

LUCY COUNTESS OF BEDFORD, JONSON, AND DONNE

LUCY COUNTESS OF BEDFORD, JONSON, AND DONNE

BY

JENNIFER REYNOLDS TAYLOR, M.A.

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AUTHOR: Jennifer Reynolds Taylor, B.A. (McMaster University)  
M.A. (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: A.W. Brink

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## ABSTRACT

This study presents a biography of Lucy Harington Russell, Countess of Bedford (1581-1627) and a study of her influence on the poets for whom she was patron and friend.

The biography of Lady Bedford in Chapter I includes a character study of her husband, a comment on Lady Bedford's supposed puritanism, and a review of the Bedford finances. Although there is an unfortunate scarcity of information about Lady Bedford's life in the years she was most influential as a literary patron, her life after 1612 is well documented. In particular, thirty-six surviving letters reveal her interests and activities, and her mature character: these are examined in the text of this study, and reproduced in full in Appendix II.

Chapter II presents a preliminary study of Lady Bedford as a literary patron. It begins with a brief general comment on patronage in the Jacobean era and a sketch of Lady Bedford's education. Lady Bedford's relationships with Drayton, Florio and Daniel are then outlined, and important works examined. The chapter concludes with a brief comment on Lady Bedford's life at Twickenham, and an outline of the suggested composition of her Twickenham circle.



The third chapter is a detailed study of Lady Bedford's relationship with Ben Jonson. Jonson's poems address the Countess as an ideal lady-muse. That figure is then embodied in the character of Arete in Cynthia's Revels, and in the masque figures whom Lady Bedford impersonated. One episode in the social life of the Twickenham circle, the supposed immorality of Cecilia Bulstrode, is examined in detail as background for the suggestion that the "Ladies Collegiates" in Epicoene reflect a disillusioned view of the Twickenham circle.

Chapter IV examines Donne's "poems of transition", the poems written in the years 1606-1613: they reflect a crisis in Donne's inner life and his intimate association with Lady Bedford. This examination provides a literary background for the study of their relationship. The poems are considered as personal statements which reflect a fundamental reorganization of Donne's deepest self, as he exchanged devotion to his secular ideal, the pseudo-religion of love and the idealized female figure, for devotion to God.

The fifth chapter is a detailed study of Lady Bedford's relationship with Donne. It includes close examination of Donne's letters and verse letters, and of the two poems thought to be about Lady Bedford, "Twickenham Garden" and "A Nocturnal Upon S. Lucies Day". Lady Bedford was an important figure in Donne's life in the years of transition: each of the stages of their relationship--love of the adored woman, rejection and loss, idealization, deepening seriousness, religious redirection--are considered.

Lady Bedford's relationships with poets followed a pattern: her interest, their praise; her disinterest or rejection, their attack, either allegorical or direct. When events in the Twickenham circle led Jonson to believe Lady Bedford no longer approximated his ideal, his disillusion influenced him to write more pointedly topical satire in a recognizable London setting. Donne's personal relationship with Lady Bedford reflected the development of his inner self in the years of transition. Thus, though Lady Bedford was influential in the social and political life of her time, her greatest importance was as an imperfect but compelling embodiment of an imaginative ideal.

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I finished this dissertation in memory of my mother, Florence Mary Reynolds Taylor, who believed but did not live to see.

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## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between poet and patron, and the possible emotional and psychological reverberations of that relationship reflected in the poet's works, constitute a fascinating but difficult subject. When we admit that our knowledge of outward events in the lives of our contemporaries is fragmentary and our understanding of their inner lives at best sympathetic speculation, the task of reconstructing such a relationship after 370 years seems formidable if not impossible. For the literary scholar, it may seem a rash undertaking, but it can be a productive and rewarding one.

Although Donne is the first figure in the English literary tradition of whom a reasonably full biography can be written -- and R. C. Bald made an admirable attempt<sup>1</sup>--there are still periods of Donne's life about which we know very little. Perhaps the most fascinating is the decade preceding his ordination early in 1615. What happened between the first years of his marriage and the accompanying collapse of his worldly career, and his final decision to enter the church? What can we learn of Donne's inner life in those years of distress and doubt? Of what importance was Lady Bedford, his friend and patron, who figures so prominently in his life and letters in that period?

In this study, I approach these questions from several angles. I offer first a biography of Lady Bedford, to provide a detailed character study, an idea of who and what she was. Chapter Two presents a study of patronage in the early Jacobean era, focussed on Lady Bedford and her relationships with poets other than Donne, to provide a social and historical background for a study of their particular relationship. In Chapter Three we shall examine Lady Bedford's relationship with Ben Jonson, an interesting secondary study which provides an illuminating comparison. The fourth chapter presents a detailed examination of Donne's poetry in this period, especially poems addressed to Lady Bedford or thought to be about their relationship, combined with a commentary on that relationship itself in the final chapter. Thus this study combines elements of biography, social history, and literary criticism. It also combines, I hope judiciously, research, interpretation and speculation.

As with any investigation, I proceeded from an original hypothesis based on an interpretation--an inchoate conviction that Lady Bedford was a centrally important figure in Donne's life in the years 1606-1615, a period I came to call his years of transition. My original work, in my M.A. thesis, concerned one aspect of Donne's inner life in those years, his struggle to establish a sustaining personal relationship with God the Father.<sup>2</sup> Some of that work is reflected here in the discussion of the early divine poems and the Holy Sonnets in Chapter IV. In that earlier study, I also outlined another aspect, Donne's relationship to an idealized female figure

embodied in or for a time identified with Lady Bedford. It was this second aspect I determined to pursue here.

Anyone proposing to write an essentially biographical study of Donne must reckon with the caveat expressed by R. C. Bald in his introductory statement "On writing the life of Donne": "Though there are some of Donne's poems which have an unquestioned biographical significance [the verse letters], this is by no means true in the same sense of all of them. Too many attempts have been made to extract autobiography from the love poems." Such attempts he denounced as adventures into a critical "quagmire". Moreover, Bald distinguished between attempts to relate the love poems to biographical particulars "in the absence of all external or internal evidence", and attempts to interpret the divine poems in terms of Donne's inner life, for there "the attitudes of mind become the sole significant factor". However, he used the same phrase in stressing that in the Songs and Sonnets "the states and attitudes of mind revealed are more significant than the name of any woman".<sup>3</sup> There seems to be a distinction here between biographical criticism and art-directed interpretation. Yet Bald himself engaged, if warily, in the effort to connect specific poems to persons or events in Donne's life: for example, he did not avoid relating "Twickenham Garden" and "A Nocturnal" to Lady Bedford. Thus, though his precept rightly warned of the dangers, Bald's practice acknowledged the significance of Donne's poems, both secular and divine, for an understanding of Donne's inner life.

Other notable scholars have taken a more positive view. Donne's first modern biographer, Augustus Jessopp, defended the value

of biography itself: "We cannot hope to estimate rightly the life-story of either the obscure or the most eminent in their generation, till we know something of the days in which they lived, the events in which they took part, the people with whom they were brought into contact, or the influences that were exercised upon them during their career."<sup>4</sup> More generally, L. C. Knights defended "historical and sociological study that is permeated by a sense of human values" by affirming that "it deepens our insight into the intimate dependence of individual growth on factors outside the individual."<sup>5</sup> In reaffirming the relevance of stylistics to the understanding of seventeenth-century poetry and prose, Joan Webber rejected the current tendency "to discount the creative influence that life and art can have upon each other" and referred to that "belief in an essential interplay between life and art" which was a Renaissance commonplace.<sup>6</sup> Ms. Webber's description of the essential characteristics of Donne's prose style, in her study of "the self-conscious first person singular" in seventeenth-century works of prose non-fiction, seems to apply equally well to his poetic voice: "Donne's prose is analytical, psychological, subjective, meditative, private, self-centered, and literary. The 'I' tends to make himself the center of things, the object of contemplation. He both insists upon and denies an audience. He rejects the opportunity to justify his writing in utilitarian terms. He is ambiguous, elusive, highly self-conscious, and creates his own reality. [ He is ] constantly turning himself and experience into art. . . ."<sup>7</sup> Using remarkably similar terms, L. I. Bredvold affirmed not only the validity but the necessity of biographical criticism in Donne studies:



. . . his purpose was to express his inner self, his moods, whims, emotions, aspirations in their infinite complexity and subtlety. He was a 'psychological' poet in the sense that he found his poetical material in his own experience; . . . Donne cannot be explained by any mere systematization of his ideas. His riddle must be read by a sympathetic appreciation of his personality, his greed for knowledge and experience, his difficulties, disappointments and dissatisfactions, and the increasing depth and intensity of his religious feelings; the final study of Donne must be biographical.<sup>8</sup>

The danger of a critical approach which is biographical and psychological is that the result may reduce and oversimplify the subject of the investigation. Yet it seems to me that the attempt to define what it was in personal terms that Donne sought in relationship with woman or with God, as that search is reflected in his poetry, is not an end to critical study but a beginning. To investigate the interrelation of Donne's life and work in a particular period seems a valuable approach to understanding not only the thing made but the maker in all his fascinating complexity. To even a new reader, what is most impressive about Donne's poetry is the power of the speaking presence. I feel there is considerable interest and perhaps some contribution to be made to Donne studies in an attempt to elucidate the personal experience from which that intense poetic presence speaks.

It seemed necessary first of all to 'see Donne whole', to attempt an explanation of my view of Donne's life and work which would provide a general context framing the centrally important years of transition. While it is somewhat simplistic to present Donne's life and work as a series of attitudes or states of mind reflected in his poetry, yet it is possible to speak of his overall life-development

in the broadest terms, as a movement from early non-attachment, at once philosophical, religious, and emotional, through attachment to woman and his secular ideals and the subsequent failure of that attachment to be life-sustaining, to a final attachment to God the Father. In general this development can be characterized as a search for self-completion. The attempt to understand that search thus becomes an effort to define the continuity of a single personality shaped in the years of transition by intense personal anxiety.

The poems written in that period, 1606-1613, reflect this transition from devotion to woman toward devotion to God. It is difficult to discuss "devotion to woman" in the abstract. It seemed best to try to elucidate Donne's disillusion, first with mutuality in love and then with the idealized female figure, in terms of an actual relationship. There are grounds for making Lady Bedford the focus for such a discussion: a lady of beauty, intelligence, great wealth and noble status, she was a figure easily idealized. It is not absurd to see her as filling a crucial role in the transition Donne accomplished from devotion to secular ideals to devotion to God. Yet it is rather more essential to identify her as a probable source of Donne's feelings of rejection, and their relationship as productive of his disillusion. That disillusion reinforced Donne's redirection of his inner life toward religious devotion and a personal relationship with God.

Something of my methods of procedure in this dissertation should be noted here. Very early in my work, in consultation with my supervisor, I decided not to attempt original historical research, but to rely on available printed sources. At most I could have spared a year,

and the chance of finding new facts which would substantially alter our view of Lady Bedford seemed slight. Moreover, though the dissertation may seem weighted in another direction, my primary interest was literary and interpretive. Therefore, I am more than usually indebted to earlier scholars; to an extent, mine has been a task of comparing, ordering and re-ordering. My particular debts include two earlier theses which I used extensively as bibliographies and guides, particularly in Chapters One and Two: Raymond W. Short, "The Patronage of Poetry under James I" (Cornell, 1936) and Florence H. Morgan "A Biography of Lucy Countess of Bedford, The Last Great Literary Patroness" (University of Southern California, 1956). I have relied heavily on the work of established scholars and earlier biographers, even when I have disagreed with their conclusions. With regard to Drayton, Florio and Daniel, my particular debts are chronicled in footnote references. For Jonson, the major source was of course the monumental work of Herford and Simpson.<sup>9</sup> Donne studies are more fully populated, and my indebtedness more wide-reaching; there have been three modern biographies, and two important editions. Jessopp admitted he had "never been able to feel much enthusiasm for Donne as a poet"--he was more interested in Donne as a religious leader--and after fifty years of collecting material, he resigned the biographical task to Edmund Gosse, whom he felt had "shown such subtile [sic] sympathy with his poetic genius".<sup>10</sup> R. C. Bald later acknowledged "the learning and acumen" Gosse brought to the task of editing Donne's letters, but with justice criticized his many inaccuracies.<sup>11</sup> In the important Oxford editions of Donne, Gardner and Milgate did not so much supplant

Grierson as amend him.<sup>12</sup>

Though Bald, Gardner and Milgate are most accurate in factual and textual matters, their vision seems limited. For the facts, I considered them authoritative, but for a human sense of what Donne was, for a sympathetic understanding of his personality, it was to Gosse and Grierson I returned. My interest in this period in Donne's life really began with Gosse's discussion of Donne's difficulties and distress;<sup>13</sup> Grierson's commentary on the "Nocturnal" first aroused my interest in Lady Bedford. In my preference for these earlier views, I do not wish to denigrate the valuable work of Bald, Gardner and Milgate-- I am extensively indebted to them-- but to suggest that it is time to redress the imaginative balance. It is my hope that this study combines the best of both styles, that it is accurate in prove-able fact, judicious in interpretation, and sensitive in its response to the human situation.

## FOOTNOTES

## (INTRODUCTION)

<sup>1</sup> John Donne--A Life (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970). The title reflects Bald's characteristic modesty--a life.

<sup>2</sup> "John Donne: The Mitcham Years, 1606-11", unpublished M.A. Thesis, McMaster University, 1974.

<sup>3</sup> Bald, pp. 5, 9, 10.

<sup>4</sup> John Donne, Sometime Dean of St. Paul's (London: Methuen and Co., 1897), p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> "On the Social Background of Metaphysical Poetry", Scrutiny, XIII (Spring 1945), 38-39.

<sup>6</sup> "Stylistics: A Bridging of Life and Art in Seventeenth-Century Studies", New Literary History, II (1970-71), 283, 296.

<sup>7</sup> The Eloquent "I": Style and Self in Seventeenth-Century Prose (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), p. 51. This study, though not directly helpful in interpreting the poems, did influence my general understanding of Donne's personality and style. Another interesting study in this vein is Stephen J. Greenblatt, Sir Walter Raleigh: The Renaissance Man and His Roles (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973). Greenblatt's comments on Raleigh's letters might almost apply to Donne:

Raleigh's letters, like his actions, reveal a man for whom self-dramatization was a primary response to crisis . . . The letters display an intense histrionic sensibility constantly striving for a moving presentation of the self. [They also display] the dangers of the histrionic sensibility: self-indulgence, self-pity, posturing. (pp. 22-23)

<sup>8</sup> "The Religious Thought of Donne in Relation to Medieval and Later Traditions", in Studies in Shakespeare, Milton and Donne U. of Michigan Publications, Language and Literature, No. I (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925), pp. 232, 196.

<sup>9</sup> Ben Jonson, C. H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, eds. 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-1954).

<sup>10</sup> John Donne, Sometime Dean of St. Paul's, p. viii.

<sup>11</sup> Bald, p. 18.

<sup>12</sup> The Poems of John Donne, ed. H. J. C. Grierson, 2 vols.  
(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912).

The Divine Poems, ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford: Clarendon Press,  
1952).

The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets, ed., Helen Gardner (Oxford:  
Clarendon Press, 1965).

The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters, ed. W. Milgate (Oxford:  
Clarendon Press, 1967).

<sup>13</sup> The Life and Letters of John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's,  
2 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1899).

## CHAPTER ONE: LUCY, COUNTESS OF BEDFORD, 1581-1627

### 1581-1594 Family Background

The two most important events of Lucy Harington's early life are recorded in the parish register of St. Dunstan's, Stepney. There she was christened on 26 January 1581<sup>1</sup> and there on 12 December 1594 she married Edward Russell, 3rd Earl of Bedford.<sup>2</sup>

For most of her childhood, the family home was probably Combe Abbey near Coventry or the Harington residence at Mile End, Stepney, though there was also a house in London (near Bishopsgate). Both her sister Frances, born in 1587, and her brother John, born in 1592, were also christened at St. Dunstan's.<sup>3</sup>

The Haringtons, though not of the first rank of great nobility, were a prominent family. Camden traced their descent from the Bruces of Scotland.<sup>4</sup> Among the relatives were several connected with literature and patronage: Lucy was perhaps named for Lucy Sidney (aunt of Sir Philip), wife of her paternal grandfather Sir James; Robert Sidney, Viscount deLisle and Earl of Leicester (brother of Sir Philip), became her close friend; Sir James Harington, author of Oceana, was a second cousin (grandson of her uncle Sir James); Sir John Harington, translator of Ariosto, was a distant relation and a friend of her father.

John Harington, Lucy's father, was born at Exton in 1540,<sup>5</sup> the eldest son of Sir James and Lucy Sidney. When his parents died in

1592, Exton Manor (Rutland) and nearby Harington-Burley (Burley-on-the-hill) came into his possession; however, by that date, his principal residence was at Combe Abbey near Coventry, which came to him through his wife, Anne Kelway.<sup>6</sup> John Harington took an active part in local life in Rutland: he was member of parliament four times, and High Sheriff for four yearly terms.<sup>7</sup> After journeying to meet the new king in the North, he was knighted on 21 July 1603, at the suggestion of Robert Cecil, a neighbour in Rutland. He is characterized as a "conscientious and high-minded nobleman."<sup>8</sup> This personal character may have been one factor in King James' choice of Harington as a suitable guardian for Princess Elizabeth. He was created Baron Harington of Exton in 1603 and died in 1613.

Lady Anne Harington, Lucy's mother, was the only child of Robert Kelway; he held various minor positions in government, the most important being Surveyor of the Court of Wards and Liveries.<sup>9</sup> Anne Kelway was at one time a maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth.<sup>10</sup> She had four children: the eldest, Kelway, died in infancy 2 Dec. 1570;<sup>11</sup> Lucy; Frances, christened 6 Oct. 1587; and John, christened 3 May 1592.<sup>12</sup> Lady Harington became more prominent in her own right in the last years of her life. When Lord Harington died in 1613, he left her in financial difficulty: King James still owed them a considerable amount for the Princess Elizabeth's expenses. When some of her financial troubles were settled, at the end of 1616, Lady Harington left England to be first Lady of honour to the Princess at Heidelberg. Chamberlain's letters record the on-again off-again arrangements, and refer to Lady Harington disparagingly as an ambitious woman. However, Sir Albertus



Morton, the head of the Princess' household, referred to Lady Harington as "good and noble"; he "rejoices" in her "wisdom", and is aided in his duties by her "authority"; he felt she was "fit to manage matters of greater consequence."<sup>13</sup> In May 1619, Lady Harington returned to England; she died in 1620.

The Haringtons' son and heir, John, became prominent as a young man as a close friend of Prince Henry, who was two years younger. In January 1605, with Cecil's son and Prince Charles, John became a Knight of the Bath.<sup>14</sup> Young Harington travelled in Europe in 1609, and wrote letters in Latin to the Prince containing his observations.<sup>15</sup> In Venice, Wotton received letters from Cecil recommending the young man as "a great personage", stressing the prominence his family then enjoyed at court, and noting Cecil's own friendship with the Haringtons. In a speech to the Doge, Wotton conveyed the general sense of young Harington's future: "Being the right eye of the Prince of Wales, the world holds that he will one day govern the kingdom."<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately, like his royal friend, John Harington died prematurely, in 1614.

The third surviving child, Frances, was born in 1587. She married Sir Robert Chichester. Little is known of her life, though she was at court with Lady Bedford at least once: in January 1608, Lady Chichester participated in Jonson's Masque of Beauty.<sup>17</sup> She died in 1615, leaving one child, Anne, for whom Lady Bedford tried to arrange a suitable marriage.

Of Lucy Harington's childhood, little is known. What can be discovered about her education will be discussed in the following chapter. Of her domestic training, her preparation to manage a large

household, even less is known; her later life-style suggests it stressed prodigality rather than practicality.

Whatever the education and training, the finished product must have been impressive. The Haringtons, a locally prominent family, with considerable landed wealth, produced a son who became the close friend of the idealized Prince Henry; his elder sister, the young Lady Bedford, was sufficiently accomplished to impress the new king and queen in 1603. Perhaps she herself was one reason King James chose the Haringtons as guardians for the Princess Elizabeth: mindful of his own unhappiness as a child, he provided for his only surviving daughter an environment which was cultured and pleasure-loving as well as staunchly Protestant.

#### 1594-1603 Marriage and the Earl

Lucy Harington's marriage to Edward Russell must have seemed an auspicious match. The rather serious Edward of great name, great wealth, and genuine Protestant conviction; the lively Lucy of respectable family, moderate wealth and some court connections: he provided the title, she the style appropriate to it. Whatever the nature of their personal relationship, the marriage lasted thirty-three years. Was this only an aristocratic facade, a necessary compliance with the moral and social strictures of the time? Or was there, perhaps, an actual affinity between them, only vaguely recognized in youth, which increased in later years? A consideration of what is known of the Earl will contribute to an understanding of the apparently solid basis of their marriage; that in turn will contribute to our understanding

of Lady Bedford.

Born in 1574,<sup>18</sup> Edward Russell succeeded to the Bedford title in July-August 1585, when his father predeceased his grandfather by one day. Edward's great-grandfather John had been a great favourite of Henry VIII, and had held a succession of important posts--comptroller of the royal household, privy councillor, lord high admiral, and in 1542 lord privy seal. He amassed the core of the family landholdings, and was created Earl of Bedford in 1550, after suppressing the western rebellion.<sup>19</sup> With the two Dudley brothers Leicester and Warwick, who were his relatives by marriage, and Huntingdon, the 1st Earl has been identified as an early Puritan: a religious enthusiast, he was in close intellectual touch with continental reformers.<sup>20</sup> The 2nd Earl, Francis, Edward's grandfather, in addition to being a renowned military man, was "the express pattern of true piety and nobleness" according to Camden.<sup>21</sup> "An Elizabethan Puritan", he possessed a substantial library, with emphasis on books of theological interest.<sup>22</sup> This religious heritage would appeal to the staunchly Protestant Sir John Harington. After 1553 Francis held a number of important positions--lord warden of the Stannaries, privy councillor, governor of Berwick. He represented Queen Elizabeth in diplomatic negotiations with Mary Queen of Scots and stood proxy for Elizabeth at the baptism of James in Dec. 1566.<sup>23</sup> As early as 1560, Francis Russell held land in Rutland near Exton, and had business dealings with Sir James Harington, Lucy's grandfather;<sup>24</sup> this may indicate a lengthy acquaintance between the families. The Bedford-Harington alliance was thus attractive to both parties for financial, social and religious reasons.

Leicester, Warwick and his Countess, and Lord Burghley were all involved in Edward Russell's up-bringing.<sup>25</sup> The young Earl was in poor health for much of his childhood. Wiffen, who identified Edward's aunt Lady Warwick as principal guardian, speculated:

it may be questioned whether a woman's guardianship was not, on the whole, unfavourable to the youthful Earl of Bedford; and whether, had it been committed to Sir William Russell, or to any other personage conversant as well with the camp as with the court, he would not have given proofs of a more vigorous and active spirit.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps Edward inherited the family religious and intellectual qualities, but lacked military or political ambition. It does seem that Edward Russell was of a quiet 'country' disposition in youth and in later life: the years of his young manhood, 1590-1602, formed an unusually active and public period in his life.

After 1590, when Edward Russell reached age 16, his guardians began to consider marriage alliances: Lucy Harington was, apparently, the fourth choice. In 1591, the Countess of Warwick (a Russell aunt) approved a match between Edward and Lady Vere.<sup>27</sup> The following year, the young Earl pursued Katharine Bridges, one of the co-heiresses of Lord Chandos;<sup>28</sup> she later married his cousin Francis (who became the 4th Earl). Perhaps in disappointment, Edward obtained a license to travel,<sup>29</sup> and apparently distinguished himself at the siege of Stenwick--<sup>30</sup> his first recorded public action. In 1594, a third prospect, Lady Bridget Manners, refused either Southampton or Bedford because "they be so yonge and fantastycall and would be so carryed away".<sup>31</sup>

When thirteen-year-old Lucy married twenty-year-old Edward, her dowry consisted of Minster Lovell in Oxfordshire (from the Kelway property) and £3,000.<sup>32</sup> The young Earl held numerous small properties

and five major ones: Bedford House, on the north side of the Strand next to Exeter House, which had been completely reconstructed during his minority;<sup>33</sup> Chiswick and Cheyneys in Buckinghamshire, the country homes where Edward most often lived; Bedford House in Exeter; and Woburn Abbey. Russell House, on the south side of the Strand, had passed to the widow of the 2nd Earl and been sold.<sup>34</sup>

Between his marriage in 1594 and the Essex rebellion in 1601, little is known of the Earl of Bedford. On 17 Nov. 1595 he ran at tilt on the Queen's day, celebrating the beginning of the 38th year of the reign.<sup>35</sup> On 13 April 1597 he bore the sword before Elizabeth in Garter ceremonies at Whitehall.<sup>36</sup> Such appearances indicate that the Earl took his expected part in court life; his lady, as we shall see, was much more active.

The extent of Edward Russell's participation in the Essex rebellion is unclear, but it had serious consequences for him. His letter to the Privy Council gives his own version of his part:

Edward, Earl of Bedford, To the Lords of the Council:  
with a Declaration how he did demean himself on Sunday,  
the 8th. of February, 1601.

From Alderman Holyday's House, Feb. 14.

It was after ten o'clock, prayers and sermon begun, that the Lady Rich came to my house, and told me that the Earl of Essex desired to speak with me; upon which I went with her in her coach, none of the family following me out of the sermon-room, and I going unknown to my family. About eleven o'clock I came to Essex House, where, shortly after, the Earl of Essex with others of his company, drew themselves into secret conference, whereto I was not called, nor made acquainted with any thing, but only of some danger which the Earl of Essex said he was in, by the practice of some private enemies. Howbeit I, doubting that that course tended to some ill, and the rather suspecting it for that I saw not my uncle

Sir William Russell there, presently desired to convey myself away; and for that purpose withdrew myself so far, that I neither heard any thing of the Earl of Essex's consultation, nor yet of the speeches with the lords of the council. From that time I endeavoured to come from the Earl of Essex so far as I might with safety; and to that end severed myself from him at a cross-street end; and, taking water, before I heard any proclamation, came back to my house about one o'clock; where I made no delay, but with all convenient speed put myself and followers in readiness; and with the best strength I could then presently make, being about the number of twenty horse, I went toward the court for her majesty's service.<sup>37</sup>

There are at least two other versions. According to the first, he followed Essex as one of a crowd of people, and was drawn away from the crowd by acquaintances, who carried him away by water. According to the second, perhaps a variant of the first, his acquaintances, finding him in the group following Essex, entreated him to leave but later lost sight of him.<sup>38</sup> What is clear in all three versions is young Bedford's confusion, and his susceptibility to the influence of friends--first to join, then to leave. He was young, easily led, unsure of himself, uncertain of his convictions or lacking the courage to pursue them, inexperienced in court intrigue, and unaware of the seriousness of the action and its possible consequences. When that awareness dawned, he did the cowardly but understandable thing: he fled, and told half-truths about his involvement and his flight.

As family chronicler, Wiffen explained Edward Russell's withdrawal into private life as a result of the Essex debacle: "The risk... which he had thus run, joined perhaps to the discontent with which his family connexions must have regarded the execution of the earl, may have concurred with his natural love of quiet and seclusion to give him a distaste for public life..."<sup>39</sup> Stone makes a very different assessment of young Bedford and suggests an interesting financial background for

the Essex rebellion. He groups Bedford with four others--Rutland, Southampton, Sussex and Mounteagle--as "angry young men in a hurry, all in their twenties, all chafing at the infuriating grip on office retained by the Cecils."<sup>40</sup> Attendance at court, fierce competition for social status, virtual exclusion from advancement--these were basic causes of financial distress. But there was also "a personal recklessness of behaviour whose cause was more psychological than social":

This private malaise was particularly common in the 1580's and 1590's as there grew up a whole new generation of high-spirited young aristocrats in open rebellion against the conservative establishment in general and Lord Burghley in particular. Very many, like Oxford, Rutland, Southampton, Bedford, and Essex had been wards of the old man and were reacting violently against his counsels of worldly prudence.<sup>41</sup>

Their absurdly prodigal extravagance created financial difficulties. Even more specifically, Stone notes that it must have been difficult for young nobles to maintain the requisite standard of living if they were paying large jointures to widowed relatives: "though all were recklessly extravagant, it is none the less noticeable that six of the seven aristocratic conspirators...had suffered in varying degrees for years past from the burden of widows." Bedford, for example, was saddled with three at one time, including his step-grandmother and an aunt.<sup>42</sup>

Stone agrees that Bedford seemed confused about the political issues or the event itself, and focusses on his financial situation to explain his involvement:

Bedford's position is less clear, but all that we know of it points in the same direction. His resources were potentially very great, but he had inherited very large debts in 1585, and had spent the 1590's running up more of his own. He was described, along with Southampton, as "fantastycall" in 1594, and was evidently a member

of the same fast London set in subsequent years. His relatives had prudently extracted huge bonds from him to prevent his alienating entailed family estates, and he had therefore been obliged to finance his excessive expenditure mainly by raising fines for long leases. The year after the revolt he sold two large manors, one of them for £5,000, and yet a few years later he was still heavily in debt and trying to sell more land.<sup>43</sup>

It should be added that 1594 was the year of Bedford's marriage: by 1601, Lucy was enjoying a place in court life which, though she was less prominent than she would be in the next reign, must have increased the young Earl's expenses. There is no direct mention of Lady Bedford in connection with the Essex rebellion, and thus no evidence that she did influence her husband either to join or to flee. There is evidence, however, that Lady Bedford was already in debt. In 1601, the Earl of Lincoln wrote "I should have received five hundred pounds of the Countess of Bedford (if she had dealt truly and honourably with me)... and this day she offers to put me off with two hundred pounds, and to arbitrate the rest, contrary to all reason, honour, or conscience..."<sup>44</sup> This would support Stone's theory that a major reason for participation in the Essex affair was financial distress.

If financial need was one reason for Bedford's involvement, it was doubly unfortunate--if appropriate--that the penalty was also financial. Perhaps the aging Elizabeth or the angry Cecil thought Bedford more responsible than he admitted--his was the second-largest fine, £20,000.<sup>45</sup> Attorney General Coke assessed £200 a year of Bedford's fine against Devonshire and Cornwall properties of the Russells.<sup>46</sup> Later in 1601, Cecil assisted in obtaining permission to use some of the Countess' property to pay the fine.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps Cecil and the Countess joined forces to persuade the old Queen to be lenient, since the fine



was reduced to £10,000.<sup>48</sup> Early in the new reign, 21 June 1603, the Earl was pardoned the remaining £3,000 of the fine, and excused for "all forfeitures for non-payment of £2,000 at the time appointed."<sup>49</sup> It had obviously been difficult to find even the £5,000 he had paid. A lampoon suggests both the Earl's confusion and the Countess' intervention:

Bedford he ran away  
When our men lost the day  
So 'tis assigned  
Except his fine dancing dame  
Do their hard hearts tame  
And swear it is a shame  
Fools should be fined.<sup>50</sup>

In addition, the Earl was first imprisoned, then restricted to Bedford House.<sup>51</sup> On 6 August 1601 the Privy Council allowed him to go to Cheyneys, but he was confined to within six or seven miles of there.<sup>52</sup>

After this first disastrous experience of public affairs, the Earl retreated into private country living. Wiffen explained: "he was well-fitted by his attainments to fill up the leisure of a private life with studious enjoyment"<sup>53</sup>--making a virtue of necessity? Indeed, during the second half of his life, the main evidence of Edward Russell's continued existence is financial. However, according to Wiffen he did participate occasionally in public events. Both the Earl and Lady Bedford were part of a large company which attended the Earl and Countess of Bath at Bath House in what appears to have been a family reunion in preparation for meeting Queen Anne during her 1603 progress southwards.<sup>54</sup> The Earl is next noticed for a refusal: on 24 July 1603, when sixty Knights of the Bath were created, the Earls of Bath and Bedford and seven other peers declined the honour. Wiffen assumed that both the Earl and Lady Bedford "necessarily appeared" in the state procession from the

Tower to Westminster 15 March 1605, and that the Earl was in attendance when Prince Henry was created Prince of Wales in 1610: in neither instance did Wiffen cite evidence, and he concluded that, living quietly in the country, the Earl maintained "the equal tenour of his unambitious course."<sup>55</sup>

Before the Essex debacle, Edward Russell was not a figure of public prominence; after 1601, he retired to the quiet life of his country estates. His Countess did not. Even in the last years of Queen Elizabeth, Lady Bedford's activities and interests were numerous. When they lived together in the first years of their marriage, the Bedfords lived at Cheyneys. From there, in 1596, the Countess twice reported to Burghley about suspected or apprehended Jesuits.<sup>56</sup> There is no other evidence of Lady Bedford's involvement in anti-Catholic efforts, but the Earl probably followed the Puritan sympathies of his ancestors, as the Countess came to in later years. Letters of one Rowland Whyte recorded Lady Bedford's social links with her cousin Robert Sidney (Viscount de Lisle and Earl of Leicester) and his family. Early in 1598 she attended a dinner at Essex House in the distinguished company of the ladies Leicester, Northumberland, Essex and Rich, and the lords Essex, Rutland and Mountjoy. Lady Bedford's social contacts may have made her an Essex sympathizer; perhaps she encouraged her husband's involvement in the rebellion. A further letter suggests that Lady Bedford had travelled, for Whyte reports that she was kind to the Sidney children when she met them abroad. Finally, in Nov. 1599, Whyte reports a visit Lady Bedford paid to Sidney's wife.<sup>57</sup>

As early as 1599, Lady Bedford was established at court. With

her mother, her husband, and her mother-in-law, she received a New Year's gift.<sup>58</sup> In his "Epistle to the Countess of Rutland", Jonson probably exaggerated Lady Bedford's importance, describing her as the "brightest star of all Lucina's train", but the flattery confirms her growing social prominence. In August 1600, one John Carey wrote from Berwick: "we look presently for the Earl of Bedford and his Countess, my Lady Harington and divers other ladies and gentlewomen to be here with a great train."<sup>59</sup> Perhaps the Bedfords went to Scotland to seek the future king; if the journey had such a purpose, and did in fact take place, it might help to explain Queen Anne's alacrity in accepting Lady Bedford as a friend. More probably, the Bedfords were paying a social visit to one of the northern lords, perhaps the Northumberland; Lucy Percy, one of Northumberland's daughters, later became one of Lady Bedford's attendants.

