinforced the scandalous image of Essex as impotent—an image that would feature prominently in royalist propaganda of the Civil War, when Essex was a prominent Parliamentarian general.

my Lady Dorsett: Mary Sackville, Countess of Dorset, governess of Prince Charles and Prince James.

my Lord her husband: Edward Sackville, Earl of Dorset, Lord Chamberlain in Henrietta Maria’s household.

my Lady Warwick: Susan Rich (née Rowe), Countess of Warwick.

beeing made a Countess glories: the Countess, Robert Rich’s second wife, was the daughter of Sir Henry Rowe, who had served as Lord Mayor of London in 1607, and the widow of city alderman William Halliday. This line therefore reflects on her social rise as a result of her second marriage.


my Lady Lindsey: Elizabeth Bertie, Countess of Lindsay.

my Lord her husband: Robert Bertie, Earl of Lindsay.

that brought his child...stage: while it has not been possible to trace a particular incident to which
this line refers, it is most likely that the Earl is being accused of allowing members of his family to participate in a masque or courtly entertainment. Such performances were popular at the Caroline court, but were vehemently denounced by many Puritans.

29  *my Lady Holland:* Isabel Rich (née Cope), Countess of Holland.

30  *my Lord her husband:* Henry Rich, Earl of Holland, High Steward in Henrietta Maria’s household.

31  *my Lady Dover:* Mary Carey, Countess of Dover.

32  *that was first wife to a citt:* Mary Carey’s first marriage was to Alderman (hence a man of the “citt [y]”) Sir William Cockayne.

33  *my Lord her husband:* Henry Carey, Earl of Dover.

34  *my Lady Denbigh:* Susan Feilding (née Villiers), Countess of Denbigh, Mistress of the Robes for Henrietta Maria.

35  *that’s groome...her grace:* the title “Groom of the Stool” was in this period used to identify the Queen’s “first lady”.

36  *my Lord her husband:* William Feilding, Earl of Denbigh.

37  *my Lady Carnarvan:* Anne Dormer (née Herbert), Countess of Carnarvon.

38  *my Lord her husband:* Robert Dormer, Earl of Carnarvon.

39  *my Lady Newport:* Anne Blount (daughter of John, Baron Boteler), Countess of Newport.

40  *my Lord her husband:* Mountjoy Blount, Earl of Newport.

41  *that rann away in France:* probably an allusion to Blount’s role as a leader of the failed naval expedition to Rochelle in 1628.

42  *my Lady Desmond:* wife of George Feilding, Earl of Desmond.

43  *my Lord her husband:* George Feilding, Earl of Desmond.

44  *my lady Portland:* Frances Weston (née Stuart), wife of Jerome, Earl of Portland.

45  *that was whipt...bedd:* Lady Frances Stuart, a cousin of King Charles, married Jerome Weston in 1632, after extended negotiations. It was widely believed that she did not initially agree to the marriage with a man socially inferior to her, and that the influence of the King was required to seal the match.
my Lord her husband: Jerome Weston, Earl of Portland.

my Lady Wimbleton: Sophia Cecil (née Zouch), Countess of Wimbledon.

but eighteen years of age: Sophia was seventeen years old at the date of her marriage, and her husband sixty-three.

my Lord her husband: Edward Cecil, Viscount Wimbledon.

that’s jealous of his page: while the author might have had in mind a particular “page”, it is perhaps just as likely that he was merely invoking the stereotype of the jealous husband married to a significantly younger, and sexually voracious, woman.

my Lady Goring: Mary (née Nevill), Lady Goring.

in devotion shee’s not cooling: suggestion of puritanical religious fervour.

my Lord her husband: George Goring (Earl of Norwich from 1644), who served first as Henrietta Maria’s Vice-Chamberlain, and subsequently as her Master of the Horse.

that hath gott all by fooling: this recalls allegations against Goring made in the Jacobean poem “Listen jolly gentlemen”.
R7  U. R. I. C. poore Canterbury

Notes. In its structure, this poem on William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, recalls the widely-disseminated early Jacobean libel on Robert Carr, “I.C.U.R”. The transcriber of our chosen version includes notes (as recorded here in footnotes) about the alphabetical codes for some lines.

”A Libell, upon William Laud Arch-bishop of Canterbury, in Parliament-tyme. 1640”

U. R. I. C. poore Canterbury, in a tottring state:
A. P. O. P. you fayne would bee, ’tis now too late.
R. U. Y. Y. for all those eyes, that looke upon you:
U. R. A. K. if you doe say, they all will wrong you.
S. C. O. T. some say was hee, brought all to light:
I. C. U. R. in a great feare, your lawne’s not white.
A. G. R. I. if hee come nigh, will have the Miter:
H. E. A. D. and all for mee; you’l fall the lighter.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 100r

Other known sources. Trevelyan Papers 3.204; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 46v; Folger MS E.a.6, fol. 4v

1  U. R. I. C.: i.e. “You are I see” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26).
2  A. P. O. P.: i.e. “A pope” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26).
3  R. U. Y. Y.: i.e. “Are you two wise” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26).
4  U. R. A. K.: i.e. “You are a K.” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26); possibly a knave, or else a jackdaw (cf. “I.C.U.R”).
5  S. C. O. T....brought all to light: presumably an allusion to the role of the Scots, whose rejection of Laud’s favoured Prayer Book in 1637 prompted the Bishops’ Wars, and precipitated the crisis that would ultimately lead to Laud’s fall.
6  *I. C. U. R.*: i.e. “I see you are”.

7  *in a great feare...white*: “lawn” is a fine linen used for the sleeves of a bishop; here the usage is perhaps largely figurative, suggesting at once Laud’s preoccupation with clerical vestments, and his concern for the dignity and preeminence of his office.

8  *A. G. R. I.*: i.e. “Agree I”.

9  *if hee come nigh...Miter*: unclear; a mitre is an ecclesiastical head-dress worn by a bishop, and therefore something Laud already wears. Perhaps this line, after the preceding one, merely reiterates a point about Laud’s obsession with ecclesiastical vestments.

10  *H. E. A. D....lighter*: menacing (and correct) suggestion that Laud’s fate is execution, by the removal of his “head”.

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1062
R8  Landless Will: of Lambeth strand

Notes. This poem identifies William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, as twin figures of popular disdain. It was probably written some time after the collapse of the Short Parliament in May 1640, but before the opening of the Long Parliament in November of the same year, and thus highlights the fevered tone of political discourse surrounding these two men, each of whom was destined to become a martyr to the royalist cause. Notably, whereas Strafford and Laud would later be portrayed as staunch royalists, this poem typifies a period in which those opposed to the policies of the Crown sought to stigmatize Charles’s closest advisors as his enemies, and themselves as truly loyal. A variant version presents the first stanza as a discrete poem (NLS MS Advocates 19.3.8).

Landless Will: of Lambeth strand
and blacke Tom Tyrant of Ireland
like Fox and woolfe did Lurke
with many Rookes and madgepies
to picke out good King Charles his eyes
and then be Pope and Turke.

And still they have him by the nose
he cannot see his Freinds from’s Foes
nor yett thereire divellish plott,
but since the vermine are found out
and lately hunted by the Route
they stinke most Pestilent hott

Whilst that in ballance even stoode
the Church, the state, like souldiers Good
bravely boare upp the heade;
and with them sweetly did conspire
Peace, wealth and honor to acquire
without Coercive dreade.
But these Innovators do Indevoure
the King and Subjects for to severe
and them to subdevide,
Tom doth the Commons racke & teare,
and Will. the Clergies skull up reare
which weighs downe all with Pride

Will, faine would weare a Triple Crowne
and Tom with scepter would beate downe
and breake the Commons Pates,
For the poore Protestants sage knaves
would be good Subjects yet not slaves
to new found Rights and rates

Tom like a Turkish Mungarell
to whom noe fiend nor divell of hell
can with more Cruell dreade
squeeze the poore Irish Cramacrees
and makes them peepe through Pilleries
as they weare smitten deade.

Through blood and Teares he hath gott In
a Cursed Treasure to the Kinge
which poysons all the reste
unprosperous to Kinge and State
their Counsells all unfortunate
God bless us from the beaste.

And nowe the beast I thinke uppon
tis tyme to leave this Bedlam Tom
that soe hath rent the state,
unto his Pox and flux and stone
that Justly racks his flesh and bone
although it be to late.

Now to the little fox againe
and that perkinge wretch the wrenn\textsuperscript{10}
that Peaetely\textsuperscript{11} ginn to prate.
What domineeringe do they keepe
like Pigmies (hercules being asleepe)\textsuperscript{12}
and stroute it or’e the state.

Till Prentises caught upp the clubb
and swore them with those flailes to dubb
which made them skip aside;\textsuperscript{13}
and duck where noe high alter was\textsuperscript{14}
To let the Peoples fury passe
Soe odious was theire pride.

Each Petty Preist practisd with hope,
and state enough to be a pope,
which most the wife denies
whom to recompence doth raise his crest
and make him like the Roman beast
Fuller of hornes then Eyes;\textsuperscript{15}

but Plott and pride beginn to fall
Scotland hath kickt them oute of all;\textsuperscript{16}
and England lately Gauled
doth wince, and lift to throwe the loade
since Ireland is soe undertrode,
neare was poore Ile soe mau’ld

Nowe England sure wilbe noe slave
haveing scapt soe many a knave
that lewdly laboured Itt
Tom Turke thy Paines and scepters lost
Pope Will thy triple Crowne is Crost
The triple Tree\(^7\) must fitt

**Source.** BL MS Harley 6947, fol. 210r-v

**Other known sources.** NLS MS Advocates 19.3.8, fol. 33r; TCD MS 806, fol. 535r

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1. *Landless Will: of Lambeth strand:* as Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud’s London residence was Lambeth Palace; however, the poet seems concerned to point out that Laud does not own this property, and perhaps also to remind the reader of his relatively humble background (as the son of a Reading clothier).

2. *blacke Tom Tyrant of Ireland:* Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, was Lord-Deputy of Ireland, where he established a reputation for harsh and authoritarian methods.

3. *Pope and Turke:* Laud was commonly charged by his enemies with popish leanings; “Turk” stands as symbolic of arbitrary and tyrannous rule.

4. *Inovators:* in the years preceding the Civil War, it is notable that the representatives of various different political and religious interests used the charge of “innovation” against their enemies. To Laud and Strafford, the “Puritans” were innovators; here, as in other proto-oppositionist discourse, the charge is turned back against them.

5. *Triple Crowne:* i.e. of a pope.

6. *scepter:* i.e. of a king.

7. *Irish Cramacrees:* while it has not been possible to trace the term “Cramacrees”, the poet clearly signals sympathy here for the native Irish, politically repressed and financially “squeezed” under Wentworth’s rule.

8. *Bedlam Tom:* madman; inhabitant of the Hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem, used in early modern London to house lunatics.

that perkinge wretch the wrenn: Matthew Wren, Bishop of Norwich and one of Laud’s closest allies. Wren’s persecution of Puritans had attracted considerable comment, most notably in the pamphlet *Newes from Ipswich* (1636), probably written (at least in part) by William Prynne.

Peaetely: possibly “pertly”; i.e. boldly, audaciously.

What domineeringe...being asleepe): the image is of small and insignificant people exploiting the lethargy of a ruler. “[H]ercules” here may be code for the King.

Till Prentises...skip aside: probable allusion to an incident that occurred soon after the collapse of the Short Parliament, in May 1640. A mob of over 1000 apprentices descended upon Lambeth Palace, Laud’s London residence, to protest at his reputed role in the Parliament’s failure. Laud dodged the protest (i.e. “skip[ped] aside”) by moving into Whitehall.

and duck...was: allusion to Laud’s controversial position on Church furnishings; the subtext is that the high altar cannot here protect him against the people’s fury.

Each Petty Preist...then Eyes: the scurrilous suggestion here is that Laudian priests are so committed to proto-Catholic practices that they resist sex with their own wives, and as a result they are rewarded with the “hornes” of a cuckold. The reference to “the Roman beast” draws on imagery of the Book of Revelation, which describes the Whore of Babylon sitting on “a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns” (Revelation 17.3).

Scottland hath kickt...all: reference to the Bishops’ Wars of 1639 and 1640, and possibly also to the issue that prompted the Wars, Scottish resistance to the Laudian English Liturgy.

triple Tree: i.e. Tyburn (place of execution in London).
Two Parliaments dissolv’d? then let my hart,  
As they in factions, it in fractions part;  
And like the Levite (sad with rage) ascribe,  
Its peecemeale portions to each broken Tribe;\(^1\)  
And say, that Bethlem Judas love hath beeene  
Wrong’d by the fag end crew of Benjamen.\(^2\)  
Oh let such high presumption be accurst,  
When the last Tribe shall wrong the best, & first:\(^3\)  
When (like the Levite) our blest Charles may say,  
The Ravenous Wolfe hath seiz’d the Lions prey.\(^4\)  
Thus oft inferiour Subjects are not shy  
To wrong alone, but mocke at Majesty.  
What faculty shall not be injured,  
If that the feet had power to spurne the head;  
And Kings prerogatives must needs fall downe,  
When subjects make a foot-ball of a Crowne.  
Thus starres Heavens inferiour Courtiers might  
Command the darknesse, but not rule the Light,  
Nor him that makes it, should they all combine  
With Luna\(^5\) in the full; one Sunne would shine  
Brighter then they; nor can he be subdued  
Though he but one, and they a multitude.  
Say subjects yee were starrs, and were allow’d  
Yee justly of your number might be proud;
Yet to the Sunne be humble, and know this
The light is borrowed, not your owne, but his.
When the unfettered subjects of the seas,
The fountaines felt their silver feet at ease,
Noe sooner summoned but nimbly went
To meet the ocean at a Parliament;
Did then those petty fountaines say their King
The Ocean, was noe Ocean but a spring?
Let mee alone if fresh accesse of store
Can make mee poorer then I was before;
And shall wee then the power of Kings dispute,
And thinke it lesse when more is added to’t?
Noe let the Common body if it can
Bee not a River, but an Ocean;
And swell into a deluge till it hide
The tops of Mountaines in it teeming pride;
Kings (like Noahs Arke) are nearer to the skies,
The more the billowes underneath them rise;
You then who if your harts were fired with Love,
Might sitt in Counsell like the Gods above;
You that doe question the Kings power below,
If you come there, will you use heavens King soe?
Doe not aspire, you may take up your rest
More safe below, then in the Eagles nest;
Hath Clemency offended, will you harme
And plucke the Sunne from heaven that keeps you warme?
Nor King, nor Bishops? please you what you gott?
An outside English and an inside Scott;
While faction thus our Countryes peace distracts,
Wee may have wordes of Parliaments, not Acts.
Ill ended Sessions, and yet well begun,
Too much being spoke, hath made too little done.
See faction thrives, Puritanisme beares sway
None must doe any thing, but onely Say.  
Stoop, stoop yee barren headed hills, confesse
Yee might bee fruitfuller if yee were lesse.
Tremble yee thread-bare Commons, are ye vext
That Lambs feed on you? Lions will come next.

Source. BL MS Egerton 2725, fols. 129r-130r

Other known sources. Rous 88; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.25, fol. 38r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 191; Bodleian MS Malone 21, fol. 93r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 361, fol. 68r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 90r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 150v; Bodleian MS Tanner 306, fol. 290r; BL Add. MS 22959, fol. 58r; BL MS Harley 367, fol. 160r; Folger MS V.a.192, part 2, fol. 5r

1 And like the Levite...broken Tribe: these lines introduce a passage of biblical analogy, setting England’s divisions against those of ancient Israel. In one interpretation, “the Levite” is not intended to signify any one particular person, either in the Bible or in England, but rather stands as a figure of a priest. In another (more likely) interpretation, “the Levite” may be the specific Levite of Judges 20, whose concubine was murdered in the Benjamite city of Gibeah, and who responded by cutting the woman in pieces and sending the body “throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they have committed lewdness and folly in Israel” (Judges 20.6).

2 And say...crew of Benjamen: these difficult lines continue the biblical analogy. “Bethlem Judas” (or, more plausibly, “Bethlem Judah’s”) refers to the city of Bethlehem-Judah (or, in modern usage, Bethlehem). An analogy to London is likely. The poem implies that the fundamental “love”, or goodwill, of the city has been undermined by a divisive faction. The image of “the fag end crew of Benjamen”, in this context, probably continues the analogy with the narrative in Judges 20 and 21, since the murder of the concubine of “the Levite” precipitated a war in which the tribe of Benjamin was almost completely destroyed.

3 When the last Tribe...first: continues the biblical analogy; the “last Tribe” is presumably that of Benjamin, while “the best, & first” that of Levi. In the English context, “the best, & first” might also be Charles I.

4 The Ravenous Wolfe...Lions prey: when Jacob initially divides Israel into twelve tribes, Benjamin is likened to a wolf, and Judah to a lion (Genesis 49.27 and 49.9).
5 *Luna:* the moon.

6 *Nor King, nor Bishops:* the link between monarchy and episcopacy was one of the hot political debates of the early seventeenth century. Those opposed to the hierarchy within the Church typically claimed that this position was consistent with a commitment to the monarchy; by contrast, a traditional declaration, supposedly endorsed by James I, held: “No bishops, no king”.

7 *An outside English...Scott:* the image, invoking a conventional model of hypocrisy, suggests that those who have brought down the 1640 Parliament are secretly committed to the paths of resistance that led the Scots into the Bishops’ Wars.

8 *Wee may have wordes...not Acts:* i.e. parliaments may be allowed (briefly) to debate, but never to enact legislation.

9 *Say:* probably a pun. On the one hand, this continues the poem’s distinction between talk and action, parliamentary debate and enacted legislation. On the other hand, it perhaps alludes to William Fiennes, Viscount Saye and Sele, who was becoming an increasingly prominent parliamentary leader at this time.
FIRST-LINE INDEX

A
A bird ill hatchd, from out a Cuckowes nest   H16
A health to my Lady Duchess   R6
A page a knight a Vicount, and an Earle [1613 version]   F1
A page, a knight, a viscount and an Erle   H5
A Phillipp once to england came   Nv7
A Prince out of the North shall come   Ni3
A proud cuckold tollit cornua   Q5
A Romane right, then rotten at the Kore   B12
A thinge gott by candle light   Oiii15
A yere of wonder to the world was 88   Pi5
Above in the skies shall Gemini rise   L1
Adew deere Don & Priest for ever   Niii2
Admir-all weaknes wronges the right   A8
Advance, advance my ill-disposed Muse   D2
Ah was there nott a time when one man swayed   D3
All earthlie things by Water knowe   I25
All the newes thats stirringe now   Nv15
All you that will goe with me   Oii13
Anagram on Count Gondomar   Niii3
Anagram on Frances Howard   H21
Anagram on George Villiers   Pi4
Anagram on John Felton   Pii1
Anagram on John Felton   Pii2
Anagram on John Williams   Miii4
Anagram on Sir Thomas Overbury   H22
And art return’d againe with all thy Faults   Oii12
And art thou dead! who whilome thought’st thy state   Pi21
And wilt thou goe, great Duke, and leave us heere  
Arme, arme, in heaven there is a faction  
As Cats over houses do go a catter-walting  
As sick men feare the cure & startle more  
At Hattfeilde neere Hartforde there lyes in a coffin  
At Portsmouth Duke I will no longer staye  
Avaunt you giddie-headed Multitude  
Awake, sad Brittaine, and advance at last  
Away, away, great George, o come not here  

Bancroft Was for Playes  
Beehold this Obsequie: but without teares  
Beholde Brave Raleigh here interr’d  
Blame not the Poet though he make such moane  
Blame not thy wife, for what thy selfe hath wrought  
Brave hardie Carre-man that with thy bastinado  
Bridewell I come be valient muse and strip  

Cease booteless teares, weepe not for him whose Death  
Chamberlaine Chamberlaine, one of her graces kinn  
Charles would yee Prevaile your foes, thine better Lucke  
Come all you Farmers out of the Countrey  
Come arme thy self brave England  
Come heare, Lady Muses, and help mee to sing  
Contemne not Gracious king our plaints and teares  
Courts commender states mantayner  
Courts scorne, states disgracing  

Dazal’d thus with hight of place  
Dearling off Kings, Patrone off armes
Death come thy selfe and let thy Image sleepe
Downe came grave auntient Sir John Crooke

England men say of late is bankerupt growne
England thy early prime is gone, good Knight
England was sick, a plewresey possest her

Enjoy thy Bondage; make thy Prison know
Essex bird hath flowen hir cage
Essex did spend, Northumberland did spare
Essex prays, Southampton playes
Essex thy death’s reveng’d, Lo here I lie

Even such is tyme, which takes in trust
Excuse me Eliott if I heare name thee
False on his Deanrye? false nay more, Ile lay
Falshoods Jewell
Feare not brave Felton sith it is thy fate
Felton, awake, & cheare thyselfe from sorrow
Fly Fame, report, that all the world may knowe
Fly not Momperson sins thear is no inn
Flye soule the bodies guide
For Lambe go ringe some bell
Fortunes darling, Kings Content
Fower Cheyffe Justices late wee had
For a Gipsie in the morneing
From Car a Carter surely tooke his name
from Cathernes docke theer launcht A pritty Pinke
From Englands happy & unequall state
From Katherins dock there launcht a pinke
From Roberts coach to Robins carr
From such a face whose Excellence L8

G

Go Echo of the minde A6

Goe soule the bodies guest A3

Great Buckingham Oii3

Great Buckingham’s buried under a stone Pi15

Great Duke, Although I litle am acquainted Pi31

Great Duke, which art commandeur of the Seas Pi27

Great Gorge, and art thou gone Pi23

Great heart, who taught thee so to dye I17

Great potent Duke, whom fortune rais’d soe high Pi20

Great Verulam is very lame, the gout of goe-out feeling Mii3

Greedie, Envious, malitious proud unstable J4

H

Had our great duke bene Joseph then might we Pi19

Hadst thou lik other Sirs and knights of worth H25

He nowe is deade, from whome men fledd D10

He that in Belgia fought for Englandes Queene A12

Heare heedlesse heedlesse matchlesse Rawly lies I6

Heare lyes the impostar lambe Oiii9

Heaven blesse King James our joy L10

Hee that can reade a sigh, or spell a teare Piii18

Heer is Francis Verulam Lord Chancelour God save him Mii6

Heer lye’s my Lord’s Grace at six & at seaven B19

Heere lies a gratious graceles Peere Pi18

Heere lies Hobbinoll our Shepheard while ere D1

Heere lieth Robbin Crookt back, unjustly reckond D4

Heere lyes a treasure in this pitte I10

Heere lyes great Salisbury though little of Stature D21

Heere lyes hee that once was poore H6
Heere lyes interred wormes meate D15
Heere lyes one nowe not worth despising F11
Heere lyes Salisbury that little great commaundr D20
Heere lyes the best and worst of Fate Piii2
Heere lyes the breife of badnes vices nurse J3
Heere lyes the man whose death and life I5
Heere lyes thy Urne, O what a little blowe Piii7
Heere lyeth our great Lord Treasurer of late D22
Heere lye’s a Lord that Wenching thought no sinne B15
Heere Robbin rousteth in his last neast D17
Heere sleeipes in the Lorde beepepperde with pox D16
Heere uninterr’d suspends (though not to save Pii15
Henrie, rysed Brandon F7
Here Dr Lambe, the conjurer lyes Oiii6
Here lies Leachery, Treachery, Pride Pi13
Here lieth one who if his case be bad B18
Here Lyes Dick of Canterburie, suspected a Papist B17
Here lyes great George the Glory of our state Pi14
Here lyes my Lord of Northampton, his Majestie’s erwigg G5
Here Lyes the bonnes off him that did Pii19
Here lyes the Lady Penelope Rich B14
Here under lyes a Counsellor of State H28
Here uninterd suspends, (doubtes to save Pii16
Hesperides, within whose gardens grow H26
Honor, worth, greatnes, and what part so ere Piii12
Hope flattered thee though lawes did life convince I9
I
I did not flatter thee Alive, and nowe Piii5
I knew thee but by fame and thy brave deeds I24
I mmoreman of glory, whose stout hand Piii9
I neade noe Trophies, to adorne my hearse  Q3
I speake to such if any such there bee  B8
I that my countrey did betray  Pi34
I will not weepe for twere as great a sin  I20
I.C.U.R  H9
If 88 be past then thrive  Ni4
If either lotteryes or lottes  E3
If ever woe possesst a stubbern heart  H15
If good mens graces in heaven with them abide  Pi26
If greatnes, wisedome, pollicie of state  D24
If heav’n rejoyce, when men leave off to sinne  Oiii7
If Saints in heaven cann either see or heare  Niv1
If spite be pleasd, when that her object dead  I22
Ilium deplores, but still old Priams glad  Nv10
Immodest death that wouldst not once conferre  B16
Immortall Man of glorie, whose brave hand  Pii8
In England there lives a jolly Sire  H2
In reading these my Lord youll see I’ve gott  Oii4
Io to Buckingham great Admiral  L4
Is Felton dead? It’s that hee did desire  Pii18
It makes mee to muse to heare of the Newes  Oii2
Its true you need noe trophees to your hearse  Q7
I’ve read of Ilands flotinge and removed  Nv3
J
Justice of late hath lost her witts  Oi13
L
Lady changed to Venus Dove  F6
Landless Will: of Lambeth strand  R8
Letchery did consult with witcherye  F2
lett Charles & george doe what they can  Pi1
Listen jolly gentlemen   L5
Looke, and lament behould a face of Earth   H20
Lord, what are wee, that thou shouldst thus respect   Pi9
M
Make haste I pray, launch out your shippes with speed   Pi29
Me thinks I see a lady sitt and mourne   H19
Mee thought I walked in a dreame   G2
Might Teares Revive thee I could wish to be   Pi31
Mother / My humble dutie done, I crave   Pi35
My honour, favour, life, & all   Pi33
My life is done my heart prepar’d for death   Q4
My Lord high steward his grace   Q1
Myene of Gold some say their’s found   E4
M alignant characters that did portend   Pi31
N
Nevil for the protestant, L Thomas for the papist   B1
No sooner had the worlds most happy knife   Pi30
Noe Poets triviall rage that must aspire   Pi32
Nourish’d with sighs and frights, and form’d with fears   Pi31
Now doe your selves noe more so deck   E2
Now let us rejoyce sing Peans all   L2
O
O Admirall! Since thou camst back againe   Oi1
O had thy name bene causer of thy death   I11
O Joyfull newse for Buckingham is nowe   L3
O Ladies, ladies howle & cry   D12
O stay your teares yow who complaine   Nv1
Of Brittish Beasts the Buck is King   Oi1
Of Raleighes life and death the sum of all to tell   I7
Oh for an Ovid or a Homer now   Nv1
Oh honoured England how art thou disgraced
Oh that such wisdom that could steer a state
Once dead and twice a live; death could not frame
Once he was Grace itself
One asked me, why I mourned
One worthy Chancellor rendred up his place
Ould Ned Cooke is putt to a new booke
Ould Sarum now is dead Younge Salisbrurie lyves
Our country Merry England (once so styl’d)
Our digby dig’d but dig’d in vain
Our eagle is yet flowne, to a place unknowne
Our Prince whom we so dearly loved
Our state’s a Game at Cards the Councell deale
Oure crossrow’s turnd, a signe off monstrous luck
Oyes

Pale death, with Iron hand, hath struck a blowe
Passer by know here is interred
Pervertinge of the lawes makes justice blind
Poor silly wight that carkes in the night
Poore Pilote thou hast lost thy Pinke
Pride lies here, Revenge and Lust
Proude and ambitious wretch that feedest on naught but faction
R
Raleigh in this thy selfe thy selfe transcends
Reader I was borne and cry’d
Reader stand still and read loe here I am
Reader when these dumbe stones have told
Reader, if that desert may make the stay
Reader, Ile be sworne uppon a booke
Rejoyce brave English Gallants
Religion the most sacred power on earth
Rex & grex are both of a sound
Robbin of Essex all in a rage
Robert E. of Salisburie. Libellous Anagram on Cecil
Romés worst Philenis, and Pasiphaes dust
S
Say, no man living would vouchsafe a verse
See what a love there is betweene
Seventh Henryes Counsayle was of great renowne
She with whom troops of bustuary slaves
Since Arthure, or his stable stood
Sir you are one of those, who dare commend
Sir, I your servant, (who have sett you free
Sith number with thy name doth thus agree
Some say Sir Edward Cecill can
Some say the Duke was gratious, vertuous, good
Some would complaine of Fortune & blinde chance
Sonne Benjamin, whil’st thou art yong
Sooner I may some fixed statue be
Sorrow and Joy at once possesse my brest
Stand fast thou shaking quaking keeper
Surely the face of thinges is alter’d much
T
Tell mee for gods sake Christs Church what you meane
The Argument is cold and sencelesse clay
The base on which mans greatnesse firmest stands
The Belgick Frogge, out of the bogge, with Brittish mouse doth strive
The Court’s full of newes
The day was turnd to starrelight, & was runne
The Disease of the stomack, and the Terme of Disgrace   A2
The Divell longe deceaved hath, Watt Raleighs wit with evell   I14
The Divell men say is dead in devonshire late   B13
The divell now hath fetcht the Ape   D8
The Duke is dead, and wee are ridd of strife   Pii6
The famous Embassador, brother to the French Favorer   Nii3
The fayre and famous mayde is gone   F9
The fift of August, and the fift   Nv18
The Great Archpapist Learned Curio   B2
The greate assemblie of the parliamente   Mii5
The heavens approve brave Feltons resolution   Pii4
The Kinge & the court desyrous of sport   Mi11
The Kinge and his wyfe the Parliament   Oi10
The Kinge loves you, you him   L6
The measled Boare is frankt I tell noe fable   Mii1
The noblest brave profession   Oii11
The old Cicilian fox   D7
The pale horse of the Revelation   Pi12
The Parliament of late hath oft been broken   Oiii14
The Parliament sitts with a Synod of Witts   Oi1
The prelats Pope, the Canonists trope, the Courtyers oracle, virginities spectacle   B11
The Prince is now come out of Spayne   Nv17
The Prince of Wales with all his royall traine   Nv14
The Shepheards struck, The sheepe are flegg   Pi6
The Sommers sun is sett   H8
The starre that rose in Virgo’s trayne   Nv8
The tottering state of transitory things   Mi2
The warlike King was troubled when hee spy’d   Oiii3