Lady Bedford's literary associations were developing even before 1603. Her patronage of Michael Drayton had begun in 1594 with his poem Matilda. In 1598, Florio dedicated his World of Words to her, and praised her command of languages; she shared the dedication with the Earls of Rutland and Southampton. In his 1603 translation of Montaigne's Essays, Lady Bedford and her mother were the first pair of six ladies addressed; in the preface, Florio says Lady Bedford encouraged him and the first chapter was finished in her house. 1600 was a busy year for Lady Bedford as a new patron. In a florid letter of 19 Dec. Sir John Harrington, translator of Ariosto, enclosed psalms translated by the Countess of Pembroke and some of his own epigrams.<sup>60</sup> He was perhaps seeking a patron in his distant relation; there is no evidence that the

Countess acquiesced. Ben Jonson's acquaintance with Lady Bedford probably began in that year: she is first mentioned in his New Year's "Epistle to the Countess of Rutland". In 1601, he addressed her directly with verses in a gift copy of Cynthia's Revels. Also in 1600 came an unusual dedication. Writing from the court of Denmark, John Dowland, the Elizabethan lutenist and composer, offered his Second Book of Songs or Aires to Lady Bedford:<sup>61</sup> this is the only evidence of Lady Bedford's interest in music.

In the first years of their marriage, which coincided with the last years of the reign of Elizabeth, the Bedfords established the basis of their life-style. For the most part, he lived quietly on his country estates; she took an active part in the social and cultural life centred on the royal court. Though the marriage may have been only a social arrangement, the young pair made the necessary effort to ensure the continuation of the family line. Within a year of the marriage, in Nov. 1595, Lady Bedford was "said to be with child";<sup>62</sup> the outcome is not recorded. Seven years later, she gave birth to her son and heir, who lived less than a month: John, christened 19 January, buried 19 February 1602, at Cheyneys.<sup>63</sup> There were two later attempts. On 5 Sept. 1610, Robert Sidney reported to his wife: "Upon Monday, my Lady of Bedford was brought to bed of a daughter, but it died within two hours after. She herself is very weak and much grieved for the loss of the child."<sup>64</sup> A year later, 5 October 1611, Chamberlain reported to Carleton that Lady Bedford had suffered a miscarriage.<sup>65</sup> After 1612, the Earl's accident injuries, Lady Bedford's recurrent illnesses, and her age (31) combined to make further pregnancies unlikely. In her letters later in life, she

records her regret at being childless.

Often characterized, in contrast to his father and grandfather, as 'the weak Earl', Edward Russell never attained the prominence in public life to which his rank and wealth entitled him. Perhaps the Essex experience combined with his natural inclination to reinforce a preference for private life. But he was not a cipher; his interest in urban development was unusual and progressive for his time. It is difficult to estimate the success of their marriage in personal terms. As young people, Lucy and Edward had widely different, perhaps conflicting temperaments. They may never have lived together for any extended period before the last decade of their lives. Considering that she was only thirteen at the time of the marriage, it would not have been unusual for the marriage to be contracted but not consummated. If for form's sake it was consummated, the young pair might be separated almost immediately. That there is not even a rumor of a pregnancy in the seven years between the unsubstantiated notice in Nov. 1595 and the birth of their heir in 1602, suggests that the latter arrangement may have prevailed. From 1601 to 1617, Edward lived principally at Cheyneys. In that period, Lucy was frequently at court, living first in London and, after 1607 at Twickenham. References in her own letters after 1614, and earlier remarks of others such as Donne and Lady Anne Clifford imply that Lady Bedford visited her husband several times a year, but did not live continually with him.<sup>66</sup> However, even as a mere arrangement, the marriage endured for 33 years. As Lady Bedford became disenchanted with court life, they perhaps discovered or developed a genuine affinity. After 1617, tired with social frivolity, worn out by illness and loss,

she virtually withdrew from court and retired to Moor Park, where she and her husband lived, apparently together, for the last decade of their lives.

### 1603-1612 Great Lady of the Court

If marriage to the Earl of Bedford was the first turning point in Lucy Harington's life, the second was the accession of King James in 1603. From the earliest days of the reign, the royal favour lighted on her parents and on herself. During his progress southward, James visited the Haringtons at Burley-on-the-hill; delighted with his entertainment, he returned a day later, 23 April 1603, to dine and hunt. Lord Harington displayed some of the family prodigality, "the house seeming so rich as it had been furnished at the charge of an emperor."<sup>67</sup>

In June, Lady Bedford and her mother travelled all the way to Edinburgh to meet Queen Anne at the beginning of her separate progress. They may have been in Edinburgh by mid April.<sup>68</sup> One commentator embellished the record of their meeting creatively: Lady Bedford and Lady Harington "exactly fulfilled her long-cherished dreams of southern refinement and elegance. Both of the English court ladies were pleasant-looking in a well-bred, unemphatic way, with fair hair, beautiful hands and fashionably oval faces of slightly pinched features. Their manners were exquisite."<sup>69</sup>

Various other ladies journeyed only to Berwick, in response to the royal command: an autograph letter of 15 April 1603 included James' instructions that some of Queen Elizabeth's ladies should meet his queen at the border with jewels and dresses.<sup>70</sup> Though James requested that she

select ladies for her bedchamber, Anne refused, choosing only Lady Bedford, perhaps in response to her alacrity in attendance, or in renewal of an earlier acquaintance.<sup>71</sup> The young Anne Clifford, meeting the royal party at Dingley, felt that Lady Bedford "was so great a woman with the Queen that everybody respected her."<sup>72</sup>

There was considerable rivalry for places near the Queen. In a letter of 2 Feb. 1604, the Earl of Worcester reported:

First, you must know we have ladies of divers degrees of favour: some for the private chamber, some for the drawing chamber, some for the bed-chamber, and some for neither certain, and of this number is only Lady Arbella and my wife. My Lady Bedford holdeth fast to the bed-chamber; my Lady Hertford would fain, but her husband hath called her home. My Lady Derby, the younger, the Lady Suffolk, Rich, Nottingham, Susan [de Vere], Walsingham, and, of late, the Lady Southwell, for the drawing-chamber; all the rest for the private-chamber, when they are not shut out, for many times the doors are locked. But the plotting and malice amongst them is such, that I think envy hath tied an invisible snake about most of their necks, to sting one another to death.<sup>73</sup>

Anne Clifford recorded her own feelings, which seem to illustrate this situation: "At Windsor, there was such an infinite number of ladies sworn of the queen's privy chamber, as made the place of no esteem or credit. Once I spake to my Lady of Bedford to be one, but had the good fortune to miss it."<sup>74</sup>

Later in the summer, after Queen Anne established her court at Hampton Court, Lady Bedford apparently experienced the vicissitudes of royal favour. With a semblance of objectivity, Anne Clifford reported: "Now was my Lady Rich grown great with the Queen, so much as my Lady of Bedford was something out with her, and when she came to Hampton Court was entertained, but even indifferently, and yet continued to be of the bedchamber."<sup>75</sup> The discontent and rivalry were only temporary, as in

early Dec., Lady Bedford and Lady Rich were among the "English ladies" who accompanied Mme Beaumont, wife of the French ambassador, to dinner with the Spanish ambassador.<sup>76</sup> Queen Anne may have chosen Lady Bedford as her particular favourite in order to spite King James. As the sister of Essex, a prominent member of the pro-James faction in the succession debate, and one of the few women he liked personally, Lady Rich enjoyed James' special favour. As Queen's favourite and King's favourite, Lady Bedford and Lady Rich would automatically be rivals; however, since the King controlled the financial benefits of court preference, a reconciliation to end any tension would be profitable to both ladies.<sup>77</sup> In any case, as time passed, it seems that Lady Bedford was second in pre-eminence in the Queen's court only to Lady Arabella Stuart, whom James and Anne had welcomed. One of her biographers considered Arabella a serious-minded, very well-educated lady, and contrasted her to Lady Bedford, who was supposedly more of "a fellow-spirit" to the amiable Queen.<sup>78</sup>

Though Lady Bedford's quarter of attendance on Queen Anne apparently was October-December,<sup>79</sup> she would remain at court for New Year's and Twelfth Night celebrations, especially when she had been involved in preparation of the masque. For this first of the great court masques, Lady Bedford advanced Daniel as a suitable poet; his Vision of Twelve Goddesses was performed 8 January 1604, with both Lady Bedford and her rival Lady Rich taking part. In the dancing which followed, "The Lady Bedford and Lady Susan [ Vere ] took out the two Ambassadors [ of France and Spain ], and they bestirred themselves very lively..."<sup>80</sup>

During the new Queen's progress southward, the Princess Elizabeth



left her mother's train at Dingley, and withdrew to Combe Abbey with the Haringtons for a few days between 25 and 30 June.<sup>81</sup> On 19 Oct. 1603, King James issued a Privy Seal order for the keeping and education of his daughter, naming the Haringtons as guardians;<sup>82</sup> Sir John had been created Baron Harington of Exton in the coronation honours. Lady Bedford's parents were renowned as "persons eminent for prudence and piety" who displayed a desirable Protestantism but also a certain prodigality evidenced by Harington's "prince-like housekeeping."<sup>83</sup>

In 1605 Lord Harington attempted to arrange a marriage between his son and heir and Robert Cecil's daughter; Lady Bedford was apparently strongly in favour of the match. Cecil's letter to Harington on the subject suggests that the Countess was obstinate in her views and unwilling to defer to her elders: "If she had not more resembled her sex in loving her own will than she does in those other noble and discreet parts of her mind (wherein she has so great a portion beyond most of those that I have known), she might have moved you to suspend the sending up of any particularities at this time." Not only did she fail to intervene to convince her father the match was undesirable, but now her father must intervene to convince her: Cecil hopes "that obedience to your commands which is observed by the world in all her carriage more than is usual in this age toward parents" will move Lady Bedford to drop the matter. Though the Cecil-Harington acquaintance may have been of long standing, though he was apparently prepared to intervene in having the Earl's Essex fine reduced, Cecil was not willing to approve a marriage alliance. His stated reason was that young John Harington

was "extraordinarily qualified" to advance in life, whereas his daughter promised "little worthy affection."<sup>84</sup> In his remarks on Lady Bedford, Cecil damns her with loud praise: he reports rather plaintively that the otherwise estimable lady is showing an uncivil obstinacy in this matter.

Between 1604 and 1607, despite rivalries and illnesses, Lady Bedford "keepeth her prerogative of greatness at Court."<sup>85</sup> Preparations for the 'great masque' for Twelfth Night began in November 1604. Estimates of the cost vary. Chamberlain reported £300 as the original expenditure.<sup>86</sup> but a second commentator thought it was ten times that amount: "The ladies in the Court prepare to solemnize the Christmas with a gallant Masque which doth cost the Exchequer £3,000."<sup>87</sup> This was Jonson's first court masque, The Masque of Blacknesse, in which Lady Bedford took part on 6 January 1605. In April 1605, she was present at the christening of Princess Mary.<sup>88</sup> On 5 January 1606, she danced in the Hymenaei, Jonson's masque celebrating the ill-fated Essex marriage.

No further evidence of the Countess' activities in these years survives. There is, however, a curious reference in a letter to Carleton from Tobie Matthew in Florence, 8 August 1606: "What was the reason that drove the Lady of Bedford thence [from court] and particularly how thrives she, whom they would needs persuade me, I was in love withall?"<sup>89</sup> No other record suggests that Lady Bedford was 'driven from the court'; perhaps she withdrew into the country after her quarter of attendance ended early in 1606. One biographer of Arabella Stuart linked Lady Bedford with the riotous celebrations at Theobalds during the visit of the King of Denmark. The evening is described in a famous letter

of Sir John Harrington, the poet and 'godson' of Queen Elizabeth: the lady portraying the Queen of Sheba dumped precious condiments in Christian's lap; he collapsed in a drunken stupor; Hope was too drunk to speak, Faith and Charity were staggering too, and all three were sick in the lower hall. Harrington's comments on the court ladies may reflect on Lady Bedford, though no lady is named:

The ladies abandon their sobriety, and are seen to roll about in intoxication...The great ladies do go well-masked, and indeed it be the only show of their modesty, to conceal their countenance; but, alack, they meet with such countenance to uphold their strange doings, that I marvel not at ought that happens.<sup>90</sup>

"The habits of the Dane may, in part, have been responsible for the lamentable conduct of the Ladies of Bedford, Suffolk, Derby and their companions..."<sup>91</sup> If she did misbehave in the midst of these notorious revels, perhaps Lady Bedford thought it prudent to withdraw from court for a time. Little can be made of Matthew's note, beyond acknowledging its teasing ambiguity. He was probably one of the young wits hovering about the great ladies of the court, playing the courtly game for fun and profit.

In 1607 Lady Bedford acquired Twickenham Park,<sup>92</sup> which became her principal residence for the next ten years. Here she established her social and literary circle of friends, relatives, wits and poets. The factual account of her life there is sketchy, a record mainly of illnesses and deaths. Lady Bridget Markham, Lady Bedford's aunt though only two years her senior, died at Twickenham 4 May 1609.<sup>93</sup> Cecilia Bulstrode, a cousin, died 4 August 1609.<sup>94</sup> Donne commemorated both ladies with elegies. Lady Bedford herself was ill early in June 1609,<sup>95</sup> but she recovered in time to plan a visit to Penshurst in early September.<sup>96</sup>

Lady Bedford was perhaps making a personal progress in that month, for the Sidney letters record she was at Bath in mid-September.<sup>97</sup> After 1603, Lady Bedford's literary associations continued to be many and varied. With his translation of Montaigne's essays in 1603, Florio continued to grace the Countess and her mother with dedications; Florio's friend Matthew Gwinne added sonnets to both ladies. Gwinne also commended the Countess in dedicatory verses in his 1607 play Vertumnus. Chapman included a sonnet of moral advice to the Countess with his translation of the Iliad in 1609. Daniel had replaced Drayton as favoured poet, but all were soon eclipsed by Donne and Jonson.

Success at court was a mixed blessing. Lord Harington gained his title, but sank deeper and deeper into debt because of his expenditures, from legitimate to extravagant, in raising Princess Elizabeth.<sup>98</sup> Lady Bedford enjoyed an important place at court and an extravagant life-style, at the cost of almost constant financial difficulty. Yet, in an age when the court was the center of the life of the nation, no cost would seem too high. The first years of the reign were the years of Lady Bedford's rise to prominence. It is unfortunate that so little concrete information survives; we are able to sketch her life in this period only in outline, with an occasional bright highlight or significant detail. She continued her early-established literary interests, widened her connections among men of letters, and became an important patron. She established herself with both the King and the Queen, became an important figure in the social life of the court, and consolidated friendships with prominent and influential courtiers. (Youth, intelligence and wealth combined to win her such a place at the center of court life that

in 1611 Chamberlain reported "she is now the Queen's only favourite."<sup>99</sup>

In the following year, Lady Bedford used her court influence politically: she was one of the prominent courtiers who advanced George Villiers as a new royal favourite. After 1612, a small opposition group developed, determined to supplant Somerset, and strongly Protestant in orientation. This faction included Sir Ralph Winwood, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbott,<sup>100</sup> William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and Lady Bedford.<sup>101</sup> Pembroke gave "a sumptuous private entertainment" at Baynard's castle during which a scheme was devised.

The description is Wiffen's:

Sir Thomas Lake first threw him in the king's way at Apthorpe; James was struck by his bearing and fine figure. The Countess of Bedford confirmed this prepossession by ushering him into the presence-chamber, where his elegant address completed the captivation. The office of cupbearer was first obtained for him, in which capacity the Earl of Pembroke and others supported him against all opposition, till his fortune as supreme favourite was no longer doubtful. Efforts were next made by Lady Bedford to enter him of the bedchamber, which Somerset resisted with all the energy of jealousy and despair. The king, too, hesitated, requiring, for some domestic reasons, that the queen herself should be first induced to become a suitor for the grant. When a fresh difficulty rose in this high quarter, the aid and credit of Archbishop Abbot were called in. He willingly undertook to try his own persuasions with the rest. Their importunity prevailed; Queen Anne undertook to press the suit with her husband; and on the 23rd. of April, 1615, Villiers was sworn of the privy chamber, with an annual pension of one thousand pounds, and was next day knighted in the queen's chamber.<sup>102</sup>

Fuller summarized the importance of Lady Bedford's role: "The Lady Lucy, Countess of Bedford, led him by the one hand, and William, Earl of Pembroke by the other."<sup>103</sup> As Buckingham became more powerful, Lady Bedford continued to enjoy some influence with him. He appears frequently in notes regarding her affairs, both social and financial; one of his virtues was a grateful memory of those who helped him rise.

In November 1612, Lady Bedford suffered a serious illness which seemed to mark a turning point in her life. The Earl of Dorset wrote on 23 Nov.: "My Lady Bedford last night, about one of the clock, was suddenly, and hath continued every since, speechless, and is past all hopes, though yet alive: and even now my wife [Anne Clifford] is gone to see her."<sup>104</sup> On 6 January 1613 she was still "dangerously sick,"<sup>105</sup> but by 11 February she had recovered sufficiently to be a godmother for the Countess of Salisbury's daughter.<sup>106</sup> The result of this two-month illness was a changed attitude to the frivolous life at court. Six months later, Chamberlain commented:

His Lady (who should have gone to the Spa but for lack of money) shows herself again in court, though in her sickness she had in a manner vowed never to come there, but she verifies the proverb nemo ex morbo melior. Marry she is somewhat reformed in her attire, and forbears painting, which they say makes her look somewhat strangely among so many vizards, which together with their frizzled powdered hair makes them look all alike, so that you can scant know one from another at the first view. Doctor Burgess (who is turned physician) was much about her in her sickness, and did her more good with his spiritual counsel, than with natural physic...<sup>107</sup>

Lady Bedford returned to court, and continued to be influential, but her later attitude that "there is no hope of any good to be done there"<sup>108</sup> perhaps began at this time.

#### Lady Bedford's Puritanism

Since the question of the extent of Lady Bedford's puritanism and its effect on her relationship with Donne is an important one, it seems appropriate to consider here the religious heritage of Lady Bedford and her husband and to attempt to define her personal religious views. If Burgess' ministrations during her 1612 illness influenced

Lady Bedford to adopt a more strongly religious if not non-conformist attitude, she might merely have been adopting the attitude of her family and friends.

"Puritan" is an ill-defined term with wide and varying connotations. During the reigns of Elizabeth and James, "Puritan" and "Protestant zealot" were almost interchangeable. An "Elizabethan Puritan" was one within the established Church of England who demanded further reformation, what might be called a militant low church opinion. "State Puritans" combined Calvinist sympathies with acceptance of established church forms. In this early period "Puritans" were not opposed to worldly wealth, expensive clothing, hunting or even gambling, and they countenanced music and dancing. Protestants in general and early "Puritans" in particular encouraged literacy. Moderation was a key principle, but ostentation was forgiven if pride and vanity were avoided. Politically, the "Puritans" were anti-Spanish because anti-Catholic.<sup>109</sup> Thus loosely defined, the term "Puritan" might indeed apply to Lady Bedford after 1612.

Though it is difficult to assess the Haringtons' religious views, it is possible to furnish a considerable amount of information on the Bedford family religious background. The Russells were traditionally reformist if not Puritan. The first Earl, Edward's great-grandfather John (1486?-1555), was one of the Protestant aristocrats who benefitted from the dispersal of church lands under Henry VIII in the 1540s.<sup>110</sup> The first Earl was "the most decisively committed to reform of his time".<sup>111</sup> Yet he supported Queen Mary pragmatically, was active against Wyatt, and was reappointed lord privy seal in 1553.<sup>112</sup>

The second Earl, Edward's grandfather Francis (1527-1585), was "a sincere adherent of the new religion" who held "radical protestant sympathies".<sup>113</sup> He secretly supported Wyatt, in opposition to his father. He spent the years of Mary's reign among the Protestant exiles at Zurich. After returning from exile, he corresponded with the Swiss reformers, and with Calvin.<sup>114</sup> His library of 221 books and 4 manuscripts<sup>115</sup> included works of Calvin and Beza and most of the prominent English puritan divines.<sup>116</sup>

After his return to England, the second Earl was "widely recognized, even overseas, as the aristocratic leader of the reformed party in England."<sup>117</sup> He was exhorted by his Zurich connections to use his influence as a member of the privy council to promote the Puritan cause.<sup>118</sup> He took an active part in the religious settlement, being a commissioner to receive the oath of supremacy and one of those who assisted in drawing up the new liturgy.<sup>119</sup> A "vigorous and apparently dominant protestant phalanx in the Commons" influenced the passage of the Act of Uniformity and the Prayer Book of 1559. The first Elizabethan House of Commons included "an impressive concentration of godly protestant gentlemen, many of whom owed their places to the patronage" of Francis Russell.<sup>120</sup> Through land ownership and patronage, a great landowner "could stabilize the religion of half a shire".<sup>121</sup> The southeast, where the Russells were the major landlords, was the stronghold of "doctrinal Protestantism".<sup>122</sup> Bedford also protected Puritans in the west country.<sup>123</sup> He was the "friend and patron" of Sir John Chichester whose "staunch protestantism" was influential in North Devon.<sup>124</sup> Sir John's son Sir Robert Chichester married Lucy's sister Frances. Identified as a



Puritan landlord, Bedford was criticized by Elizabeth for his charity because it supposedly encouraged idleness.<sup>125</sup> Bedford also carried his religious views into diplomacy. He was sent by Cecil to France in 1561 to contact the leading Huguenots and "to dissuade France from involvement in the Council of Trent". He was accompanied by William Whittingham, a colleague of John Knox and one of the translators of the Geneva Bible.<sup>126</sup>

It was thus the second Earl Francis who gave the Bedfords their reputation as a Puritan family. The sympathies of Edward's immediate ancestors are less clear. Lord John Russell, Edward's uncle, married as his second wife Elizabeth, one of the daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, the Greek scholar who had been tutor to Edward VI. Lady Elizabeth and her sisters, who married Burghley and Sir Nicholas Bacon, were clever, classically-educated ladies with Puritan sympathies. Lady Elizabeth had two daughters, Elizabeth and Anne, who were both maids of honour to Queen Elizabeth, and may have been friends and attendants of Lady Bedford.<sup>127</sup> When Lord John died without male issue in 1584, Edward's father Francis became heir to the title, but he died on 27 July 1585, one day before his father the second Earl died. Little is known of Edward's father, and even less of his mother, one Julian Foster.<sup>128</sup>

Edward Russell's own religious views are difficult to determine. He seems to have been a serious and studious man in later life. His participation in the Essex rebellion may indicate he was at least sympathetic to religious reform. In the last years of Elizabeth's reign, "the Puritan political interest was without a head". Essex seemed to be it, temporarily, but he reverted to a studied neutrality.<sup>129</sup> He may

only have been "posing as the Puritan champion",<sup>130</sup> but the presence of Puritan preachers at Essex House in the days before the rebellion is not doubted,<sup>131</sup> and the rebellion had a religious and political dimension in that the Essex faction were pro-reformation and anti-Spanish.

The religious heritage of the Harington family and the extent of their Puritan sympathies are equally difficult to define. The strongest evidence is Lord Harington's activity, as one of the executors for the Countess of Sussex, in founding Sidney Sussex College at Cambridge. Cambridge was the centre for "spiritual" as distinct from "witty" preaching. "It was greatly encouraged by the founding of two new colleges, Emmanuel in 1584 by Sir Walter Mildmay...and Sidney Sussex in 1596 by the Countess of Sussex, aunt of Sir Philip Sidney. Both were established expressly for the purpose of training up a preaching ministry."<sup>132</sup> Sir Walter Mildmay and Lord Harington were old friends.<sup>133</sup> Lady Harington and Lady Bedford were benefactors of the college, and Lady Bedford donated books for its library. Oliver Cromwell was a Sidney Sussex student.<sup>134</sup>

Lucy's brother, John, second Lord Harington, was also a student at Sidney Sussex. He seems to have been an acknowledged Puritan. He kept both a diary and a "private character" in code, recording his daily failings.<sup>135</sup> He also maintained a very religious household: "Before dinner and supper, he had a psalm, chapter, and prayer, in his family, and a prayer after supper."<sup>136</sup> When John Harington died in 1614, Richard Stock, a puritan preacher in the parish of Allhallows in the neighborhood of Bread Street in London, gave the funeral sermon. Stock was still

the preacher there when John Milton was growing up in the parish.<sup>137</sup>

Two other gentlemen connect the Haringtons and Lady Bedford with Milton. John Tovey, the master of Coventry grammar school near Combe from 1599-1602, was one of Lucy's brother's tutors; in 1613, as tutor of Princess Elizabeth, he travelled with the newlyweds to Heidelberg.<sup>138</sup> The Haringtons extended patronage to both John and his son Nathaniel. Nathaniel was taken into Lady Bedford's household; she sent him to Sidney Sussex College in 1612. Probably recommended by Richard Stock or Dr. Diodati, he became Milton's tutor.<sup>139</sup> Theodore Diodati was one of the European refugees encouraged by the Haringtons; for a time he was tutor to young John Harington. Lady Bedford later asked him to assist Florio with the Montaigne translation. Theodore was the father of Milton's friend Charles Diodati.<sup>140</sup>

Several of Lady Bedford's noble friends may have shared Puritan sympathies. William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke was of the anti-Spanish faction and was described by the French ambassador in 1625 as the "head of the Puritans".<sup>141</sup> He and his brother were more probably of the low church opinion, though Montgomery sided with the Parliamentarians after 1614.<sup>142</sup> Lord Hay was also of the anti-Spanish faction, and was in later life "an aristocratic Presbyterian".<sup>143</sup>

A survey of the dedications of works addressed to Lady Bedford and members of her family produces some general conclusions.<sup>144</sup> Dedications of religious works are almost the only source of information concerning the Countess' religious views. Almost all the writers who dedicated works to Lady Bedford were Protestant; some were definitely Puritan; some were clergymen. Some of the writers were Essex sympathizers.

Several had been members of the Bedford-Harington households. About one third had been educated at Cambridge. A few were Europeans, mostly Protestant exiles or refugees. The dedications Lady Bedford received, only three of which were expressly religious works, may attest to her wide range of interests, and her tolerance of different points of view, or they may merely reflect her prominent court position. Though both she and her parents were addressed by Puritan writers, there is little to indicate that she had definitely Puritan ideas. For instance, in dedicating An Exposition upon the Epistle of the Colossians to the Earl and Countess of Bedford in 1615, Nicholas Byfield praises Lady Bedford for "care of God's Sabbaths" and "never failing attendance upon the ordinances of God with the congregation, morning and evening". Though Byfield became the Earl of Bedford's chaplain, this commendation indicates only that Lady Bedford was conventionally pious.

The strongest evidence that "Despite her apparent worldliness there was a pietistical strain in Lady Bedford which, as she grew older, became more and more tinged with Puritanism"<sup>145</sup> is the influence of Dr. John Burgess. He apparently became Lady Bedford's spiritual advisor after her 1612 illness. He had been educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and had been imprisoned in the Tower in 1604 for non-conformity. After his release, he studied medicine at Leyden; on his return to England, he settled at Isleworth near Twickenham and began attending a number of influential ladies, officially as physician, unofficially as spiritual counsellor.<sup>146</sup> At the time of Lady Bedford's illness, Mayerne, the attending physician, became another of Burgess' champions, but King James was not amused:

...his manner of praying was so well liked by Monsieur Mayerne of Turquet, that thinking to do him a pleasure he commended him to the King who was so moved that he should dogmatise (as he called it) in his court, that he commanded the archbishop to look to it, who sending for him used him somewhat roughly, and enjoined him not to practise within ten miles of London.<sup>147</sup>

In 1616, Burgess was permitted to preach again, partly because Lady Bedford favoured him.<sup>148</sup> In July 1617 he preached at Paul's Cross.

Later he received a living at Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire. In an oft-quoted article, Patricia Thomson has suggested that Burgess replaced Donne as Lady Bedford's spiritual advisor after her 1612 illness.<sup>149</sup>

Though Donne's verse letters to her after 1609 become more serious and philosophical, there is little to suggest that their relationship was of this nature. However, there may have been some rivalry between Donne and Burgess for the Countess' attention: in 1614 Donne felt Burgess had influenced Lady Bedford to question the sincerity of his religious calling.<sup>150</sup> Lady Bedford's relationship with Burgess continued throughout her life; in 1624, he dedicated to her and her husband the works of his father-in-law Thomas Wilcox, a Puritan who also had been imprisoned for non-conformity.

Before her 1612 illness and the influence of Dr. Burgess, there is little to suggest that Lady Bedford did any more than conform to the religious ideas prevailing in her family. The Haringtons and the Bedfords were strongly Protestant if not definitely Puritan. Only three religious works were dedicated to Lady Bedford alone: this fact suggests that she was addressed as 'one of the clan', that such writers assumed her religious views were similar to those of her parents and her husband's family.

In patronage, in politics, in religion, Lady Bedford was influenced

by others. She followed the tastes of the court and the suggestions of friends in choosing poets to patronize. She sympathized with the Elector Frederick and supported the Protestant alliance because her parents had been Princess Elizabeth's guardians, because she and the Princess were to some degree personal friends, and because her political friends, Hay, Hamilton, Pembroke and Montgomery, were of the anti-Spanish faction. In a letter in 1624 to Lady Cornwallis, Lady Bedford referred to her hopes for the good of "the Church and the Commonwealth":<sup>151</sup> since in the same paragraph she had expressed concern that Parliament was prorogued very quickly, this remark seems to indicate her distrust of the king's personal government rather than her support for a Puritan commonwealth; it also suggests that hers was a low church but established view. Lady Bedford's religious opinions, like her other attitudes, were influenced by whoever was personally powerful with her at the time--her family, her friends, Dr. Burgess. And such influence never prevailed for very long. As Chamberlain noted, only six months after her illness, Lady Bedford returned to court "though in her sickness she had in a manner vowed never to come there". That she was "somewhat reformed in her attire" and did not use make-up suggests at most a lingering seriousness. She does not seem to have abandoned any of her social activities. Her later letters to Lady Cornwallis, our best source of information about Lady Bedford's mature character, reveal only conventional pious wisdom framed in philosophical platitudes.

#### 1612-1619 Maturity

Though her serious illness and the spiritual counsel of Dr.