1081
The wealth he gott to make his meanes greate   H11
The wisest King did wonder when hee spy’d   Oiii2
The Word of Deniall, and the Letter of Fifty   A1
The worst is tould the best is hide   G3
There is a close Prisoner in the Tower   J2
There is a man, a Plauge uppon him   Oi17
There was a great fleete, all they that did see’t   Oi6
There was a man, & hee was Semper idem   Oi5
There was a Munkye clumbe up a tree   Oi7
There was an ould ladd rode on an ould padd   H1
There was some pollicie I doe beleive   Oi9
These put together, thus they crye   Ni2
They beg our goods, our lands, and our lives   E1
This day is made Knight of the Garter   A15
This little Grave embraces   Pi11
This stone can not inclose thy fame   I15
This Taper, fedd, & nurst with court-oyle   D9
Thou seest my tombe, Grey haires lye in this grave   I16
Thou that on topp of Fortunes wheeles did mount   Pi24
Thus Buck-in-game, Felt-one did soone abate   Pi7
Thy followers in hope to flatter thee   Miii3
Thy numerous name great George, expresseth thee   Pi3
Tis painefull rowing gainst the bigg swolne tide   F10
To hunt the Doe I have refu’sd   Oiii13
To whome shall cursed I my Case complaine   B7
Two kinsmen wrastlinge, who shold have the fall   I18
Two Parliaments dissolv’d? then let my hart   R9
Two R:R:rs twoe Crookebacks of late ruled Englands helme   D5
U
U. R. I. C. poore Canterbury   R7
Vainglorious man who can your witt applaude
Wants hee a grave whom heavens doe cover? was hee
Waste not a signe that courtlye Rosse should fall
Water thy plaints with grace divine
Watt I wot well thy over weaning witt
Well met Jockie whether away
Were itt nott a brutish crueltie
What hatfull fury dipt thy raging Quill
What once was said by valiant Tomyris
What suddayne change hath dark’t of late
What Worlds of people hath death conquered
What! shall I say now George is dead
When Carr in Court a Page at first began
When Charles, hath got the Spanish Gearle
When in the brazen leaves of fame
When onely one doth rule and guide the shipp
When Poets use to write men use to say
When Scotland was Scotland and England it selfe
When that rich soul of thine (now Sainted) kept
down the uncivill civill peace of State
When we but heare that Turkes and Tartars fight
When you awake, dull Brittons, and behould
Where Medwaye greetes old Thamesis silver streames
Whiles thy sonnes rash unluckye armes attempt
Who best did Calculate the life of man
Who doubts of Providence, or God denyes
Who ever lov’d man vertuous
Why did the fond Plebeans say
Why how now Robine? discontented quite  H12
Why shoulde poore chauncelour be condemned by a cry  Mii4
Why was the varlett sent into the meane  Oii8
Why: is our Age turn’d coward, that no Penn  Pii7
Why? what meanes this? England, & Spaine alike  Nii1
Wilye watt, wilie watt  B5
Within this sty heer now doth ly  Mii7
Withold thy fiery steeds great God of light  Nvi3
Y
Ye Gastly Spiritts that haunt the gloomy night  Pi37
Yee snarling Satyrs, cease your horrid yells  Piii6
Yee Spanyards, come away, come away  Oi8
Yet weere Bidentalls sacred, and the place  Piii9
You auntient Lawes of Right; Can you, for shame  Pii12
You braveing spiritts (not brave) inflamd from hell  Piii4
You Justices & men of myghte  Mi1
You men of Britaine, wherefore gaze yee so  Ni1
You say that Malefacit was dead:  D13
You that reade passing by  D23
Young witts are soone seduced and alwaies apt  I2
Your bold Petition Mortalls I have seen  Niv2
INDEX OF MANUSCRIPTS

Republic of Ireland archives

Trinity College Dublin Library

731 no foliation (Q3)
806 fol. 469r (Oi2), fol. 511v (Pii20), fol. 535r (R8), fol. 560v (Oi1), fol. 570r (Mii8), fol. 575v (L10), fol. 577r (Mii2), fol. 581v (Miii2)
G.2.21 p. 409 (C1i)

United Kingdom archives

Bodleian Library University of Oxford

Add. C.302 fol. 18r (Oi16)
Ashmole 36-37 fols. 6r-10v (Pi37), fols. 11r-14r (B7), fols. 14r-16r (B8), fol. 31r (Pii12), fol. 50v (Oii12), fol. 57r (Oiii5), fol. 58r (Nvi1), fol. 59r (Vii2), fol. 62r (Oi15), fol. 70r (J5), fol. 70r and 145v (J3), fol. 75r (Oiii3), fol. 76v (Nii6), fol. 108r (Mii2), fol. 131r (C1i), fol. 155r (Vv4), fol. 156r (Mii5), fol. 174v (Oiii10), fol. 174v (Oiii13), fol. 213r (G2), fol. 213r (G4), fol. 264r (R5), fol. 303r (Niv1)
Ashmole 47 fol. 25r (Nv6), fol. 31r (Pii5), fol. 40r (Ni4), fol. 53r (L6), fol. 83v (Nv3), fols. 88v-89r (Q2), fol. 112r (H25)
Ashmole 51 fol. 6r (A3)
Ashmole 230 fol. 343v (I3)
Ashmole 423 fol. 263r (Ni3), fol. 265r (Ni4)
Aubrey 6 fol. 78v (D1), fol. 79r (I10), fol. 106r (Miii5)
CCC. 309 fol. 80r (Nv6)
CCC. 327 23v (G3), fol. 23v (G4), fol. 24r (A14), fol. 32v (Q3)
CCC. 328 fols. 11v and 62r (Pii15), fol. 40v (Miii5), fols. 43r and 76v (B14), fol. 47v (L6), fol. 51r (Pii10), fol. 51v (Pii8), fol. 58r (Q3), fol. 63r (I20), fol. 63v (Pii17), fol. 70v (Nv6), fol. 94v (C1i), fol. 94v (C1b), fol. 97r (B16), fol. 97r (Pii10)
Dodsworth 79 fol. 158r (Pi25), fol. 158r (Pii5), fol. 158r (Pii20), fol. 158r (Pii12), fol. 158v (Pi24), fol. 161v (Pii10), fol. 162r (Pii9)
Don. b.8 p. 117 (Nv15), p. 212 and p. 368 (Pii10)
Don. b.9 fol. 33r (Pii20), fol. 33v (Pii21)
Don. c.54 fols. 3v, 11r (I3), fol. 7r (A8), fol. 9v (B4), fols. 19r-20r (A7), fol. 20r (A9), fol. 22v (H9), fol. 22v (H10), fol. 23r (F4), fol. 23r (F6), fol. 23r (H1), fol. 23r (H5), fol. 29r (Oi5)
Don. d.58 fol. 6r (I18), fol. 15v (B14), fol. 18r (B16), fol. 18r (B17), fol. 18r (B18), fol. 19r (Pii10), fol. 36v (Mi3), fol. 42r (Nv4)
Don. f.39 fol. 24r (Oi5)
Douce 357 fol. 17r (Pii8), fol. 17v (Pii8), fol. 18r (Pii20), fol. 18v (Pii5)
Douce f.5 fol. 5r (Oi15), fol. 5v (Oii12), fol. 9r (B14), fol. 11r (A3), fol. 11r (B16), fol. 13v (Pi28), fol. 15v (Miii5), fol. 16r (Mii7), fol. 21v (Oii5), fol. 28r (F1i), fol. 31r (A1), fol. 31r (A2), fol. 31r (Miii5), fol. 34v (E4), fol. 36v (L4), fol. 37v (Mii3)
Eng. Poet. c.11 fol. 15r (Nvi1)
Eng. Poet. c.25 fol. 38r (R9)
Eng. Poet. c.50 fols. 1r-7r (K1i), fol. 7r (Miii1), fol. 7v (Ni4), fol. 8r (Niv1), fol. 10v (Niv2), fols. 12v-13r (Nv10), fol. 13r (Miii1), fol. 13v (Oii5), fol. 13v (Oii10), fol. 13v (Pii4), fols. 14r-15r (Oii10), fols. 15v-16r (Nv13), fol. 21r (Oi2), fol. 21v-22v (Nii5), fol. 23r (Oi4), fol. 24v (Oi15), fol. 25r (L8), fol. 25v (Nvi2), fol. 26r (Pii10), fol. 26v (Ni3), fol. 27r (Oii3), fol. 27r (Oii8), fol. 27v (Oii12), fol. 28v (Oi11), fol. 29r (Nii6), fols. 30r-31r (K2), fol. 31v (I3), fol. 31v (I12), fol. 31v (Miii2), fol. 32v (Mii3), fol. 41v (L7)
Eng. Poet. c.53 fol. 9r (Pii15)
Eng. Poet. d. 3 fol. 2v (A3)
Eng. Poet. d.152 fol. 86r (Oi15), fol. 154v (B14)
Eng. Poet. e.14 fol. 11v (Oii10), fol. 12v (Pii1), fol. 12v (Pii9), fol. 12v (Pii15), fol. 13r (Oii15), fol. 13r (Pi34), fol. 14v (Pii10), fol. 15r (Pii9), fol. 15v (Pii10), fol. 19r (Pi28), fol. 1086
Rawl. 859 fol. 85v (I3)
Rawl. 1334 fol. 29v (I3)
Rawl. A. 346 fol. 141v (Q2), fol. 142r (Q3)
Rawl. B. 151 fol. 101r (Mii8), fol. 102v (Mi2), fol. 102v (Mii3), fol. 103r (G2), fol. 103r (G4)
Rawl. C. 986 fol. 15r (I3)
Rawl. D. 152 fol. 11r (Nv1)
Rawl. D. 361 fol. 68r (R9)
Rawl. D. 383 fol. 140r (I3)
Rawl. D. 398 fol. 162r (Ni4), fol. 183r (Nv11), fols. 188r and 229r (Nv11), fol. 222r (Nv1), fol. 226r and fol. 230r (Nv2)
Rawl. D. 727 fol. 94v (G4)
Rawl. D. 954 fol. 35r (I17), fol. 35r (I20)
Rawl. D. 1048 fol. 50v (Nv12), fol. 51v (Nv3), fol. 53r-v (Nv4), fol. 64r (F1), fol. 64r (F2), fol. 64r (H5), fol. 64r (H10), fol. 64v (F4), fol. 64v (H8), fol. 64v (H9), fol. 73r (Nv1), fol. 76r (Nv15), fol. 76v (I2)
Rawl. D. 1092 fol. 23r (Ni4)
Rawl. D. 1100 fol. 89v (Oii4)
Rawl. Poet. 26 fol. 1r (E1), fol. 1r (E3), fol. 2r (A10), fol. 2r (G1), fol. 2v (G4), fol. 3v (Nv8), fol. 4v (Miii5), fol. 6v (B10), fol. 6v (Oiii10), fol. 7r (C1i), fol. 8v (Oiii2), fol. 14r (Pii28), fol. 15v (B14), fol. 15v (Ni4), fol. 17v (F5), fol. 17v (H8), fol. 17v (H10), fol. 18r (F4), fol. 18r (H4), fol. 18r (H6), fol. 18v (F6), fol. 20r (Nv2), fol. 20v (A8), fol. 21r (Q3), fol. 21r-v (Nv1), fol. 22r-v (Nv17), fols. 22r-23r (Nv9), fols. 23r-24r (Nv18), fol. 24v (Nv15), fol. 25r (Nv8), fol. 33r (Pii11), fol. 33v (Pii16), fol. 33v (Pii14), fol. 34r (Pii10), fols. 37v-38r (Pii18), fol. 38r-v (Pii19), fol. 61r (O1i6), fol. 67r (Ni3), fol. 69v (I3), fol. 69v (I17), fol. 70r (I19), fol. 72r (L8), fol. 78r (D1), fol. 78r (Pii34), fol. 78v (Pii5), fol. 79r (Oii12), fol. 80v (Oii5), fol. 82v (Nii4), fol. 88r (Ni2), fol. 90r (R9), fol. 97r (Pii9), fol. 97v (Pii10), fol. 100r (R7), fol. 101r (Miii8)
Rawl. Poet. 62 fol. 35r (Pii9), fol. 42v (Oiii2)
Rawl. Poet. 71 p. 4 (C1b)
Rawl. Poet. 84 fol. 64v (Mii8), fol. 68r (H18), fol. 71r (Oii3), fol. 72r (Ni1), fol. 72r (Oiii2), fol. 72v (A2), fol. 73v (Miii5), fol. 74r (Pii6), fol. 74v (Pii8), fol. 114r (Pii15)
Rawl. Poet. 88 p. 59 (Pii2)
Rawl. Poet. 116 fol. 54r (Miii5)
Rawl. Poet. 117 fol. 16r (G4), fol. 22v (Mii3), fol. 23v (L8), fol. 150v (R9), fol. 169v (Ni4), fol. 196v (C1i), fol. 261v (H25), fol. 271v (A1)

Rawl. Poet. 142 fol. 42v (Pii10)

Rawl. Poet. 147 p. 40 (Pii15), p. 97 (H14)

Rawl. Poet. 148 fol. 1r (A1), fol. 1r (A2)

Rawl. Poet. 152 fol. 4r (Nvi2), fol. 23r (B14)

Rawl. Poet. 153 fol. 9v (Piii9), fol. 10r (Piii10)

Rawl. Poet. 155 p. 70 (D15)

Rawl. Poet. 160 fol. 14v (L8), fol. 16r (Nvi1), fol. 18v (Nvi2), fol. 25r (Mii8), fol. 53r (Pii15), fol. 157v (C1i), fol. 158v (C1b), fol. 163r (F4), fol. 163r (H1), fol. 163r (H5), fol. 174r (L7), fol. 176v (Nvi11), fols. 177v-78r (Nvi15), fol. 179v (Mii2), fol. 180v (Nvi18), fol. 185r (B3), fol. 198r (Oii5), fol. 198r (Oii12), fol. 198r (Pi3)

Rawl. Poet. 166 p. 83 (H14)

Rawl. Poet. 172 fol. 8r (C1i), fol. 12v (A3), fol. 13r (A4), fol. 13r (A5), fol. 13r (A6), fol. 14r (B4), fol. 79r (Oii1)


Rawl. Poet. 206 p. 72 (Mii15)

Rawl. Poet. 208 fol. 3r (I3)

Rawl. Poet. 209 fol. 9v (I20), fol. 10r (I17)

Rawl. Poet. 212 fol. 87v (A14), fols. 90r-91r (A6), fol. 91r (A4), fol. 91r (A5)

Rawl. Poet. 246 fol. 16v (Oii15)


Tanner 82 fol. 244r (I3)

Tanner 88 fol. 253r (Ni3)

Tanner 265 fol. 14r (Nvi1)

Tanner 299 fol. 11r (D8), fol. 11r (D9), fol. 11r (D18), fol. 11v (D10), fol. 11v (D11), fols. 11v-12r (D12), fol. 12r (D13), fol. 12r (D15), fol. 12v (D14), fol. 12v (D1), fol. 13r (D4), fol. 13r (D17), fol. 28v (I3)

Tanner 306 fol. 242r (Nvi1), fols. 247r-48v (Mii1), fol. 251r (I17), fol. 254r (C1i), fol. 256v (C1b), fol. 257r (L10), fol. 261r (L7), fol. 264r (Oii12), fol. 290r (R9)
Tanner 306* fol. 188r-v (A3c)
Tanner 465 fol. 61v (H14), fol. 71v (Pii15), fol. 81r (Miii5), fol. 81r (Ni1), fols. 81v-82r (Niii1), fol. 96v (H5), fol. 98v (Oii12), fol. 100r (Oi15), fol. 100r (Oiii10), fol. 100r (Pi1), fol. 100r (Pi3), fol. 100v (Oii4), fol. 102r (Pii3), fol. 102v (Pi13), fol. 102v (Pii20), fol. 102v (Pii5), fol. 102v (Pii20), fols. 102v-103r (Pi33), fol. 103r (Pi28), fol. 103r (Pi34), fol. 103v (Pii35), fol. 104r (Pi26)
Tanner 466 fol. 67r (Miii5)
Top. Cheshire c.7 fol. 3r (Niv1), fol. 6r (Niv2)