Burgess combined to alter Lady Bedford's attitude to the more frivolous aspects of court life, after 1612 she continued to be prominent and influential. She recovered from her illness in time to be an attendant at the wedding of Princess Elizabeth on Feb. 14, 1613.<sup>152</sup> The premature death of Prince Henry in Nov. 1612 had not been allowed to delay his sister's marriage to Frederick Count Palatine. Both the established Church party, including Archbishop Abbott, and the so-called Puritan faction approved of this marriage because it strengthened the continental Protestant alliance, and assured the Protestant succession in case of the failure of heirs male. Lady Bedford and the Princess had apparently become personal friends during the ten years of the Princess' residence with the Haringtons. The Haringtons accompanied the newlyweds to Heidelberg. Lord Harington went at his own expense, but with the honorary rank of ambassador.<sup>153</sup> In May 1613 Winwood wrote from the Hague that the Countess planned to join her parents in Heidelberg;<sup>154</sup> commenting on her recent illness and the Earl's accident, Chamberlain reported that lack of money had prevented her from going to the Spa.<sup>155</sup>

In mid July 1613, the Earl of Bedford was severely injured in a hunting accident. Donne reported: "My Lord of Bedford, I hear, had lately a desperate fall from his horse, and was speechless all Tuesday last; his lady rode away hastily from Twickenham to him, but I hear no more yet of him."<sup>156</sup> Two weeks later, in the same letter in which he commented on Lady Bedford's illness, Chamberlain reported in more detail: "The Earl of Bedford, hunting in a park of his own, by the fall of his horse was thrown against a tree and so bruised, that the report went he was dead, and it is doubted yet that he is in danger, for that his skull

is said to be cracked."<sup>157</sup> The unfortunate results of this accident were partial lameness and impaired speech.

Her own illness and her husband's accident were only the beginning of a series of unhappy events. While her husband was recovering, Lady Bedford's father died at Worms 23 Aug. 1613, in the course of his journey homeward from Heidelberg. Lady Harington brought his body back to England; Lord Harington was buried at Exton 7 Oct. 1613.<sup>158</sup> Then on 26 Feb. 1614, the Countess' younger brother died. "The most complete young gentleman of his age that this kingdom could afford for religion, learning, and courteous behaviour",<sup>159</sup> he had been a friend of Prince Henry. Donne wrote an elegy; Richard Stock a Puritan minister of Bread Street, preached the funeral sermon. The young Lord Harington left one third of his property to Lady Chichester, two-thirds to Lady Bedford, "esteeming her worthy of much more than he had to leave her"<sup>160</sup> or perhaps recognizing the financial burden of her large debts. Little more than a year later, in May 1615, Lady Chichester, Lady Bedford's only sister, died.<sup>161</sup> Only Lady Harington and the Countess herself remained.

In the last thirteen years of Lady Bedford's life, for the first time, there are accounts of her life from her own viewpoint: thirty-four of her letters are preserved in The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Cornwallis. These begin in July 1614 and end in March 1626.<sup>162</sup> Jane Meautys Cornwallis was the same age as Lady Bedford, a close friend, and thus an ideal correspondent. As a young woman, she had been one of Lady Bedford's attendant ladies. She married Lord Cornwallis in 1608, and Nathaniel Bacon, an amateur painter, in 1614.<sup>163</sup> Most of Lady Bedford's



letters to Lady Cornwallis conform to a pattern. Because they were written at irregular intervals, the letters usually begin with apologies for not writing or not visiting, and include suitable explanations. They often contain plans for exchanges of visits, and protestations of continued affection. The body of the letter, and often a long postscript, give details of personal news, and news and gossip about the court. Most of the letters close with a personal postscript expressing affection for Mr. Bacon and for Lady Cornwallis' children. Lady Bedford's letters provide not only numerous details of her interests and activities but also, in her comments and reflections, a clear idea of her mature personality.<sup>164</sup>

Lady Bedford's letter of 27 Oct. 1614 reports personal news and court gossip. Returning to Bedford House from Rutland, Lady Bedford found her husband in "a very great and almost hopeless danger": in fact, she considered her "fortune" to be "in balance" and "waited to see which way it would settle" before writing. The Earl recovered, and this illness seemed to counteract some of the lasting ill effects of his 1613 accident: "the violent fever he hath had hath done him some good for his palsy, his speech being better than it was before he fell sick, though his lameness be nothing amended." Lady Bedford's matter-of-fact tone does not necessarily indicate a lack of warmth toward her husband but rather the surface formality of the time: for instance, even in her private diary, Lady Anne Clifford referred to her husband as "my lord".

Lady Bedford apparently had cause to be concerned about her "fortune" in the financial sense. In the same letter, she wrote with philosophic good humour of a family legal squabble which would cost her

"some lawyers' fees, and a little trouble, which I am born to," and more ruefully of "the burden of a broken estate".

In reporting births and deaths within the court social circle, Lady Bedford mentioned another close friend for the first time. Lady Roxborough was expecting, and Lady Bedford feared that she would have to replace her friend in the Queen's circle, "more attendance than of late I have put myself unto."<sup>165</sup> Lady Roxborough's son born late in 1614 died in infancy.

A similar situation arose eighteen months later. On Goodfriday 1616, Lady Bedford reported that Lady Roxborough was again expecting and "so near her time" that Lady Bedford again found herself tied "to a very strict attendance" on the Queen.<sup>166</sup> On 30 April 1616 Chamberlain noted: "The Lady Roxborough's daughter was christened at Greenwich on Sunday, the Queen and Lady of Bedford being Godmothers."<sup>167</sup>

Jane Drummond, the second wife of Robert Ker, first Lord Roxborough, had been another of Lady Bedford's attendant ladies. An incident in the spring of 1617, reported to Lady Cornwallis in 2 letters, reveals Lady Bedford's loyalty to her friends. In the first letter, a very brief note, Lady Bedford apologized for not meeting her friend, though both were in London. Writing on "Monday night at 7 o'clock", Lady Bedford asked Lady Cornwallis to delay her return to the country until after Wednesday, so they could enjoy a visit. Lady Bedford would not be free on Tuesday because "my Lady of Roxborough's business, whom I must not forsake, will passe a trial."<sup>168</sup> This seems to refer to Queen Anne's displeasure with and dismissal of Lady Roxborough, mentioned in the second letter:

Of the Queen's court I can say little good, for her resolution to part with Roxborough still continues, which makes her look big upon all she thinks love that good woman, and they attend her very seldom; of which matter I am one that prize her favour, but upon such an occasion cannot be sorry for her frowns, which are now so little to me, all my court businesses being so dispatched as they will not much require my attendance there; and I am grown to love my ease and liberty so well as no measure of favour could often invite me thither, where there is no hope of any good to be done.<sup>169</sup>

The Queen was incensed at an instance of neglect of her prerogative, royal and maternal. Lady Roxborough was a Lady of the Bedchamber and governess to the royal children. Lord Roxborough obtained the promise of King James that he would be appointed Chamberlain to Charles Prince of Wales. Queen Anne was not consulted, and in her anger, banished Lady Roxborough to Scotland. Sir Robert Carey, afterwards Earl of Monmouth, became the Prince's Chamberlain. The Queen's petulant behaviour toward her friend obviously contributed to Lady Bedford's increasing dislike of the court. She was pragmatic, however, in noting that she could afford to neglect court attendance only because her business there did not require her presence. Five months later, the Queen was still angry with her friend, and Lady Bedford still critical: "The noble Lady Roxborough is in Scotland, which makes me perfectly hate the court."<sup>170</sup>

In Dec. 1615, Lady Bedford reported she was "like to be a Londoner the most of this winter, to air my house at Twickenham against the spring", and invited Lady Cornwallis and Mr. Bacon to visit her at Bedford House.<sup>171</sup> At about this time, Lady Ann Clifford noted to her mother (the Countess of Cumberland): "My Lady of Bedford is become a new courtier again, and as it is thought, will quite leave her house and poor husband, and be a continual abider there. He is still weak

and sick, yet the physicians say he may live this many years."<sup>172</sup>

In the same letter, Lady Bedford reflected on "the business now afoot", the Somerset trial for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, calling the matter "this tragedy". Several months later, in a postscript to a letter written at Whitehall on Goodfriday 1616, Lady Bedford reported that the Countess of Somerset had been sent to the Tower to await her arraignment.<sup>173</sup> From these two brief references, it is difficult to judge what Lady Bedford's attitude may have been to one of the greatest scandals of the age.

Chamberlain recounted one of the social events which occupied Lady Bedford in the summer of 1616. Early in July, Secretary Winwood entertained the chief figures of the court at Ditton, Buckinghamshire. The party included Pembroke, Montgomery, and Lady Bedford. Feeling that such great "states...were no company" for him, Chamberlain had "no mind to tarry", modestly excused himself, and returned to London.<sup>174</sup>

In her next letter to Lady Cornwallis, written at Bedford House 9 Sept. 1616, Lady Bedford outlined the events of the summer. Within eight days of her arrival in Rutland, before she could visit Lady Cornwallis at Brome, or go herself to Exton, the King arrived, "against whose coming and during his stay at my house, all my time and little wit was so taken up about the business of house keeping as it made me lay all else aside." Shortly after the King's visit, Lady Bedford went to visit Lord Huntingdon, her cousin, and while there, received "a peremptory commandment" to wait upon the Queen at Woodstock. Before leaving the Queen's court, she fell ill, and remained so for most of six weeks in London. The next event was the death of her niece, "Francke"

Markham, for whom the Countess had been arranging a suitable marriage. This report gives a clear picture of the Countess' consistently active life.

In this same letter, Lady Bedford informed her friend of Lady Harington's proposed journey to Germany, in response to "my Lady Elizabeth's extreme earnest desire, and the King's commandment." She worried about the dangers of "so cruel a journey" in such a poor season, and commended her mother's affection for the Princess, and her spirit which "carries her body beyond what almost could be hoped at her years."<sup>175</sup>

Lady Harington actually began her journey in early Dec. 1616. In successive letters, Chamberlain questioned the reason for the journey and explained the delay. On 6 Nov. he forewarned Carleton: "It is like you may have the old Lady Harington come by you shortly in her way toward Heidelberg, whither she is going to reside about the Lady Elizabeth who hath written to the King for her, but whether of her own motion or the other's procurement is the question, she being thought an ambitious woman, and there being doubt that she looks for a day."<sup>176</sup> Two weeks later he reported: "The Lady Harington sets out on Tuesday or Wednesday towards Heidelberg, by the way of Flanders and Brabant, there having been much ado to furnish her with five thousand pound, which the King bestows on her por ayuda di costa."<sup>177</sup> This £5,000 may be the unspecified amount referred to in a letter from Buckingham to Winwood: "I understand from my Lady of Bedford that my letter will be a sufficient warrant unto you for the payment of so much money to my Lady Harington as is due to her.... His Majesty's pleasure is that you take speedy order for the payment of

that money unto her, that there be no further stay of her journey."<sup>178</sup> Finally, on 7 Dec. Chamberlain noted wryly: "The Lady Harington hath been going these ten days, but now sets out on Monday sans faute and Sir John Finet accompanies her to Heidelberg."<sup>179</sup> Lady Bedford's next letter must have been a few days later, in early Dec. 1616, as she reported that her mother "crossed the sea thitherward on Thursday last." She apologized profusely for neither writing nor visiting, but promised to go to Brome before going into Germany. Her duty to her mother and to the Princess Elizabeth may "carry" her there in the spring; moreover, Dr. Mayerne suggested the Spa "for the confirmation of my health and prevention of some infirmities." There is no evidence in other accounts that Lady Bedford journeyed to the Continent in 1617; perhaps illness, financial problems or court duties prevented her fulfilling this intention. The letter closed with a promise to pursue some unspecified desire of Lady Cornwallis with the Queen, and the first of many notes of dissatisfaction, that the Queen "in that as all others she is slow in performance."<sup>180</sup>

On 26 May 1617, Lady Bedford was unable to write to Lady Cornwallis because she was busy with "some little building I have in hand at the Moor."<sup>181</sup> In a brief note probably written soon after, and the first letter actually written "From the More", Lady Bedford excused her failure to visit "by reason of my building".<sup>182</sup> Building at Moor Park seems to have been one of Lady Bedford's favourite pastimes in 1617. The King granted the Earl and Countess of Bedford the manor of Moor Park in Hertfordshire in that year. The following year the Countess resigned her interest in Twickenham Park to her kinsman William Harington, and

after 1618, used Moor Park as her principal country home. This change of residence coincided with her change of interests as a patron, as she tired of poets and became interested in paintings and gardens. In her next letter to Lady Cornwallis, written at Bedford House on 22 Oct.

1617, Lady Bedford once more referred to building, perhaps repairs if not additions to her new home: "I should be extreme glad...to have your advice and Mr. Bacon's in my works at the Moor, where I have been a patcher this summer, and I am still adding some trifles of pleasure to that place I am so much in love with, as, if I were so fond of any man, I were in hard case."<sup>183</sup> A touch of self-deprecating wit in a lady who, though only thirty-six, had tired of court life, and sought refuge in the new amusements of country living.

Foremost among those amusements was the development of a garden at Moor Park. In her letter of 4 Oct. 1618 from "More Lodge", Lady Bedford noted with good humour that "it is not good being too free an offerer to a free taker", but asked Lady Cornwallis a favour: "This month puts me in mind to entreat the performance of your promise for some of the little white single rose roots I saw at Brome, and to challenge Mr. Bacon's promise for some flowers, if about you there be any extraordinary ones; for I am now very busy furnishing my gardens."<sup>184</sup> On Nov. 6, she wrote a brief note "in haste" from Bedford House to convey her thanks: "I must not let this bearer return without my entreaty to you that to mine you will join your thanks to Mr. Bacon for the favour he hath done me in furnishing me with such helps for my garden."<sup>185</sup> Sir William Temple described the garden at Moor Park as he knew it more

than a generation later.

The perfectest figure of a garden I ever saw either at home or abroad was that of Moor Park in Hertfordshire,...It was made by the Countess of Bedford,...It lies on the side of a hill (upon which the house stands) but not very steep. The length of the house, where the best rooms and of most use or pleasure are, lies upon the breadth of the garden, the great parlour opens into the middle of a terrace gravel-walk that lies even with it, and which may be...about three hundred paces long and broad in proportion; the border set with standard laurels, and at large distances, which have the beauty of orange trees out of flower and fruit: from this walk are three descents by many stone steps, in the middle and at each end, into a very large parterre. This is divided into quarters by gravel walks, and adorned with two fountains and eight statues in the several quarters; at the end of the terrace walk are two summerhouses even with the cloisters, which are paved with stone, and designed for walks of shade, there being none other in the whole parterre. Over these two cloisters are two terraces covered with lead and fenced with balusters; and the passage into these airy walks is out of the two summerhouses, at the end of the first terrace walk. The cloister facing the south is covered with vines, and would have been proper for an oranghouse, and the other for myrtles....

From the middle of the parterre is a descent by many steps flying on each side of a grotto that lies beneath then (covered with lead and flat) into the lower garden, which is all fruit-trees ranged about the several quarters of a wilderness which is very shady; the walks here are all green, the grotto embellished with figures of shell-rock-work, fountains and water-works....There was a garden on the other side of the house,...very wild; shady, and adorned with rough rock-work and fountains.

This was Moor-Park, when I was acquainted with it, and the sweetest place, I think, that I have seen in my life, either before or since, at home or abroad.<sup>186</sup>

The dedication of a curious book attests to Lady Bedford's interest in gardens even before she acquired Moor Park. In 1614, Giacomo (Giacopo) Castelvetro dedicated to Lady Bedford a manuscript copy of his book with the elaborate title Raconto di tutti le Radici, di tutte l'Herbe, et di tutti i Frutti che crudi o cotti in Italia si mangiano. The book is about the growth and use of fruits and vegetables, and their preparation as food. Castelvetro arrived in England in 1584. He was a friend and contemporary of Florio, and like him found service



in the court circle. He was King James' Italian tutor for four years; he also attended Wotton in Venice, and helped Lady Bedford's brother John with his Italian during his visit there.<sup>187</sup>

After 1612, Lady Bedford's primary new interest as a patron was in paintings. The earliest evidence is a letter from Nicholas Bacon to his wife Lady Cornwallis on 6 Feb. 1614. It appears that Lady Bedford had commissioned a painting, possibly a landscape, since Bacon advised that "the weather hath been very unfavourable to the proceedings of her picture".<sup>188</sup> In 1615, the Earl of Arundel returned from two years in Italy: under the influence of Inigo Jones, he became the first aristocratic patron in England to turn from poetry to graphic arts. Lady Bedford soon followed suit. By 1618 she had become a serious collector. A postscript to a letter written to Lady Cornwallis from Bedford House on 7 March 1618 contains the famous reference to "paintings of Holbein's".

I had almost forgotten an earnest request I am to make by you to Mr. Bacon, but that a trick of my Lord of Arundel put upon me yesterday to the cosening me of some pictures promised me, put me in mind of it. I was told the last night that your father in law was like to die, and that he had some peices of painting of Holbein's; which I am sure, as soon as Arundel hears, he will try all means to get: but I beseech you entreat Mr. Bacon, if they will be parted with to any, to lay hold of them afore hand for me, who better than any other I am sure may prevail with his brother, to whose share I conceive they will fall; for I am a very diligent gatherer of all I can get of Holbein's or any other excellent master's hand; I do not care at what rate I have them for price, but shall think it an extraordinary favour if Mr. Bacon can procure me those, or any others, if he know any such thereabouts, upon any conditions; whose judgement is so extraordinary good as I know none can better tell what is worth the having. Some of those I have, I have found in obscure places, and gentlemen's houses, that, because they were old, made no reckoning of them; and that makes me think it likely that there may yet be in divers places many excellent unknown pieces, for which I lay wait with all my friends; and when Mr. Bacon comes to London, he shall see

that though I be but a late beginner, I have pretty store of choice pieces. Dear Madam, let me hear by this bearer, whether I have not been misinformed concerning these pictures, and if I have not, make them sure either for me or nobody; and be not curious to think I may pay too much, for I had rather have them than jewels. If any copies of them be desired, I will return such as he must extraordinarily well know painting, that shall distinguish them from the originals.<sup>189</sup>

Lady Bedford was astute enough to realize that "old" paintings were often hidden in "obscure places", eager enough not to "care at what rate I have them for price"; no longer the "fine dancing dame", she now preferred paintings to jewels. Her rivalry with Arundel, the foremost of the new collectors, led to plotting and detective work, "for I am a very diligent gatherer of all I can get of Holbein's or any other excellent master's hand." She asked Mr. Bacon's help--his father did not die, in fact, until Nov. 1624--and commended his "extraordinary good judgement." Yet there is little in the letter to justify the opinion that Lady Bedford was a knowledgeable collector: "though I be but a late beginner, I have pretty store of choice pieces" suggests that she had simply taken up the latest fad.

Nevertheless, in pursuit of Holbein or 'any other excellent master', Lady Bedford did in fact become a connoisseur, as a letter probably written to Sir Dudley Carleton on 5 Nov. 1621 reveals:

I will shortly send you over a picture of my Lord Chamberlain done by Mittens [sic] which if too much desire to do well make him not fall short of his late works, I dare say may boldly appear amongst the better sort of Michel Johnston's. But certainly then you shall not see something of his hand for the credit of my judgement in painting. If he fail in what is destined to you, I will send you some other good piece of his, whether you care for the person or no. And if ever I be so happy as to see you here, entertain you with the sight of such a collection, as will answer for the Italian spirits that no Dutchman must ever hope to approve them; no more then any of any nation to surpass in thankfulness and respect to you.<sup>190</sup>

Despite its obvious good humour, this letter does do credit to Lady Bedford's judgement in painting. Her rivalry with Arundel underlies the comparison of the Dutch to "the Italian spirits", and her jibe at Carleton that she will send "some other good piece of his, whether you care for the person or no" suggests, as Patricia Thomson noted, that Lady Bedford valued portraits for their artistic merit.

Chronicling subsequent generations of the Bedford title, Gladys Scott Thomson speculated on the contents of Lady Bedford's collection. She found in the Bedford papers at Woburn no record of how many pictures Lady Bedford acquired, what they were, or how many survived in the family collection; Lady Bedford died intestate, and the title passed to Francis, the third Earl's cousin. There are three portraits of the first Earl in the Woburn collection, all probably by followers or imitators of Holbein. These may have been in the Russell family, if not acquired then perhaps "found in obscure places" (as she said in the Holbein letter) by Lady Bedford. One drawing of the first Earl by Holbein himself, 'The Lord Privy Seal with one eye' in the royal collection at Windsor, "is not nor ever was in any house belonging to the Russells"; if it passed into the royal collection through the efforts of Charles I, who shared with the prominent courtiers the new pastime of collecting, it could have been acquired through Lady Bedford's agency. Thomson felt that Lady Bedford acquired the one "unique possession", a Gheerhaedts portrait, one of only three known paintings which are signed in full by Gheerhaedts himself. Lady Bedford may also have acquired the portrait of Queen Elizabeth with two Armada scenes in the background, a Gheerhaedts studio piece. It is difficult to trace Lady Bedford's contribution to the

Woburn collection because of the absence of records, and also because her successor, Katherine Brydges, daughter of Lord Chandos and wife of the fourth Earl, brought another collection of sixteenth-century portraits into the Russell family.<sup>191</sup>

Another of Lady Bedford's favourite pastimes was matchmaking. The most spectacular of the alliances which the Countess helped to arrange was that of her friend James, Lord Hay with Lucy Percy, daughter of the Earl of Northumberland. On 22 Feb. 1617, Chamberlain reported:

...this night he [the French Ambassador, de la Tour] is solemnly invited by the Lord Hay to the Wardrobe to a supper and a masque [Jonson's Lovers Made Men], where the Countess of Bedford is to be Lady and mistress of the feast, as she is of the managing of his love to the Earl of Northumberland's younger daughter, with whom he is far engaged in affection, and finds such acceptance both at her hands and her mother's that it is thought it will prove a match.<sup>192</sup>

"That magnificent profligate" who excelled in "parvenu ostentation"<sup>193</sup> was the only one of James' early favourites who retained the affection of the king and his place at the centre of the social life of the court. Hay's reputation for extravagance seems well justified. In his next letter, Chamberlain sniped: "The Frenchmen are gone after their great entertainment, which was too great for such petty companions, specially that of the Lord Hay's which stood him in more than £2200, being rather a profusion and spoil than reasonable or honourable provision,..."<sup>194</sup> Lord Hay probably thought it was all worthwhile. Though Northumberland himself disapproved, the marriage took place on 4 Nov. 1617, in the presence of the king.<sup>195</sup>

The existence of Lady Bedford's letters in the Cornwallis papers is especially fortunate, for there is little other information concerning

her activities in the years 1615-1618. The Chamberlain letters provide a complementary source of comment, though much of it is incidental. Chamberlain's frequent references to Lady Bedford in his newsletters to ambassador Carleton were a reflection both of the Countess' social importance and of Carleton's vested interests. Precisely when Lady Bedford and Carleton became acquainted is not known; they may have passed many times in the royal audience chambers. After 1618, there is considerable information about their friendship. In April 1618, Chamberlain noted that he had seen Lady Carleton with Lady Bedford at Mercers chapel; the ladies "came to hear the archbishop of Spalato that made a kind of introduction for the new-come Italian preacher [Caesar Calandrini]."<sup>196</sup> On Nov. 28, John Pory advised Carleton that Lady Isabella Rich "wished Carleton had applied to Lady Bedford, who is powerful with both the Marquises [Hamilton and Buckingham] and the Lord Chamberlain Pembroke."<sup>197</sup> Carleton had already done so: a letter from Lady Bedford to him 18 Oct. 1618 indicates that she did lend him her support.<sup>198</sup> He did not obtain the secretaryship he sought, but his friendship with Lady Bedford continued. In later years, seven letters from Lady Bedford to Carleton survive, several dealing with the affairs of Princess Elizabeth while Carleton was the ambassador in the Hague.

When Lady Bedford wrote to Lady Cornwallis on 4 Oct. 1618, the "worst" news was the Queen's illness--"I never saw her look so dangerously ill." As a result, Lady Bedford found herself "oftener a courtier than I intended," almost as if she were keeping her quarter of attendance as of old, and she thought she would "winter at London".<sup>199</sup> When she wrote in April 1619, Queen Anne was dead and lying in state. Lady Bedford

regretted that Lady Cornwallis was ill, and would be unable to attend the funeral. Though Lady Bedford reported "the King is earnest to have the funeral hastened,"<sup>200</sup> it did not take place until 13 May. The Countess of Arundel was the chief lady mourner, and Lady Bedford was among the principal ladies in attendance.<sup>201</sup> "The decease of the queen leading naturally to a reduction of the royal household, the countess--after sixteen years' attendance on, and attachment to, her person, during which she was identified more than any other Lady with her amusements, tastes, and movements--retired to her private villa."<sup>202</sup> Queen Anne's death certainly contributed to Lady Bedford's preference for living at Moor Park, away from the court, but her disenchantment was not new; for two years at least she had been pursuing her private amusements, attending the royal court infrequently, on business or by command.

1619 marked the end of Lady Bedford's second decade as a courtier. After a series of domestic misfortunes--her own severe illness, the Earl's accident, the deaths of her father, brother and sister--her interest in court life waned.

In 1617 the Bedfords acquired Moor Park, and Lady Bedford turned to two new interests, establishing an elaborate garden and collecting paintings. Her political and social power remained: she was often in attendance at court; she numbered Hay, Hamilton, and Pembroke among her friends and allies; she was influential in the introduction of Villiers, and he rewarded his friends. In these years, when the Countess was in her 30's, we have for the first time her own letters and their evidence of her attitudes. They provide brief notes about her public life, and

reflect more clearly her private self--her concern for the well-being of her friends, her wit and good humour, her sincere if platitudinous piety.

#### 1619-1627 Retirement

Almost immediately after the funeral of Queen Anne in May 1619, Lady Bedford set out for Dover to meet her mother; Lady Harington was returning to England after more than two years attendance on Princess Elizabeth. At Dover, Lady Bedford "met with news of a dangerous sickness whereunto she has fallen beyond the seas, I think at Calais, whither my Lady Bedford has gone over to her."<sup>203</sup> By the date of that letter, 24 May, Lady Harington must have been recovering, for they reached London May 29; crowds gathered near Harington House in Bishopsgate to witness Lady Harington's return.<sup>204</sup>

Within two weeks, Lady Bedford herself was seriously ill. By June 12, the illness was identified as the dreaded smallpox; she was attended by Mayerne.<sup>205</sup> The progress of the illness was reported in a series of newsletters; the most dramatic accounts are Chamberlain's.

June 18. My Lady Bedford is sometimes well, sometimes ill, but past all danger, as it is hoped.

June 19. ...the small pocks had seized on the Lady of Bedford, and so seasoned her all over, that they say she is more full and foul than could be expected in so thin and lean a body.

July 9. My Lady Bedford is well recovered, only she hath a (disorder) in one of her eyes, so that she doth not yet go abroad.

July 15. The Countess of Bedford was lately at the last cast and no hope of life left, in so much that receiving the communion in company of the lord chamberlain, Marquis Hamilton and others as her viaticum, she gave over the world and took her leave, but the worst is they say the master-pox hath settled in one of her eyes whereby she is like to lose it.

August 29. My Lady Bedford will hardly escape the loss of her eye.<sup>206</sup>

When recalling the events of 1619 later, Lady Anne Clifford noted "Lady Bedford had the smallpox and had them in that extremity that she lost one of her eyes."<sup>207</sup> Whether this did in fact happen can be doubted: no other account records such a dire result, and Lady Bedford does not list partial blindness among her afflictions in her familiar correspondence. It can even be doubted that she "had her beauty ruined as a result of its ravages;"<sup>208</sup> many of her contemporaries suffered little visible damage from the disease.

Lady Bedford's mother never entirely recovered from her own 1619 illness. Lady Harington died "of a convulsion or kind of apoplexy"<sup>209</sup> on 25 May 1620. She died at Harington House in Bishopsgate, and was buried at Exton.<sup>210</sup> Lady Bedford acknowledged Lady Cornwallis' condolences with a long reflective letter on 1st June: "What a mother I have lost I need not tell you, that know what she was in herself and to me." She compared her loss to Pembroke's, whose infant son had just died. She reflected on the "religious resolution" of her friend to "bear with patience what the Almighty hath done", and on the 'good end' made by her "dear mother", "who hath left many seremonies [i.e. exempla?] how well she was prepared for it, which is my unspeakable comfort." She concluded: "It now rests for me to follow as well as I can her good example, which God grant I may, in living for his service, that I may die in his favour."<sup>211</sup> The religious commonplaces seem genuine here-- as is the sense of loss, and her deep sympathy with Pembroke in his.<sup>212</sup>

In the last decade of her life, despite illnesses and financial difficulties, Lady Bedford continued to enjoy matchmaking for her young



friends. Early in 1620, Chamberlain reported Lady Bedford's generosity to one of her young attendants:

I forgot in my last that Sir Francis Nethersole was then newly married to Mistress Goodyer that served the Lady of Bedford who gave her 500 £ or 700 £, besides 500 £ she bestowed upon them in gloves, which brought in a great contribution of plate to make up a portion which her father Sir Henry could not give.<sup>213</sup>

Sir Henry Goodyer had attended Lady Bedford for more than ten years. By 1620, Donne's friend and favourite correspondent was virtually bankrupt, the result of prodigal living. His daughter, like Donne's, was named Lucy as a god-child of the Countess. This was a situation Lady Bedford would delight in: helping a young lady with few prospects to achieve a suitable match.

In 1621 and 1622, Lady Bedford again tried to arrange a marriage for her niece, and this time she was successful. Writing to Lady Cornwallis early in 1621, Lady Bedford referred to the match proposed three years earlier with Hamilton's son, "those designs I had for my niece being crossed by her father's untowardness."<sup>214</sup> Since she had no heirs, Lady Bedford intended to provide for herself and her niece. "My niece, her father, and I having bargained, she with him for the present possession of her land, and I with her for the possibility in the lease of Combe." Her niece thus provided for--"her own portion being sufficient for any match"--Lady Bedford planned to secure her own maintenance by selling Combe.<sup>215</sup> In April 1622, Chamberlain reported: "The Prince...was the last week at the Lady of Bedford's about the concluding of a match twixt the Lord Bruce and her niece Mistress Chichester."<sup>216</sup> All these efforts were rewarded: Anne Chichester

married Thomas, third Lord Bruce of Kinross, early in July 1622.<sup>217</sup>

Even after the death of Queen Anne and her own serious illness in 1619, Lady Bedford continued to be influential in the court circle. In late Sept. 1619 she acted as mediator in a squabble between two of her powerful friends at court. On Sept. 11, Chamberlain reported:

We have much talk of a pique at court twixt the Lord of Buckingham and the Earl of Pembroke about the granting of the office of Groom-porter, which the Lord Chamberlain pretends to be in his gift, and the other got it of the King for a follower of his, and entitles the King to it.<sup>218</sup>

By Oct. 2, the matter was settled:

I hear the difference twixt the two great lords at court about the Groom-portership is accorded by mediation of the Lady of Bedford, and the Lord Chamberlain's creature in possession of the place.<sup>219</sup>

Again in Dec. 1626, Lady Bedford acted as mediator in a squabble among courtiers. In the contentions over Lord Zouch's will--Lady Zouch was Lady Bedford's aunt--"these disputes have been referred by the parties to the Lord Steward of the Household [Pembroke] and the Countess of Bedford whose award the Lord Keeper thought should be adhered to, with one slight alteration".<sup>220</sup>

Lady Bedford was not always so successful in influence-peddling. Chamberlain reported in March 1622 that the combined influence of Prince Charles, Lady Bedford and Pembroke was not enough to upset the process of nomination of a new warden for Merton College:

After the decease of Sir Henry Savile,...the warden-ship of Merton College it is yet in suspense, for though the fellows and seniors with full consent made choice of Master Brent...yet by reason the Prince wrote in the behalf of Sir Isaac Wake, my Lord of Canterbury makes stay till his highness may be satisfied, and withall Sir Isaac Wake's friends have made such means to the Countess of Bedford and the Lord Chamberlain, that many questions are made about the validity of the election,...<sup>221</sup>

At the end of the month, Chamberlain noted that the college seniors had had their way, and "Master Brent is quietly possessed of Merton College."<sup>222</sup>

In the final years of James' reign, Lady Bedford watched the rise of the Duchess of Richmond, and became her attendant and friend. Ludovick Stuart, first cousin to King James, was the second of only three dukes in England: Prince Charles (as Duke of Cornwall) was first in precedence; Richmond was second; Villiers, created Duke of Buckingham in 1623, was third. After his death in Feb. 1624, his widow remained one of the principal courtiers. That she attended the Duchess in her mourning and later when she returned to public life <sup>223</sup> attests to Lady Bedford's continued prominence in court life, and to her astute choice of powerful allies.