British Library

Add. 3910 fol. 29v (Ni1)
Add. 4130 fol. 92v (G2), fol. 93r (G4)
Add. 4149 fol. 211r (G2), fol. 213r (C1i)
Add. 5832 fol. 169r (D1), fol. 197r (Pii7), fols. 197v-199r (Pii32), fol. 200v (Nv15), fol. 202r (Niv1), fol. 206r-v (B3), fol. 222v (Q3)
Add. 5956 fol. 23r (A8), fol. 28r (Oii1)
Add. 10309 fol. 42r (Oii5), fol. 42r (Oii12), fol. 103v (A16), fol. 120r (A14), fol. 123r (C1i), fol. 128v (Mii8), fol. 141r (I3), fol. 142v (A10), fol. 148r (G4), fol. 152r (H25)
Add. 15226 fol. 6v (B7), fol. 11v (B8), fols. 22v-24r (Oii9), fol. 28r (Pii15), fol. 28r-v (Pii16)
Add. 15227 fol. 2r (L3), fol. 15r (A15), fol. 17v (C1i), fol. 21r (Pii6), fol. 27r (H26), fol. 28r (Miii5), fol. 41v (Pii1), fol. 42v (H9), fol. 42v (Oii5), fol. 79v (C1b)
Add. 15476 fol. 1r (H9), fols. 91r-92r (H2)
Add. 15891 fol. 245v (H1)
Add. 18044 fol. 81r (Pii10), fol. 153v (I3)
Add. 19268 fol. 32r (Pii9)
Add. 21433 fol. 102v (B13), fol. 120v (Nv4), fol. 145v (G2), fol. 147r (G4)
Add. 21544 fol. 128r (Pii8)
Add. 22118 fol. 5v (Oiii10), fol. 9v (E4), fol. 29r (Q3), fol. 36v (Oii2), fol. 38v (Mi5), fol. 42v (Mii2)
Add. 22591 fol. 89r (Q3), fol. 89r (Q6), fol. 315r (Oii12)
Add. 22601 fol. 60v (A14), fol. 63r (B5), fol. 63v (B6), fols. 64r-65v (B4)
Add. 22603 fols. 33r-34r (L7), fols. 49v-50r (I20)
Add. 22640 fol. 105r (L8)
Add. 22959 fol. 8r (Oii12), fol. 22v (Oii12), fol. 25v (Pi3), fol. 27r (Pi34), fol. 27r (Pi3), fol. 27r (Pi20), fol. 28r (Oii13), fol. 35v (Oii2), fol. 49r (F11), fol. 58r (R9)
Add. 23229 fol. 16r (C1i), fol. 99r (L8)
Add. 23723 fol. 22r (Nii4)
Add. 25303 fol. 83r (Mii8), fol. 86r (Mii10), fol. 98r (B13), fol. 131r (Nv4), fol. 133r (L8), fol. 162r (G2), fol. 163r (G4)
Add. 25707 fol. 46r (H20), fol. 74r (Nvi1), fol. 76r (Niv1), fol. 160v (Piii9), fol. 161v (Piii10), fol. 185v (H14)
Add. 27408 fol. 146r (Oii12)
Add. 27879 fol. 239v (Ni3)
Add. 28640 fol. 101r-v (Ni3), fol. 103v (Nii4), fol. 123v (Nvi1), fol. 128v (Nv1), fol. 148r (Oii1), fol. 149r (Oii1), fol. 149v (Oii3)
Add. 29303 fol. 3v (Mii8), fol. 5r (Nv1)
Add. 29492 fol. 26r (Oii1), fol. 27r (Oii4), fol. 30v (Nv15), fol. 49v (Oii12), fol. 55r (Oii1), fol. 55v (Oii1), fol. 55v (Pi3), fol. 55v (Pi4), fol. 56r (Oii10), fol. 56r-v (Pi28), fol. 63v (Pii10)
Add. 29607 fol. 1r (Oii3)
Add. 29764 fol. 9r (A3)
Add. 29879 fol. 26r (L5)
Add. 29996 fol. 70v (Oii12), fol. 70v (Oii10)
Add. 30982 fol. 7v (L6), fol. 21r (Ni1), fol. 21v and 148v (I3), fol. 22r (H9), fol. 22r (Mii5), fol. 33r (C1i), fol. 45v (Pii2), fol. 86r (Pii10), fol. 157v (C1b)
Add. 33998 fol. 8v (Nv3), fol. 29v (Oii13), fol. 41r (Pii22), fol. 42v (Pii10), fol. 65r (Mi5), fol. 96v (I12), fol. 96v (I17)
Add. 34217 fol. 39v (Nvi1), fol. 41v (Ni4)
Add. 34218 fol. 6r (B16), fol. 20r (C1i), fol. 162v (F6), fol. 165r (F4)
Add. 35331 fol. 28r (Oii2), fol. 30v (Oii3)
Add. 38139 fol. 58r (B11), fol. 192v (B4)
Add. 39829 fol. 93r (A14)
Add. 43410 fol. 163v (I3)
Add. 44963 fol. 19v (C1i), fol. 36v (Mii5), fol. 37r (Oii6), fol. 38r (Oii7), fol. 38r (Pi34), fol. 38v (Q3), fol. 40r (H5), fol. 40r (Pii10), fol. 40r (Pii10), fol. 40v (Oii5), fol. 40v (Oii15)
Add. 47111  fol. 4v (Pii10),  fol. 4v (Pii15),  fol. 18r (Nv6)
Add. 47126  fol. 138v (Oiii5)
Add. 52585  fol. 4r (Nv1),  fol. 56v (I3)
Add. 58215  fol. 24r (I20),  fol. 42r (I17),  fol. 46v (A7),  fol. 173v (Oii16),  fol. 190v (C1i)
Add. 61481  fol. 63r (Nv4),  fol. 64r (Nv5),  fol. 97r (Nv1),  fol. 99r (Mii2)
Add. 61683  fol. 67r (Oiii3),  fol. 73r (Nv15)
Add. 61944  fol. 77v (F4)
Add. 62134  fol. 12r (I20)
Add. 69847A  fol. 5r (A3)
Add. 69883B  fol. 66r (D24),  fol. 76r (Ni4)
Add. 69968A  fol. 30v (H14)
Add. 70454  fol. 21v (B19),  fol. 22v (B20),  fol. 53r (Miii5)
Add. 70639  fol. 65r (Miii5),  fol. 70v (Oii12)
Add. 72368  fol. 31r (Oi1)
Add. 72439  fol. 148r (H14)
Add. 72479  fol. 6r (Oi1),  fol. 8r (Oi4)
Add. 73086  fol. 18r (I3)
Add. 74734  item K (H1)
Cotton App. L  fol. 169r (B16)
Cotton Titus c.7  fol. 93r (I7),  fol. 93r (I13),  fol. 94r (I1),  fol. 95r (I17)
Egerton 784  fol. 5v (I23),  fol. 22v (Ni4)
Egerton 923  fol. 10v (Miii5),  fol. 11r (G3),  fol. 26v (Pii15),  fol. 30r (L8),  fol. 31v (Ni4),  fol. 37r (Nv11),  fol. 40v (Nv6),  fol. 45v (Pi34),  fol. 45v (Pii5)
Egerton 1160  fol. 241v (Pii15)
Egerton 2026  fol. 12r (Oiii13),  fol. 12r (Pii10),  fol. 12r (Pii10),  fol. 64v (Pii8),  fol. 65r (Pii10),  fol. 66r (Miii5)
Egerton 2230  fol. 25r (C1i),  fol. 33v (D3),  fol. 33v (D15),  fol. 34r (D1),  fol. 34r-v (D18),  fol. 34v (D9),  fol. 34v-35r (D10),  fol. 35v (B16),  fol. 64r (Pi35),  fol. 69r (F6),  69r (F10),  fol. 69v (D5),  fol. 69v (F3),  fol. 69v (F8),  fol. 70r (E1),  fol. 70r (H27),  fol. 70v (E2),  fol. 70v (H5),  fol. 70v (H6),  fol. 71r (F4),  fol. 71v (H3),  fol. 72r (H10),  fol. 72v (H25)
Egerton 2421  fol. 2v (C1b),  fol. 18r-v (Pii13)
Egerton 2541 fol. 118r (Oiii2)
Egerton 2725 fol. 37v (L2), fol. 43r (Miii8), fol. 45v (C1i), fol. 47r (Niii3), fol. 60r (Piii10), fol. 78v (Pii19), fols. 79r-80v (Pii22), fol. 80v (Oiii5), fol. 82r (Pi18), fol. 82v (Oiii11), fol. 110r (Q3), fols. 129r-130r (R9)
Egerton 2877 fol. 88v (B12)
Harley 367 fol. 151r (Nvi1), fol. 153r (L8), fol. 160r (R9), fol. 163r (Nv9), fol. 187r (Mii3)
Harley 646 fol. 26r (H21), fol. 26r (H22)
Harley 738 fol. 328r (Q3)
Harley 791 fol. 49r (I17), fol. 49r (L2), fol. 57r (Pi28), fol. 57r (Pii5), fol. 59r (J3), fol. 61r (Ni1), fol. 69r (Oiii11)
Harley 837 fol. 74r (Nv1)
Harley 907 fol. 75v (Nv15)
Harley 1221 fol. 74r (D1), fol. 74v (H27), fol. 74v (L2), fol. 75r (Ni1), fol. 80v (Mii3), fol. 90r (Oi1), fol. 91r (H9), fol. 96v (F4), fol. 110v (H14)
Harley 1574 fol. 2r (I3)
Harley 2127 fol. 34r (A13)
Harley 2296 fol. 135r (A3)
Harley 3511 fol. 18v (Pii15)
Harley 3910 fol. 8r (Mii8), fol. 11r (B2), fol. 14r (B4), fol. 26r (H17), fol. 28r (I20), fol. 60r (Mii4)
Harley 3991 fol. 126r (B19), fol. 126r (B20), fol. 126v (B15), fol. 126v (B16), fol. 126v (E1)
Harley 4931 fol. 9r (Pi2), fol. 9r (Pii13), fol. 10r (C1i)
Harley 4955 fol. 72r (Oii9), fol. 85v (Oiii14), fol. 86r (Mii5)
Harley 5191 fol. 17r (C1i)
Harley 5353 fol. 83r (A1), fol. 83r (A2)
Harley 6038 fol. 14r (H28), fol. 18r (D1), fol. 18v (L2), fol. 18v (H27), fol. 19r (Ni1), fol. 27r (Mii3), fol. 27v (Oii1), fol. 28r (H9), fol. 28v (F4), fol. 44r (H14)
Harley 6057 fol. 6v (Pii15), fol. 13v (F4), fol. 35r (I20), fol. 50v (I16), fols. 52v-53v (Oiii4)
Harley 6383 fol. 27r (Pii14), fol. 27v (Pii9), fol. 28v (Pii10), fol. 29r (Oii12), fol. 34v (Pii13), fols. 49r-50r (R6), fol. 63v (Oii7), fol. 71r (B11), fol. 78r-v (H19)
Harley 6910 fol. 141v (A3)
Harley 6917 fols. 20v-21r (Pii10), fol. 21r-v (Pii21), fol. 101r (Mii8)
Harley 6918 fol. 34v (C1b), fol. 83v (Oiii6)

1093
Sloane 1492  fol. 9v (Ni4)
Sloane 1792  fols. 2v-4r (H17),  fol. 5r (Oii5),  fol. 52v (Nv15),  fol. 74r (H25),  fols. 74v-75v (R4),  fol. 95r (C1b),  fol. 104v (Cl1),  fol. 109r (Mii8),  fol. 114v (Pii10)
Sloane 1842  fol. 117r (I3)
Sloane 1867  fol. 45r (Mii5)
Sloane 1925  fols. 30v-29v (H14)
Sloane 2023  fol. 58v (H10),  fol. 59r (C1i),  fol. 60v (F4),  fol. 60v (G1)
Sloane 4178  fol. 63r (Pii10)
Stowe 354  fol. 43r (C1i)
Stowe 402  fol. 24r (H25)
Stowe 962  fol. 52v (Mii8),  fol. 66v (C1i),  fol. 84r (B4),  fol. 142r (Nii6),  fol. 144v (L8),  fol. 146r (Oii4),  fol. 219r (C1b)
Trumbull Misc. V fol. 11r (D2)

Brotherton Library University of Leeds

Lt. 25  fol. 8r (B16),  fol. 9r (B13)
Lt. 28  fol. 2r (Niv1),  fol. 6r (Niv2)
Lt. 31  fol. 38v (Oi5)
Lt. q. 9  fol. 17r (B6),  fol. 61r (Oii4),  fol. 63v (Ni3)
Lt. q. 11  no. 41 (Nv6),  no. 47 (Nv4)
Lt. q. 44  fol. 1r (L8),  fol. 2r (Niv1),  fol. 6r (Niv2),  fol. 10r (Mii8),  fol. 13r (Nii5),  fol. 43v (L7)
Lt. q. 51  p. 207 (Oii12)

Cambridge University Library

Add. 29  fol. 2r (Oi14),  fol. 18r (H20)
Add. 42  fol. 37r (Pi35),  fol. 37v (Pii5)
Add. 79  fol. 47r (Oiii5)
Add. 335  fol. 54r (Q3),  fol. 54r (Q7)
Add. 4138  fol. 47r (H9),  fol. 49r (A12),  fol. 49r (B17),  fol. 49r (B18)
Dd.11.73  fol. 67v (Pi2),  fol. 67v (Pi34),  fol. 67v (Pii5),  fol. 69r (Oii15),  fol. 69r (Pi4),  fol. 102v (Oiii2)

Cheshire Country Record Office

CR  63/2/19 fol. 3r (G3),  fol. 10v (H27),  fol. 11r (F5),  fol. 11r (F7),  fol. 11r (H5),  fol. 11r (H6),  fol. 11r (H10),  fol. 11v (H11),  fol. 12r (H12),  fol. 13r (H9),  fol. 14v (H1),  fol. 14v (H11),  fol. 18r (L3),  fol. 19v (Ni1),  fol. 20r (J1),  fol. 20r (J3),  fol. 33r (Niv2),  fol. 35v (Nv10),  fol. 41v (Oi7),  fol. 58r (Oi15),  fol. 58r (Oi17),  fol. 60r (Oii9),  fol. 60r (Oii8),  fol. 60r (Oiii9),  fol. 60r (Oiii10),  fol. 62v-63r (Oiii11),  fol. 63v (Oiii12),  fol. 69r (Pii23),  fol. 69r (Pii19),  fol. 69v (Oiii5),  fol. 70v-71r (Pii31),  fol. 71r (Pii7),  fol. 71r (Pii13),  fol. 72r (Q3),  fol. 72r (R1)

Doctor Williams’s Library


Hampshire Record Office

Malmesbury Papers  9M73/G3(b) (C1i)

Hatfield House

Salisbury 140  fol. 123r (F6),  fol. 126r (Oiii5)

John Rylands Library, University of Manchester

Eng. 410  fol. 21r (B18),  fol. 26v (Miii3),  fol. 27v (L2)

Leicestershire County Record Office


National Library of Scotland

2060  fol. 2r (I3),  fol. 2r (I17),  fol. 15v (Miii5),  fol. 53r (Mii8)
2062  fol. 220r (Oii6)
Advocates 19.3.8  fol. 1v (Oiii10),  fol. 33r (R8),  fol. 47r (L8)
Advocates 33.1.7  vol. 24,  fol. 78r (Oii17)

National Library of Wales

1096
Northamptonshire County Record Office

IL 3337  p. 9 (Q3)
IL 3338  fols. 1r-2r (Q1), fol. 2v (Q3)
IL 4278  (Nv5)
IL 4296  (D23), (D27)
IL 4304  (D1), (D15), (D21), (D22)
Westmorland (A) 6.vi.I fol. 11r (Piii10)

Public Record Office London

SP 12/278/23  (A13)
SP 14/69/67:1  (D5), (D6), (E1)
SP 14/103/61x  fol. 99r (I8), fol. 99r (I9)
SP 14/104/16  (Ni1)
SP 14/118/104  (Oi2)
SP 14/191/6  (E5)
SP 16/114/32  (Pi1)
SP 16/114/68  (Pi29)
SP 16/114/69  (Piii16)
SP 16/114/70  (Pi21), (Piii12)
SP 16/119/25  (Pi1)
SP 16/119/30  (Pi1)
SP 16/85/84  (Oii12)
SP 46/64  fol.163 (I21), fol. 163 (I25)

St. John's College Cambridge Library

K.56  no. 22 (Pi18), no. 22 (Pi28), no. 23 (Oi1), no. 30 (Oiii2), no. 59 and no. 60 (Niv1), no. 61 and no. 62 (Niv2), no. 65 (Nv3), no. 65 (Nv4), no. 68 (Nvi1), no. 71 (Nv1), no. 72 (Ni4), no. 72 (Nv15), no. 74 (Oii10)
S.32  fol. 1r (Oi15), fol. 7r (C1b), fol. 28r (Pii15), fol. 29r (Pii10), fol. 31r (L8), fol. 32r (Q3), fol. 32v (Q6), fol. 34v (I3), fol. 38v (Nv3), fol. 40v (I17), fol. 42v (Pi28)
University of Nottingham Library

Clifton CL LM 24 (D23)

Victoria and Albert Museum London

D25.F.39 fol. 66v (B13), fol. 67v (B14), fol. 67v (B16), fol. 68r (B17), fol. 68v (B15), fol. 71r (D1), fol. 71r (D15), fol. 71v (F8), fol. 81r (A8), 82v (B21), fols. 88v-89r (E5), fol. 97r (F4), fol. 97r (H9), fol. 97v (H1), fol. 98v (H3), fol. 98v (H10), fol. 99r (H6)
F48.G.2/1 item 3 (Pii8), item 3 (Pii10)

Wiltshire County Record Office

413 fol. 401 (Q3), fol. 401 (Q6), fol. 401 (Q7)
865/500 (I17)

United States archives

Beinecke Library Yale University

Osborn b.125 fol. 38r (Q3), fol. 38r (Q2)
Osborn b.126 no foliation (Q3)
Osborn Bagott Papers Chest 1 no. 16 (Piii2), no. 16 (Pii7), no. 16 (Piii9)
Osborn Box 12 no. 5 fol. 18v (Pii10), fol. 20r (Pii17)

Folger Shakespeare Library Washington D.C.

E.a.6 fol. 3r (Q3), fol. 3r (Oiii7), fol. 4v (R7), fol. 84r (Niii3)
J.a.2 fol. 81r (C1i)
V.b. 50  p. 547 (Q3)
V.b.110  pp. 88-90 (R5)
V.b.198  fol. 2r (A3)
V.b.275  fol. 220r (Pi2)
V.b.277  fol. 98r (Oiii4)
V.b.303  p. 232 (Ni3),  p. 264 (Nvi1)
X.d.235  (L8)
X.d.241  fol. 1v (B4)

**Houghton Library Harvard University**

Eng.  628  p. 385 (I3)
Eng.  686  fol. 17r (Nii2),  fol. 17v (A1),  fol. 17v (A2),  fol. 34r (F5),  fol. 59v (L8)
Eng. 1278  item 7 (Piii8),  item 8 (Pi19),  item 10 (I10),  item 10 (I17),  item 10 (L2),  item 11 (Pii10),  item 12 (Pii5),  item 13 (Oiii4),  item 14 (Oii5),  item 14 (Oii12),  item 15 (Piii10),  item 16 (Piii7)

**Huntington Library San Marino California**

HM 198  1.19-21 (H18),  1.29 (Ni1),  1.3 (C1i),  1.30 (L8),  1.33 (H17),  1.37 (Mii8),  1.44 (Oii12),  1.56 (Oi9),  1.62 (Niv1),  1.84-85 (Nii6),  1.134-36 (Mii9),  1.157 (Oiii5),  1.158 (Pi8),  1.159 (Pi21),  1.164 (B2),  2.125 (D20),  2.126 (D18),  2.152
HM 742  fol. 1v (Oii5),  fol. 2r (Oii12)
HM 904  fols. 49r-52r (Piii17)

**Pierpont Morgan Library New York**

MA 1057  p. 80 (L8),  p. 94 (I21),  pp. 190-91 (H15)

**Rosenbach Library Philadelphia**

239/22  fol. 18v (Nv4),  fol. 26v (Ni1),  fol. 36r (Nv3),  fol. 42v (C1i),  fol. 49v (H25),  fol. 50v (I20)
239/23  fol. 95v (H14)

240/2 fol. 93r (Pii10)

240/7 p. 60 (Pi28), p. 82 (Pii15)

243/4 p. 161 (Q3)


1083/17 fol. 29r (B16), fol. 65r (Pii20), fol. 65v (Pii21), fol. 71v (I17)
INDEX OF NAMES

A
Aaron (biblical), Piii9
Abbot, George, Archbishop of Canterbury, F0, F4, H18, K1x
Abel (biblical), Pi31
Abergavenny, Earl of see Neville, Henry
Abigail (biblical), Niv2
Abihu (biblical), Piii9
Abner (biblical), Pi36
Abraham (biblical), Oii4
Absalom (biblical), K2, Oiii3
Achan (biblical), Niv2, Pi22
Achilles (classical), Oi11
Acland, John, Sir, Cl1i
Adam (biblical), Mii2, Pi36, Pi37
Adolphus, Gustavus, King of Sweden, viii, R0, R5
Adonis (classical), Piii17
Aeneas (classical), I2, Nv10, Nv17, Pii8
Aeolus (classical), L7
Aesop, H9, H10
Africanus, Scipio (classical), Oi2
Agamemnon (classical), Nv10, Piii11, Piii22
Ahab (biblical), L8
Ahitophel (biblical), Mii9
Ajax (classical, Nv10, Piii16
Alecto (classical), Pi31
Alençon, Francis, Duke of Anjou, A9, Oi1
Alexander the Great, King of Macedonia, Ni3, Nv10
Aliff, T., Piii15
Alpheus (classical), Piii17
Alured, Thomas, K1viii
Amarillis (literary), D1
Amasa (biblical), Pi36
Anchises (classical), I2
Andrewes, Lancelot, Bishop of Ely, F4, H18
Andromache (classical), Nv10
Anglesey, Earl of see Villiers, Christopher
Anjou, Duke of see Alençon, Francis
Anne of Denmark, Queen, C1i, D1, D12, D18, K1iv, K1v, Nv1
Annesley, Francis, Sir, Oiii4
Antiphus (classical), Piii22
Antony, Mark (classical), Mii8
Antrim, Earl of see MacDonnell, Randal
Apollo (classical), G2, I2, L2, L7, L8, Nv6, Nv16, Nvi3, Pi37, Pii8, Piii16
Arden, Elizabeth, R5
Arden, Goditha, R5
Arethusa (classical), Piii17
Aretino, Pietro, Q2
Ariadne (classical), B4
Aristotle (classical), Pi36
Arminius, Jacobus, Oii12, Oiii3, Oiii4
Armstrong, Archie, L5, Nv17
Arpe, Katherine (née Monbodiac), R5
Arpe, Thomas, R5
Artemis (classical), G2, Piii11
Arthur, King, Nv9
Arthur, Prince, Nv6
Arundel, Countess of see Howard, Alathea
Arundel, Earl of see Howard, Thomas
Ashley, Anthony, Sir, L10
Ashley, Philippa (née Sheldon), L10
Aston, Roger, Sir, C1iii
Astraea (classical), Mii9, Pi36, Piii17
Athena (classical), Nv6, Pi21
Atkins, Henry, D18
Atlas (classical), H17, Nv6, Pi21, Pi37, Piii11, Piii16
Atropos (classical), D1, Nv16, Piii17
Aubert, Maurice, R5
Aubrey, John, E0, Mii3, Miii5, Niii1
Audley, Lady see Brydges, Elizabeth
Aurora (classical), Nv6, Nv10, Nv16, Pi36
Ayton, Robert, Nii2
B
B., R., H28
Baal (biblical), K1i
Bacchus (classical), L7, Nv4, Nv6
Bacon, Alice, Lady, Mii4
Bacon, Anthony, A0, B7
Bacon, Francis, Sir, vi, A0, A7, C1i, C1ii, C1iv, D7, K1vi, K1vii, K1ix, Mi5, Mii1 (section about), Miii1, Miii2, Nv10
Bacon, Nicholas, Sir, K1ix
Badger, Thomas, Sir, L5
Bagot, William, Sir, Nv13
Balaam (biblical), K1i, Pi36
Balak (biblical), K1i, Pi36
Balfour, James, Pii8
Banbury, Earl of see Knollys, William
Bancroft, Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury, A0, B0, B11, B12, B17, B18, B19, B20
Basilius (literary), B2
Bassompierre, Francis de, Oi11
Bastard, Thomas, H7
Bastwick, John, R0
Bathsheba (biblical), Niv2
Beaufort, Edmund, second Duke of Somerset, A7
Beaufort, John, first Duke of Somerset, A7
Beaumont, Anthony, Piii5
Beaumont, Dorothy see Hill, Dorothy
Beaumont, Elizabeth, R5
Beaumont, Francis, R5
Beaumont, Mary see Beaumont, Mary
Beaumont, Robert de, fourth Earl of Leicester, Piii5
Beaumont, Ursula, R5
Bedford, Countess of see Russell, Lucy
Bedford, Earl of see Russell, Edward
Beech, R[ichard], I23
Beecher, William, Sir, Oiii4
Beer, Zacharias (or Ursinus), B2
Beeston, Hugh, Sir, C1ii, D20
Benefield, Sebastian, Pi9
Benjamin (biblical), R9
Bennet, John, Sir, C1iii, Mii1
Berkshire, Earl of see Norris, Francis
Bertie, Elizabeth, Countess of Lindsay, R6
Bertie, Robert, Earl of Lindsay, R6
Bevis of Southampton, Sir (literary), Oii7
Bildad (biblical), L8
Bilson, Thomas, Bishop of Winchester, F4, H18, H28
Birkhead, George, D16
Blount, Anne, Countess of Newport, R6
Blount, Charles, first Earl of Devonshire and Lord Mountjoy, A0, A3, A7, B0, B13, B14
Blount, Mountjoy, Earl of Newport, R5, R6
Bonaventure de Longueval, Charles, Count of Bucquoy, Mi1i2
Bond, John, C1i1i, C1iv
Boreas (classical), L7
Boteler, Elizabeth (née Villiers), L10
Boteler, John, Baron, R6
Boteler, John, Sir, L10
Bowes, Jerome, Sir, C1i
Bowyer, Robert, C0, C1i
Brandon, Charles, Duke of Suffolk, F7
Breton, W., Ni1i3
Brett, Alexander, Sir, Oi1i1, Oi1i2
Brett, Anne see Cranfield, Anne
Bridgewater, Earl of see Egerton, John
Bristol, Earl of see Digby, John
Broadway, Giles, Q0, Q2, Q6, Q7
Brocke, William, C1i1i
Bromley, Henry, Sir, B1
Bromley, Thomas, Sir, Oi1i4
Brooke, Christopher, C0, C1i, C1i1i, C1iv
Brooke, George, B4
Brooke, Giles, C1i1i
Brooke, Henry, eleventh Lord Cobham, A0, A7, A8, A12, B0, B1, B4, B7, K1i1i
Brooke, Lord see Greville, Fulke
Brooke, Thomas, C1i1i
Brough, William, Oi1i2
Brutus (or Brute) (classical), Nv6, Pi1i8
Brutus, Marcus (classical), C1b, Pi1i8
Brydges, Elizabeth, Lady Audley, Q2
Brydges, Grey, Baron Chandos, Q0
Buchanan, George, B2, Oiii2, Oiii3
Buckhurst, Baron see Sackville, Thomas
Buckingham, Countess of see Compton, Mary
Buckingham, Duchess of, see Villiers, Katherine
Buckingham, Duke of, see Villiers, George
Bucquoy, Count of see Bonaventure, Charles
Bullheley, Richard, Sir, C1iv
Burghley, first Lord see Cecil, William
Burghley, second Lord see Cecil, Thomas
Burghley, third Lord see Cecil, William
Burton, Henry, R0
Bushell, Thomas, Mii3
Bushie, John, Sir, Nvi3
Busiris (classical), Piii11
Butler, Mr., Mii3
Butler, Pierce, Pi31
Bysshe, Edward, Oiii4
C
Ca., R., H26
Cacus (classical), Pi36
Cadenet, Marquis de see Albert, Honore d’
Cadmus (classical), Piii17
Caesar, Julius, Sir, Miii1
Caesar, Julius (classical), C1b, G2, Mii8, Oii11, Oiii4, Piii8, Piii16
Cain (biblical), Pi31
Caito (or Catto), R5
Calvert, George, Sir, K1vi, K1vii
Calvin, John, B2, Nv4
Campbell, Anne, Lady, R6
Canidia (literary), H17
Carew, George, Sir, A8
Carew, Richard, H26
Carew, Thomas, P0, Piii20, Piii21
Carew, Thomasina, Lady, R5
Carey, George, Lord Hunsdon, A8, A13
Carey, Henry, Earl of Dover, R6
Carey, Mary (née Cockayne), Countess of Dover, R6
Carleton, Anne, Lady, Oi10
Carleton, Dudley, Sir, L1, Nii1, Nvi1, Oi10
Carisle, first Earl of see Hay, James
Carisle, second Earl of see Hay, James
Carlyle, Robert, E2
Carnarvon, Countess of see Dormer, Anne
Carnarvon, Earl of see Dormer, Robert
Carr, James, D2
Carr, Robert, Viscount Rochester and Earl of Somerset, ix, B0, B9, D0, E1, E6, F0(section about), F5, G3, H0(section about), K1iii, K1iv, K2, L0, Nvi1, Pi36, R7
Cassandra (classical), Nv10
Castlehaven, Countess of see Touchet, Anne
Castlehaven, second Earl of see Touchet, Mervin
Castor (classical), H19, L1
Catherine of Aragon, Nv6
Cato (classical), Mii8, Mii9
Cato, M. Porcius (classical), Oiii4
Cavendish, Mary, Countess of Shrewsbury, K1v
Cavendish, William, Earl of Devonshire, Miii2
Cecil, Anne, Lady, J0(section about), Miii2
Cecil, Edward, Viscount Wimbledon, Nii1, Oi6, Oi7, Oii7, Oiii1, Oiii4, Pi32, R6
Cecil, Elizabeth (née Manners), B12
Cecil, Frances see Clifford, Frances

Cecil, Frances, Countess of Exeter, J0(section about)

Cecil, Robert, first Earl of
Salisbury, v, vi, viii, ix, A0, A7, A8, A9, A11, A12, A13, A15, A16, B0, B7, B12, C1i, C1iv, D0
(section about), E1, H16, H20, I4, I11, I23, K1iii, Oi10, R0