Lady Bedford herself, several of her friends at court, and other members of the original Twickenham circle, were sympathetic to the cause--and subsequent plight--of the Princess Elizabeth. In 1613, Princess Elizabeth had married Frederick, Count Palatine. For six years, they ruled his principality from Heidelberg, and the young Elector dabbled in the complicated affairs of the European alliances. In 1619, the elective crown of Bohemia was vacant: <sup>the king of Bohemia was one of the Electors who chose</sup> The Archduke Ferdinand, a Catholic, <sup>the Holy Roman</sup> a Hapsburg and Emperor. expected to be chosen, but the Bohemian Protestants wanted a Protestant King. After the death of the Emperor Matthias on 20 March 1619, Lord Hay (Viscount Doncaster) was sent to Germany to negotiate between the Archduke and the Bohemians, in hopes of averting further difficulties. Hay, with Donne in his train, left England on 12 May and arrived in Heidelberg in early June. Ferdinand was chosen emperor on 18 August,

but two days earlier the Bohemians had deposed him <sup>as king of Bohemia</sup> and offered his crown to Frederick. He accepted, and almost immediately there began what became the Thirty Years' War.<sup>224</sup> Frederick was soon defeated; he and the Princess Elizabeth fled, and took up residence at the Hague in April 1621.<sup>225</sup>

When Lady Bedford and the Princess Elizabeth became personal correspondents is not known. Lady Bedford, Lady Cornwallis and the Princess had been friends while the Princess lived at Combe Abbey with the Haringtons.<sup>226</sup> After Lady Harington returned to Heidelberg at the end of 1616, Lady Bedford immediately planned a visit there, though there is no evidence that she actually went. By 1620, they were exchanging letters. On 13 March, Elizabeth, then Queen of Bohemia, wrote: "I see by your lines that you are still the same to me in your affection...I would that others were of your mind. Then I hope there would be taken a better resolution for us here than yet there is; for I am every way assured of the people's love, which is more than I can yet deserve."<sup>227</sup> The prince was sympathetic to his sister's situation, and in favour of supporting her husband. At about this time in 1620, two of the Countess' friends wrote in defense of Frederick's actions, Sir Thomas Roe a poem and Wotton a pamphlet.<sup>228</sup> Lady Bedford obviously shared the opinions of her friends: after 1621, both she and the Earl were active in trying to aid the exiles.

In July 1621 Lady Bedford wrote to Lady Cornwallis with news of her impending journey to the Hague. Chamberlain had mentioned this plan on 18 April: "The Countess of Bedford is preparing to go to the Hague,

though I think not so soon as was pretended."<sup>229</sup> Lady Cornwallis must have known of the plan and wished to accompany her friend, for Lady Bedford explained that permission for her journey was granted "with this condition, that I should not invite others to the like journey." King James, worried that Prince Charles' continued poor health would leave the succession open, probably feared that peers sympathetic to the Princess Elizabeth would flock to her, if Lady Bedford set a trend. Lady Bedford's plans were precise: "I intend to set forward from hence on Tuesday or Wednesday comse'night, and to stay there till towards the 20th of August, before the end of which month I must, if I live, of necessity be in England." In 'settling her estate' before travelling, she provided for repayment of her debt to Lady Cornwallis if she did not return.<sup>230</sup>

Lady Bedford arrived in the Hague about the middle of August 1621. Her visit lasted only a few days, and was marred by quarrels over precedence between the Dutch and Palatine ladies, because Lady Carleton deferred to Lady Bedford. "Elizabeth had exactly one day of far from uninterrupted converse with her friend. Her Majesty both dined and supped at the British Embassy, where Lady Bedford was staying, on Aug. 17."<sup>231</sup> Then, when the treacherous channel winds turned suddenly in her favour, Lady Bedford made a hasty departure.

After her return, Lady Bedford engaged in trying to assist Elizabeth and Frederick. Seven letters from her to Carleton in the period 30 August 1621 to 19 Nov. 1623 survive; they concern Carleton's attempts to find a position in England,<sup>232</sup> and some affairs, for the most part domestic, of the Queen of Bohemia. One of the few extant

letters of the Earl of Bedford concerns efforts of the English government to send money to Frederick in 1621.<sup>233</sup>

30 August 1621 Lady Bedford wrote to inform Carleton that she was "sending a page to the King of Bohemia for Duke Charles."<sup>234</sup> 4 April 1622 she reported that she had just written "a volume of news" to Elizabeth, and that "Mr. Preston, a chaplain soon to be sent to Her Majesty, is much approved, and is conformable to the English Church." Finally she advised that Elizabeth write to Secretary Calvert, probably seeking further financial assistance.<sup>235</sup> On 4 May she repeated the advice, asking that Elizabeth "write urgently to the Prince and Secretary Calvert." Lady Bedford hoped to visit Elizabeth in the Hague again, but could not because she was "troubled with an encumbered estate."<sup>236</sup> The letter of 13 May referred again to Mr. Preston, or to the chaplain he was replacing: Lady Bedford advised that, if Elizabeth liked her chaplain, she should keep him, "as good preachers will scarcely be induced to go abroad, where no ways of preferment are open."<sup>237</sup>

In the next ten months, the Bedfords may have been actively aiding the Bohemian cause, for on 28 March 1623, Lady Bedford sent a warning: she entreated Carleton "for God's sake preach more wariness to the Queen whom she uses freedom to, else she will undo herself." At the time, Prince Charles was in Spain; perhaps Elizabeth had speculated too freely on the succession problem. Of her own part, Lady Bedford reported: "if I had not found much cause I would not have done what I confess against myself."<sup>238</sup> This letter has the tension and obscurity of a writer who thinks she is involved in espionage and intrigue; perhaps

the Countess' problem was simply that she risked the King's displeasure by supporting Elizabeth too openly.

At about the same time as her last letter to Carleton, in Nov. 1623, Lady Bedford wrote to Elizabeth herself, describing Prince Charles' appearance in parliament after his return from Spain:

--where none plays his part with so due applause as your excellent brother, who wins daily more and more upon the hearts of all good men; and hath begotten, by his princely and wise proceedings, such an opinion of his reality, judgment, and worthy intentions for the public good, that I think never prince was more powerful in the parliament-house than he. And there doth he express himself substantially so well, that he is often called up to speak, and he doth it with that satisfaction to both houses as is much admired. And he behaves himself with so much reverence to the houses, when either himself takes occasion to speak, or is chosen by them to do so unto the Lower House, as any other man who sits amongst them. And he will patiently bear contradictions, and calmly forego his own opinions, if he have been mistaken, which yet hath so seldom happened, as not above twice in all this time he hath had cause to approve of any other than his own. All which are so remarkable excellencies in a prince so young, so lately come to be himself, as I am sure the world hath not another to parallel with him. He is besides most diligent and indefatigable in businesses - a patient hearer, judicious in distinguishing counsels, moderate in his actions, steady in his resolutions; so even as variableness is a thing neither in deed or in appearance in him. And so civil and accomplished withal every way, both in mind and body, that, consider him even not as a prince (which yet adds much lustre to him), and there is nobody who must not acknowledge him to be a gentleman very full of perfections. And, without flattery, I know none to be compared with him; for his virtues and parts are eminent, without any mixture of vanity or vice.<sup>239</sup>

Even considering that for the intended reader Lady Bedford would polish the royal image with flattery, the idealization is extreme. But in the second half of the letter, Lady Bedford's motives, both disinterested and ulterior, become clear.

She first asked Elizabeth to repeat to Charles "what you hear of him from them who will neither flatter him nor dissemble with you", meaning, of course, her own effusion. This repetition would provide both

"recompense, and encouragement"; Elizabeth should "press his due upon him". Lady Bedford's intention is clear: if all idealize the prince, the prince will feel compelled to become ideal. Next, quite disingenuously, she disclaimed any personal interest: "though I am furthest removed from any hope of particular advantage, I have, for the general, so large a share as makes me, who am otherwise weary of life, glad that I have lived to see this proof of him." The lady was capable of considerable convolution, if not subtlety. She concluded with the hope that, through Charles' agency, Elizabeth would soon be "restored to what you have been."

In a letter to Lady Cornwallis on 28 Nov. 1623, Lady Bedford noted that "the Prince is the most improved man that ever I saw," an opinion which perhaps justified the above effusion to the Princess written at about the same time. She also noted that "Buckingham recovers much of what he had lost",<sup>240</sup> probably referring to Buckingham's loss of dignity through his management of the failed Spanish marriage for Prince Charles, and his rumoured scandalous behaviour at the Spanish court. Three months later, on 28 Feb. 1624 she reported that Buckingham had "made his declaration" to parliament effectively ending the negotiations for the Spanish marriage, and that her friend Hamilton had become Lord Steward of the Household.<sup>241</sup>

Hamilton died on 2 March 1625; King James himself died the 27th of the same month. Lady Bedford's grief at the death of Hamilton and her morbid speculations that he may have been poisoned, occupy one half of a very long letter to Lady Cornwallis on 12 April 1625; in the other half, she described the situation at court under the new king. Lady Bedford



observed his dispensations in some detail: Charles had "already changed the whole face of the court...suffering none but the council and his bedchamber to come further than the privy chamber." He behaved graciously to Buckingham, "but, it is hoped, will be governed by no man." She approved of his acceptance of Pembroke as one of the few "honest men" the time afforded, and expected that Pembroke would succeed Hamilton as Lord Steward of the Household, and that his brother Montgomery would become Lord Chamberlain. All of this seemed positive, but "the chief" cause for hope was that Charles "manifests much care of God's service".<sup>242</sup>

A year later Lady Bedford reported that King Charles and parliament were already having differences, he "stiff" and they "growing stronger and stronger". Arundel, the Lord Marshall, was again in the Tower.<sup>243</sup> His son, Lord Maltravers, had married Lady Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of the Duke of Lennox, without the knowledge or consent of the king. Lady Bedford feared that "so able a man" would be kept out of parliament for the entire session; in spite of complaints from the Lords, Charles did not release Arundel until June 8, when the session was ending.<sup>244</sup>

It is difficult to determine Lady Bedford's political views or even the extent of her political acumen from these brief notes interpolated in the midst of court news and gossip. It is obvious she has some reservations about King Charles. Since she was always pragmatic in such matters, I suspect that, as long as she continued to benefit, she would object only in theory, if at all seriously, to the idea of personal royal government.

Two letters written early in 1624 reveal Lady Bedford's mature

character--her concern for her friends, her philosophic outlook on life, her view of grief. In a note written 28 Nov. 1623, Lady Bedford had expressed concern for Lady Cornwallis' state of mind in terms which suggest her friend was pregnant and apprehensive.<sup>245</sup> In a letter of advice written 20 Jan. 1624, Lady Bedford expands on this concern. Though general and philosophical, the letter conveys active sympathy. Lady Cornwallis was suffering some undefined illness compounded with nervous dread: "I remember well what it was you feared at your last being in town, and I am sorrier than I can tell you, that there is such a resemblance in our destinies as makes you, like me, a true professor to yourself of ills to come." Lady Bedford counselled her friend to rely on her "courage" and "kind sensibleness" to overcome "that melancholy... which...hath already wrought soill effects upon your health, and so strong apprehensions in your mind..."<sup>246</sup> If her friend's unhappy state of mind continued, Lady Bedford thought she should move to London, and promised her own "service" and "that of others of more power than my own":

I am sure you believe there are not many for whom I durst engage my word to you so freely, and therefore will easily judge that I offer you the service but of two; but if those two give you not a good account of what I promise in their names, set it on my score as a falsehood.

It is tempting to speculate which "two" are meant here: if the matter were political or social, the most probable would be the powerful Herbert brothers, Pembroke and Montgomery, or perhaps Hamilton and Buckingham; since the problem is personal, the two may have been Mayerne and Burgess. Lady Bedford offered space in her own London residences as fit lodgings for Lady Cornwallis and her family.

In her next letter, Lady Bedford again expressed concern for her

friend's "indisposition incident to child bed". Writing from Harington House on 28 Feb., she invited Lady Cornwallis to London because 'dangerous melancholy' prevailed on her friend's mind in 'that solitary place'.<sup>247</sup> The main news was the death of the Duke of Richmond. Lady Bedford commented on the happiness of the marriage, the details of the death, and the behaviour of the widow: she gave "liberal vent" to her sorrow, cut her hair, and "told us of some other vows of retiredness she had made." Lady Bedford encouraged her to keep them, because "it is the counsel I should take to myself in her case." Lady Bedford 'imagined' there would be difficulty between the Duchess and the wife of Lord Esme Stuart, who succeeded to the dukedom.<sup>248</sup>

Lady Bedford's first letter to Lady Cornwallis in 1625, written on 23 March from Moor Lodge, concerned her grief at the death of the Marquis of Hamilton: "I have lost the best and worthiest friend that ever breathed." She continued to lament at some length, revealing a genuine sense of loss. But even in grief Lady Bedford was practical, for she reflected that the Lord Chamberlain, Pembroke, was "the last person left of power that I can rely on for the worth of his affection and friendship to me." She also expected "a great change" in the country as the King was ill at Theobalds, and there was "no hope of his life."<sup>249</sup> Four days later, King James died.

In her letter of 12 April, the Countess again reflected on the death of Hamilton, and vehemently defended his memory against the "slander" that he had been a papist: his close friends wished the world to know "how far both in sound judgment as well as practise he was from approving

any point of their doctrine disagreeing with the creed we profess."

In her unhappiness, she indulged in the hysterical speculation that, because he had been "the boldest opposer of their ends," Hamilton had been poisoned by "the lying Papists". However, providing the details of the autopsy, she admitted that "all his vital parts were so decayed, as,...he could hardly have lived out a year," and recalled his own "melancholy apprehension" that he would soon die.<sup>250</sup> These letters, and the two expressing concern for Lady Cornwallis, are further evidence of an admirable trait of Lady Bedford's character: genuine affection for her friends and grief at their loss.

To the end of her life, Lady Bedford remained interested in paintings and other art objects. The only letter in the Cornwallis papers from Lady Bedford to Nathaniel Bacon himself is an elaborate note of thanks written 6 Nov. 1624. It is unlikely that what Bacon had furnished was his father's collection of paintings, though Sir Nicholas Bacon died only a week later. Bacon had probably been acting as Lady Bedford's agent for several years. In a postscript, she promised to show him "some good new pieces of painting at Harington House" when next he was in London.<sup>251</sup> Among Lady Bedford's other interests were coins and antique medals. At the end of Dec. 1626, she received a letter from Sir Thomas Roe, written 9 Dec. in Constantinople. It opens with an elegant courtly flourish: "I am glad to find an excuse and force an occasion to renew in your remembrance the name of an old servant..." Knowing Lady Bedford's interest in "the latest pleasure", the collecting of "ancient coins and medals", he wrote a learned and detailed report of

"such as in this pilgrimage I have collected." Arundel, Buck ingham, and Pembroke were Lady Bedford's rivals in this newest aristocratic fad.<sup>252</sup>

In late 1626 and early 1627, there is also some news of the Earl. In 1626 he had been at the Court of Holland with Carleton and others; Lady Bedford perhaps planned to visit Elizabeth then, but had not made the journey.<sup>253</sup> Early in 1627, as Lord Lieutenant of Devonshire, he was overseeing the defense of Dartmouth and dispatching soldiers to Portsmouth to be shipped to Guernsey and Jersey.<sup>254</sup>

Early in 1627, both the Earl and Lady Bedford fell ill, he of smallpox, she of an ague. In April and May, Thomas Meautys reported the course of their ill health to his cousin, Lady Bacon. On April 5, her "best friend" was "increasing to a perfect recovery", and on Easter night "my Lady of Bedford wins still upon her health, and missed her fit yesterday."<sup>255</sup> But neither the Earl nor his lady recovered. Edward Russell died on 3rd May; the next day, Meautys reported: "My Lady's recovery is much doubted; her strength and spirits being, as they say, far spent, and wearing out daily by an untoward cough, which is almost continual."<sup>256</sup> She died 26th May. The Earl was privately interred at Cheyneys, in Russell Chapel, either the night of his death,<sup>257</sup> or the 11th of May.<sup>258</sup> Lady Bedford was buried at Exton Church on the 31st of May.<sup>259</sup>

#### Finances

The records of the Bedfords' financial affairs are the final source of information about Lady Bedford's life. Notes in her own letters, in state papers, and in contemporary accounts present details

of the financial situation which underlay her life-style. All these details indicate that throughout her adult life, whatever her current interests, whether she lived at court or in the country, the main feature of Lady Bedford's life-style was her extravagance. As a result, she was often in financial difficulty. As we shall see in considering Lady Bedford as a patron, there are few records of her extravagance and generosity. But the efforts the Bedfords made to mend their fortunes--Lady Bedford commented to Lady Cornwallis in 1614 that she felt "the burden of a broken estate"--are fairly well documented.

In discussing the financial background of the Essex rebellion, as we have seen, Lawrence Stone described the Earl of Bedford as one of the "whole new generation of high-spirited young aristocrats"<sup>260</sup> whose extravagance placed them in financial difficulty. Though Bedford's financial affairs are not as fully documented as those of Rutland or Southampton, Stone notes that Bedford "had inherited very large debts in 1585" including the encumbrance of surviving widows, and "had spent the 1590's running up more of his own".<sup>261</sup> After their marriage in 1594, the young Earl had the added burden of Lucy's expenses. As previously noted, in 1601 she was unable to repay in full a debt of £500.<sup>262</sup> In that year, by Stone's estimates, Bedford's private debts exceeded £7,000 while his gross rental income was perhaps only £4,000.<sup>263</sup> Of that total debt, Bedford owed more than £1,000 to London shopkeepers for goods and services.<sup>264</sup> Perhaps Bedford himself was extravagant, or perhaps he was already finding his lady an expensive luxury: he obviously needed a large cash revenue, and used his lands to gain it.

In 1585 when he became Earl, Bedford was advised to convert

demesne holdings to leases, which provided greater immediate income. This was in contrast to his father, a "conservative landlord" who simply held land, made few improvements but also exerted little pressure on tenants. In the 1590's, the young Earl was apparently following the advice, as he was among the many noble landlords who agreed to long leases at low rents but with high initial fines (fees).<sup>265</sup> In addition, Bedford began selling land: for example, he sold two large manors in 1602, one for £5,000.<sup>266</sup> Stone noted that Bedford's relatives, alarmed at these sales, "prudently extracted huge bonds from him to prevent his alienating entailed family estates".<sup>267</sup>

In addition to his country estates, Bedford also held extensive city holdings. The usual plan of lords engaged in urban development was not to invest their own capital, but to survey and divide into lots, give thirty-one year leases, and then allow the tenant to build. Edward Russell and his heir, the 4th Earl Francis, were among "a few striking exceptions to this pattern of entrepreneurial initiative without capital expenditure". The 3rd Earl began the development of his property on the north side of the Strand; he apparently built or rebuilt Bedford House itself.<sup>268</sup> In 1602, Bedford's gross income from rentals, both urban and rural, was in excess of £3,500.<sup>269</sup> In 1612, he was developing his Long Acre property, and by 1618 had a London rental of more than £500 a year. It was the 4th Earl who became "one of the giants among the entrepreneurs of London building" for developing the Covent Garden piazza, but it was the 3rd Earl who started the family on urban development. He and Southampton were in the unusual position of receiving fairly large incomes from urban rents in the west end.<sup>270</sup>

Despite these efforts to increase revenue, in 1606 Bedford was still heavily in debt. He continued to sell land. In Feb. 1607, Cecil and others requested the permission of the Earl's uncle William Lord Russell for the Earl to sell the manor of Middleborne to Lord St. John. This property was part of the Countess' jointure, but she agreed to the sale. Lord Russell agreed, as this was an unentailed estate; however, he refused permission for the sale of entailed properties.<sup>271</sup> The properties placed under attainder by Lord Russell were Woburn Abbey and the Covent Garden holdings.<sup>272</sup> In accordance with this attainder, in April 1610, the Earl refused to sell his Covent Garden property to Cecil, because he had "bound himself under a heavy penalty not to further impoverish himself by sale of his property."<sup>273</sup> In 1611, however, he "conveyed Covent Garden in trust for the present maintenance of the Countess, who will transfer to his Lordship the things desired by him therein [unspecified]."<sup>274</sup> This provides the clue to the Earl's financial situation: living quietly in the country, his own expenses were probably moderate; the Countess, however, was another question. To dress in the latest style; to participate in masques and other court frivolities; to entertain lavishly; to maintain one or two London houses plus Twickenham and the country estates; to support and supply an enormous retinue (Lady Anne Clifford listed one hundred and ten as "the Household" at Knoles in 1613, and that was only one residence<sup>275</sup>) and a wide circle of friends and relations--Stone estimated that life at court would cost as much as £10,000 per year in addition to regular living expenses.<sup>276</sup> The Earl's annual rental income in this period was



perhaps half that amount. Combined evidence suggests that Lady Bedford was an example of that often satirized figure, the courtier who sold land and peddled influence to pay for amusements and costly apparel.

On her own behalf, Lady Bedford used her court influence for profit. Like almost every other courtier, Lady Bedford engaged in the sale of titles. When Sir William Cavendish bought his title from Lady Arabella Stuart in 1605, among other gifts to influential people was "£80 paid to Mr. Walter Wentworth 'servant of Lady Bedford' ".<sup>277</sup> An uncle of Arabella, Cavendish was at first parsimonious, and almost lost his chance; when he acquiesced, he was granted the barony of Hardwick in the honours at the christening of Princess Mary.<sup>278</sup> In return for her patronage in gaining the patent on the manufacture of gold and silver thread granted on 21 May 1611, Lady Bedford received £1,000. The patent, renewed in 1616, must have been profitable, since King James took it into his own hands in 1618.<sup>279</sup>

Grants from the king were another source of revenue. On 31 Dec. 1605, the Earl received "remainders, etc., of manors, value 100£ per ann." in fee simple.<sup>280</sup> Again, on 10 Feb. 1609, there was a "Grant to the Earl of Bedford of manors, parsonages, etc., not mentioned, value 120£ per ann.",<sup>281</sup> but from this on 14 Nov. 1610 "the King's reversion of Rowley Park, co. Stafford, was granted to Sir Thomas Leigh, of Stoneleigh ".<sup>282</sup> There is other evidence of King James' generosity to Lady Bedford herself. On 27 Oct. 1617, she reported to Lady Cornwallis that she had been attending the King "by his commandment for the settling of a business I have long had in hand for his service and my profit".<sup>283</sup> Unfortunately there are no financial records which accord with that date.

Almost a year later, on 4 Oct. 1618, Lady Bedford's best news was that, "after many difficulties" she had received another grant from the king with "excuses for the delays...and so much compliment as hath made amends."<sup>284</sup> A month later Chamberlain reported: "For all this hard world the Countess of Bedford hath lately gotten a suit but I know not what it is."<sup>285</sup> But Sir Edward Harwood knew: "Lady Bedford had obtained her suit for concealed debts."<sup>286</sup>

One way of recouping losses attendant on life at court was to obtain "sinecure legal offices": the nobleman involved collected fines and fees, and farmed out the actual duties. In 1612, two patents for the Clerkship of Enrolments in the King's Bench were held by Somerset and Sir John Harington, Lady Bedford's brother; Heath and Whitelock were their agents. After young Harington's death, Lady Bedford "bought out Whitelock for £800, and made over the whole interest to Somerset."<sup>287</sup> There seems to be no record of what Lady Bedford gained in exchange; perhaps this transaction cleared some private debt to Somerset, or Lady Bedford wished to cut any tie, even financial, to the waning favourite.

A more important source of income was "revenue farming" which allowed an exclusive patent to the noble petitioner. In 1612, Lord Harington was given the right to mint farthing tokens for three years. Though this was in recompense for an estimated £32,000 spent in attending the Princess Elizabeth,<sup>288</sup> the original patent was limited to £25,000.<sup>289</sup> In May of the same year, the use of tradesmen's tokens was forbidden, in order to protect Lord Harington's exclusive right.<sup>290</sup> After the death of her husband in 1613, Lady Harington appealed to Somerset because the royal debt for the princess' education had still not been met; probably through

his influence, the patent was continued in Lady Harington's benefit.<sup>291</sup> In July 1616, the patent was renewed in the names of Lady Bedford and the Duke of Lenox, who had objected to the original patent.<sup>292</sup> They nominated Edward Woodward and Thomas Gavett, London goldsmiths, to do the actual coining.<sup>293</sup> but this appointment brought objection from Gerard Malines: apparently Lady Bedford and Lenox changed both the workmen and the design, and the injured Malines claimed a loss of £2,500 in total.<sup>294</sup> There is no record of any settlement to this claim. Nor is there any evidence of the actual amount of the Harington-Bedford profit from this venture; however, since Lady Harington continued to be in financial difficulty, one assumes the total never reached the original £25,000. In 1622, the use of farthing tokens was extended to Ireland,<sup>295</sup> perhaps ensuring Lady Bedford an increase of revenue.

There are extensive financial records for this final period in Lady Bedford's life. At the time of her illness in 1619, Chamberlain noted wryly: "But for her comfort, the King had granted some few days before to her and the Marquis Hamilton a suit out of the cursitor's office in chancery worth 2000<sup>l</sup> a year towards the payment of their debts,..."<sup>296</sup> Lady Bedford's debts must have been substantial: that grant was reported on 19 June 1619; on 12 July, Lady Bedford received another grant "of certain arrears of an old custom of 2d. per chaldron on sea coals sold at Newcastle to people not franchised, due from 20 Eliz. to 10 Jac.I. Also a lease of the said custom for 31 years to come."<sup>297</sup> This grant, which Lady Bedford apparently shared with the Earl of Dorset, had been obtained through Buckingham's influence.<sup>298</sup>

In spite of all this aid, Chamberlain reported 20 Nov. that "all will not serve, for she is upon selling all the land that descended to her from her father or her brother, being (they say) 50,000£ in debt, so that the overplus will hardly amount to 20,000£."<sup>299</sup> Aside from one item, that the Countess of Bedford became one of the "lessees of the Mines Royal in Pembrokeshire" in 1624,<sup>300</sup> all other financial records concern land transfers and sales.

The Countess did in fact begin to sell the Harington estates to pay her debts. In 1619 she began by conveying several parcels of land to distant relatives. A cousin, Sir Edward Noel, who had married the daughter of the wealthy silk merchant Baptist Hicks, acquired both Ridlington and Leighfield manors in Rutland.<sup>301</sup> Noel sold Dalby Manor in Leicestershire to Buckingham for £29,000 and hoped to acquire Burley from the Countess, on which property he had already lent money.<sup>302</sup> Perhaps these exchanges were all part of one complicated land deal, for by 1621 Buckingham himself had acquired Burley from the Countess, and was entertaining the King there.<sup>303</sup> Lady Bedford was also selling her mother's property; Buckingham acquired a manor at Oakham from her in 1621.<sup>304</sup> On 26 May 1617, Lady Bedford had told Lady Cornwallis of "a bargain I am making with my Lord of Buckingham's officers for the fee farm at Combe".<sup>305</sup> Lady Bedford may have alienated part of the Harington estate at Combe Abbey at that time. In a letter to Lady Cornwallis on 20 Feb. 1621, Lady Bedford confided: "I intend to turn Combe wholly into money, both to make myself a free woman from debt, and with the rest of it to raise as good an estate for life as I can."<sup>306</sup> In July 1622 she sold Combe Abbey to Lady Craven for £36,000.<sup>307</sup> Lord Craven was apparently

one of Lady Bedford's principal creditors.<sup>308</sup>

The Bedford estates themselves were not exempt from new arrangements. In 1621 Chamberlain reported that "The Earl of Bedford has left his wife £4000 jointure, and a town and country house."<sup>309</sup> These were probably Bedford House and Moor Park. In 1622 all or part of Bedford House was leased to Francis Bacon.<sup>310</sup> The following year, part of Bedford House was leased to the Earl of Rutland at an annual rent of £120.<sup>311</sup> After the death of her first husband Dorset in March 1624, Lady Anne Clifford lived for most of the six years of her widowhood at "Cheynie House in Buckinghamshire, the Chiefe seat of my mother's father and grandfather".<sup>312</sup> As this had been Edward Russell's principal residence, Lady Anne's note confirms that the Earl and Lady Bedford were probably living together at Moor Park for the last decade of their lives. The Countess ultimately conveyed her rights in Moor Park to her cousin Pembroke.<sup>313</sup>

All of these arrangements served the immediate purpose of providing for the present maintenance of the Countess. The Earl even managed to pay some of his debts. Among State Papers for 1622 is a 'docquet' of 23 Feb.:

Warrant to the Officers of the Exchequer to strike a tally on behalf of the Earl of Bedford, of receipt of 10,000<sup>l</sup> from him, for certain entails of lands, which 10,000<sup>l</sup> was by him paid direct to the King, instead of into the Exchequer, and discharge to the said Earl of 600<sup>l</sup> more, which by contract he was to have paid for the same, and which the King remitted.<sup>314</sup>

However, even after their deaths, their debts lingered: in 1631, Sir Francis Goodwin claimed a lien when Moor Park was to be sold to Sir

John Sidley, for "his suretyship for a large debt of the late Earl and Countess of Bedford."<sup>315</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

## (CHAPTER ONE)

<sup>1</sup> Bernard H. Newdigate, "The Phoenix and the Turtle", TLS, Oct. 24, 1936, p. 862. The DNB does not list a birthdate for Lady Bedford.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Lysons, The Environs of London (2nd ed.; London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1811), II, 696.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> William Camden, Britannia, trans. Philemon Holland (2nd. ed.; London: F. Kingston, et al., 1637), p. 526.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Fuller, The History of the Worthies of England, ed. P. Austin Nuttall (London: Thomas Tegg, 1840), III, 40.

<sup>6</sup> Louisa S. Costello, Memoirs of Eminent Englishwomen (London: R. Bentley, 1844), II, 506.

<sup>7</sup> Member of Parliament in 1571, 1593, 1597-8, and 1601; High Sheriff in 1594-5, 1597-8, 1598-9, 1602-3: The Victoria History of the County of Rutland, ed. William Page (London: A. Constable and Co., Ltd., 1908) II, 115.

<sup>8</sup> Eliot Warburton, Memoirs of Prince Rupert (London: R. Bentley, 1849), p. 29.

<sup>9</sup> Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, XXI, II, 517.

<sup>10</sup> John Strype, Annals of the Reformation (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1824), II, li, 136.

<sup>11</sup> James Wright, History and Antiquities of the County of Rutland (London: B. Griffin, 1684), p. 56.

<sup>12</sup> Lysons, op. cit., 696.

- 13 HMCRC, Buccleuth, I, 193.
- 14 John Stow, The Abridgement or Summarie of the English Chronicle. Continued unto 1607 (London: for the Company of Stationers, 1607), III, 234.
- 15 Thomas Birch, Life of Henry, prince of Wales (London: A. Millar, 1760), pp. 119-126.
- 16 CSP Venetian, 1607-1610, pp. 215-216.
- 17 John Nichols, The Progresses of King James the First (London: J. B. Nichols for the Society of Antiquaries, 1828), II, 174; also Herford and Simpson, Ben Jonson, VII, 191 and X, 441.
- 18 On Oct. 6, 1589, Edward Russell was 15 years old. See Burghley's memo quoted in G. P. V. Akrigg, Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 31. Akrigg cites William Murdin, A Collection of State Papers (London: W. Bowyer, 1759), p. 792.
- 19 DNB.
- 20 Lawrence Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 727. Hereafter cited as Crisis.
- 21 Camden, Brittania, p. 394.
- 22 Stone, Crisis, p. 706.
- 23 DNB.
- 24 Wright, op. cit., p. 66.
- 25 See CSPD, Addenda, 1580-1625, pp. 152-3; and Stone, Crisis, p. 582.
- 26 J. H. Wiffen, Historical Memoirs of the House of Russell; from the time of the Norman Conquest (London: Longman, 1833), II, 65.
- 27 CSPD, 1591-1594, p. 16: letter of Roger Manners to Burghley.
- 28 Wiffen, II, 14; Thomas Birch, Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth (London: A. Millar, 1754) I, 140f.
- 29 Murdin, State Papers, p. 798: Burghley's note.
- 30 Francis Markham, The Booke of Honour (London: A. Matthews, J. Norton, 1625), p. 97.



31 Quoted in Akrigg, Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton, p. 182.

32 John Philipot, The Visitation of the County of Buckingham Made in 1634, Harleian Society Publications No. 58 (London: Mitchell, Hughes, and Clarke Printers, 1909), p. 149; P. M. Handover, Arbella Stuart: Royal Lady of Hardwich and Cousin to King James (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1957), says the dowry was £10,000 but gives no source for this figure (p. 193).

33 Gladys Scott Thomson, Life in a Noble Household, 1641-1700 (London: Jonathan Cape, 1950; first published 1937), p. 37.

34 Ibid.

35 HMCR, Various Collection, IV, 163.

36 G. B. Harrison, The Second Elizabethan Journal (London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1931), p. 184.

37 Birch MSS. No. 4160, art. 70: quoted in full in Wiffen, II, 65-66, n. 2. Wiffen gives the date incorrectly as 1603.

38 See HMCR, XI, 50 and Thomas B. Howell, Cobbett's Complete Collection of State Trials (London: R. Bagshaw, et al, 1809-26), I, 1340.

39 Wiffen, II, 65-66.

40 Stone, Crisis, p. 483.

41 Stone, Crisis, p. 582.

42 Stone, Crisis, p. 172 and n.

43 Stone, Crisis, p. 484; see also Appendix XXI, p. 778 -- Stone estimates Bedford's private debts as exceeding £7,000 while his gross rental income was perhaps £4,000.

44 Edmund Lodge, Illustrations of British History (London: G. Nicol, 1791), III, 107-8.

45 John Chamberlain, The Letters of John Chamberlain, ed. N. E. McClure (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939), p. 123. Chamberlain to Carleton, 27 May, 1601: "...there is a commission of the counsels to ransom and fine the lords and gentlemen that were in the action, and have already rated Rutland at 30,000 £, Bedford at 20,000£, Sandys at ten<sup>m</sup>, Mounteagle at 8,000, and Cromwell at 6,000, Catesby at 400 marks, Tresham at 3,000 marks, Percy and Manners at 500£ and 500 marks; (CSPD, 1601-03, p. 88.) The Chamberlain letters are cited throughout in the following manner: Letters, I (volume no.): 38(letter no. in text); 123(page no.).

46 CSPD, 1601-03, p. 279.

47 Cecil Papers, XI, 533.

48 CSPD, 1603-1610, p. 55.

49 Ibid., p. 15.

50 Charlotte Stopes, The Life of Henry, third earl of Southampton. Shakespeare's Patron, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), pp. 235-237.

51 See HMCR, Townshend, p. 11; Gladys Thomson, Life in a Noble Household, p. 37.

52 Acts of the Privy Council, 1601-04, p. 145.

53 Wiffen, II, 66.

54 Vita Sackville-West, ed., The Diary of Lady Anne Clifford (London: Heineman, 1923), p. 7; also quoted in Wiffen, II, 69. The Diary is cited throughout as Clifford, Diary.

55 Wiffen, II, 73; 75; 89; 119.

56 Cecil Papers, VI, 100, 494.

57 HMCR, Lord de Lisle and Dudley, II, 322, 416, 419.

58 John Nicols, Progresses of Queen Elizabeth (New York: Bart Franklin, 1823), III: 129, 133, 143-4, 147.

59 Calendar of Border Papers, II, 678. The writer was probably the John Carey who became 3rd Lord Hunsdon in September 1603 (2nd son of Henry, 1st Lord). As marshal of Berwick, he proclaimed James King of England when his brother Sir Robert rode north with the news of Queen Elizabeth's death. (See DNB.)

60 Norman E. McClure, ed., The Letters and Epigrams of Sir John Harington, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1930), p. 390.

61 John Dowland (1563?-1626?) spent most of his adult life abroad. His "First Booke of Songes or Ayres of Foure Parts", published in 1597, was immediately popular; a second edition appeared in 1600. On the title page of his "Second Booke of Songs or Ayres, of 2. 4. and 5. parts," he is described as "lutenist to the King of Denmark." Perhaps he sought to enter Queen Anne's circle through her brother's favour and his dedication to Lady Bedford; he dedicated at least one later work to Queen Anne. (See DNB.)

<sup>62</sup> HMCRC, Lord de Lisle and Dudley, II, 182.

<sup>63</sup> George Lipscomb, The History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham, London: J. and W. Robins, 1847), III, 260-61.

<sup>64</sup> HMCRC, Lord de Lisle and Dudley, IV, 229.

<sup>65</sup> Chamberlain, Letters, I: 123; 306.

<sup>66</sup> See pp. 47-48 below, and footnote 172. The situation of Lady Anne Clifford and her first husband Dorset was analogous to that of the Bedfords, though the roles were reversed. Dorset was a favourite of King James, a rake, a gambler and a spendthrift. Lady Anne's obstinacy in refusing to settle disputes over her lands made her more incompatible to her husband than their contrasting temperaments alone might have. She resigned herself to an almost complete separation, lived quietly at Knole, and was pathetically grateful for Dorset's occasional visits. See Diary, and George C. Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford ... (Kendal: Titus Wilson and Son, 1922; 2nd ed. Yorkshire: S. R. Publishers, Ltd., 1967).

<sup>67</sup> C. H. Firth, ed., Stuart Tracts 1603-1693, (Westminster: A. Constable & Co. Ltd., 1903), II, 37-39. The King was at Burley the 23rd and 25th April.

<sup>68</sup> Ethel Carleton Williams, Anne of Denmark (London: Longman, 1970), p. 74.

<sup>69</sup> Carola Oman (Carola Mary Anima Lenanton), Elizabeth of Bohemia (London: Hodder and Stoughton, first published 1938, revised edition 1964), p. 13.

<sup>70</sup> Agnes Strickland, Lives of the Queens of England from the the Norman Conquest (London: George Bell & Sons, 1906), IV, 66-68.

<sup>71</sup> See p. 23 above.

<sup>72</sup> Clifford, Diary, pp. 8-9.

<sup>73</sup> Handover, Arbella Stuart, pp. 198-199.

<sup>74</sup> Quoted in Wiffen, II, 71; a continuation of Diary, p. 11, from another unspecified source.

<sup>75</sup> Clifford, Diary, p. 13.

<sup>76</sup> Letter of Arabella Stuart, Nichols, Progresses of James, IV, 1060.

- 77 Violet A. Wilson, Society Women of Shakespeare's Time (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head Ltd., 1924), p. 52.
- 78 Handover, Arbella Stuart, p. 208.
- 79 HMCRC, Lord de Lisle and Dudley, III, 136.
- 80 Handover, Arbella Stuart, p. 202. Handover cites Chamberlain a letter of 15 Jan. 1604, but no such letter exists in the collected Chamberlain Letters.
- 81 Strickland, pp. 68-69; also Mary A. Everett Green, Lives of the Princesses of England, (London: Henry Colburn, 1850-55), V, 151-153.
- 82 Oman, Elizabeth of Bohemia, p. 19.
- 83 From Sir John Harrington's account of Lucy's brother, John second Lord Harrington, in Nugae Antiquae, selected by Henry Harrington, arranged by Thomas Park (London: Vernon and Hood, 1804; reprint New York: AMS Press Inc., 1966), II, 307, 311.
- 85 HMCRC, Cowper, I, 52: letter of Coke to Sir Fulke Greville; at least 2 illnesses are recorded: in August 1603, the Countess was seriously ill with a fever, which was first thought to be the plague (Isaac H. Jeayes, ed., Letters of Philip Gawdy, (London: Roxburghe Club, 1906), p. 135; in late summer or early fall 1604, the Countess was again very ill (HMCRC, Portland, IX, 13, Sir John Holles to Cecil).
- 86 Chamberlain I: 67; 198.
- 87 Lodge, Illustrations, III, 247, 240: quoted in G. B. Harrison, A Jacobean Journal (London: G. Routledge and Sons Ltd., 1941), p. 168.
- 88 Lodge, Illustrations, III, 280.
- 89 Quoted in Bernard H. Newdigate, Michael Drayton and his Circle, (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1941, corrected edition 1961), p. 65.
- 90 Sir John Harrington's account, in a letter to Mr. Secretary Barlow, is printed in full in Nugae Antiquae, II, 348-352.
- 91 Handover, Arbella Stuart, p. 224.
- 92 Bald, p. 172.
- 93 Bald, p. 177.
- 94 Bald, p. 177-8.
- 95 HMCRC, VII, 527.

<sup>96</sup> HMCRC, Lord de Lisle and Dudley, IV, 134: letter of Robert Sidney to his wife.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>98</sup> In Nov. 1606, the King was two-and-one-half years behind in reimbursing Harington (HMCRC, Salisbury, XVIII, 338); in 1608, though the allowance had been increased, Harington was still in debt (Victoria History of Rutland, I, 184).

<sup>99</sup> Chamberlain, Letters, I: 123; 306

<sup>100</sup> G. P. V. Akrigg, Jacobean Pageant, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 190.

<sup>101</sup> R. C. Bald, Donne and the Drurys, (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1959), pp. 122-123.

<sup>102</sup> Wiffen, II, 105-106.

<sup>103</sup> Worthies of England, II, 232

<sup>104</sup> Thomas Birch, The Court and Times of James the First (London: Henry Colburn, 1848), I, 211.

<sup>105</sup> Letter of Sir Thomas Lake to Carleton, CSPD, 1611-18, p. 166.

<sup>106</sup> Chamberlain to Carleton, CSPD, 1611-1618, pp. 169-170; in a letter of 11 Feb. 1613 (Letters I: 165; 422), Chamberlain noted only that the christening would be postponed a week while Lady Bedford recovered.

<sup>107</sup> Chamberlain, Letters, I: 180; 470.

<sup>108</sup> Lord Braybooke, The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Correvallis 1613-1644 (London: S. & J. Bentley, et al, 1842), pp. 44-45.

<sup>109</sup> M. M. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), pp. 428-438, 469.

<sup>110</sup> Stone, Crisis, p. 727.

<sup>111</sup> W. Ward et al, eds., The Cambridge Modern History (London: MacMilland and Co. Ltd., 1918), II, 567.

<sup>112</sup> DNB.

<sup>113</sup> Patrick Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 22, 63.

114 Ibid., p. 52.

115 Thomson, Noble Household, p. 263.

116 Collinson, p. 53.

117 Ibid., p. 31.

118 Knappen, p. 207.

119 DNB.

120 Collinson, p. 31.

121 Ibid., p. 22.

122 Knappen, p. 104.

123 Patrick McGrath, Papists and Puritans under Elizabeth I (New York: Walker and Co., 1967), p. 238. McGrath is heavily indebted to Collinson and Stone, and has little to add.

124 Collinson, p. 22.

125 Knappen, p. 411.

126 Collinson, pp. 53, 32, 48.

127 Violet A. Wilson, Society Women of Shakespeare's Time, pp. 9-10, 23.

Sir Anthony Cooke (1504-1576) was a classical scholar, a tutor to Edward VI, and a politician. Two daughters were "the most learned women in England" (DNB).

Lady Elizabeth Russell was an interesting character. Her first husband had been Sir Thomas Hoby, English Ambassador to France; they had two sons, Sir Edward Hoby and Sir Thomas Posthumous Hoby. Lady Elizabeth translated a Latin work called A Way of Reconciliation of a Good and Learned Man. She was a leader of the "Puritan Colony" at Blackfriar's in their 1596 effort to prevent Burbage from opening a replacement for The Theatre there. They were successful in that a public playhouse was prohibited. Lady Elizabeth maintained Stephen Egerton at St. Ann's, Blackfriars. Very popular with ladies, Egerton was "the only persistent non-conformist in London" in 1598, and was defended by Essex. He became the "London leader of the militant puritan minority." (Collinson, p. 446.) Lady Elizabeth died in 1609.

128 DNB.

- 129 Collinson, pp. 444, 445.
- 130 Knappen, p. 319.
- 131 Collinson, p. 446; see also G. B. Harrison, The Life and Death of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1937), pp. 227, 228.
- 132 William Haller, The Rise of Puritanism (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1938; repub. 1972), p. 174.
- 133 Knappen, p. 518.
- 134 Ibid., p. 472.
- 135 Haller, pp. 104, 291.
- 136 Sir John Harrington, "Sketch of the Character of John, Lord Harington, Baron of Exton" -- Lucy's brother, not her father -- in Nugae Antiquae, II, 312.
- 137 Haller, pp. 290-1.
- 138 William Riley Parker, Milton: A Biography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), II, 708.
- 139 Ibid., I, 31.
- 140 Ibid., II, 714.
- 141 Friedrich von Raumer, History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (London: J. Murray, 1835), II, 296-7.
- 142 DNB.
- 143 DNB.
- 144 A complete list of all works dedicated to Lady Bedford and her family appears as Appendix II, pp. 280-295 in Florence H. Morgan, "A Biography of Lucy Countess of Bedford, The Last Great Literary Patroness", unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California, 1956. I did not think it necessary to reproduce all the evidence here.
- 145 R. C. Bald, John Donne--A Life, p. 174.
- 146 DNB.
- 147 Chamberlain, Letters, I: 180; 470.

148 James Spedding et al, The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon (London: Longmans, Green, 1868-1890), V, 371-3.

149 P. Thomson, "John Donne and the Countess of Bedford", MLR, 44 (April 1949), 329-340.

150 The possible rivalry between Donne and Burgess will be discussed in Chapter V.

151 Private Correspondence, pp. 87-91. Letter 27, Appendix II.

152 Wiffen, II, 101.

153 Ian Grimble, The Harington Family (London: Jonathan Cape, 1957), p. 163. See also Nugae Antiquae, II, 406.

154 HMC, Downshire, IV, 115.

155 Chamberlain, Letters, I: 180; 470.

156 Edmund Gosse, The Life and Letters of John Donne, II, 16.

157 Chamberlain, Letters, I: 180; 470.

158 The Complete Peerage of England, original ed. George Edward Cokagne (London: The St. Catherine Press Ltd., 1910-1959), VI (1926), 321.

159 James Whitelocke, Liber Famelicus ed. John Bruce (Westminster: Camden Society Publications LXX, 1858), p. 39.

160 The Narrative History of King James, (London: for Michael Sparke, 1651), p. 56.

161 Chamberlain, Letters, I: 230; 600.

162 Lord Braybrooke, The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Cornwallis 1613-1644 (London: S. & J. Bentley, et al, 1842). Cited throughout as Private Correspondence and cross referenced to the complete text of Lady Bedford's letters reproduced in Appendix II in my suggested chronology.

163 Private Correspondence, pp. ix-x.

164 Lady Bedford is first mentioned in the Cornwallis correspondence six months before her first letter to Lady Cornwallis. A letter of 18 Jan. 1614 from Nathaniel Bacon was addressed to Lady Cornwallis at Twickenham, where she was visiting Lady Bedford. In a postscript, Bacon asks his wife "to kiss the hands of the Lady of Bedford of my part, and let her understand that at this instant I am providing to



do her service." (Private Correspondence, p. 18) In a subsequent letter on 6 Feb. 1614, Bacon advised "that the weather hath been very unfavourable to the proceedings of her picture." (p. 20) In a letter of 6 March 1614 expressing his "special condolences" to Lady Cornwallis at the death of Lady Bedford's brother--the "untimely death" left him "so sensible of our frail estate in this life" that he requested "a better assurance" of Lady Cornwallis' intention to marry him--Bacon included a postscript for Lady Bedford which, though formulaic, conveys genuine concern: "For my Lady of Bedford, let my best service attend her, and my continual prayers for all comfort spiritual and temporal." (pp. 20-21)

The first of Lady Bedford's letters in the Private Correspondence is a note of 30 July 1614 written from Bedford House. She explained that the unexpected visit of King Christian of Denmark, who was in England between 23 July and 1 August, would keep her in London a few days longer than she had intended, and asked Lady Cornwallis to meet her at Huntingdon about 11 August (p. 23. Letter 1, Appendix II). The brevity and minimum of ceremony of this first note suggest both haste and assured friendship.

165 Private Correspondence, pp. 28-30. Letter 2, Appendix II.

166 Private Correspondence, pp. 35-36. Letter 3. Appendix II.

167 Chamberlain, Letters, I: 240; 626. Early in March 1617, Lady Bedford was a godmother twice in a week: "There were two christenings in the chapel at Whitehall this week, the first on Tuesday of a son of the Lord Haddington's where the King, with the Earl of Sussex and the Countess were gossips, the other on Thursday of a son of the Lady Fielding, sister to the Earl of Buckingham who was a partner with the king and the same Lady of Bedford in that business." (Chamberlain, Letters, II: 261; 62-63. Wiffen (II, 106) following Birch (II, 13) altered Sussex, who was Haddington's father-in-law, to Southampton.)

A god-parent was chosen as a friend of the parents, as a gesture of compliment, and also as a social patron who would assure the child a place in court life when it grew up. Such notes show the range and extent of Lady Bedford's social influence.

168 Private Correspondence, p. 37. Letter 7, Appendix II.

169 Ibid., p. 43-46. Letter 8, Appendix II.

Letters 7, 8, and 9 seem to me to form a brief sequence. In Letter 7 Lady Bedford first mentions "my Lady of Roxborough's business" which is then discussed at some length in Letter 8. Dated 26 May 1617, Letter 8 also expresses Lady Bedford's wish "that I may not appoint to come to you at an unseasonable time". In Letter 9, Lady Bedford plans to visit "before your time of deliverance". These phrases refer to Lady Cornwallis' pregnancy: her third child, Nicholas Bacon, was born in 1617 (Private Correspondence, p. 1).

170 Ibid., p. 48. Letter 10, Appendix II.

An incident at the end of this period confirms the impression that among Lady Bedford's virtues was faithful support of her friends in times of trouble. In Dec. 1618 Lady Bedford was one of a large group "of almost an hundred coaches" which attended the evening funeral of Lady Haddington (Chamberlain, Letters, II: 310; 195). Accompanying Lady Bedford was Lady Exeter, who was at the time embroiled in one of the occasional scandals that enlivened the Jacobean court. Sir Thomas Lake had accused Lady Exeter of trying to poison his daughter Lady Roos, wife of William Cecil, Lord Roos, Exeter's grandson. In January 1619, Lady Bedford and the Countess of Arundel accompanied Lady Exeter to the star chamber (Chamberlain, Letters, II: 315; 207). Lady Exeter was eventually exonerated, and Lake was fined and imprisoned in the Tower for making his false accusation.

171 Ibid., pp. 33-34. Letter 3, Appendix II.

172 G. C. Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford, pp. 152-153.

173 Private Correspondence, pp. 35-36. Letter 4, Appendix II.

174 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 245; 13.

175 Private Correspondence, pp. 24-27. Letter 5, Appendix II.

176 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 251; 33. By the phrase "she looks for a day", Chamberlain may be hinting the Lady Harington hoped Princess Elizabeth would succeed to the throne of England; she and Lady Bedford, as old friends of the Princess, would then be very powerful.

177 Ibid., II: 253; 40.

178 HMCR, Buccleuth, I, 176.

179 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 254; 42.

180 Private Correspondence, pp. 40-41. Letter 6, Appendix II.

181 Ibid., pp. 43-46. Letter 8, Appendix II.

182 Ibid., p. 38. Letter 9. In this same undated note, probably written in April 1618, Lady Bedford proposed a visit, promising "I will be with you about a fortnight hence". This was one of the few such visits actually paid. In a very brief note dated 7 May, Lady Bedford set out specific plans: "...I will be with you...on Tuesday comese'night at night, and staying with you all Wednesday; but on Thursday you must give me leave to return homewards, for I must needs be here again on Friday." (Private Correspondence, p. 53. Letter 13.) The Cornwallis editor noted: "An old household book of expenses at

Brome Hall early in the xviith. century, still extant, notices the Countess of Bedford's visit at the end of May 1618. The charges during that week amounted to 11*l*.18*s*.6*d*., being more than double the usual average expenditure." (Private Correspondence, p. 53*n*.) In a letter of 20 May, Mary Countess of Bath wrote to her sister-in-law Lady Cornwallis commenting on this visit: "I wished, as I commanded this bearer to tell you, that you should not lose so much of your precious time of entertaining and enjoying so honorable a parsnach, but put it in your pocket til you come at London." (Private Correspondence, pp. 54-55.)

183 Private Correspondence, pp. 46-48. Letter 10. In a largely negative study of Lady Bedford in The Harington Family, Ian Grimble rather poignantly suggests that Lady Bedford loved Moor Park "because it was all her own" (unlike her other houses)--"a home that she could create for herself" (p. 169).

184 Ibid., pp. 56-58. Letter 14, Appendix II.

185 Ibid., pp. 58-59. Letter 15, Appendix II.

186 The Works of Sir William Temple (London: T. Woodward, 1750), II, 214-16.

187 Katherine T. Butler, "An Italian's Message to England in 1614", Italian Studies, 2 (August 1938), 1-18.

188 Private Correspondence, p. 20.

189 Ibid., pp. 49-51. Letter 11, Appendix II. In an undated letter probably written in April 1618 (Letter 12), Lady Bedford sent her particular thanks to Mr. Bacon, "of whose care to do me the kindness I so unmannerly desired of him for some good pieces of painting, your chaplain hath been a faithful relator and made me a thankless [?] debtor." (Private Correspondence, pp. 51-52.) As Sir Nicholas Bacon lived another six years, these cannot have been the paintings in his collection; perhaps Mr. Bacon acted as Lady Bedford's agent in some other acquisition.

190 The letter is quoted in full and discussed in Patricia Thomson, "Lucy, Countess of Bedford as a Collector of Paintings", Notes and Queries, (21 Feb. 1948), 70-71; (Dutch State Papers, 103/213). Modernized here. There is some confusion in the discussion. In introducing the letter, Ms. Thomson says Lady Bedford was "writing to the Earl of Pembroke (the Lord Chamberlain)" (p. 70); immediately following the letter, she says "it is almost certain that this letter was written to Sir Dudley Carleton" (p. 71). The latter statement is surely correct for two reasons: the existence of the letter in Dutch State Papers--Carleton was Ambassador at the Hague after 1616--

and the fact that it would be ludicrous to refer to "sending you over a picture of my Lo. Chamberlaine" if the letter was addressed to the Lord Chamberlain himself. The portrait mentioned may be the portrait of Pembroke reproduced in Herford and Simpson, Ben Jonson, VII, frontispiece ("The painter is unknown; he is an artist of the school of Mytens." VII, x).

191 Gladys Scott Thomson, Life in a Noble Household, 1641-1700, pp. 283-287.

192 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 259; 55.

193 Akrigg, Jacobean Pageant, p. 49.

194 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 260; 57.

195 R. C. Bald, John Donne--A Life, pp. 331-2. Almost a year later, Lady Bedford concluded her letter of 4 Oct. 1618 to Lady Cornwallis with news of another matchmaking effort.

I think I shall invite you towards the spring to do my niece an honor, if I can compose things according to my wishes; an offer being made me for her pleases me well, and I doubt not will take effect, if her unreasonable father can be brought to do what he ought, which if love will not make him, I hope fear will prevail: but of this let no speech pass you, because it is yet too early days; but as soon as it is settled to any certainty, and that the King hath declared himself, whose work it is, you shall hear of it more particularly from me, to whom it will be of a great deal of use and comfort, if it please God to prosper it.

(Private Correspondence, pp. 56-58. Letter 14)

More than a month later, Chamberlain reported the names and more details: "The Marquis Hamilton and she are in hand to make up a match for his son and heir [the Earl of Arran] with her niece, daughter to her sister the Lady Chichester, from whom she inherits 1500£ a year land, and may be a greater heir by her aunt if her Ladyship could be persuaded to hold her hands." (II: 304; 184) Nothing came of all these plans, probably because Chichester remained "unreasonable". In his negative character study of Lady Bedford in The Harington Family, Ian Grimble suggests that Chichester objected because he was protecting his daughter from Lady Bedford's grasping self-interest (pp. 169-170). In view of Lady Bedford's known generosity, not only to her neice, but to her numerous young attendants like Lucy Goodyer, this view seems untenable.

A second November match, in which Lady Bedford was less directly involved, was completed, but caused a minor scandal.

...Sir Thoms Smith's son had married the Lady Isabella Rich, without his father's consent or privity, and the affront is the more being done in so good company as the Countess of Bedford with divers other Ladies and persons of account,

whereof the Lord Chamberlain [Pembroke] gave the bride, but not one of his friends or kindred present or made acquainted withall; which is thought a strange thing that so great a man and counsellor should give countenance to such an action as the robbing a man of his only child, a youth of eighteen years old (for he is no more,) and sure I have seen the time that such a matter could not have been so carried. They do now all of them labour the father, and give him no rest, who seeing there is no remedy I think will be easily enough entreated.... (Chamberlain, Letters, II: 306; 187-188.)

Writing to Sir Thomas Puckering on 5 Jan. 1619, Rev. Thomas Lorkin added more details about the behind-the-scenes intrigue. Pembroke sent to Baynard's Castle for his own chaplain, "who making some difficulty, for that they had no license, his Lordship encouraged him, upon assurance of saving him harmless. So they were presently married: and from thence conducted to my Lord of Southampton's to dinner, and to my Lady Bedford's to bed, where all was consummate" (Birch, II, 121-122).

196 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 294; 157.

197 CSPD, 1611-1618, p. 598.

198 Ibid., p. 585.

199 Private Correspondence, pp. 56-58. Letter 14, Appendix II.

200 Ibid., p. 63. Letter 16, Appendix II.

201 Strickland, pp. 132-134.

202 Wiffen II, 109.

203 Birch, II, 167: letter of Rev. T. Lorkin to Sir T. Puckering

204 Letters from George Lord Carew to Sir Thomas Roe, ed. John Maclean, (London: Camden Society Publications, No. 76; 1860), p. 65, n. May 31, Chamberlain noted only that "the Lady of Bedford went to Dover to meet her mother that Lady Harington and brought her to town the last week" (Letters, II: 328; 241).

205 CSPD, 1619-1623, p. 53.

206 Williams to Doncaster: Birch, II, 174; Chamberlain to Carleton: Letters, II: 330; 244-5; Williams to Doncaster: Birch, II, 179: brackets in Birch; the original quoted in Wiffen (II, 109, n) read "a pin and web"; Chamberlain to Carleton: Letters, II: 332; 250; Murray to Doncaster: Birch, II, 187-8.

207 Clifford, Diary, p. 105.

208 Thomson, Noble Household, p. 319.

209 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 354; 306.

210 Private Correspondence, p. 65, n.

211 Ibid., pp. 65-7. Letter 17, Appendix II.

212 Ian Grimble would not agree: he felt Lady Bedford included her reaction to the death of Pembroke's son out of self-pity, in order "to secure all the sympathy she craved" (The Harington Family, p. 167).

213 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 348; 291.

214 In her letter of 17 May 1621 (ie. three months later), Lady Bedford noted that Sir Robert Chichester's obstinacy forced her "to play my game another way than I had laid my cards" (Private Correspondence, pp. 77-79. Letter 22). See footnote 195 above.

215 Private Correspondence, pp. 75-77. Letter 21, Appendix II.

216 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 406; 433-34.

217 Ibid., II: 411; 446.

In the latter half of 1625, Lady Bedford was again enjoying the intrigues of matchmaking. A long letter to an unknown correspondent gives details of two marriages in which the Countess was interested. The first was the marriage of James, Lord Strange, heir to the earldom of Derby, and Lady Charlotte de la Tremouille. The King, his French queen, and Elizabeth of Bohemia all favoured the match. Lady Bedford diligently inquired and reported the financial details of the marriage offer. The settlement must have been acceptable, for the couple were married in June 1626.

In the second match, Lady Bedford was more directly involved. She hoped a marriage could be arranged between the son of Sir Theodore Mayerne and Mlle de Rohan, who seems to have been a Huguenot. She wrote of Mayerne with affection and respect: "my father Mayerne...who is all nobleness, discretion and goodness," and noted that "my Lord Chamberlain and I have such an interest in the father, as whatsoever we should undertake, he will make good." (Letter quoted in Wiffen, II, 114-117. Letter 36, in Appendix II) Early in Jan. 1616, the popular Mayerne became chief physician-in-ordinary to King Charles; Lady Bedford and Montgomery probably influenced the appointment.

218 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 336; 263.

- 219 Ibid., II: 337; 265.
- 220 CSPD, 1625-26, p. 502.
- 221 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 403; 425-6.
- 222 Ibid., II: 404; 430.
- 223 See below p. 71 and footnote 248.
- 224 Jessopp, John Donne, Sometime Dean of St. Paul's, pp. 124-7;  
Bald, pp. 338-358.
- 225 Green, V, 361.
- 226 Ibid., V, 462.
- 227 HMC Supplementary Report, Hamilton MSS 9: quoted in Oman,  
Elizabeth of Bohemia, pp. 205-6.
- 228 Oman, p. 212.
- 229 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 378; 365.
- 230 Private Correspondence, pp. 41-43. Letter 23, Appendix II.  
The Cornwallis editor dated this letter 12th July 1616. If he assumed  
that it referred to plans for a visit immediately after Lady Harington's  
departure in Dec. 1616 (see pp. 40-41; Letter 6, p. 50 above), then the  
date would be 12th. July 1617. If Lady Bedford had visited, or even  
planned to visit, Princess Elizabeth in 1617, it would have been at  
Heidelberg, not the Hague. Lady Bedford's specific reference to the  
Hague, and the exact concurrence of the proposed dates with those of  
the recorded visit, indicate that this letter was written in 1621.
- 231 Oman, Elizabeth of Bohemia, pp. 261-3: reference to State  
Papers, Holland (84), 100.163-6; 786.
- 232 As early as 1618, Lady Bedford had been attempting to find  
Carleton a position in England. In Oct. of that year, she explained  
that she was uncertain who would replace Lake as secretary after the  
Exeter scandal, and promised that she and other friends would do their  
best for Carleton. (CSPD, 1611-1618, p. 585) He did not get the job.  
On 24 April 1623, she wrote with reference to Carleton's application to  
succeed Thomas Murray as Provost of Eton: "I am I protest grown so  
very a fool in the ways of this time as I can make no judgement of  
anything, all wonted grounds failing: and I assure your Lordship even  
those that are nearest the well head know not with what bucket to draw  
for themselves or their friends." She thought Freeman, a Master of  
Requests and an ally of Buckingham, would be appointed, not Sir William

Beecher, (CSPD, 1619-1623, p. 569: SP 14/143.63) but another correspondent told Carleton that Buckingham was divided between Beecher and Carleton. (CSPD, 1623-25, p. 109.) Carleton did not obtain this position either. Finally, on 19 Nov. 1623, Lady Bedford wrote to thank Carleton "for his continued and undeserved friendship to one whose misfortunes are so familiar to the world," and said there was no news, as all were waiting "to understand what purpose Spain will please to avow...." (CSPD, 1623-25, p. 114: SP. 14/154.49)

In 1624 Lady Bedford continued to be interested in Carleton's problem and Elizabeth's affairs. On 15 April, Dudley Carleton wrote to Sir Dudley that Lady Bedford "promises to have influence used with the Prince" for Carleton's promotion in England. (*Ibid.*, p. 215) On Dec. 18 he reported that he had "been to Court on a private business, suggested by the Countess of Bedford for the Queen of Bohemia." (*Ibid.*, p. 412) In 1625, Carleton was again unsuccessful in his job-search, for Sir Thomas Edmondes reported on 13 March that "the person who absolutely possesses the King's favour" had disposed of the secretaryship to someone else. He noted that for others, Lady Bedford was more successful: Sir Humphrey May was appointed 'Chancellor of the Duchy' "by mediation of the Lord Chamberlain and Countess of Bedford with Buckingham." (*Ibid.*, p. 553)

233 See Samuel Rawson Gardiner, History of England (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1884-86), IV, 230.

234 CSPD, 1619-1623, p. 286.

235 Ibid., p. 372. Preston was a popular Puritan preacher. Through Buckingham's influence, he was appointed chaplain to Prince Charles; Pembroke and Lady Bedford also supported him. Daniel Neal, The History of the Puritans (2nd ed.; London: J. Buckland, 1754?), II, 352 f.