Cecil, Sophia (née Zouch), Countess of Wimbledon, R6

Cecil, Thomas, second Lord Burghley and Earl of Exeter, J0(section about)

Cecil, William, first Lord Burghley, A0, A3, A7, A8, A9, A13, C1ii, D16, D24

Cecil, William, Lord Roos, J0(section about)

Cecil, William, third Lord Burghley, B0, B12

Cecil, William, Viscount Cranborne and second Earl of Salisbury, D20, D27

Celsus (classical), Pi35

Cerberus (classical), H17

Ceres (classical), Piii17

Challenor, Thomas, Sir, C1i

Chamberlain, John, D0, D6, E1, Miii1, Miii2, Nii1, Nvi1, Oi6

Chapman, George, E3, H1

Charlemagne, Oii12

Charles I, King, ii, A13, L5, L7, Miii2, N0(section about), O0, Oi1, Oi4, Oi6, Oi9, Oi10, Oi11, Oi13, Oi15, Oii3, Oii4, Oii6, Oii7, Oiii2, Oiii3, Oiii4, Oiii11, Oiii12, Oiii14, P0, Pi8, Pi15, Pi37, Pii4, Pii8, Pii1, Pii2, Pii5, Pii8, Piii10, Piii11, Piii13, Piii15, Piii20, Q6, R0, R4, R5, R6, R8, R9

Charles II, King, R6

Charon (classical), Nv6, Pi27, Pi30, Pi31

Cholmley, Henry, Pii15, Pii16

Christ, Jesus (biblical), Mii8

Christian IV, King of Denmark, Pi15

Chute, Walter, Sir, G1

Cicero (classical), Mii8, Mii9

Cicill, Mr., I17

Circe (classical), H17

1109
Clare, first Earl of see Holles, John
Clare, second Earl of see Holles, John
Clayton, preacher of Fulham, Nv13
Clifford, Anne see Herbert, Anne
Clifford, Anne, Lady, R6
Clifford, Frances (née Cecil), D20
Clifford, Francis, fourth Earl of Cumberland, D20
Clifford, Henry, D20
Clotho (classical), Nv16, Piii17
Clout, Colin (literary), D1
Cobham, eleventh Lord see Brooke, Henry
Cockaine, Mr., Mii3
Cockayne, Mary see Carey, Mary
Cockayne, William, Sir, R6
Codrus (classical), Piii17
Coke, Edward, Sir, A7, B0, B7, C1ii, K1iv, K1v, K1vi, K1vii, K1x, Mi5, Mii2, Mii5, Mii1,
Mii2, Oi1, Oi9, Oi12, Oi13, Oi14, Oiii4, Pi24
Coke, Elizabeth, Lady Hatton, K1v, Mii2, Oi9
Coke, Frances see Villiers, Frances
Coke, John, Sir, A13, Oi6
Colchis (classical), H17
Coloma, Don Carlos, Oi1
Compton, Mary, (née Villiers, née Beaumont), Countess of
    Buckingham, K1vii, L10, N0, Oii4, Oii12, Pi16, Pi17, Pi23, Pi25, Pi30, Pi31, Pi32, Pi35, Pi36, Pii8,
Compton, Spencer, L10
Compton, Thomas, Sir, L10, Mii2, Oii4
Compton, William, Lord Compton and Earl of Northampton, L10
Conway, Edward, Lord Conway of Ragley, Oi10
Cope, Anthony, Sir, C1ii
Cope, Isabel see Rich, Isabel
Cope, Walter, Sir, C1i, C1iii, C1iv, D20
Corbet, Andrew, Sir, Oiii4
Corbett, Richard, D26, H25, L6, Nv3, Nv4, Nv5, Nv15, Nv17, Oiii2, Oiii3, Piii10
Cornelia (classical), Piii17
Cornwallis, Charles, Sir, G0
Cottington, Francis, Sir, Nv10, Nv15
Cotton, Robert, Sir, C1iv, H15, Mi4, Pii8, Pii10
Coventry, Baron see Thomas
Cowell, John, C1iii
Cradocke, John, Mii1
Cranborne, Viscount see Cecil, William
Cranfield, Anne (née Brett), Countess of Middlesex, L10, Oi5
Cranfield, Lionel, Earl of Middlesex, K1vii, K1ix, L10, Miii1, O0, Oi1, Oi4, Oi5
Craven, Baron of Hampstead Marshall, Berkshire see Craven, William
Craven, William, Baron Craven of Hampstead Marshall, Berkshire, R5
Crew (or Crewe), Randall (or Ranulph), Sir, Oi12, Oi13, Oi14
Crew, Thomas, Sir, Q1
Crichton, Robert, Earl of Sanquhar, E1, E2
Crofts, Cicely, R5
Crofts, John, Sir, L5
Croke, John, Sir, ii, iii, C0, C1i, C1b
Crompton, Thomas, C1iii
Cromwell, Edward, Lord Cromwell, A10
Cumberland, fourth Earl of see Clifford, Francis
Cupid (classical), R5
Curtius, Mettius (classical), Pi36, Pii18
Curzon, Mary, B16
Cynthia (classical), B4, Mii9, Pi37, Piii17
Cyrus (classical), Pi25
D
d’Albert, Charles, Duc de Luynes, Nii3
d’Albert, Honoré, Marquis de Cadenet, Nii3

d’Aubigny, Seigneur see Stuart, George

D’Ewes, Simonds, Sir, x, H0, H21, H22, K1x, Mii3, Pi12

Daedalus (classical), B4, Pi37

Dalston, George, Sir, Oiii4

Dalyson, Roger, Sir, K1iii

Damett (or Dannett), Thomas, Sir, C1iv

Danae (classical), Piii17

Daniel (biblical), K1i, K1ix

Daniel, Samuel, D19, D20, D23, D24, Nv16

Daniell, John, B7

Daphne (classical), Nv6

Davenant, William, Sir, P0, Piii22

Davenport, Humphrey, L10

Davenport, William, of Bramhall, F7, G2, G3, H11, H12, H27, I11, J1, J3, Pi7, Pi23, Pi31, Q3

David, King (biblical), Mii9, Nii5, Niv2, Oiii3, Pi36, Pii11

Davies, John, C0

Deianeira (classical), Oii10

Denbigh, Countess of see Feilding, Susan

Denbigh, Earl of see Feilding, William

Derby, Earl of see Stanley, William

Derry, Tom, L5

Desmond, Earl of see Feilding, George

Deucalion (classical), Piii17

Devereux, Dorothy see Percy, Dorothy

Devereux, Elizabeth (née Paulet), Countess of Essex, R6

Devereux, Frances, Countess of Essex, B7

Devereux, Robert, second Earl of Essex, ix, A0(section about), B0, B4, B5, B7, C1ii, D0, D2, D4, D17, D25, D27, I0, I4, I11, K1ii, Nvi1, Oii11

Devereux, Robert, third Earl of Essex and fourth Viscount of Hereford, E6, F0(section about), H1,
H2, H3, H4, H10, H11, H16, H17, H19, K2, Oii11, Pi32, R6

Devonshire, Earl of see Cavendish, William

Devonshire, first Earl of see Blount, Charles

Diana (classical), L7, Nv6, Pii8, Piii11, Pii16

Digby, John, Earl of Bristol, Miii2, Oi3, Oii12

Digges, Dudley, Sir, Oi10, Oiii4

Diomedes (classical), Pi21

Dives (biblical), Oii4, Oiii4

Dominis, Marco Antonio de , Niii2

Doncaster, Viscount see Hay, James

Donne, John, iv, vii, C0, C1i, C1iii, C1iv, D0, Pii15

Dorner, Anne (née Herbert), Countess of Carnarvon, R6

Dorner, Robert, Earl of Carnarvon, R6

Dorset, Countess of see Sackville, Mary

Dorset, first Earl of see Sackville, Thomas

Dorset, fourth Earl of see Sackville, Edward

Dorus (literary), Oii10

Dover, Countess of see Carey, Mary

Dover, Earl of see Carey, Henry

Drake, Francis, Sir, A12, Oii6

Drayton, Michael, iv, vii

Drummond, William, L8, Oii6

Drury, Robert, Sir, C1iii

Dudley, Robert, Earl of Leicester, A0, A12, B4, C1i, C1ii, Mii9

Dun, Daniel, Sir, C1ii

Dunbar, Earl of see Home, George

Duncombe, Edward, C1ii

Dunluc, Lord see MacDonnell, Randal

Dyott, Anthony, C1iv

E

Easter (or Ester), Mr., R5
Echo (classical), Nv10, Pii12
Edney, Francis, Mii3
Edward, the Black Prince, Nv9, Oii11
Edward II, King, B4, K1vii
Edward III, King, Nv9, Oii2
Edward VI, King, Ni2, Nv13
Effingham, Lord Howard of see Howard, William
Egerton, John, Earl of Bridgewater, K1vi
Egerton, Thomas, Lord Ellesmere, A7, A14, C1i, K1v, K1vi, Mii8, Miii1, Oi9
Eglisham, George, Oii5, Oii12, Oiii5, Pi18, Pi22, Pi24, Pi25, Pi30, Pi32, Pii4, Pii20
Eglon (biblical), Pii11
Ehud (biblical), Pii11
Eliot, John, Sir, Oi10, Oiii4, Piii9, Piii10
Eliphaz (biblical), L8
Elizabeth, Princess (Electress Palatine), K1v, N0, Ni4, Nii2, Nii5, Nv9, Nv10, Nvi1, Oi2, Oiii4, Pi15, Pii8
Elizabeth of York, B21
Elizabeth I, Queen, ix, A0, A3, A3c, A4, A7, A8, A9, A12, A13, A14, A15, A16, B0, B1, B4, B7, B8, B11, C1i, C1ii, D20, D24, I13, K1ix, Mii9, Miii1, N0, Ni2, Ni4, Niv1, Niv2, Nv13, Oi1, Oi2, Oii11, Pii8, R1, R4
Ellesmere, Lord see Egerton, Thomas
Elwes, Gervase, Sir, H0, H1, H3, H20, K1iii, K1iv
Endymion (classical), Mii9, Nv10
Epicurus (classical), Pi36
Essex, Countess of see Devereux, Frances
Essex, Countess of see Devereux, Elizabeth
Essex, second Earl of see Devereux, Robert
Essex, third Earl of see Devereux, Robert
Estcourt Giles, Sir, Oiii4
Euterpe (classical), Nv6
Eve (biblical), L8, Nii5, Pi36, Pi37
Ewens, Ralph, C1i, C1iv
Exeter, Countess of, see Cecil, Frances
Exeter, Earl of, see Cecil, Thomas
F
Fanshaw, Thomas, Sir, Q1
Fawkes, Guy, Oi10
Feilding, George, Earl of Desmond, R6
Feilding, Mary, Marchioness of Hamilton, R5, R6
Feilding, Susan (née Villiers), Countess of Denbigh, L10, R5, R6
Feilding, William, Earl of Denbigh, L10, Pi30, Pi32, R5, R6
Felltham, Owen, P0, Piii8
Felton, John, P0(section about)
Fennor, William, Nv4
Ferdinand II, King of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor, N0, Nii2, Oii2
Field, Theophilus, Oii12
Fiennes, William, Viscount Saye and Sele, R9
Finch, John, Sir, Oiii4
Finet, John, Sir, L5
Fitton, Mary, A13
Fitzpatrick, Florence (or Lawrence), Q0, Q1, Q2
Fletcher, Mr., Mii3
Flood, Robert, Sir, Mi5
Flora (classical), C1b
Ford, John, H24
Forman, Simon, H1
Fortescue, John, Sir, C1ii
Foxe, John, B2
Franklin, James, H0, H20, K1iv
Frederick V, Elector Palatine, K1v, Miii2, N0, Ni4, Nii2, Nii5, Nv9, Nv10, Nvi1, Oi1, Oi2, Oi9, Oi10, Oi17, Oii2, Oiii4, Pi15, Pi32, Pii8, R4
Fuller, Nicholas, C1i

G

Gainsford, Thomas, K1viii

Ganymede (classical), v, L0, L7, L8, N0, Nv6, Nvi3, O0, Oi2, Oiii4, Pi22

Gargrave, Richard, Sir, C1iv

Garnier, Jean, R5

Gaspar, Don, de Guzmán, Count of Olivares, Nv3, Oi1, Pi36

Gaveston, Piers, B4

Gawdie, Phillip, C1ii

Geoffrey of Monmouth, Pii8

George, St. (biblical), Oii10, Oii11

Geryon (classical), A7

Giles, Edward, Sir, Oiii4

Gill, Alexander, L8

Gloucester, Duke of see Humphrey

Goddard, William, ix

Goliath (biblical), Pii11

Gondomar, Count of see Sarmiento, Don Diego

Good, John, C1iii

Goodfellow, Robin (literary), D15

Goodwin, Francis, Sir, C1ii

Goodyer, Henry, Sir, C1i, C1iii, C1iv

Gordon, George, Marquis of Huntly, R6

Gorges, Ferdinando, Sir, B7

Goring, George, Earl of Norwich, L5, R5, R6

Goring, Mary (née Nevill), Lady, R6

Graham, Richard, Oii7, Oiii5

Grandison, Viscount see Villiers, William

Greene, Henry, Sir, Nvi3

Gregory VII, Pope, Pi35
Gregory XV, Pope, Nv14
Greville, Edward, Sir, C1i
Greville, Fulke, Lord Brooke, A13, K1vii, Miii1, R0, R1
Grey, Elizabeth (née Talbot), Countess of Kent, R6
Grey, Henry, Earl of Kent and Lord Ruthin, R6
Grey, Thomas, Lord Grey of Wilton, A8, A12, A13, B4, K1ii
Griffith, John, Oiii4
Guilpin, Everard, A0, C0

H
Hakewill, William, C1iv
Halliday, William, R6
Hamilton, James, Marquis of Hamilton, Oii5, Oii12, Oiii5, Pi24, R5, R6
Hamilton, Marchioness of see Feilding, Mary
Hanmer, Dorothy (née Trevor), R5
Hanmer, Thomas, Sir, R5
Hare, John, C1iv
Harington, John, Sir, A1, A14
Hariot, Thomas, Niii1
Harley, Robert, Sir, Oiii4
Harrington, Lucy see Russell, Lucy
Harsnett, Samuel, Oiii2
Harvey, Simon, Sir, Oi9
Hatcher, Mii3
Hatton, Christopher, Sir, A0
Hatton, Lady see Coke, Elizabeth
Haughton, Baron of see Holles, John
Hawley, James, E1
Hay, James, first Earl of Carlisle and Viscount Doncaster, Miii2, Nii3, R5
Hay, James, second Earl of Carlisle, R5
Hay, Lucy (née Percy), Oi10, R5
Haywood, Ralph, R1
Heape, John, Oii12, Pi34, Piii12
Heath, Nicholas, K1ix
Heath, Robert, Sir, Pii10, Q1
Hebe (classical), Oiii4
Heber (biblical), Pii11
Hecate (classical), Pi37
Hector (classical), Nv10, Oi11
Helen (classical), H19, Nv10
Hemminge, William, Piii7
Hemmings, W., Piii7
Henri IV, King of France, A7, A12, Oiii5, Pi36
Henrietta Maria, Queen, Mii1, Oii4, Oii7, Pii8, R5, R6
Henry V, King, Nv9, Oii2, Oii11, Oii14
Henry VI, King, A7, Oii2
Henry VII, King, B21, Niv1, Nv6, Oi11
Henry VIII, King, B21, C1ii, F7, L5, Ni2, Oii7, Pi19
Hepwith, John, vii
Hera (classical), Nv6
Heraclitus (classical), Pi37
Herbert, Anne see Dormer, Anne
Herbert, Anne (née Clifford), Countess of Pembroke, R5
Herbert, John, Sir, C1ii
Herbert, Philip, Earl of Montgomery and fourth Earl of Pembroke, E1, K1ii, R5, R6
Herbert, William, third Earl of Pembroke, A10, D23, D24, D27, K1vii
Hercules (classical), A7, K2, Nii1, Nvi3, Oii10, Oiii4, Pi36, Piii11, R8
Hereford, fourth Viscount of see Devereux, Robert
Hermes (classical), L7
Herod (biblical), D8
Herodotus (classical), Nv10, Pi25
Herrick, Robert, iv, viii
Hertford, Earl of see Seymour, Edward
Hessels, D2
Hill, Dorothy (née Beaumont), L10
Hill, John, L10
Hill, Susan see Montagu, Susan
Hitcham, Robert, Sir, C1i
Hobbinoll (literary), D1
Hoby, Edward, Sir, C1ii, C1iii
Hohenheim, Theophrastus Bombastus von see Paracelsus
Holcrofte (or Holcraft), Thomas, Sir, C1i
Holinshed, Raphael, Nvi3
Holland, Countess of see Rich, Isabel
Holland, Earl of see Rich, Henry
Holland, Hugh, C1iv
Holles, John, second Earl of Clare, H19, Oi7
Holles (or Hollis), John, Baron of Haughton and first Earl of Clare, C1ii, K2
Home, George, Earl of Dunbar, F1, H4, H5, H15, H16
Homer (classical), H17, I24, Nv10, Nv16, Pi21, Pi22, Pi31, Pi3ii2
Honthorst, Gerrit Van, Pii8
Hood, Robin (literary), D15
Horsey, Jerome, Sir, C1i
Hoskyns, Benedict, G2, G4
Hoskyns, John, iii, C0, C1i, C1iv, C1b, G0(section about), I17, Mii3
Hotham, John, Sir, Oiii4
Houghton, Richard, Sir, C1i
Howard, Alathea (née Talbot), Countess of Arundel, R6
Howard, Catherine, Countess of Suffolk, D1, D12, D17, D18, D19, D27, H2, H16, H18, K1iv, Miii2
Howard, Charles, Earl of Nottingham, A7, A8, A12, C1i, C1ii, K1vi, L0, L2, Miii1
Howard, Elizabeth, R5
Howard, Frances, Countess of Somerset, viii, ix, E6, F0(section about), H0(section about), J0, J5, K1iv, K2, Nvi1, R6
Howard, Henry, Earl of Northampton, A0, B0, B1, B2, C1iv, D0, G0(section about), K1iii, K1iv
Howard, Katherine, R5
Howard, Robert, Sir, Oi9
Howard, Theophilus, second Earl of Suffolk and second Baron Howard de Walden, K1iii
Howard, Thomas, Earl of Arundel, D2, H19, K1viii, L10, Oi5, R6
Howard, Thomas, first Earl of Suffolk, B1, D1, D12, D18, D27, F0, G3, H2, H19, K1iii, K1iv, K1vi, Miii1, Miii2
Howard, William, Lord Howard of Effingham, A7
Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, Nv3
Hungerford, Edward, Sir, C1i
Hunsdon, Lord see Carey, George
Huntly, Marquis of see Gordon, George
Hurtado, Juan, de Mendoza, Marquis of Inijosa, Oi1, Oi2
Hussgen, Johannes (or Joannes Oecolampadius), B2
Hyacinth (classical), Pi37
Hyde, Lawrence, C1ii
Hyde, Nicholas, Sir, O0, Oi12, Oi13, Pi24
Hymen (classical), K1v, Nv6
I
Icarus (classical), B4, Pi22, Pi37
Inijosa, Marquis of see Hurtado, Juan
Io (classical), Nv6
Iphigenia (classical), Pi11
Irwin, James, E2
Isabella, Archduchess, Oiii5
Iscariot, Judas (biblical), Pi34, Pi37
Isham, John, B1
Isus (classical), Piii22
Ixion (classical), Pi31
J
Jabin (biblical), Pii11
Jackson, John, Sir, Oiii4
Jacob (biblical), Pi19, R9
Jael (or Yael), Pii11
James I, King, ii, iii, v, A0, A13, A14, A15, A16, B0(section about), C0, C1i, C1ii, C1iii, C1iv, D0, D1, D17, D18, D20, E0, E4, F0, F1, F5, F7, F10, F11, G0, G2, H0, H2, H5, H10, H11, H15, H16, H18, H20, H23, I0, I24, J0, J2, J3, K1i, K1ii, K1iii, K1v, K1vii, K1viii, K1ix, K1x, K2, L0(section about), Miii1, Miii2, Miii5, N0(section about), O0, Oi1, Oi2, Oi5, Oi10, Oi11, Oi16, Oi17, Oii12, Oii4, Oii5, Pi18, Pi22, Pi24, Pi25, Pi30, Pi32, Pi36, Pi37, Pi4, Pi8, Pi20, Pii2, Pii5, Pii8, Piii10, Piii11, Piii20, R1, R4, R9
James II, King, R6
James V, King of Scotland, Nv1
James, Richard, C1iii, C1iv, Pii8
Janus (classical), Nv10
Jason (classical), Nv1, Nv6, Nv10, Oii12, Pi36
Jehova (biblical), Nv10, Pi37
Jenkin, Henry, Sir, C1i
Jewel, John, B2
Joab (biblical), Pi36
Job (biblical), L8, Mii2, Niv1
John, King, Niv1, Nvi1
John XXII, Pope, Pi35
John, Richard Edward, D15
Johnson, Robert, Sir, C1iii
Jones, Edward, C0
Jones, Inigo, C1iv, Miii2, Nv11
Jones, John, C1iii
Jones, Richard, C1iii
Jones, Robert, C1iii
Jonson, Ben, iv, vii, C1iv, E3, L8, L9, Mii2, Pii10
Jordan, Ignatius, Oiii2, Oiii3
Joseph (biblical), Pi19
Josephus, Flavius, D8
Joshua (biblical), Niv2, Pi22, Pi36
Jove (classical), A7, L3, L7, L8, Nv6, Nv16, Oiii4, Pi22, Pii10, Pii12, Pii6, Pii16, Pii17
Judah (biblical), R9
Judus (biblical), D4, I19
Juno (classical), L7, Nv6, Oiii4
Jupiter (classical), A7
Juventas (classical), Oiii4
K
K., E., I11, Oii11, Oiii8, Oiii9, Pi23, Pii19
Kel., Ed., I11
Kensington, Viscount see Rich, Henry
Kent, Countess of see Grey, Elizabeth
Kent, Earl of see Grey, Henry
Killigrew Anne see Kirke, Anne
Killigrew, Mary (née Woodhouse), R5
Killigrew, Robert, Sir, R5
King, John, H18
King, Samuel, I17
Kirke, Anne (née Killigrew), R5
Kirton, James, C1i
Knightley, Richard, Oii4
Knollys, William, Viscount Wallingford and Earl of Banbury, A13, K1vi, Mii1
Knox, John, B2
Knyvett, Thomas, Sir, C1iii
L
L’Isle-Adam, Philippe Villiers de, Piii5
Lachesis (classical), Nv16, Piii17
Lake, Mary (née Ryder), Lady, J0(section about)
Lake, Thomas, Sir, C1iv, J0(section about), K1v, K1vi, K1vii, Miii1, Miii2
Lambe, John, Mii1, O0, Oii11, Oiii5, Oiii6, Oiii7, Oiii8, Oiii9, Pi1, Pi3, Pi6, Pi16, Pi17, Pi23, Pi30, Pi31, Pi32, Pi35, Pi36, Pii3, Pii8
Latewar, Richard, A3
Laud, William, Archbishop of Canterbury, H9, Oiii2, R0, R2, R3, R7, R8
Lazarus (biblical), Oii4, Oiii4
Leda (classical), H19
Lee, John, (or Leigh) Sir, C1ii, C1iv
Leicester, Earl of see Dudley, Robert
Leicester. fourth Earl of see Beaumont, Robert de
Leigh, Mr., Mii3
Leigh, Humphrey, Mii3
Leighton, Alexander, ix, Nii6
Lennox, Duke of see Stuart, James
Lennox, Duke of see Stuart, Ludovick
Leonidas (classical), Oii14
Leslie, John, A9
Leveson, John, Sir, B16
Leveson, Richard, Sir, B16
Levi (biblical), R9
Lewis, Dr., Piii18
Lewis, William, Mii8, Mii10
Lewkenor, Lewis, Sir, C1iii
Lewkenor, Samuel, C1iii
Ley, James, Earl of Marlborough, Oi12, Oi13, Oi14
Lindsay, Countess of see Bertie, Elizabeth
Lindsay, Earl of see Bertie, Robert
Lister, Matthew, Sir, R5
Littleton, Edward, Oiii4
Littleton, Thomas, Oiii4
Long, Walter, Oiii4
Lopez, Roderigo, A7
Lot (biblical), Q2
Louis XI, King of France, Pi36
Louis XIII, King of France, Nii3, Pi36
Love, Thomas, Sir, Oi6
Lovelace, Richard, Sir, C1iii
Lower, William, Sir, C1i, C1iv
Loyola, Ignatius, Pi35
Lucan (classical), Piii17
Lud, King, Pi8
Ludlow, Henry, C0, C1i, C1iv
Luther, Martin, B2
Luynes, Duc de see Albert, Charles d’
M
MacDonnell, Randal, Lord Dunluce and Earl of Antrim, R5, R6
Machiavelli, Niccolò, A6, B5, B17, I11
Maegera (classical), Pi31
Mallory, William, K1x
Manasseh (biblical), Pi36
Manchester, first Earl of see Montagu, Henry
Mandeville, Viscount see Montagu, Henry
Manners, Elizabeth see Cecil, Elizabeth
Manners, Katherine see Villiers, Katherine
Manners, Francis, sixth Earl of Rutland, L0, L10, Miii2, Nv15
Manners, Roger, fifth Earl of Rutland, A10
Manningham, John, B1
Mansell, Robert, Sir, Miii2, Oii7, Oiii4, Pi32
Mansfelt, Ernst von, Oi1, Pi32
Manwaring, Roger, Pi36
Maria, Spanish Infanta, Miii2, N0(section about), Oi1, Piii13
Marlborough, Earl of see Ley, James
Marlowe, Christopher, Pi36
Marprelate, Martin (literary), A0, B0
Mars (classical), A12, C1b, I16, L7, Nv6, Nv10, Pi21, Piii3, Piii17
Marston, John, A0, C0, E3, Oii5, Pi3
Marten, Henry, Sir, Oiii4
Martial (classical), Q2
Martin, Richard, Sir, C0, C1i, C1iii, C1iv
Martyr, Peter see Vermigli, Piermartire
Mary, Queen of Scots, Oi11
Matthews, Toby, C1i
Maurice, William (or Morris), Sir, C1i, C1iii, C1iv
Maxwell, James, E1
Maxwell, Robert, Earl of Nithsdale, L10
May, Humphrey, C1i
May, Thomas, R6
Mayerne, Theodore de, D18
Maynard, John, Sir, L5, Oiii4
Mead, Joseph, Nv13, Nvi1, Pi10
Meautys, Edmund, Mii3
Meautys, Thomas, Mii3
Medea (classical), H17, Nv10, Pi36
Melanchthon, Philip, B2
Menelaus (classical), H19, Nv10
Mercury (classical), L7, Nv6, Nv16, Pi37, Pii8, Piii6, Piii17
Merlin (literary), Ni3, Niv2
Micah (biblical), K2
Micaiah (biblical), L8
Michell, Francis, Sir, K1viii, Mi1, Mi2
Midas (classical), B4
Middlesex, Countess, of see Cranfield, Anne
Middlesex, Earl of see Cranfield, Lionel
Middleton, Thomas, Nii1
Milliscent, John, Sir, L5
Minerva (classical), Piii6
Minos, King (classical), B4, Q2
Mohammed, Ni4
Molech (biblical), Piii11
Mompesson, Giles, Sir, K1ix, Mi1(section about), Mii5, Mii2
Momus (classical), L7
Monbodiac, Francoise de, R5
Monbodiac, Katherine see Arpe, Katherine
Monson, Thomas, Sir, C1iv, H0, H15, K1iii, K1iv, Oi9
Monson, William, Sir, H15, K1iii, K1iv
Montagu, Edward, Sir, L10
Montagu, Henry, Viscount Mandeville and first Earl of Manchester, I0, K1vii, K1ix, Miii1, Oi12, Oi13
Montagu, Susan (née Hill), L10
Montgomery, Earl of see Herbert, Philip
Moore, Francis, Sir, C1i
More, George, Sir, C1iii, C1iv, H18
More, Thomas, D16
Morley, Lord see Parker, Henry
Moses (biblical), Niv2, Pi7, Piii4
Mountague, Henry, Sir, C1i
Mounteagle, Lord see Parker, William,
Mountjoy, Lord see Blount, Charles

Murray, E1, E6

Musidorus (literary), Oii10

N

Nabal (biblical), Niv2

Nadab (biblical), Piiii9

Narcissus (classical), Nv10

Nashe, Thomas, A0

Naunton, Robert, Sir, A3c, K1vi, K1vii, Miiii1

Nebuchadnezzar (biblical), K1ii

Neile, Richard, Oii4, Oiii2

Nemesis (classical), Pi36

Neptune (classical), H18, I11, L2, L3, L4, L7, Nv2, Nv6, Nv13, Pi21, Pi32, Piiii15