236 Ibid., p. 385.

237 Ibid., 392.

238 Ibid., p. 542: SP 14/140.57. Princess Elizabeth apparently wrote to the Duchess of Richmond and Lennox that Prince Charles was safe in Spain: because her continued existence ensured the Protestant succession, there would be no point in harming him. (Green, V, 405-6)

239 Wiffen, II, 112-114. Letter 35, Appendix II.

240 Private Correspondence, pp. 84-86. Letter 25, Appendix II.

241 Ibid., pp. 87-91. Letter 27, Appendix II.

242 Ibid., pp. 125-131. Letter 33, Appendix II.



243 On 17 May 1621, Lady Bedford had reported to Lady Cornwallis that Arundel had been committed to the Tower (Private Correspondence, pp. 77-79. Letter 22.): he refused to make "a submission to the House" after an exchange of insults with Lord Spencer (Ibid., p. 79 n).

244 Ibid., pp. 146, 147 and n.

245 Ibid., pp. 84-86. Letter 25, Appendix II.

246 Ibid., pp. 59-62. Letter 26, Appendix II. The Cornwallis editor dated this letter January 1618/1619. That date seems unlikely because of Lady Bedford's clear reference to Lady Cornwallis' pregnancy: there is no record of a pregnancy, miscarriage or birth between 1617 (birth of Nicholas) and 1624 (birth of Jane). Of those two dates, I think the latter is correct, for several reasons. In a letter of 28 Nov. 1623, Lady Bedford worried that Lady Cornwallis was "apprehensive ...of a danger it hath pleased God to carry you so often safely through" (p. 85); in a letter of 28 Feb. 1624, Lady Bedford referred to "some indisposition incident to child-bed" (p. 87). It seems logical that a long letter of concern and advice would be in sequence between these two letters.

The clue to the date of this letter is in the following phrase: "I trust our good God will with a safe deliverance of a happy birth restore you the one, and,...so assist you as you shall to your contentment overcome what causes the other." Lady Cornwallis' fourth child, Jane Bacon, was born in 1624; it was probably this pregnancy which caused her so much alarm.

In the final part of this letter, Lady Bedford offered profuse if embarrassed thanks for the "liberality" of her friend; the terms used--"debtor", "as your treasurer, not as a legacy"--leave no doubt that she refers to a loan. Her gratitude took a lugubrious turn, as she promised to repay it "when I shall leave the world," or "as faithfully if I outlive you". These phrases seem appropriate to 1624, when both ladies were forty-two years of age, and each had experienced long periods of illness, than to five years earlier.

247 Many of the letters in the Cornwallis collection reflect the reciprocal interest and concern of Lady Bedford and Lady Cornwallis as old friends. A note placed two years earlier in the Cornwallis papers and dated only 11 April refers to a "present" (Private Correspondence, pp. 48-9. Letter 18). Another note in 1620 offers further thanks for what I think is the same gift, "the finest little beast that ever I saw" Ibid., pp. 72-74. Letter 19). The rest of the letter concerns the marriage of Lady Cornwallis' niece, another Jane Meautys, to Sir John Radcliffe's son. The marriage seems to have caused another minor scandal: Lady Bedford reported "the King is incensed"; Buckingham had failed to provide "the protection promised", but Hamilton, Pembroke and Montgomery had "done their best...to save her from public shame." What caused the problem Lady Bedford did not discuss.

On 16 Jan. 1623 Lady Bedford wrote that for two months she had been too ill to write, and was still "a lame woman". She hoped Lady Cornwallis would be in London in the spring. (Private Correspondence, pp. 82-3. Letter 24) Despite fear of plague, Lady Cornwallis did visit, for Bacon wrote to his wife from Culford on 14 March. Fearing the uncertainties of such times, he enquired after the ladies' health, and sent his regards to Lady Bedford, "unto whom my prayers do daily entreat a talent of patience, equal or exceeding her worst fortunes" (Ibid., p. 81.)

Lady Cornwallis was again visiting Lady Bedford in mid-1624, for several letters from Nathaniel Bacon were addressed to her at Harington House. (Ibid., pp. 93, 99) Lady Bedford's next note of 23 June confirmed this: after Lady Cornwallis "went from hence", Lady Bedford sought a "second letter to the Keeper" from Lady Lenox, to expedite some matter for Lady Cornwallis. (Ibid., p. 100. Letter 28) In a letter written probably in the summer of 1624, Lady Bedford occupied the body of the letter with advice to her friend to "afflict not yourself" about her husband's illness, since all reports were of his "amendment". (Ibid., pp. 121-3. Letter 29)

A brief and formal note, repaying a debt with elaborate apologies for delay, may also have been written in 1624. Lady Bedford was "ashamed" to have been "so long" in writing (it had been several months) and "so long" in repaying the loan. (Ibid., pp. 71-72.) Nothing in the note suggests a particular date. The Cornwallis editor chose 1620; I think it would be later than Letter 21, 20 Feb. 1621 in which Lady Bedford promised repayment, and Letter 26, which I have dated 20 Jan. 1624. The note, dated only 12 Sept., would thus fulfil Lady Bedford's repeated general promises and her specific plan to repay the debt "when I shall leave the world", or "as faithfully if I outlive you" mentioned in her letter of 20 Jan. (Ibid., p. 62) Another reason why this letter belong in sequence here is that it was written at Leicester; in a newsletter on 26 Oct., Bacon reported to his wife that Lady Bedford was "not yet come to the town, nor is expected until Wednesday next." (Ibid., p. 108)

Many of Bacon's letters to his wife contain references to Lady Bedford. In Feb. 1626, he was in London, and reporting on Lady Bedford's health. On Feb. 3, she was "well and in town"; by Feb. 10, she "hath been exceedingly ill of the gout, and is little recovered yet," and on the 16th. she was "yet very ill." (Ibid., pp. 140, 141, 143.) In a letter at the end of March, the last of her letters in the Cornwallis collection, Lady Bedford referred to her recovery from this bout of illness. She noted that "My fear of relapsing makes me content to punish myself this spring by following a course of physic Sir Theodore Mayerne hath put me into...because it shall not be laid to my charge that I neglect the means of health." She closed her letter when it was time for her next treatment, "and my hour of persecution is come." (Ibid., pp. 145-148. Letter 34)

Lady Bedford was fond of Lady Cornwallis' children, and on 4 Oct. 1618 sent "a sword to defend him from the malice of the bucks

in this their coleric season" to Frederick, young Lord Cornwallis, her "servant" then eight years old. (Ibid., pp. 56-58. Letter 14)

In all these notes, warmth of feeling and genuine affection, good humour and generosity are evident on both sides. Visits and gifts exchanged, loans offered and debts repaid, concern about illness and interest in children--the small details of the Cornwallis correspondence offer a different picture of Lady Bedford, a complement to and perhaps a corrective of our view of her as the courtly great lady.

248 Private Correspondence, pp. 87-91. Letter 27. The Duchess of Richmond's resolutions to retire from the court in her grief did not last even a year. On 8 Jan. 1625, Chamberlain reported her appearance at church as if it were a social event:

We have much talk of this Diana of the Ephesians, and her magnificence in going to the chapel at Ely House on Sunday last to a sermon..., where she had her closet or traverse, her four principal officers steward, chamberlain, treasurer, controller, marching before her in velvet gowns with their white staves, three gentlemen ushers, two Ladies that bare up her train, the Countesses of Bedford and Montgomery following with the other Ladies two and two, with a great deal of other apish imitation,.... (Letters, II: 464; 594-5).

249 Private Correspondence, pp. 118-120. Letter 32, Appendix II.

250 Ibid., pp. 125-131. Letter 33, Appendix II

251 Private Correspondence, pp. 111-112. Letter 31, Appendix II.

252 Samuel Richardson, ed., The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe in His Embassy to the Ottoman Porte, 1621-28 (London: G. Strahan, 1740), V, 583; see also Wiffen, II, 117-8.

253 Oman, Elizabeth of Bohemia, p. 296: ref. to Harl. MSS 390.148. Lady Bedford intended to visit Princess Elizabeth in 1626 because the Princess was ill and depressed after childbirth (Green, V, p. 454).

254 Acts of the Privy Council, 1627, pp. 271, 385-6, 390.

255 Private Correspondence, pp. 168, 169.

256 Ibid., p. 173.

257 Lipscomb, Buckinghamshire, III, 260-1.

258 Wiffen, II, 120.

259 Braybrooke, Private Correspondence, p. xviii; Wiffen, II, addenda after p. 592.

- 260 Stone, Crisis, p. 582.
- 261 Ibid., pp. 172n, 484.
- 262 See above p. 20 and footnote 44.
- 263 Stone, Crisis, Appendix XXI, p. 778.
- 264 Ibid., p. 514.
- 265 This information has been culled from Stone, Crisis, Chapter VII, "Estate Management", in which Bedford is an occasional example; see especially pp. 300, 330, 315; also p. 484.
- 266 Stone, Crisis, p. 484.
- 267 Ibid.
- 268 John Stow, A Suruay of London continued and enlarged by A. Munday (London: G. Purslowe, 1618), pp. 370-1.
- 269 Stone, Crisis, Appendix VIII, pp. 760-761: Bedford is one of ten in Group V--3,600-5,399~~£~~ per annum.
- 270 Ibid., p. 510.
- 271 CSPD, 1603-1610, p. 347.
- 272 Thomson, Noble Household, p. 17.
- 273 CSPD, 1603-1610, p. 604.
- 274 CSPD, 1611-1618, p. 69.
- 275 Clifford, Diary, pp. lvii-lxi.
- 276 Stone, Crisis, p. 450.
- 277 Ibid., p. 101.
- 278 Handover, Arbella Stuart, pp. 213-214.
- 279 Wm. H. and H. C. Overall, Analyticall Index to the Series of Records known as the Remembrancia 1579-1644 (London: Corporation of the City of London, 1878), p. 219, n.
- 280 CSPD, 1603-1610, p. 339.
- 281 Ibid., p. 491.

- 282 Ibid., p. 642.
- 283 Private Correspondence, pp. 46-48. Letter 10, Appendix II.
- 284 Ibid., pp. 56-58. Letter 14, Appendix II.
- 285 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 304; 184.
- 286 Harwood letter to Carleton. CSPD, 1611-1618, p. 594.
- 287 Stone, Crisis, p. 444.
- 288 Ibid., p. 440.
- 289 CSPD, 1611-1618, p. 180.
- 290 Ibid., p. 184.
- 291 Ibid., p. 237.
- 292 Ibid., pp. 174, 215.
- 293 Ibid., p. 387.
- 294 Ibid., p. 456.
- 295 Acts of the Privy Council, 1621-23, p. 269.
- 296 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 330; 244-5.
- 297 CSPD, 1619-1623, p. 61.
- 298 Stone, Crisis, p. 428.
- 299 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 341; 275.
- 300 CSPD, 1623-25, p. 264.
- 301 Victoria History of Rutland, II, 42f.
- 302 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 262; 66.
- 303 Ibid., II: 389; 396.
- 304 Victoria History of Rutland, II, 13.
- 305 Private Correspondence, pp. 43-46. Letter 8, Appendix II.
- 306 Ibid., p. 76. Letter 21, Appendix II.

- 307 Chamberlain, Letters, II: 411; 446.
- 308 Ian Grimble, The Harington Family, p. 169.
- 309 CSPD, 1619-1623, p. 248.
- 310 Birch, II, 317.
- 311 Stone, Crisis, p. 396.
- 312 George C. Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford..., p. 156.
- 313 Robert Clutterbuck, The History and Antiquities of the County of Hertford (London: Nichols, Son and Bentley, 1815-1827), I, 194.
- 314 CSPD, 1619-1623, p. 350.
- 315 CSPD, 1631-1633, p. 116.

## CHAPTER TWO: LADY BEDFORD AS A LITERARY PATRON

### Introduction

A brief comment on patronage in the Jacobean era must be a repetition of accepted generalities with some accompanying illustrations, for there is little concrete evidence in contemporary documents and records. Poets mentioned by Chamberlain -- Daniel, Donne, Harington, Jonson -- are never mentioned in connection with a patron. There is no mention of any literary figure in Lady Anne Clifford's Diary, or in her surviving account books; Donne appears late in his career, but as a visiting preacher. The letters of the Countess of Pembroke, of Sir Robert Sidney, of Lady Bedford herself, do not speak of visiting poets. Even from the poets themselves, there is little evidence. Though they reveal the personal dimension of his relationship with Lady Bedford, Donne's letters and verse letters allude only occasionally to being at Twickenham, and only obliquely to more tangible favours. Jonson's poems record what hospitality he received. The main evidence is dedications and verse letters - direct addresses of poet to patron in whatever form, style and tone.

Very few dedications were unmercenary, in the sense that the writer always expected some reward. Patronage could provide personal and social advancement, an office or some preferment at court; the patron's protection, especially against the suspicion of treason or

heresy in a work; hospitality; or an actual monetary reward. There was a fairly clear distinction between the professional poet who wrote expecting tangible rewards, and the gentleman poet who hoped for favour and preferment. Drayton, Daniel, Chapman and Jonson, whatever the actual reward, wrote as professionals, Donne as a gentleman.

Patronage by its very nature seems a feudal institution. The poet is to some extent dependent on his patron, subject to his tastes and whims. The nature of the relationship changed through time. In England in the time of Henry VIII, the poet was virtually a retainer, a member of the household. Patronage retained the characteristics of an essentially medieval and feudal relationship. During the reign of Elizabeth, this relationship broke down; no longer household retainers, the poets became rivals for favour. The earlier style of patronage was upheld by Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke, who was second only to the queen in the chorus of praise in her own time. Elizabeth herself provided an intelligent audience, but, being slow with monetary rewards, she encouraged gentlemanly rather than professional writers. The accession of James was expected to introduce a new age. Drayton hailed him as "of kings a poet, and the poets' king",<sup>1</sup> and Daniel reflected that "our Sovereign's happy inclination" toward literature led poets "to expect an encouragement to go on with what we do than that any innovation should check us".<sup>2</sup> Chamberlain carped that "the very poets, with their idle pamphlets, promise themselves great part in his favour."<sup>3</sup> But the reality failed to fulfil expectation, "every man expecting mountains and finding molehills".<sup>4</sup> In the reign of James a new style of patronage did emerge. New



wealth and new titles increased the number of patrons, but not all the changes were for the better. Instead of being attached to one patron, poets addressed a number of established and rising courtiers. Daniel, who had been a member of the Pembroke circle and the Clifford household, complained in his "Verses to Florio" of the "overflowing waste" of the nobility in contrast to the scanty patronage they provided.<sup>5</sup>

The Sidney-Pembroke circle exemplified the earlier style. Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke set the standard of the courtier-patron. The gatherings at Wilton facilitated the exchange of ideas on poetry and created a climate of interest and support for Spenser, Daniel, and Sidney's own poetic experiments.<sup>6</sup> "Wilton House was like a College, there were so many learned and ingenious persons."<sup>7</sup> In the next generation, something of the Wilton style was followed by the Sidney heirs - Montgomery, Pembroke, the Countess of Rutland, Sir Robert and Lady Mary Wroth. Lady Bedford was marginally, in ancestry and in style, of this group, and her "graceful and brilliant little court"<sup>8</sup> at Twickenham appeared to carry on the Wilton tradition, the tradition of such circles of learned and literary men meeting at patronesses' houses. Lady Bedford followed the example of the Countess of Pembroke, and in addition she 'inherited' several literary figures from the Pembroke circle, Daniel, Florio and Jonson. But the Twickenham circle was newer, less high-minded, reflecting the frivolity of Queen Anne's court and the newer literary styles: the vogue for the verse satire, the social escapism of the court masque, the 'witty depravity' of Donne as Grierson termed it. The Wilton gatherings were of a different tenor, entirely more serious than those at

Twickenham. The contrast is important, not to discredit Lady Bedford as a serious patron, but because the Twickenham circle reflected the different social and literary climate of the Jacobean age.

Lady Anne Clifford provides a contrast of a different kind. A few years younger than Lady Bedford, the heiress of the great Clifford estates, wife first of Dorset and later of Montgomery, she might have played an important role in social and literary life. Too thoughtful and reserved for success at court, living in retirement at Knole because of difficulties with her first husband over land settlements, she was prominent but not active. Her Diary records her pleasure in reading and the "Great Picture" at Appleby Castle shows her library,<sup>9</sup> but she engaged in no more active form of patronage. Though she remembered her tutor Daniel fondly, the only tangible evidence of her favour to him is the monument she commissioned for his tomb.

Even in the reign of James, however, patronage could provide the traditional rewards. There are numerous examples of cash remuneration, most in connection with some form of court preferment. Drayton received a pension of £10 from Prince Henry, Daniel's salary was £10 a year as licenser of the Children of Her Majesty's Revels, and later £60 as a groom of the queen's privy chamber. Florio received £100 a year as a groom because he had extra duties as secretary and tutor in the royal household. Jonson's pension from King James began at 100 marks, which was later raised to £100. Donne as a gentleman poet seems to have received only intangible support, but when he was arranging to pay his debts in 1614 before entering the priesthood, Lady Bedford contributed £30: Donne considered it a small amount, but for a single

occasion it compared favourably with these annual salaries.<sup>10</sup>

In its economic aspect, patronage was subject to the vicissitudes of the patron's fortune. Lady Bedford apologized for sending only £30, claiming quite truthfully that she was in financial difficulty herself. The different treatment accorded Joseph Hall and Donne by Sir Robert Drury in the same decade is an even clearer example. In 1605, having difficulty meeting his debts, leasing and conveying his lands, Drury refused Hall a stipend of £10 a year. By 1610, Drury was experiencing a financial recovery, and his treatment of Donne reflected his improved fortunes: Donne had lodgings in or near Drury House in London for himself and his family, and accompanied Drury on his 1611 trip to the continent.<sup>11</sup> These examples illustrate that the underlying reality for both poet and patron in this period was a continual scramble for money.

A less direct form of patronage was protection. A dedication could mean that the patron approved the work, smoothing its way past censors and into print. Daniel wrote in his preface to Philotas that his patron Mountjoy (by then Earl of Devonshire) had read the work; when the play was attacked for its supposed pro-Essex sentiments, Mountjoy was alarmed by the assumption that he approved its contents. When Daniel was called before the council to explain, he appealed to Mountjoy and to Robert Cecil (Lord Cranborne) to effect his release.<sup>12</sup> Protection thus might include a patron's efforts to rescue a poet who had written something unwise. In 1605, when Jonson, Chapman and Marston were jailed for the supposedly seditious Eastward Ho, Jonson wrote to six lords and one lady, probably Lady Bedford: this collection

combined the immediately powerful and his personal acquaintance, several of whom-- Pembroke, d'Aubigny, Lady Bedford-- were among his usual patrons. Suffolk and d'Aubigny acted to obtain their release.<sup>13</sup>

Poets often held office as privileged servants of patrons. Of the five writers discussed in this study, only Jonson escaped such employment. Drayton, Florio, and Daniel were tutors to children, readers or teachers to adult patrons. All three later held posts at court which were not mere sinecures because they included actual duties. Donne was secretary to Egerton before his marriage interrupted his career; later he sought various secretaryships, served Drury as some sort of secretary-companion, and accompanied Lord Hay (Doncaster) to Germany as travelling companion and chaplain. Jonson was in many ways an exception, perhaps because he found most of his patrons among the inheritors of the Sidney-Pembroke tradition. He seems to have enjoyed the position of honoured guest in several noble houses: he lived for five years with Esmé Stuart, Lord d'Aubigny, and was welcomed at Penshurst by Sir Robert Sidney. Yet the terms of tribute in "To Penshurst" suggest that even he found such hospitality the exception and not the rule. The easy familiarity that developed in later years between the gentlemen and professional poets in 'the tribe of Ben' perhaps grew out of the best features of Jacobean patronage and of the Twickenham-type salon.

As a literary patron, Lady Bedford inherited the Sidney tradition and yet reflected the newer style. Like the Countess of Pembroke, she provided hospitality and encouragement, but she lacked a settled, high-minded purpose. Between 1594 and 1612, she patronized

a series of favoured poets. A critical observer might say that she favoured whoever seemed fashionable, often at the suggestion of a friend or relative. When she became bored or her tastes changed, she passed on to the next fad or current interest. And there is some truth in such a view. Drayton, Florio, Daniel, each enjoyed her favour in turn: for them she was the 'great lady', the 'learned lady', a patron in the older style. Jonson and Donne seem to have shared her attention: for them she was a friend, an intelligent audience, an ideal figure -- and for each, in his different way, something more.

#### Lady Bedford's Preparation to be a Patron

Of Lady Bedford's education and her preparation to be a patron, little is known. There must of necessity be more inference than fact. Her parents apparently shared a predisposition toward learning. "A man of science and a man of religion, withal a courtier and a sportsman, Harington was no unworthy contemporary of Francis Bacon."<sup>14</sup> Lord Harington and the Earl of Kent, as executors of Frances Sidney, Countess of Sussex, were granted a license 12 July 1594, to found Sidney Sussex College at Cambridge.<sup>15</sup> Lady Harington, her son and daughter were benefactors; Lucy's cousin, James Montague, became the first master. Lord Harington has been described as "a true-hearted Protestant, of firm and independent character, thoughtful and devout."<sup>16</sup> Lady Harington seems to have been a minor example of the Elizabethan learned lady. In her youth she was a maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth.<sup>17</sup> One of her later actions was to provide for the erection and furnishing of a library in the parish church of Oakham, Rutland.<sup>18</sup> In the dedi-

cation to his translation of Suetonius' History of the Twelve Caesars in 1606, Philemon Holland described Lady Harington as combining "singular affection to advance good literature, with an extraordinary respect for learned men".

Dedications of several textbooks to Lady Harington and little Lucy suggest that the Haringtons provided education in foreign languages for their eldest child. Claudius Holyband (Claude Desainliens) was a Huguenot refugee who came to London in 1564; in later years he became a schoolmaster there.<sup>19</sup> He may have been retained by the Haringtons as a tutor.<sup>20</sup> In 1580 he dedicated his Treatise for Declining Verbs to Lady Harington; his Treasury of the French Tongue, a dictionary, was also dedicated to her; in 1583 he dedicated The Flowery Field of Four Languages (Campo di Fior) to Lucy, who was scarcely two years old. This was both a language textbook and a literary work: it consisted of a parallel text translation of some of Vives' dialogues, with Italian, French, and English versions alongside the original Latin.<sup>21</sup> Apparently, Lucy made good use of the book, for Florio later credited her with the ability to read, write and speak French, Spanish and Italian. A letter from her diplomat friend Sir Thomas Roe in 1626 indicates that Lady Bedford could read Greek and Latin.<sup>22</sup> Considering that both King James and George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, forbade that their daughters be taught the classical languages,<sup>23</sup> this evidence of extensive training in languages indicates that Lady Bedford was given the kind of education common to the learned ladies of the Elizabethan age, such as the Countess of Pembroke who was twenty years her senior.

Some indication of Lady Bedford's background can be inferred from the details of the education Lord Harington provided for Princess Elizabeth. It seems logical to assume that Lord Harington would have provided similar opportunities, if on a reduced scale, for his daughter. Princess Elizabeth was seven years old when she was sent to live at Combe Abbey late in 1603; the Haringtons' son and heir, John, was then eleven. The Haringtons were "a rising gentry family". As early as 1595, Sir John was "renowned as a local Elizabethan worthy who had assumed the conduct of the nobility....though legally he was still a country gentleman, socially he approximated to the state of an influential baron".<sup>24</sup>

Combe had originally been a Cistercian monastery, and "something of the high-souled austerity and practical ability of the original inhabitants seemed to have passed to its third lay possessors."<sup>25</sup> Under the Haringtons, "a sensible, rational family,...the life at Combe Abbey seemed 'as regular as that of a religious community' ".<sup>26</sup> Young John Harington's diary provides details: early rising was followed by family prayers; morning hours were occupied with study and outdoor exercise; a 'prayer, chapter and psalm' preceded dinner; and the whole household met again for prayer after supper.<sup>27</sup>

Princess Elizabeth's education included classical studies and French,<sup>28</sup> Italian, music and dancing.<sup>29</sup> Even in childhood, she wrote in English, French and Italian, as her surviving letters indicate.<sup>30</sup> Lord Harington's accounts also record payment for supplies and a writing master.<sup>31</sup> One of the Princess' instructors in music was the

celebrated Dr. John Bull, organist of the Chapel Royal and first Professor of Music at Gresham College.<sup>32</sup> The young Princess' library included "the Book of Martyrs" and "a great Bible" -- testifying again to the strongly Protestant if not Puritan inclination of the household-- and "volumes of histories".<sup>33</sup>

A contemporary memoir of Princess Elizabeth written by one of her attendants provides both further details and a general sense of life at Combe Abbey. Within the park were flower-beds, lawns, and an artificial river; beyond it, a "little wilderness", a large brook, and a small lake with an island so planted that there was continual spring for nine months of the year. Here Lord Harington began an aviary, and Princess Elizabeth "collected birds of every species and of every country". Lady Bedford's new year's gift to the Princess in 1613 was "a pheasant",<sup>34</sup> perhaps an addition to this collection. In the wilderness and wood, Lord Harington built small wooden buildings to illustrate the different orders of architecture; these were furnished with paintings in different styles, and stuffed animal skins: the result was "a kind of world in miniature". In the adjoining meadows, the Princess had her "Fairy-farm", stocked with miniature cattle.

Lord Harington seems to have been something of an innovator in educational planning: "the bulk of the instruction was imparted informally and without being obtrusively labelled work". History and geography were taught with "pictured cards", natural science by explaining any item when it happened to catch the Princess' attention. Lord Harington provided both a microscope and a telescope, discounted



astrology, and expounded the Copernican theory of the universe. Moral and biblical lessons were interjected whenever appropriate. Nor was her social training neglected. Music and dancing occupied most evenings. Princess Elizabeth had a "court" of six young companions (Lady Lucy Percy, whose marriage to Lord Hay Lady Bedford helped to arrange in 1617, was one of these), and received twice-weekly visits from the children of the neighbouring families.<sup>35</sup> From our knowledge of Lady Bedford's mature life-style-- her abilities in languages, her interest in paintings and antiquities, her delight in her gardens and her pet animals, her participation in masques, her extravagant social life-- we may infer that Lord Harington provided a similar, most unusual kind of aristocratic education for his eldest daughter, making her a princess of her class.

One year after Lucy's marriage, the Haringtons celebrated the Christmas of 1595 in princely fashion. Harington gathered all his relatives for the occasion, and entertained hundreds of local visitors during the twelve days of his Christmas revels. An account of this celebration, which included the only known private performance of Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus, provides further evidence of the life-style at Combe, nine years before Harington was raised to the peerage. The following report was written by Jacques Petit, a "Gascon servant" of Anthony Bacon, an agent of "Essex's secret intelligence service", and for two brief months, Dec. 1595 - Feb. 1596, the tutor to the Harington heir, John. Petit tells Bacon he will report on "the excellent and magnificent order" at Combe during this Christmas season.

Deux fois le iour il y auoit presche dans lesglise le mat(in) & l'appresdisnee & chasque iour nouueau ministre Mr & Ma(d) la Contesse (Russell)<sup>36</sup> sy trouuoint por la plus part

Mr le Comte estoit serui avec tout lhonneur & respect (qui) estoit possible. a disner & souper la musique alloit (&) 30 ou 40 gentilshommes seruans quand ils portoient la viande deux ou 3 cheualiers & les Dames oultre force gentilhommes (sic) & damoiselles estoient a sa table, puis apres le repas ensuiuoit la dance & ieux plaisans por donner a rire & seruir de recreation

Sr Jean disnoit a la sale por recueillir sesevoisins & principaulx fermiers les festoyat avec vne chere excessive, de toute sorte de mets & de toute sorte de vins.

Son me dhostel s'attendoit a regarder que rien ne manquast au(x) aultres faisant garnir 4 ou 5 longues tables de viande por quatre vints ou cent personnes a la fois lesq̄ls ayant acheué faisoient place a autant dautres & se retiroyent, apres que (tout) estoit fait on portoit aux pources (sic) du pain & de la via(nde) a pleines barriques tellem̄t que tous estans contentes (il) en demeuroit beaucoup de reste

Le Jour de lan fut monstree la liberalite de ces bon(s) gens & principalemt de Mad: la Contesse car depuis le plus (grand) iusques au plus petit elle en donna bon tesmoignage, mesm(e) i'en puis dire quelque chose. Les commediens de Londres son(t) venus icy por en auoir leur pt. on les fait iouer le soir (de) leur venue & le lendemain on les despecha

On a fait icy vne mascarade de linuention de Sr Edw: wingfield on a aussi la tragedie de Titus Andronicus mais la monstre a plus valeu q̄ le suiet

Oultre ce q̄ dessus & qui est encore plus a priser cest q̄ sortant des festes on ny fait qu'entrer car la bonne chere & le pasetemps sont plus grands & plaisans & rien ne diminue que la foule & trop grand nombre des gens rustiques<sup>37</sup>

This report completes the picture of the background of style and taste from which Lady Bedford stepped forward to become one of the most important patrons of her time. Educated in languages and the social arts, accustomed to considerable wealth and its uses -- entertainment, personal generosity, charity -- combining in her personal attitudes extravagance and piety, she entered with enthusiasm into a life of

lettered ease and the social whirl of the court.

### Drayton 1594-1597

Michael Drayton was the first poet Lady Bedford honoured with her patronage. Born in 1563, and thus eighteen years her senior,<sup>38</sup> he had been in the service of the elder Sir Henry Goodyer, friend and neighbour of the Haringtons, for as long as twenty years until Goodyer's death in 1595.<sup>39</sup> Drayton later said that Goodyer had "bequeathed" him to Lucy Harington. Drayton may have been the last of Lucy's tutors.<sup>40</sup> Their association as poet and patron began just before her marriage in 1594, when he addressed her by her maiden name in the dedication to his poem Matilda: "Your rarest virtues, (honourable Mistress Lucie,) have made me, amongst many other competent Judges of your worth, both to love and admire you." He is "moved" to seek her "protection" because the Goodyers show her "exceeding kinde affection" and because she is "adorned with the like excellent gifts, both of bodie and minde" as the chaste Matilda. Her patronage of Matilda "may encourage me hereafter, to publish some work of greater worth, under your name and protection."<sup>41</sup> Drayton is Action in Spenser's Colin Clouts Come Home againe; printed in 1595, the poem links poet and patron for the first time, if the "lovely lasse, hight Lucida" is Lady Bedford.<sup>42</sup> Drayton's next work, Endimion and Phoebe was dedicated to her and published 12 April 1595. In his prefatory sonnet, Drayton claims "And, but thyself, no subject will I ask". It may have been written on the occasion of Lady Bedford's marriage; however, the poem itself is an allegory with "Idea" as its subject, not an epithalamium. The dedication, which

expresses both deference and affectionate admiration, was perhaps only a gesture of compliment.<sup>43</sup> In this dedication, known as "the Great Lady sonnet" because of its opening -- "Great Lady, essence of my chiefest good,/Of the most pure and finest tempered spirit" -- Drayton is explicit in acknowledging "thy sweet golden showers"<sup>44</sup>, the bounty of her patronage.