Nereus (classical), Nv6

Nethersole, Francis, Sir, Oiii4

Neve (or Le Neve), Jefferie, Nv18

Nevill, Mary see Goring, Mary

Neville, Henry, Earl of Abergavenny, C1i, C1ii

Neville, Thomas, B1

Newport, Countess of see Blount, Anne

Newport, Earl of see Blount, Mountjoy

Niccols, Richard, vii

Nicholas, Edward, Oiii4

Nimrod (biblical), I2, Pi36, Pi37

Niobe (classical), G2, Niv1, Nv10, Piiii16, Piiii17

Nithsdale, Earl of see Maxwell, Robert

Noah (biblical), Miiii8, Niv1, R9

Noel, Henry, A1, A2

Norris, Elizabeth, Lady, L10

Norris, Francis, Earl of Berkshire, K1x, L10
Norris, John, Sir, A12
Northampton, Earl of see Compton, William
Northampton, Earl of see Howard, Henry
Northumberland, Earl of see Percy, Henry
Norton, Benjamin, D16
Norwich, Earl of see Goring, George
Nottingham, Earl of see Howard, Charles
Nowell, Alexander, A1
Noy, William, C1i
Noyes, John, C1i
Noyes, Peter, C1i
O
Oecolampadius, Joannes see Hussgen, Johannes
Oedipus (classical), Pi31
Oldisworth, Nicholas, H2
Olivares, Count of see Guzmán de, Don Gaspar
O’Neill, Hugh, Earl of Tyrone, A7, A12, B7
Onslow, Richard, Sir, Oiii4
Orpheus (classical), Piii5
Osborne, Francis, D1, D15, E1, E6, J1
Overbury, Nicholas, Sir, H2
Overbury, Thomas, Sir, viii, x, C1ii, C1iv, F0(section about), G0, H0(section about), K1iii, K1iv, K2, Nv10, Nv11, Oi9
Ovid (classical), Nv3, Nv16
Owen, Roger, Sir, C1ii
Oxenbridge, Robert, (the elder), Sir, C1iii
Oxenbridge, Robert, (the younger), Sir, C1iii
Oxford, eighteenth Earl of see Vere, Henry de
Oxford, nineteenth Earl of see Vere, Henry de
Oxford, seventeenth Earl of see Vere, Edward de
Paddy, William, Sir, C1iii, C1iv
Pan (classical), D1, Nv1, Nv6
Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim), Pi35
Paris (classical), H19, Nv10
Parker, Henry, Lord Morley, Nv15
Parker, John, Sir, C1iii
Parker, William, Lord Mounteagle, A10
Parsons (or Persons), Robert, A0
Pasiphae (classical), Q2
Paulet, Elizabeth see Devereux, Elizabeth
Peake, Edward, C1i
Peele, George, A7, A12
Pelagius, Oiii3
Pembroke, Countess of see Herbert, Anne
Pembroke, fourth Earl of see Herbert, Philip
Pembroke, third Earl of see Herbert, William
Perceval, John, Sir, Pii10
Percy, Dorothy (née Devereux), A16
Percy, Henry, R5
Percy, Henry, Earl of Northumberland, A16, II, K1ii
Percy, Lucy see Hay, Lucy
Peronne, Mme., R5
Perrot, James, Sir, C1iv
Phaeton (classical), B4, H15, l2, L8, Nv10, Pi22, Pi22
Phelips, Edward, Sir, C1ii, C1iv
Phelips, Robert, Sir, C1iv, K1x, Oiii4
Philaenis (classical), Q2
Philip II, King of Spain, A7, Nv7
Philip III, King of Spain, Nv13
Philip IV, King of Spain, A7, N0, Nii6, Nv3, Nv13, Nv17, Oi1, Pi36
Phillis (literary), D1
Philomela (classical), H17
Phineas (biblical), Pii11
Phoebus (classical), B4, G2, H15, H17, I2, L8, Nv4, Nv6, Nv10, Oiii2, Oiii3, Pi22, Pi37
Pickering, Lewis, B0, B11
Piggot, Christopher, C1iv
Plancy, Pierre de la, R5
Plato (classical), A7
Pleione (classical), Nv6
Plessis, Armand du, Cardinal Richelieu, Pi36
Pluto (classical), Oii4, Pi29, Pi30, Pi31, Pi32, Pi35
Poe, Leonard, D12, D18, D20
Pollux (classical), H19, L1
Pompey (classical), Piii17
Poole, Henry, Sir, C1i
Porter, Endymion, Nv10, Nv15, R5
Porter, Olive, R5
Portland, Earl of see Weston, Jerome
Pory, John, C1iv, Pii10
Priam (classical), Nv10, Oi11, Piii16, Piii22
Price, Charles, C1iii, Oiii4
Price, James, C1iii
Proserpina (classical), L7, Oii4, Pi31
Proteus (classical), Nv6
Prynne, William, Oiii2, Oiii3, R0, R8
Purbeck, Lady see Villiers, Frances
Purbeck, Viscount see Villiers, John
Pym, John, Oiii2, Oiii3
Pythagoras (classical), A7
R

R., Jo; Q2

Radcliffe, Bridget, Countess of Sussex, Miii2
Radcliffe, John, Sir, Oii9, Oii11
Radcliffe, Robert, fifth Earl of Sussex, Miii2

Ralegh, Walter, Sir, vii, A0(section about), B0, B1, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, B10, C1ii, D1, E1, E6, H9, H10, H11, I0(section about), K1ii, K1viii, N0, Niii1, Nvi1, Oi2, Oii7

Ramsay, William, E1
Ramus, Petrus, Oiii2
Rancien, Jacques, R5
Ravaillac, François, Oiii5
Reynolds, John, C0
Rhadamanthys (classical), Pi31
Rich, Charles, Sir, Oii11, Oii12
Rich, Henry, Viscount Kensington and Earl of Holland, L5, Oi10, Oi11, Oii12, Pii3, R5, R6
Rich, Isabel (née Cope), Countess of Holland, R5, R6
Rich, Penelope (née Devereux), Lady, A3, B0
Rich, Robert, Earl of Warwick, Pii3, R6
Rich, Robert, Lord Rich, B13, B14
Rich, Susan (née Rowe), Countess of Warwick, R6
Richard, Duke of York, A7
Richard I (the Lionheart), King, Piii5
Richard II, King, K1x, Mii9, Nvi3
Richard III, King, D4, D5
Richardson, Thomas, Pi24
Richelieu, Cardinal see Plessis, Armand du
Richmond, Earl of see Stuart, Ludovick
Ridgeway, Thomas, Sir, C1ii
Rochester, Viscount see Carr, Robert
Rogers, Thomas, B4
Romulus (classical), C1b
Roos, Lord see Cecil, William
Rous, John, iii, viii, Oi12, Oii13, R0
Rowe, Henry, Sir, R6
Rowe, Susan see Rich, Susan
Rubens, Peter Paul, Pii8
Russell, Edward, Earl of Bedford, A13
Russell, Lucy (née Harrington), Countess of Bedford, A13
Ruthin, Lord see Grey, Henry
Rutland, fifth Earl of see Manners, Roger
Rutland, sixth Earl of see Manners, Francis
Ryder, William, Lord Mayor of London, J2
S
Sackville, Edward, fourth Earl of Dorset, Oi10, R5, R6
Sackville, Mary, Countess of Dorset, R6
Sackville, Thomas, Baron Buckhurst and first Earl of Dorset, A14, B0, B15, B16
St. John, Barbara see Villiers, Barbara
Salisbury, first Earl of, see Cecil, Robert
Salisbury, second Earl of see Cecil, William
Samson (biblical), I21
Samuel (biblical), A6
Sandys, Edwin, Sir, C1ii
Sandys, William, Lord, A10
Sanquhar, Earl of see Crichton, Robert
Sarmiento, Don Diego, Count of Gondomar, K1ii, K1viii, N0, Niii1, Niii2, Niii3, Nv10, Nv15, Nv17, Pi36
Satan (biblical), Mii2, Pi21, Pi29, Pi30, Pi31, Pi37, Piii4
Saturn (classical), L7, Nv6, Oi1, Piii11
Saye and Sele, Viscount see Fiennes, William
Scaevola, Mucius, Pi36, Pii7, Pii18
Scory, Silvanus, I1
Scott, Thomas, B10, Niii1, Nv3
Scroope, William, Earl of Wiltshire, Nvi3
Scudamore, John, Viscount Sligo, Oiii4
Selden, John, Oiii4
Seymour, Dorothy, R5
Seymour, Edward, sixth Duke of Somerset, H11
Seymour, Edward, Earl of Hertford, H11
Seymour, William, K1v
Shakespeare, William, H2
Sharpe, Lionel, G0(section about)
Sheldon, Elizabeth, L10
Sheldon, Philippa see Ashley, Philippa
Sheldon, Richard, Sir, Q1
Shirley, James, P0, Piii2
Shirley, Thomas (the elder), Sir, C1ii
Shirley, Thomas (the younger), Sir, C1ii
Shrewsbury, Countess of see Cavendish, Mary
Sibthorpe, Robert, Pi36
Sidney, Philip, Sir, A12, B2, Nv16
Sinon (classical), Nv10, Pi36
Sisera (biblical), Pii11
Sisyphus (classical), Pi31
Skipwith, Henry, Q2
Sligo, Viscount see Scudamore, John
Smith, James, Oiii5, Pii12
Smith, William, Sir, H16
Solomon (biblical), Oiii2, Pi36
Somerset, Countess of see Howard, Frances
Somerset, Earl of, see Carr, Robert
Somerset, Edward, fourth Earl of Worcester, K1vi, Miii1
Somerset, first Duke of see Beaufort, John
Somerset, second Duke of see Beaufort, Edmund
Somerset, sixth Duke of see Seymour, Edward
Southampton, Earl of see Wriothesley, Henry
Spanish Infanta see Maria
Spencer, Hugh, (the elder) Earl of Winchester, K1vii
Spencer, Thomas, Oiii2
Spenser, Edmund, iii, vii, A7, A8, D16, Nv16
Spenser (or Despenser), Hugh, the elder, B4
Spenser (or Despenser), Hugh, the younger, B4
Spinola, Ambrosio, Miii2, N0
Stanley, Anne see Touchet, Anne
Stanley, William, Earl of Derby, A8, Q0
Stephen of Blois, King, Nii3
Stow, John, Nv18
Strafford, Earl of see Wentworth, Thomas
Strowde, William, Sir, C1iv
Stuart, Arabella, B0, B4, C1ii, K1ii, K1v
Stuart, Frances see Weston, Frances
Stuart, George, Lord, Seigneur d’Aubigny, R5
Stuart, Henry, Prince, G1, H10, Ni4, Niv1, Nv10
Stuart, James, Duke of Lennox, R5
Stuart, Ludovick, Duke of Lennox and Earl of Richmond, E6, Oiii5, Pi24
Stubbes, John, A9
Stukeley, Lewis, I0, I10, I18, I19
Stuteveille, Martin, Sir, Nvi1
Suffolk, Countess of see Howard, Catherine
Suffolk, Duke of, see Brandon, Charles
Suffolk, first Earl of see Howard, Thomas
Suffolk, second Earl of see Howard, Theophilus
Susanna (biblical), K1ix
Sussex, Countess of see Radcliffe, Bridget
Sussex, fifth Earl of see Radcliffe, Robert
T
T., A., Mr., Pi17
Talbot, Alathea see Howard, Alathea
Talbot, Elizabeth see Grey, Elizabeth
Tamburlaine (literary), Pi36
Tantalus (classical), Pi31
Taranis (classical), Pi11
Taylor, John, Nv4
Temple, Jane, R5
Thersites (classical), Nv10
Theseus (classical), B4
Thetis (classical), L7, Nv6, Nv10
Thomas, Baron Coventry
Thr[ockmorton], A[thur], Sir, I13
Throckmorton, Elizabeth, A3, A7
Throckmorton, John, C1i
Tiberius (classical), Mi2, Oii11
Tolderrey, Christopher, C1iv
Tomyris (classical), Pi25
Touchet, Anne (née Stanley), Countess of Castlehaven, Q0, Q1, Q2, Q3, Q6, Q7
Touchet, James, Baron Audley, Q1, Q2
Touchet, Mervin, second Earl of Castlehaven, Q0(section about), R0
Townshend, John, Sir, C1iii
Townley, Zouch, Pi10
Tresham, Thomas, Sir, B3
Tressilian, Robert, Sir, Mi9
Trevor, Dorothy see Hanmer, Dorothy
Trevor, John, Sir, C1i
Trumbull, William, D2, E1
Tudor, Mary, Queen, Nv7, Nv17
Tudor, Mary, Queen of France, F7
Turner, Anne, H0, H1, H2, H3, H20, J0, K1iv
Turner, John, E1, E2
Turner, Samuel, Oi10
Tyndareus (classical), H19
Tyrone, Earl of see O’Neill, Hugh
U
Ulysses (classical), Nv10, Piii16
Uriah (biblical), Niv2
Ursinus see Beer, Zacharias
Uvedale, William, Sir, R6
V
Valentine, Benjamin, Oiii4
Vantelet, Madame de, R5
Venus (classical), F6, H3, L7, Nv6, Oii12, Pi21, Piii17, R5
Vere, Edward de, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, C1i
Vere, Henry de, eighteenth Earl of Oxford, Nii1, Nv10, Oiii5, Pi32
Vere, Henry de, nineteenth Earl of Oxford, L10, Miii2
Vere, Horace, Sir, Miii2, Nii1
Vermigli, Piermartire (or Peter Martyr), B2
Verstegan, Richard, A0
Villiers, Barbara (née St John), L10
Villiers, Christopher, Earl of Anglesey, L1, L10, Miii2
Villiers, Edward, Sir, L10
Villiers, Elizabeth see Boteler, Elizabeth
Villiers, Frances, (née Coke), Lady Purbeck, Miii2, Oi9
Villiers, Francis, Piii18, Piii18, Piii19
Villiers, George, Duke of Buckingham, v, viii, x, xiii, H0, I2, K1v, K1vi, K1vii, K1viii, L0 (section about), Mi1, Mii3, Mii9, Miii1, Miii2, N0(section about), O0(section about), P0 (section about), R0, R4, R5, R6
Villiers, John, Viscount Purbeck, K1v, L1, Miii2, Oi9, Oiii1
Villiers, Katherine (née Manners), Duchess of Buckingham, L0, L10, Miii2, Nv18, Oii4, Oii8, Pi19, Piii17, Piii19, Piii20, Piii22, R5, R6
Villiers, Mary see Compton, Mary
Villiers, Susan see Feilding, Susan
Villiers, William, Viscount Grandison, R5
Virgil (classical), I2, Nv17, Oi1, Piii16
Vitry, Captain, Oiii5
Vulcan (classical), I11, L7, Nv6, Pi37
W
Waad, William, Sir, C1ii, C1iv
Walden, second Baron de see Howard, Theophilus
Wallingford, Viscount see Knollys, William
Walsingham, Audrey, Lady, D1, D12, D18, D19
Walsingham, Thomas, Sir, D1, D12, D18
Wandesford, Christopher, Oiii4
Ward, John, F4
Warwick, Countess of see Rich, Susan
Warwick, Earl of see Rich, Robert
Watson, Thomas, F9
Wentworth, John, Sir, Miii2
Wentworth, Thomas, Earl of Strafford, Oiii4, R0, R8
Weston, Frances (née Stuart), R6
Weston, Jerome, Earl of Portland, R6
Weston, Richard, H0, H1, H3, H20, H26, K1iv
Weston, Richard, Sir, Miii1, Oiii15
Whitaker, Lawrence, Oiii4
Whitaker, William, B2
White, John, B10
Whiteway, William, viii, I23, Oi15
Whitgift, John, Archbishop of Canterbury, A0, B0, B1, B11, E5, E6
Williams, Abraham, E1
Williams, John, K1ix, L10, Miii3, Ni2, Oi9
Willoughby, George, Pi1
Wilton, Lord Grey of see Grey, Thomas
Wiltshire, Earl of see Scroope, William
Wimbledon, Countess of see Cecil, Sophia
Wimbledon, Viscount see Cecil, Edward
Winchester, Earl of see Spencer, Hugh
Windsor, Catherine, Lady Windsor, Oiii9
Windsor, Thomas, Lord Windsor, Nv15, Oiii9
Wingfield, Robert, Sir, C1ii
Winwood, Ralph, Sir, K1vi, K1vii, Miii1
Wither, George, vii
Wood, Roger, C1iv
Woodhouse, Mary see Killigrew, Mary
Worcester, fourth Earl of see Somerset, Edward
Wray, Edward, L10
Wren, Matthew, Bishop of Norwich, R8
Wriothesley, Henry, Earl of Southampton, A8, A10, A13, Oiii5, Pi24, Pi32
Wriothesley, James, Pi24
Wymark, Edward, C1ii
X
Xantippus (classical), Piii1
Xerxes, King of Persia (classical), Nv10, Oii14
Y
Yelverton, Henry, Sir, K1vii, Mii1, Miii2
Yonge, John, Sir, C1iii
Yonge, Walter, Oi12, Oiii2, Oiii3, Pii3
York, Duke of see Richard
Young, John, Mii3
Younge, Richard, C1iii
Z
Zebedee (biblical), Nv3, Nv4
Zophar (biblical), L8
Zouch, Sophia see Cecil, Sophia
Zouche, Edward, Sir, L5
Zwingli, Huldrych, B2
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