Despite this auspicious beginning, Drayton enjoyed Lady Bedford's favour for only two years, during which he dedicated a series of new works to her. In the dedication to Mortimeriados, published in April 1596, he addressed her as "Rarest of Ladies, all, of all I have,/ Anchor of my poor Tempest-beaten state", and complimented Lady Bedford as the heir of Sidney's virtues, and the inspiration and life of his own muse.<sup>45</sup> Twice he expanded on the dedication with an address to her interjected into the story: at l.260, he invokes her as "Mistris of my Muse" and begs an infusion of "spyrit", "light" and "new lyfe" from her "lyving power";<sup>46</sup> at l.2080, he announces a change of tone, promising "to sharpen thy sweet spirit with some delight".<sup>47</sup> The first version of Robert, Duke of Normandy was published in Nov. 1596 in a volume including amended versions of Matilda and Piers Gaveston, with dedications to Lady Bedford and her mother.<sup>48</sup> There are several contrasts between the two dedications. That to Lady Bedford is in prose; though hyperbolic in flattery, it betrays some strain in their relationship:

What nature and industry began, your honour and bountie hath thus farre continued. The light I have, is borrowed from your beams, which Envie shall not eclipse, so long as you shall favourable shine. Under the stampe of your glorious Name my Poems shall passe

for currant, beeing not altogether unworthy of so great a super-  
scription.<sup>49</sup>

"Thus farre" suggests that he feared her bounty would not continue further; "so long as" almost threatens the eclipse. The dedication to Lady Harington is in verse, and commends her "bountie", "gracious kindnes", modestie" and "wit" with greater humility and sincerity.<sup>50</sup> Several of Drayton's dedications to Lady Bedford are explicitly mercenary, whereas his address to Lady Harington and his commendations of her when addressing her daughter seem disinterested. Perhaps he had been introduced to Lady Bedford through her parents, who were neighbours and contemporaries of his first patron Goodyer; or perhaps he expected polite interest from the virtuous mother but "golden showers" from the illustrious daughter -- he does stress the importance of her marriage to "Bedford's greatnes".<sup>51</sup>

England's Heroicall Epistles, published in Oct. 1597, was the last new work Drayton dedicated to Lady Bedford: the epistles of Rosamond and King Henry II were dedicated to her; those of Queen Isabel and Mortimer to Lady Harington; an epistle of Queen Isabel to Richard II to the Earl of Bedford. These dedications show a growing unease and uncertainty. In his address to the Earl of Bedford, Drayton seems to be appealing to the Earl because his relationship with the Countess was deteriorating. He mentions first "the love I have ever borne to the illustrious house of Bedford, and to the honourable familie of the Haringtons"; next his "true and zealous affection"; then that he was "bequeathed" to the Countess by Goodyer; and concludes with a direct appeal to Bedford to "patronize willingly".<sup>52</sup> That he repeats "be-

queathed" twice, while commending Goodyer as "learned and accomplished" and "excellent and matchlesse" suggests that as the second "cherisher" of his Muse, Lady Bedford has been less satisfactory than the first.

In his dedication to Lady Bedford, Drayton compares himself to Rosamond:

I present to your Ladiship this Epistle of hers to King Henry, whom I may rather call her lover then beloved. Heere must your Ladiship behold variablenes in resolution: woes constantly grounded: laments abruptly broken off: much confidence, no certainty, wordes begetting teares, teares confounding matter, large complaints in little papers: and many deformed cares, in one uniformed Epistell. I strive not to affect singularity, yet would faine flie imitation, and prostrate mine owne wants to other mens perfections. Your judiciall eye must modell forth what my pence hath layd together: much would shee say to a King, much would I say to a Countesse, but that the method of my Epistle must conclude the modestie of hers: which I wish may recommend my ever vowed service to your honour.<sup>53</sup>

It is interesting to note that Rosamond's epistle is a lament for her sinful relationship with the king, and the loss of her chastity.<sup>54</sup>

What Drayton may have been suggesting about Lady Bedford, whom three years earlier he had honoured as the counterpart of chaste Matilda, is unclear; perhaps he used the romantic metaphor to suggest his patron was forsaking him for some rival.<sup>55</sup> Whether a complete breach in their relationship followed is also unclear, though Drayton dedicated no new works to Lady Bedford after 1597. Probably still hoping for her favour at court, Drayton did not abandon his modesty to complain until 1606.

After 1597, Drayton turned to another interest, writing for the stage. He became associated with the Admiral's players, and collaborated on at least twenty-four plays between 1597 and 1602, of which only the first part of Sir John Oldcastle survives.<sup>56</sup> The rivalry between the Admiral's men and the Chamberlain's men may have

reflected the political factions, the former representing the Howard-Cecil party, the latter the Essex circle.<sup>57</sup> If this connection were true, it would explain an aspect of the breach in Drayton's relationship with Lady Bedford: he chose the wrong side. However, it is more likely that the Chamberlain's men became the King's men not through political factionalism but simply because they were the better company,<sup>58</sup> and that Drayton turned to the theatre because his patrons failed to provide sufficient support. Like many other professional poets of his day, Drayton was always poor,<sup>59</sup> and became a hack writer for Henslowe in order to survive.

At the end of this first period of dramatic activity, Drayton acquired a new patron and returned to writing poetry. He was the first poet to acclaim the new king. The Majesty of King James appeared only a few days after Queen Elizabeth's death.<sup>60</sup> Drayton also wrote "A Paeon Triumphall" for the Society of Goldsmiths, celebrating James' entry into London on 15 March 1604.<sup>61</sup> For several reasons, Drayton failed to gain James' favour. In his haste to praise the new king, he neglected to mourn the old queen, a lack of tact which gave offence and brought disgrace. He himself later regretted his "forward pen".<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the closing lines of his "Paeans" warn James against sycophants:

Those silken, laced, and perfumed hinds,  
That have rich bodies, but poore wretched minds,  
But from thy Court (O Worthy) banish quite  
The foole, the Pandar, and the Parasite.<sup>63</sup>

James probably objected to such moral hectoring, and rising courtiers like Lady Bedford might be offended if they suspected Drayton was

referring to themselves. The general moralizing tone of his historical works had been out-of-fashion for some years in the new age of wit. Now, however, Drayton went further, expressing openly his hostility toward some of the powerful figures of the court. In his address to James, Drayton hinted that he had already suffered disfavour: "Had not my soule beene prooffe gainst envies spite/I had not breath'd thy memory to write".<sup>64</sup> In The Owle, published in 1604 but written earlier, he satirized Cecil and others of the royal council as birds of prey.<sup>65</sup> Later, Drayton complained of his loss of royal favour; if he also lost the favour of powerful courtiers at this time, it would not be surprising.

Lady Bedford may have withdrawn her patronage as early as 1598: that would explain why no new works were dedicated to her. The "Great Lady" sonnet from Endimion and Phoebe was reprinted in eight editions.<sup>66</sup> Drayton may still have hoped for her good offices at court: this impression is confirmed by the fact that, in reprints of the sonnet between 1599 and 1608, Drayton changed the last line from "Sweet Ladie, then, grace this poore Muse of mine" to "Sweet Ladie, yet, grace...".<sup>67</sup> In the revised version of Mortimeriados, published in 1602 as the Barons' Wars, the allusions to Lady Bedford were suppressed, and the work dedicated to Drayton's new patron, Sir Walter Aston.<sup>68</sup> The offensive Owle was also dedicated to Aston. Later in 1604, in the dedication to Moses in a Map of His Miracles, Drayton assured his new patron "Yet then your owne, we seeke not other names". Perhaps quite simply Lady Bedford's tastes changed, or Drayton found a more congenial patron; or she may have reacted to the tactical blunder of his premature



address to James and nasty attack on Cecil. There may have been no overt or abrupt breach, but Drayton later wrote an allegorical complaint which suggests that there was.<sup>69</sup>

In 1606, when Drayton published a revised version of Idea The Shepheards Garland in Poems Lyrick and Pastorall, he introduced a new passage into the Eighth Eglog, criticizing "Selena" for deserting "Rowland" in favour of "Cerberon".

So once Selena seemed to regard,  
That faithfull Rowland her so highly praysed,  
And did his travell for a while reward,  
As his estate she purpos'd to have raysed,  
But soone she fled him and the swaine defyes,  
Ill is he sted that on such faith relies.

And to deceitfull Cerberon she cleaves  
That beastly clowne to vile of to be spoken,  
And that good shepheard wilfully she leaves  
And falsly al her promises hath broken,  
And al those beautyes whilom that her graced,  
With vulgar breath perpetually defaced.

What daintie flower yet ever was there found  
Whose smell or beauty mighte the sence delight  
Wherwith Eliza when she lived was crowned  
In goodly chapplets he for her not dighte  
Which became withered soon as ere shee ware them  
So ill agreeing with the brow that bare them.

Let age sit soone and ugly on her brow,  
No shepheards praises living let her have  
To her last end noe creature pay one vow  
Nor flower be strew'd on her forgotten grave,  
And to the last of all devouring tyme  
Nere be her name remembered more in rime.<sup>70</sup>

Assuming that "Selena" is Lady Bedford-- there are no other identifications suggested<sup>71</sup>-- who was the hated rival? Cerberon could be Florio,<sup>72</sup> whose first dedication to Lady Bedford came in 1598; or Jonson, whose acquaintance with Lady Bedford probably began in 1600; or Daniel, who was given the task of writing the first masque for the

new court in 1604, though Drayton had written for the stage.<sup>73</sup> What is undeniably clear is that some honoured female figure had abandoned her faithful poet for a rival.

Following the four "Selena" stanzas, which were removed in the 1619 printing, are two which seem to refer to Drayton's overeager celebration of James' accession, and his failure to win royal patronage:

So did great Olcon, which a Phoebus seem'd,  
Whom all good Shepherds gladly flock'd about,  
And as a God of Rowland was esteem'd,  
Which to his prayse drew all the rurall Rout:  
For, after Rowland, as it had beene Pan,  
Onely to Olcon every Shepherd ran.

But he forsakes the Heard-groome and his Flocks,  
Nor of his Bag-pipes takes at all no keepe,  
But to the sterne Wolfe and deceitfull Fox,  
Leaves the poore Shepherd and his harmelesse Sheepe,  
And all those Rimes that he of Olcon sung,  
The Swayne disgrac'd, participate his wrong.<sup>74</sup>

One wonders which of the rivals the "sterne Wolfe" and "deceitfull Fox" might have been.

In the earlier period of his work, before 1594, for instance in the First Eglog of The Shepherds Garland, Drayton ascribed his failure to achieve due recognition to his own shortcomings. After 1603, he is much less subjective, vehemently blaming others.<sup>75</sup> In the "Selena" passage, and six years later in a brief note in Poly-Olbion, he links his failure at court and his changed relationship with his "great lady", disclaiming "nor of a pin he wayes/What fooles, abused Kings, and humourous ladies raise".<sup>76</sup> In writing that poetic geography of England, Drayton deliberately omitted the Countess and her family. Bedfordshire and an ancient Bedford ancestor are mentioned, but the Countess and her husband, and the Harington family, are all ignored.<sup>77</sup>

The King's displeasure was not perpetual, though Lady Bedford's may have been. After August 1607, Drayton became associated with the Children of the King's Revels,<sup>78</sup> perhaps as a writer. After 1609, he is mentioned in lawsuits as a sharer in the company, and may have been their manager.<sup>79</sup> The company was frequently in financial difficulty. His Majesty's in Whitefriars was the rival company to the Children of Her Majesty's Revels, Blackfriars. This time Drayton had definitely joined the opposition, for Her Majesty's children were supported by Queen Anne and Lady Bedford, and Daniel was their licenser.

Drayton was a professional poet of an earlier Elizabethan type, out-of-place in the new age of wit. As early as 1594, in the preface to Matilda, his first poem dedicated to Lady Bedford, he complained of the changing styles in poetry.<sup>80</sup> Conservative, old-fashioned, moralistic and definitely un-bohemian, he could not hold the interest of the lively Lucy for very long. Perhaps she simply preferred his "rival" poets -- Daniel, Florio, Edward Herbert, Jonson, Donne -- who were more adaptable if not different in spirit. Already established as a poet, introduced by another, Drayton enjoyed her favour for several years. She may then have turned to other interests; he tried his hand at the stage. Perhaps he hoped for her patronage in the new reign, but he lost the royal favour, at least temporarily, by seeking it too soon. She probably gave him up entirely at that time. He acquired a new patron, and returned to dramatic activity. Finally, several years later, he vented his disappointment in an allegorical attack, and removed her name when he reissued his earlier works.

Florio 1598-1604

John Florio was born in 1553, probably in London; his father was an Italian protestant exile, a teacher of languages to pupils as illustrious as Lady Jane Grey and perhaps even Queen Elizabeth herself in her youth. The family left England in 1554; Florio senior became pastor of the reformed church of Soglio in northern Italy. John Florio returned to England about 1576, and became a teacher of languages.<sup>81</sup>

Florio's first published work was the First Fruits in 1578, a grammar and forty-four dialogues in Italian and English. It was dedicated to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. In the dedication and the dialogues there is "an undercurrent of discontent" with the negative Elizabethan attitude to foreigners and the ill-treatment he himself received; one source of the discontent, and perhaps of the ill-treatment, was his own patronizing view of the inferiority of English language and culture. "Florio's dissatisfaction with things in general sometimes takes a Puritan tone... Scattered through the First Fruits are many criticisms of contemporary life from a definitely Puritan standpoint".<sup>82</sup> Through Leicester, or through Sir Edward Dyer or Fulke Greville, Florio hoped for entrance to the Sidney circle; he apparently knew Spenser and Harvey, and John Lyly, whose euphuistic style he shared.<sup>83</sup>

After 1578, Florio went to Oxford. He was a "poor scholar" of Magdalen, the Puritan college, and matriculated in 1581. At Oxford, Florio probably met Daniel, who spent three years at Magdalen beginning in 1579.<sup>84</sup> Daniel may have learned his Italian from Florio, who was teaching at Oxford from 1580-1583.<sup>85</sup> At some time before 1585, Florio

married Daniel's sister.<sup>86</sup> Florio also met Matthew Gwinne at Oxford; Gwinne, signing himself "Il Candido", wrote poems to accompany many of Florio's books.<sup>87</sup> From 1583 until probably 1589 Florio was employed at the French embassy in London.<sup>88</sup> Here he developed his intimate friendship with Giordano Bruno.<sup>89</sup>

In 1591, Florio's Second Fruits appeared. It was dedicated to Nicolas Saunders of Ewell, a member of a well-known Surrey family. The dedication is a review of current production in journalism, poetry and drama. The Puritan moralizing is absent from the dialogues; this marked change in tone may reflect the change in Florio's fortunes and life-style, and his acquaintance with the new generation of young aristocrats. Early in the 1590s, Florio found his patrons among Essex's friends. As of 1589, Southampton, Rutland and Bedford were wards of Burghley, who may have appointed Florio as their Italian tutor. By 1594, Florio was in the service of Southampton.<sup>90</sup>

"On March 2nd, 1596, 'a most copious and exacte Dictionarie in Italian and English made by John Florio dedicated to the right honourable the Earle of Southampton' was licensed to Edward Blount".<sup>91</sup> When A Worlde of Wordes appeared in 1598, it was dedicated to "Roger Earle of Rutland, Henrie Earle of Southampton, Lucie Countesse of Bedford". The dedication opens with an extended conceit that, after "two over-hastie fruites...like too forewarde females" (his First and Second Fruits), this work is his first man-child. Thus for custom's sake he needs two male and one female godparents. Perhaps Rutland and Lady Bedford were added as an afterthought. Lady Bedford as well as her husband and the two earls may have been Florio's pupil;<sup>92</sup> or with his

connections to the Essex circle, Florio might have met Lady Bedford between 1596 and 1598.

Florio addresses the three collectively throughout as "your Honors". He addresses Southampton first and at some length, as one "in whose paie and patronage I have lived some yeeres", and commends the earl for a knowledge of Italian so complete "that there seemed no neede of travell: and nowe by travell so accomplished, as what wants to perfection?" If Florio was the earl's Italian tutor, such high praise is rather disingenuous. Next he addresses Rutland in four brief lines, praising him for an ability with Italian almost as good as Southampton's. Finally, he offers the following lines to Lady Bedford:

Naie, if I offer service but to them that need it,  
with what face seeke I a place with your excellent  
Ladiship (my most-most honoured, because best-best  
adorned Madame) who by conceited industrie, or industrious  
conceite, in Italian as in French, in French as in Spanish,  
in all as in English, understand what you reade, write as you  
reade, and speake as you write; yet rather charge your minde  
with matter then your memorie with words?<sup>93</sup>

The praise offered Lady Bedford is both more particular and more extravagant than that bestowed on Southampton. The opening conceit, and the fact that in the body of the dedication both Rutland and Lady Bedford are addressed in parentheses, give an impression that Southampton was the one Florio actually knew and the other two were added to fill up the slate. Florio was renowned and mocked by contemporaries for his double and triple dedications.<sup>94</sup> Yet if there is substance beneath the ornament of his remarks to Lady Bedford, Florio must have had some acquaintance with her and some knowledge of her education.

Florio's translation of Montaigne's Essays was licensed June 4, 1600 but not published until 1603.<sup>95</sup> The three dedicatory epistles were addressed to Lady Bedford and Lady Harington, the Countess of Rutland and Lady Penelope Rich, Lady Elizabeth Grey and Lady Mary Neville; from the first pair, he hoped for continued patronage and access to the court; with the second, he maintained his connection with the Essex faction; the third pair were favourite pupils.<sup>96</sup> With the wealth of affected language removed, the dedication reveals that Florio enjoyed considerable profit from his Harington-Bedford connections: after he had begun his translation at the behest of Wotton, Lady Bedford read the first chapter, and encouraged him to finish; the Earl of Bedford provided financial assistance; both Lady Bedford and the Haringtons extended hospitality; Lady Chichester provided patronage of both kinds. The language of the address to Lady Bedford is interesting in itself. First he recalls the dedication to A Worlde of Wordes: "To my last Birth...I the indulgent father invited two right Honorable Godfathers, with the One of your Noble Lady-shippes to witnesse". Next, after commending the "most motherly-affected Lady Harington", he discusses at some length the reluctance of the "praise-surmounting" Lady Bedford to be praised; he is "held-in" by her "sweete reining hand (who have ever helde this desire, sooner to exceede what you are thought, then be thought what you are not)" from praising her to excess. Then after an apology for his "plainnesse", he describes the progress of his work and her part in it:

...when I with one Chapter found my selfe over-charged, whereto the charge or choise of an Honorable person, and by me not-to-be denied Benefactor (Noble and vertuous Sir Edward Wotton) had engaged me,

which I finished in your owne house) your Honor having dayned to read it, without pittie of my failing, my fainting, my labouring, my languishing, my gasping for some breath (O could so Honorable, be so pittie-lesse? Madame, now doe I flatter you?) Yet commaunded me on: (and let me die outright, ere I doe not that commaund.) I say not you tooke pleasure at shore (as those in this Author) to see me sea-tosst, wether-beate, shippe-wrackt, almost drowned (Mon.lib.iii.c.I). Nor say I like this mans Indian King, you checkt with a sower-sterne countenance the yerne-ful complaint of your drooping, neere-dying subject (Lib.iii.c.6). Nor say I (as he alleadgeth out of others) like an ironically modest Virgin, you enduced, yea commaunded, yea delighted to see mee strive for life, yet fall out of breath (Lib.ii.c.23). Unmercifull you were, but not so cruell. (Madame, now do I flatter you?) Yet this I may and must say, like in this French-mans report, our third in name, but first and chiefe in fame, K. Edward, you would not succour your blacke, not sonne, but servaunt, but bade him fight and conquere, or die (Lib.i.c.41): Like the Spartane imperirious Mother, a shield indeede you gave mee, but with this Word. Aut cum hoc; aut in hoc (Giou. Imp. Mar Pes.). I must needes say while this was in dooing, to put and keepe mee in hart like a captived Canniball fattend against my death, you often cryed Coraggio, and called ça, ça and applauded as I passt, and if not fet mee in, yet set mee on, even with a Syrens ô treslouable Ulissee (Mont. li.ii.c.16). O Madame who then spake faire? As for mee, I onely say, as this mans embossed Hart out of hart (Lib.ii.c.II), I sweat, I wept, and I went-on, til now I stand at bay: howsoever, I hope that may yet save me, which from others strangles others, I meane the collar you have put about my necke with your inscription Noli me caedere, nam sum Dianae. Yet nor can you denie, nor I dissemble, how at first I pleaded this Authors tedious difficultie, my selfe-knowne insufficiencie, and others more leisurefull abilitie. But no excuse would serve him, that must serve without excuse. Little power had I to performe, but lesse to refuse what you impos'de: for his length you gave time: for his hardnesse you advised help: my weaknesse you might bidde doe it's best: others strength you would not seeke-for-further.

She procured for him the assistance of Theodore Diodati, whom Florio says was tutor to her brother John Harington, and of his old friend Gwinne. Finally, "besides your owne inexplicable bounty first-mover of my good", he lists the kindness of her husband and family.<sup>97</sup>

Compared to the epistle to the Countess of Rutland and Lady Rich ("peerlesse" and "unparagonized Ladies"), this address seems immediate



and personal. The effect of first expounding her reluctance to be praised and then repeating the rhetorical "now do I flatter you?" is to reinforce the sense of actual exchange and to create an impression of the real person behind the convention-decorated patron. Whatever we make of the extravagant imagery and the elaborate Petrarchan pose, at very least we see Lady Bedford here as a lady of formidable personality. It is amusing to note that, when composing his imaginary Courtier's Library at some time between 1603 and 1611, Donne parodied the absurd affectations of Florio's dedications in "Item # 15. The Ocean of Court".<sup>98</sup> Also of interest is the fact that Florio's address to the reader contained an apology for translation: "The translators were, almost without exception, firm Protestants, and they were protected and encouraged by the new, liberal, Protestant nobility".<sup>99</sup> The support given to Florio by the Haringtons and Bedfords is thus further evidence of the strongly Protestant if not Puritan convictions of the families.

About 1604 Florio was appointed a Groom of the Privy Chamber to Queen Anne. He had many contacts in court and political circles, but Cecil and Lady Bedford were probably responsible for the appointment.<sup>100</sup> His brother-in-law Daniel received the usual salary of £60 per year for this post; Florio received £100.<sup>101</sup> He apparently had additional duties as reader in Italian and private secretary to the Queen; he may also have tutored the Princess Elizabeth and advised Jonson of the Queen's wishes for the court masques.<sup>102</sup> A Worlde of Wordes was reissued "much augmented" in 1611 as Queen Anna's New World of Words; the

second edition of Montaigne's Essays in 1613 was also dedicated to the queen. After the death of Queen Anne in 1619, Florio lost his position at court. He spent his last years in poverty and retirement at Fulham, and died late in 1625.<sup>103</sup>

Florio is an important secondary figure in a study of Lady Bedford as a patron. The sequence of events suggests that he was the rival Drayton resented in 1598 and excoriated in 1606. Florio's portrait of Lady Bedford in the dedication to his Montaigne translation in 1603 indicates that as a patron she was generous with time, money, hospitality and encouragement, but as a learned lady forceful and demanding. There is more than a touch of wry desperation in his description of the great lady using her leisure to hector the harried but eager writer. Lady Bedford was only one of Florio's numerous patrons. There was probably a situation of mutual advantage, he hoping to advance at court, she able to provide the queen with a new and amusing servant.

#### Daniel 1603-1604

Born in Somerset in 1562 or 1563,<sup>104</sup> Samuel Daniel was a contemporary of Drayton, but with the encouragement of a series of patrons, he adapted to changing times, and eventually became a wealthy man in his own right.<sup>105</sup>

Daniel's first patron after he left Oxford was Sir Edward Dymoke, the Queen's Champion; this relationship lasted seven years, 1585-92.<sup>106</sup> His second patron was more renowned: he entered the Pembroke household in 1592.<sup>107</sup> The prose dedication to Delia, published

in Feb. 1592, suggests that his relationship with the Countess of Pembroke was still new; his plea for her "protection" is formal and conventional.<sup>108</sup> For the next two years, Daniel was a member of the Pembroke circle; that experience affected his high conception of poetry, and the theories expounded later in his Defense of Ryme, in which he writes of being 'first incourag'd or fram'd' to poetry by the Countess. The sonnet to the Countess of Pembroke presenting the third edition of Delia in 1594 suggests a closer and more familiar acquaintance: he no longer 'hopes' for her protection, but in fact enjoys it. Daniel may have been William Herbert's tutor;<sup>109</sup> in years following, he became one of Daniel's patrons.<sup>110</sup> Daniel left Wilton in 1594, perhaps because the Countess of Pembroke was forcing him to write in uncongenial styles and forms.<sup>111</sup> Late in 1593, he had begun looking for new patrons; temporarily, he was encouraged by Fulke Greville and Lord Mountjoy.<sup>112</sup> His Poeticall Essayes, published in 1599, were dedicated to Mountjoy.<sup>113</sup> Also in 1599, Daniel dedicated A Letter from Octavia to Marcus Antonius to Margaret, Countess of Cumberland;<sup>114</sup> the subject was particularly appropriate, as the Countess and her husband George Clifford had many differences, legal and marital, and often lived apart.<sup>115</sup> In the same year, Daniel became tutor to the Countess of Cumberland's daughter, Lady Anne Clifford.<sup>116</sup>

In April 1603, Daniel wrote "A Panegyricke Congratulatorie" welcoming King James to Harington-Burley. Whether the Haringtons discovered him themselves, or Lady Bedford recommended him, is not known. When the "Panegyricke" was published later in 1603, it included

an epistle to Lady Bedford amongst others addressed to Lord Keeper Egerton, Lord Henry Howard, the Earl of Southampton, and the two Clifford ladies. Daniel obviously hoped these influential nobles would advance him if the king himself did nothing. The verse epistles to the three ladies are serious and philosophical; none is warmly personal. The epistle to the Countess of Cumberland discusses a stoic resolution, affected by neither fear nor hope, and acclaims the Countess for "that cleere judgement that hath caried you/Beyond the feeble limits of your kinde", allowing her to maintain "This Concord of a well-tun'd minde".<sup>117</sup> In the epistle to Lady Anne Clifford, Daniel praises Lady Cumberland's efforts to make her daughter "as highly good as highly borne" and advises the young lady how that is to be accomplished-- that honour is a combination of private worthiness and public respect; that "not to prophane" her dignity, she must be careful that "the vertuous gaine/The best effects" of her generosity; that she must not trust her own "sufficiency", while doubting the flattery of others and of self-deceit. This epistle seems quite typical of the sober advice of a parting tutor to a teenage pupil; Polonius would have approved.

The epistle to Lady Bedford has something of the same tone of moral admonition. Since virtue is "more her selfe" when "in the faire attyre of honour dight", there exists in Lady Bedford a balanced reciprocity between "high fortunes" and virtue "that gracing you, comes grac't thereby". Therefore, the "learned lady" should pursue "this faire course of knowledge", for, other than her "studies", "no key had you else that was so fit/T'unlocke that prison of your Sex as this." Daniel advises her to achieve through study the philosophic

stance he praised the older Lady Cumberland for maintaining, overseeing "this rowling world" but unaffected by it. This contrast suggests it is Lady Bedford who needs to 'redeem her thoughts from out confusion' and 'find the measure of her self'. Books cannot show "the certaine place of truth" but they can "give the Soule the best delights that may/Encheere it most, and most our spirits inflame/To thoughts of glory, and to worthy ends". Therefore she is to continue to "runne the rightest way/That is on Earth" which is to read books and to patronize poets.

Perhaps Lady Bedford appreciated the advice, or she was pleased with the Burley entertainment: the "Panegyricke" does seem to have led to court preferment. For the new queen's first Christmas at Hampton Court Daniel was commissioned to write a masque, probably through Lady Bedford's influence.<sup>118</sup> The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses was presented 8 Jan. 1604, and was dedicated to the Countess. Queen Anne represented Pallas, Lady Bedford Vesta.<sup>119</sup> In his dedication, Daniel expresses his gratitude to the Countess and declares he intended only the simplest meanings for his allegorical figures. He explains that "the ancients attributed the blessing of religion to Vesta". If the character suited the person, this is one of the earliest references to Lady Bedford's piety. Daniel describes Lady Bedford's costume: "Vesta, in a white mantle embroidered with gold flames, with a dressing like a nun, presented a burning lamp in one hand and a book in the other".<sup>120</sup> Dudley Carleton could distinguish the different goddesses only by their headdresses, but noted "Only Pallas had a trick by herself, for her clothes were not so much below the knee but that we might see a woman

had both feet and legs which I never knew before".<sup>121</sup> Perhaps in comparison to the new queen's levity Lady Bedford would seem a serious person.

The Vision seems to have been successful, at least for Daniel personally. Early in 1604 he was appointed licenser of the Children of the Queen's revels. According to its patent, this company was not under the jurisdiction of the Master of Revels;<sup>122</sup> Daniel was responsible for the subject matter of the plays performed. This post "yielded him a bond of £100. and an annuity of £10.; but these he made over to another on April 28, 1605".<sup>123</sup> There are several explanations for Daniel's retirement from the Queen's Revels company. Late in 1604 the company presented Daniel's Philotas. The play was interpreted as referring to the Essex rebellion, and Daniel was called before the council to explain.<sup>124</sup> He must have been convincing, as Philotas may have been performed before King James in January 1605, and was published with a dedication to Prince Henry later that year.<sup>125</sup> Another explanation is that Daniel retired because of the row over Eastward Ho, the Jonson-Chapman play which caused such offense that its authors were jailed. Daniel had obviously been unwise in the choice of plays presented; he risked the anger of King James by allowing works which amused Queen Anne by ridiculing her husband.

At some time after this withdrawal as licenser in 1605, Daniel retired to a farm in Wiltshire owned by the Earl of Hertford, who had been one of Daniel's patrons since 1603.<sup>126</sup> However, he maintained some connection to the court, and in 1607 became a Groom of her Majesty's privy chamber.<sup>127</sup> He apparently enjoyed the favour of

Queen Anne herself, and was commissioned to write the Queen's masque as part of the celebration for the investiture of Henry as Prince of Wales. Tethys Festival was performed at Whitehall on 5 June 1610; Daniel's former pupil Lady Anne Clifford was one of the thirteen river nymphs. In his preface, Daniel showed "indifference towards the masque form itself and some contempt for those who would take it seriously".<sup>128</sup> This attitude is evidence of continued rivalry between Daniel and Jonson. Daniel may have been the rival poet Jonson castigated Lady Bedford for preferring in his 1600 "Epistle to the Countess of Rutland".<sup>129</sup> Lady Bedford promoted Daniel, not Jonson, to write the first court masque in 1603. In his preface to The Vision, Daniel dismissed masques as "dreames and shewes"; he was uneasy with a form not suited to his talents, even contemptuous of it.<sup>130</sup> When Jonson began receiving masque commissions, he may have felt this as a challenge; in the preface to Hymenaei in 1606, Jonson seems to answer Daniel's contemptuous dismissal.<sup>131</sup> In the preface to his second masque, Tethys Festival in 1610, Daniel attacks Jonson obliquely by maintaining the same attitude, and by giving credit mostly to the architect, an idea Jonson abhorred.

Daniel probably realized quickly that he could not compete with Jonson as a masque writer. In the contest for court favour, he needed a vehicle more suited to his talents. He found it in adapting Italian pastoral drama to English tastes. His first attempt was The Queenes Arcadia, performed for the visit of James, Anne and Prince Henry to Oxford August 27-31, 1605. Performed on the 30th, and designed to please the Queen and the court ladies, Daniel's was the only production

in English.<sup>132</sup> The dedicatory poem seems to glance satirically at Jonson: he may be the "wolfe" who preaches sedition, a reference to Jonson's difficulties with Eastward Ho and Sejanus.<sup>133</sup> The theme of this work seems un-Jonsonian, as Daniel celebrates not witty sophistication but the simplicity of goodness. Daniel's final comment came in 1615: in the prologue to his second pastoral drama, Hymen's Triumph, Daniel declared he would admit "no wild, no rude, no antique sport", rejecting explicitly the cruder materials of pastoral and implicitly the elements of the Jonsonian anti-masque.<sup>134</sup> Hymen's Triumph was written to celebrate the marriage of Robert Ker, Lord Roxborough to Jean Drummond in Feb. 1614; this Lady Roxborough was Lady Bedford's particular friend.

After 1610 Daniel continued in Queen Anne's favour. He was one of the seven grooms of her privy chamber who took part in the funeral of Prince Henry in 1612.<sup>135</sup> The following year he became a 'gentleman extraordinary' of the queen's privy chamber, and received wages of £60 per year.<sup>136</sup> In 1618, Daniel dedicated his Historie of England to the Queen, noting that the work was "for the most part done under your Roofe, during my attendance upon your Sacred Person".<sup>137</sup> Both the Queen and Daniel died in 1619; Lady Anne Clifford raised a monument to her tutor in the church at Beckington where he had been living.<sup>138</sup>

Before he entered the royal circle, Daniel had a number of noble patrons, including four of the great ladies of the time, the Countess of Pembroke, The Countess of Cumberland and her daughter Lady Anne Clifford, and Lady Bedford. He may have been recommended to the Haringtons and Lady Bedford by these earlier patrons, or introduced



to the Bedford circle by Florio. An independent man, Daniel sought his fortune with noble patrons and at court; Lady Bedford was the last stop on his climb to royal favour. Their relationship lasted only two years. Daniel's addresses to Lady Bedford are very similar in tone and style to his addresses to other patronesses. There is no evidence of a particularly close or personal relationship between them, and Lady Bedford's influence in Daniel's career can only be inferred. It is interesting to note that Daniel's 1604 masque came before the first series of Jonson's great masques, and his 1610 masque, which followed the 1609 breach in Jonson's relationship with Lady Bedford, interrupted that series. Lady Bedford must have had some influence in the choice of Daniel each time, and the rivalry between the two poets may have centred on her as much as on their different theories. Unlike Drayton and Jonson, Daniel never stooped to attack Lady Bedford either directly or allegorically, perhaps because their relationship was not personal but purely professional. After 1604, when he received a place in the queen's household, he no longer needed patronage for financial support, and had only indirect and infrequent contact with Lady Bedford.

#### Twickenham 1607-1612

In 1607 Lady Bedford acquired Twickenham Park, an estate on the river nine miles from London which had formerly been the home of Francis Bacon.<sup>139</sup> For the next ten years it was her principal residence. Lady Bedford's life at Twickenham cannot be reconstructed in detail; she herself left no record of this period, and the few contemporary references are vague. Of the ambience created there and the

social circle which enjoyed it, however, something can be said.

Where she was, interesting people gathered. The Twickenham circle was probably wider and more amorphous than is suggested here; in definition it was simply a group of people who shared some relationship with Lady Bedford. A reconstruction of its nature and membership is necessarily speculative; concrete evidence is slight. Consider its two most illustrious literary members: it cannot be proven that Jonson was ever at Twickenham; Donne stated only twice that he was,<sup>140</sup> though we infer he was a frequent visitor.

We have already seen that as a patron Lady Bedford inherited some of the Sidney-Pembroke tradition though in a form modified by the different reality of the Jacobean court. "The tradition of 'housekeeping' inherited by a good many noblemen and gentlemen of the early seventeenth century seems to have included the duty of maintaining, in various capacities and for longer or shorter periods, scholars and men of letters."<sup>141</sup> That is an admirable general summary of the older Elizabethan style of patronage exemplified by the Countess of Pembroke. In the early years of the reign of James, this ideal of aristocratic hospitality had its rural epitome at Penshurst, the home of Sir Robert Sidney, younger brother of Sir Philip.

And though thy walls be of the countrey stone,  
 They're rear'd with no mans ruine, no mans grone,  
 There's none, that dwell about them, wish them downe;  
 But all come in, the farmer, and the clowne:  
 And no one empty-handed, to salute  
 Thy lord, and lady, though they have no sute.  
 ...  
 But what can this (more then expresse their love)  
 Adde to thy free provisions, farre above  
 The neede of such? whose liberall boord doth flow,  
 With all, that hospitalitie doth know!

Now, Penshurst, they that will proportion thee  
 With other edifices, when they see  
 Those proud, ambitious heaps, and nothing else,  
 May say, their lords have built, but thy lord dwells.<sup>142</sup>

Jonson's ode presents "an idealized...but not a misleading picture."<sup>143</sup>

The tradition of 'housekeeping' which the poem celebrates is shown not only "in the deep concern with the social function of the great house in the life of the community", but equally in the poems reflection of an ideal patronage:

The function of the poet in this society was to make it aware of itself; and because the poet had a function the relation between poet and patron in these poems is sound and wholesome. The poet is not a menial or a hanger-on, but an honoured friend and guest, welcomed for himself and for what he has to contribute to the life of the great house...both poet and patron are parts of an organic whole, each recognizes the importance and place of the other in the life of the community.

In the companion piece, Jonson's poem to Sir Robert Wroth, the central contrast is between "the contented, traditional life of the country and the anxious, acquisitive life of the town and court."<sup>144</sup> Penshurst and the life Sir Robert Sidney lived there represented a deliberate effort to continue the earlier style of aristocratic 'housekeeping'; in 1650, what Marvell celebrated in Fairfax' life at Nunappleton House was a conscious recreation of the earlier mode. Lady Bedford is representative of this change in styles of living, as great country houses and the aristocratic landlord's central place in the life of the rural community gave way to town houses and increasing dependence on the court.<sup>145</sup> She is also a key figure in this period of transition in the nature of patronage. Though he once praised her for her generosity, it was not for 'housekeeping' and quiet country living that Jonson commended Lady Bedford: his poems to her were spoken by a

different voice. The essential values remained, but in Lady Bedford Jonson celebrated their more courtly expression.

Twickenham embodied that expression of this social ideal. The "Paradise" Donne found there combined a pleasant natural setting--there must have been a garden--and an atmosphere of lettered and courtly ease. If it was less serious than Wilton, less sober than Penshurst, it had the excitement of proximity to London and the court and the extravagance for which Lady Bedford and her family were renowned. The Jonson editors, Herford and Simpson, were most succinct in declaring that Lady Bedford "made her country house at Twickenham a little court of literature -- as near an approach to the French salon as the English seventeenth century ever achieved."<sup>146</sup> Wiffen, the late-nineteenth century Russell family historian, was more impressionistic in his description, focussing on Lady Bedford:

It was here that she received the more familiar visits of the gay, the busy, and the enterprising of her time, that she gathered wisdom and enjoyment from her hours of lettered ease, and found in the society of the poets whose productions she admired, and whose labours she munificently encouraged, a happy relief from the distractions and intrigues of court. Entering into their pursuits with a congenial feeling and enthusiasm, she became the trusted depository of their various anxieties and hopes, and the flattered object of many a grateful canzonet.<sup>147</sup>

Jessopp embroidered even more fancifully:

The gardens at her house at Twickenham, where she kept up her hospitalities on a sumptuous scale, were famous for the assemblies of poets, wits, and whoever else happened to be the intellectual celebrities of the hour. She herself wrote verses--sometimes exchanging her own effusions with those of her guests who had presented her with a song or a sonnet. She exacted from her favourites the frequent homage of their offerings in letters and poems. She delighted in startling subjects of conversation, which others might take part in; her entertainments were veritable intellectual feasts, at which she presided as mistress of the board. Graceful and highly cultured, rich and lavish in her bounty,

with a refined taste in art and literature, and always on the watch to attract men of genius to her side, it was not long before Donne found himself among the regular attendants at her court,-- for at Twickenham the semblance of a court was kept up as if the Countess of Bedford had been a royal personage.<sup>148</sup>

Though we smile at these delightful inventions, we recognize that they probably reflect the true spirit of the place.

The Twickenham circle was at once aristocratic, social, political and literary.<sup>149</sup> Lady Bedford and her attendant ladies-- Jane Meautys, later Lady Cornwallis; the Countess' relatives Bridget Markham and Cecilia Bulstrode; younger ladies such as Lucy Percy and Lucy Goodyer-- formed the centre. The members of the circle were essentially of three groups: the great courtiers, Lady Bedford's allies at court; her gentlemen 'servants', members of the professional elite; the poets. Of those included in the following annotated list, many have been mentioned already in this study; most would appear as important secondary figures in any biography of Donne.

James Hamilton, second Marquis Hamilton: accompanied James from Scotland; privy councillor of Scotland 1613, of England 1617; appointed lord steward of the household 1624; died of a malignant fever 2 March 1625 -- Lady Bedford feared he had been poisoned.

James Lord Hay: educated in France; knighted in Scotland; an early and life-long intimate of King James; received a succession of honours-- life baron 1606, peer 1615, Viscount Doncaster 1618, Earl of Carlisle 1622; only important court appointment, master of the wardrobe 1613; sent to Germany Feb. 1619 on an important embassy to try to avert further Bohemian troubles; became a favourite of

Frederick and Princess Elizabeth; in 1621 and 1622, sent to France to negotiate Huguenot rights; renowned for good nature and extravagance.

Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury: the gentleman poet; friend of Donne and Jonson; mentioned Lady Bedford several times in his Life in context of social intrigues.

William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke: son and heir of the Countess of Pembroke; held a series of positions at court--privy councillor 1611, lord chamberlain, succeeding Somerset, 1615; Aubrey called him 'the greatest Maecenas to learned men of any peer of his time': patron of Daniel, who had been his tutor, and of his cousin George Herbert; gave Jonson £20 annually to buy books; shared with Montgomery the dedication of the Shakespeare folio in 1623; Donne an intimate friend.

Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery: Pembroke's brother; the first royal favourite in England; succeeded Pembroke as lord chamberlain 1626; bad tempered, foul mouthed and immoral; Lady Anne Clifford his second wife; after 1641, sided with the parliamentary opposition; chancellor of Oxford 1641, later removed, restored by parliament 1647; patron of Vandyk.

Sir Dudley Carleton: began his professional career as secretary to Northumberland; first appointed as a diplomat to succeed Wotton at Venice 1612-1615; succeeded Winwood at the Hague 1616-1625, and became friend and confidant of Princess Elizabeth; in 1628 after the death of Buckingham, became chief secretary of state for foreign affairs.<sup>150</sup>

Sir William Cornwallis: nephew by marriage of Lady Jane; knighted by Essex in Ireland; wrote essays in imitation of Montaigne, published in 1600 and 1610; friend of Jonson; met Donne when he was secretary to Egerton, and remained a life-long friend.<sup>151</sup>

George Garrard: cousin of Sir Thomas Roe; friend and correspondent of Donne from before 1607; by 1609, attending Lady Bedford: solicited the elegies on Cecilia Bulstrode; later in the service of Prince Henry, the young Earl of Salisbury, and the Percy family, in succession; became Master of the Charterhouse in 1637.<sup>152</sup>

Sir Henry Goodyer: nephew, son-in-law and heir of the elder Sir Henry; knighted by Essex in Dublin in 1599; a gentleman of the privy chamber; after 1605, attached to the Bedford household; acted for Lady Bedford in 1607 to obtain the lease of Twickenham Park; friend and correspondent of Donne: perhaps met as early as 1597 at Cambridge; Donne's verse letters to Lady Bedford often sent in packets to Goodyer; after 1609, attached to the Countess of Huntingdon's household; himself a minor patron, he may be the "H.G." who contributed verses to Drayton's Matilda (1594) and to whom Drayton's "Odes" were dedicated in 1606; died in 1627, and Drayton was one of his trustees.<sup>153</sup>

Sir Tobie Matthew: diplomat; belle lettrist; later a Catholic convert and a priest; while in England 1607-1608, an intimate friend of Francis Bacon, Donne, and Goodyer.

Sir Thomas Roe: related to and advanced by Lord Berkeley; knighted in the coronation honours in 1603; popular with both Prince Henry and Princess Elizabeth; explorer and diplomat; probably the lover

of Cecilia Bulstrode at the time of her death; assisted Donne in his 1614 explanations to Lady Bedford.<sup>154</sup>

Sir John Roe: sometimes identified as Sir Thomas' brother, but probably his cousin; a soldier and a friend of Jonson.

Sir Henry Wotton: met Donne at Oxford in 1584; secretary to Essex in 1596; knighted in Ireland; a literary amateur; Donne's most serious early friendship, reflected in letters and poems; ambassador to Venice for three terms 1604-1612, 1616-1619, 1621-1624; after 1624, provost of Eton.<sup>155</sup>

George Chapman: involved with Jonson and Marston in the Eastward Ho difficulties in 1605; sonnet to Lady Bedford with others accompanied his Homer in 1609.

John Davies of Hereford: included lines to her in "Worthy Persons" published with The Scourge of Folly 1611; dedicated the Muses Sacrifice to Lady Bedford in 1612.

Jonson and Donne.

This suggested composition of the Twickenham circle provides a specific illustration of L.C. Knights' view of 'the social background of metaphysical poetry':

...the social milieu...was aristocratic in tone, connecting in one direction (partly but certainly not exclusively through patronage) with the inner circles of the Court, in another with the universities and with the middle and upper ranks of the ecclesiastical, administrative and legal hierarchies, and in yet another with the prosperous merchant class represented by Izaak Walton and the Ferrars.<sup>156</sup>

Hamilton, Hay, Montgomery and Pembroke were already prominent in the



social life of the court; all later held a series of increasingly important positions. Knights' remark that "the tone of the inner court circle was set by men whose interests in the arts did not go very far beyond the opportunities for display that they afforded"<sup>157</sup> may be cynical but it is largely true. Only Pembroke could be considered a serious patron. The majority of the Twickenham circle belonged to a second group, the literary, upper-middle class, professional and intellectual elite, close to the great courtiers, often dependent on them for advancement, but a distinct class, a "functional aristocracy" exemplified by Wotton, Carleton and Sir Thomas Roe.

Knights suggested that "in Jonson's or Donne's or Wotton's circle, politics and public affairs, scholarship and 'the new philosophy', literature and the arts, meet and cross: they are not compartmentalized."<sup>158</sup> It is interesting to note how many of the Bedford circle had been followers of Essex. The number of specific inter-connections between the Twickenham circle and the party sympathetic to the Princess Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, gives the Twickenham circle a serious political dimension. As we have seen, Carleton became the confidant of Elizabeth while he was ambassador at the Hague, an intermediary for Lady Bedford's messages, and her host during her 1621 visit; Roe and Wotton were sympathetic defenders of the Princess' cause, official visitors, friends and correspondents; Hay was James' envoy to Germany at the time of the original Bohemian troubles, and advised English intervention on Frederick's behalf; Donne accompanied him, preached before the Queen, and later sent her copies of his published sermons.

There were also social connections: Lady Cornwallis, Lady Bedford's correspondent and friend, had been a childhood friend of the Princess; Sir Francis Nethersole, the Princess' London agent after 1621, married Lucy Goodyer, daughter of Sir Henry and godchild of Lady Bedford (Donne performed the marriage); both the Earl and Lady Bedford interested themselves in the marriage of Lord Strange, heir of the Earl of Derby, to Mlle de la Tremouille; both young people had attended the Princess at the Hague, had in fact been introduced by her, and she was a strong advocate of the match.<sup>159</sup> The Bedfords were both engaged in supporting the Princess, sending money, relaying messages, planning visits. Interest in the Queen of Bohemia's cause indicated opposition to the proposed Catholic marriages for Prince Charles, first Spanish then French, and defense of the Protestant succession which the Princess Elizabeth represented and ensured. After 1605, when the conspirators of the gunpowder plot had planned to abduct the Princess from Lord Harington's care and proclaim her queen, James had distrusted any faction which supported her. Lady Bedford herself and these members of the Twickenham circle were thus involved in a cause which was very popular with the English people -- in her youth, the Princess had been almost as popular as her revered elder brother Henry -- but feared and frowned upon by the king.

In its best moments, the Twickenham circle must have provided a sympathetic social and cultural ambience for its literary members. It is interesting to note that when Knights stated that "the distinct note of Metaphysical poetry...is in some way socially supported; that... 'unity of being' has some relation to a certain 'unity of culture' ",<sup>160</sup>

he found the most succinct statement of the idea within the Twickenham circle, when Jonson, in presenting Donne's satires to Lady Bedford, commended both poet and patron -- "Rare poems ask rare friends". The following chapters attempt to define the real importance, personal and literary, of that rarest of friends, Lucy the ideal lady-muse, to her two rarest poets, Jonson and Donne.

## FOOTNOTES

## (CHAPTER TWO)

<sup>1</sup> Sonnet appended to England's Heroicall Epistles, 1600 edition.

<sup>2</sup> In his Defence of Ryme, 1603.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Birch, The Court and Times of James the First, I, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Clifford, Diary, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> For this summary, I am indebted to R. S. Short, "Patronage in the Reign of James", unpublished doctoral dissertation, Chicago, 1936.

<sup>6</sup> See John Buxton, Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance (2nd ed.; London: Macmillan, 1965): Chapter I, The Tradition of Patronage.

<sup>7</sup> Myra Reynolds, The Learned Lady in England 1650-1760 (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920), p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>9</sup> Lady Anne's reading for the year Sept. 1616 to Aug. 1617 included the following: Montaigne's essays (probably the Florio translation), the Faerie Queene, the Bible, the "Chronicles" (the series of family records she and her servants were compiling, or Daniel's "Chronicle of England"?), Chaucer, the Arcadia, and several histories. Diary, pp. 41, 52, 56, 66, 76.

Pictured on the shelves in the triptych portrait among more than 100 volumes are "all the works in verse of Samuel Daniel", "all the works of Dr. Joseph Hall", "Sidney's Arcadia", "Montaigne's Essays" (probably the Florio translation), "Daniel's 'Chronicle of England'", "All Benjamin Jonson's works", "Donne's Poems", "George Herbert's divine poems", and "Donne's Sermons". Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford..., pp. 498-9.

<sup>10</sup> For Drayton, Newdigate, Michael Drayton and His Circle, p. 160; for Daniel, Sprague, Poems, p. xxv, and CSPD, 1619-1623, p. 31; for Florio, CSPD, 1611-1618, p. 357; for Jonson, Ben Jonson, I, 86, 96; for Donne, Bald, A Life, p. 296.

11 See Teager, "Patronage of Joseph Hall and John Donne", Philological Quarterly, XV (Oct., 1936), pp. 408-413. R. C. Bald, Donne and the Drurys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), provides more information.

At the death of his father Sir William, 8 Jan. 1590, the Drury estate was heavily encumbered by debts. From 1591 until 1607, Sir Nicholas Bacon, Sir Robert's father-in-law, managed the estate and Drury's finances; he had been the most important surety for Sir William (pp. 14-32). Sir Robert was imprisoned in late 1600 for being critical of the Queen's treatment of Essex while Drury was at the court of France; he was also under suspicion in 1601 in the Essex rebellion (pp. 43-45). These facts perhaps explain Drury's inability to patronize Hall. There is also evidence that Hall, a favorite of Lady Drury's, suffered in the tensions between Drury and his wife in the early 1600s (p. 50). After 1603, his military career over, Drury returned to live in England. By 1610, he could have been described as "undoubtedly a wealthy man" (p. 65) since control of his estates was finally within his own power.

12 Joan Rees, Samuel Daniel, A Critical and Biographical Study (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1964), pp. 98-99.

13 Herford and Simpson, Ben Jonson, I, 38-39.

14 Rait, Five Stuart Princesses, p. 55.

15 CSPD, 1591-1594, p. 527.

16 Green, Lives, V, 153.

17 Strype, Annals of the Reformation, II, li, 136.

18 Wright, History and Antiquities of the County of Rutland, p. 52.

19 Austin Warren, "Desainliens" Notes and Queries, 175 (Nov. 19, 1938), 371; and "Claudius Holyband: an Elizabethan Schoolmaster", 177 (Sept. 30, 1939), 237-240.

20 Newdigate, Michael Drayton and his Circle, p. 56.

21 Yates, John Florio, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1934), pp. 144-5.

22 The letter is printed in Samuel Richardson, ed., The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe..., p. 583.

23 Rait, Five Stuart Princesses, p. 55 and Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford..., p. 66.

- 24 Gustav Ungerer, "An Unrecorded Elizabethan Performance of Titus Andronicus", Shakespeare Survey, 14 (1961), p. 103.
- 25 Oman, Elizabeth of Bohemia, p. 20.
- 26 Benger, Memoirs of Elizabeth Stuart..., I, 83, 69.
- 27 Sir John Harrington's sketch of the Life of John, 2nd Lord Harington, in Nuqae Antiquae, II, 312: also quoted in Oman, Elizabeth of Bohemia, p. 22.
- 28 Benger, Memoirs of Elizabeth Stuart..., I, 83.
- 29 Oman, Elizabeth of Bohemia, p. 22-3.
- 30 Green, Lives of the Princesses of England, V, 157f.
- 31 Lord Harington's accounts, Exchequer of Receipt, Miscellanea, Public Record Office, are quoted in Green, Lives, V, 173f.
- 32 Oman, Elizabeth of Bohemia, p. 23.
- 33 Green, Lives, V, 173.
- 34 Oman, Elizabeth of Bohemia, p. 23.
- 35 This account is based on the "Memoirs Relating to the Queen of Bohemia" written by "One of her Ladies", quoted at length in Robert S. Rait, Five Stuart Princesses, pp. 54-57.
- 36 Ungerer identifies these as "Russell": I assume he has mistaken the family name for the title, and the account refers to the Earl and Countess of Bedford.
- 37 Letter quoted in full in Gustav Ungerer, "An Unrecorded Elizabethan Performance of Titus Andronicus", Shakespeare Survey, 14 (1961), pp. 107-108.
- 38 Oliver Elton, Michael Drayton: A Critical Study (New York: Russell & Russell, 1966; first published 1905), p. 1.
- 39 Newdigate, Michael Drayton and his Circle, pp. 32-3.
- 40 Ibid., p. 56.
- 41 J. William Hebel, ed., The Works of Michael Drayton (Oxford: The Shakespeare Head Press, 1931), I, 210. Hereafter cited as Drayton, Works.
- 42 See Elton, pp. 37-8, Newdigate, p. 88.

43 Newdigate, p. 57. See also John Buxton, ed. Poems of Michael Drayton (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), I, xiii, and Elton, p. 17. Courthope (History of English Poetry (London and New York: Macmillan, 1895-1910), III, 246) suggested Lucy Harington was Drayton's "Idea" in the famous sonnet sequence. Newdigate disagreed, and felt, as do most critics, that the sonnets express "the genuineness and intensity of Drayton's devout love" for Anne Goodyer, the daughter of his first patron.

44 Drayton, Works, I, 126.

45 Drayton, Works, I, 306-7.

46 Drayton, Works, I, 316.

47 Drayton, Works, I, 368.

48 Newdigate, p. 57.

49 Drayton, Works, I, 249.

50 Drayton, Works, I, 250.

51 Dedication to Mortimeriados: Drayton, Works, I, 306.

52 Newdigate, pp. 74-5.

53 Quoted in Newdigate, p. 72.

54 For a thematic discussion of the Epistles, see N. Christoph de Nagy, Michael Drayton's "England's Heroical Epistles": A Study in Themes and Compositional Devices, #14 The Cooper Monographs, (Bern: Franke Verlag, 1968.)

55 At least one critic felt that Drayton's later allegorical attack on Lady Bedford reflected both literary and personal rivalry: that is, that Drayton was jealous. Raymond Jenkins, "Drayton's Relation to the School of Donne, as Revealed in the Shepherd's Sirena", PMLA 38 (1923), 557-587.

56 Newdigate, pp. 101-104.

57 See R. B. Sharpe, The Real War of the Theatres (for the MLA: Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1935), pp. 214-216.

58 A. Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions (New York: Macmillan, 1952), p. 90.

59 Newdigate, p. 107.

- 60 Ibid., pp. 125-6
- 61 Drayton, Works, I, 479f; Newdigate, p. 127.
- 62 "Epistle to George Sandys (1627)", Drayton, Works, III, 206,  
1. 20.
- 63 ll. 165-8, Drayton, Works, I, 475.
- 64 ll. 151-2, Drayton, Works, I, 475.
- 65 Drayton, Works, V, 176; Newdigate, p. 130. Cecil is the vulture.
- 66 The editions were those of 1599, 1600, 1602, 1605, 1608, 1610,  
and 1613. Drayton, Works, V, 22.
- 67 Jenkins, op. cit., pp. 572-3.
- 68 Newdigate, p. 59.
- 69 Elton denied that there was any rupture in their relationship,  
or that the "Selena" passage referred to Lady Bedford, p. 22.
- 70 Drayton, Works, V, 189; Newdigate, pp. 59-60.
- 71 Elton (p. 22) denied that "Selena" was Lady Bedford, but made  
no other suggestion; it seems unlikely that the passage had only general  
application to the plight of poets and the vicissitudes of patronage.
- 72 Newdigate, p. 68; J. W. Hebel, "Drayton's Sirena", PMLA 39  
(1924), 817. Newdigate also suggested Cecil (p. 69), but there is  
little to suggest "Cerberon" is not a literary figure.
- 73 Ibid., pp. 66-7: Newdigate denied that "Cerberon" was Daniel.  
"Drayton would never have counted the gentle Daniel or his 'worthy  
friend', George Chapman, as 'too vile of to be spoken'." Jenkins (p.  
575) suggested Cerberon was Donne, but this rests on the unproven  
assumption that Donne knew Lady Bedford before 1606.
- 74 ll. 91-102 (1619), Drayton, Works, II, 561-2; see Newdigate,  
pp. 133-4. J. W. Hebel, "Drayton's Sirena", suggests that the reference  
is literary not political, and that Olcon is Daniel (p. 825). Jenkins  
thought Olcon was either Donne or Jonson (p. 575, n.).
- 75 Newdigate, p. 133.
- 76 XIII, ll. 187-8, Drayton, Works, IV, 280.
- 77 See Drayton, Works, V, 248 f.



- 78 Newdiage, p. 112.
- 79 Ibid., pp. 113, 116.
- 80 See Drayton, Works, I, 211.
- 81 Francis Yates, John Florio: The Life of an Italian in Shakespeare's England (London: Cambridge University Press, 1934) Ch. I, pp. 1-26, and p. 27.
- 82 Ibid., Ch. II, pp. 27-33.
- 83 Ibid., Ch. III, pp. 42-53.
- 84 Ibid., pp. 53, 54.
- 85 Rees, p. 5.
- 86 Yates, p. 54; Rees, p. 5.
- 87 Yates, p. 55.
- 88 Ibid., Ch. IV, pp. 61-86.
- 89 Ibid., Ch. V, p. 87f.
- 90 Ibid., Ch. VI, p. 124f.
- 91 Ibid., pp. 188-9.
- 92 Ibid., p. 190.
- 93 John Florio, A Worlde of Wordes (1598) (Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1972), n.p.
- 94 Yates, pp. 147f, 168 192f, 224.
- 95 Yates, p. 213.
- 96 Lady Mary Neville was the aunt of the Earl of Dorset; she is the "Moll Neville" who read the Faerie Queene to Lady Anne Clifford in 1616, in the same month that others were reading Montaigne to Lady Anne aloud. Diary, p. 67.
- 97 John Florio, trans. The Selected Essays of Montaigne, (New York: Carlton House, 1930), pp. xv-xix.
- 98 The Courtier's Library, or Catalogus Librorum Aulicorum incomparabilium et non vendibilium, by John Donne, ed. E. M. Simpson (London: The Nonesuch Press, 1930), pp. 46-47. Quoted in Yates, p. 224.

- 99 Yates, p. 223.
- 100 Ibid., p. 246.
- 101 CSPD, 1611-1618, p. 357.
- 102 Yates, p. 257.
- 103 Ibid., pp. 317-318.
- 104 Joan Rees, Samuel Daniel: A Critical and Biographical Study, p. 1.
- 105 DNB.
- 106 Rees, p. 9.
- 107 Ibid., p. 10.
- 108 A. C. Sprague, Poems and A Defence of Ryme (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1930), suggested that the Countess of Pembroke was "Delia" (p. xv); Rees (pp. 14-20) denied this identification, and noted that some of the sonnets reflect as actual love-rejection experience.
- 109 Rees, p. 11.
- 110 Sprague, p. xiv.
- 111 Rees, p. 67.
- 112 Rees, p. 62.
- 113 Sprague, pp. xix-xx.
- 114 Rees, p. 76.
- 115 See V. Sackville-West, "introduction", Diary and Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford, p. 31.
- 116 Rees, p. 76; Sprague, p. xviii.
- 117 This and the following dedications are quoted from Samuel Daniel, A Panegyricke with a Defence of Ryme (1603), (Menston, England: The Scolar Press Ltd., 1969), n.p.
- 118 Rees, p. 91.
- 119 E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), III, 278.

- 120 A. B. Grosart, ed. The Complete Works in verse and prose of Samuel Daniel (London: Aylesbury, 1885; repub. New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), III, 185f.
- 121 Ernest Law, ed. The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1880), pp. 43-45.
- 122 Chambers, I, 326.
- 123 Sprague, p. xxv.
- 124 Ibid.
- 125 Rees, pp. 97, 99.
- 126 Ibid., p. 122.
- 127 Ibid., p. 147.
- 128 Ibid., p. 148.
- 129 See below, p. 163.
- 130 Rees, p. 93.
- 131 Herford and Simpson, Ben Jonson, VII, 209-10.
- 132 Rees, pp. 112-3.
- 133 Ibid., p. 119.
- 134 Rees, pp. 157-9.
- 135 Ibid., p. 152.
- 136 CSPD, 1619-1623, p. 31.
- 137 Rees, p. 167; Sprague, p. xxvii.
- 138 Williamson, Lady Anne Clifford..., pp. 62-63.
- 139 Bald, p. 172.
- 140 Supper in Sept. and Nov. 1608: Bald, p. 176.
- 141 Knights, "On the Social Background of Metaphysical Poetry", Scrutiny, XIII (1945), p. 47.
- 142 Herford and Simpson, Ben Jonson, VIII, 93-96: ll. 45-50, 57-60, 99-102.

143 Knights, p. 48.

144 G. R. Hibbard, "The Country House Poem of the Seventeenth Century", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XIX (1956), 159.

145 See Lawrence Stone, Family and Fortune (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 229; also Hibbard, op. cit.

146 Herford and Simpson, Ben Jonson, I, 54.

147 Wiffen, II, 109.

148 Jessopp, John Donne, Sometime Dean of St. Paul's, p. 43.

149 In his curious nineteenth century study, The Religion of Beauty in Woman, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1911; republished New York: Haskell House, 1966), J. B. Fletcher defined three types of "courtly platonic love". "There was the salon type, in which a great lady dispensed her beneficent influence (and her hospitality) to a coterie of 'servants' who in turn 'immortalized' her in verse, or in dedications or in letters (which usually sooner or later found their way into print), or at least amused her busy idleness with précieux entretiens d'amour....This salon type of platonic love, was, of course, the most open, being frankly impersonal, a system where an indefinite number of satellites revolve around a central life-giving (often living-giving) 'she-sun'....A second type of platonic love was where two only were involved, but where the poetical wooing was a kind of 'open letter' of compliment....The third type of platonic love is hardly distinguishable, except in the special color of its philosophical jargon, from that of troubadour or minnesinger." pp. 181-185 It seems to me that in general the Twickenham circle, so far as it was platonic, approximated the salon type; Lady Bedford's relationship with Donne in particular appeared to combine elements of all three types; but in fact such definitions are of little value in an attempt to understand what really happened in Lady Bedford's relationships with her poet-friends.

150 Unless otherwise specified, the information in these character sketches comes from the DNB; complete information will be included in the bibliography.

151 Bald, pp. 5, 104.

152 Bald, pp. 159, 177-8, 276-77, 518, 424.

153 Bald, p. 5, 47, 172 and n, 276, 494 and n.

154 Bald, p. 141, 177-8, 297.

155 Bald, pp. 43, 80, 104, 122.

156 Knights, p. 42.

157 Ibid., p. 45.

158 Ibid., p. 46.

159 For these social connections, see Green, Lives of the Princesses of England, V, 457 and f.

160 Knights, p. 42.

### CHAPTER THREE: JONSON AND LADY BEDFORD

The fundamental problem involved in the study of the relationship between Ben Jonson and Lady Bedford is the scarcity of biographical detail. From the barest skeleton of events and formal exchanges, it seems extravagant even to suggest that their acquaintance could constitute a 'relationship'. There is in fact little evidence of direct social interaction between Jonson and his patroness; none of the five poems addressed to her can be dated more than approximately, though one in which she is mentioned can be. Yet, with the obvious difficulties in mind, it is possible to suggest that, while Lady Bedford may not have been the most important of Jonson's noble lady-muses, she was for a time of some significance in his life and work. His relationship with her is interesting in itself and important as the possible explanation of his choice of subject in Epicoene.

Lady Bedford at first represented a familiar ideal: that is, his addresses to her indicate in their tone that she was somewhat less remote, though certainly no less idealized, than his other noble ladies. Jonson addressed her as his hoped-for ideal of the noble lady, and when it appeared that she was in some ways less than ideal, his faith in the possibility of realizing the ideal declined, and his disillusion may be reflected in a caustic anatomy of a social circle similar to hers. Thus the realities of Lady Bedford's life, interpreted in the light of Jonson's original ideal of her, in fact paralleled and perhaps occasioned a change in attitude evident in his works.

Probably the earliest reference to Lady Bedford in Jonson's works is in the "Epistle To Elizabeth Countesse of Rutland", sent as a gift for New Year's Day 1600.<sup>1</sup> In a style which becomes characteristic of his addresses to her, Jonson introduces Lady Bedford through the etymology of her name: "that other starre, that purest light,/Of all Lucina's traine, Lucy the bright". As he has already praised the poetic judgement of the Countess of Rutland (30 ff.), he apparently cannot resist suggesting that, in extending her patronage to "a better verser", Lady Bedford may be less discriminating. Jonson's rival was most probably Michael Drayton, who between 1594 and 1597 dedicated five works to Lady Bedford, three of which (Mortimeriades, Robert of Normandy, and England's Herociall Epistles) were on "tragical" or "sanguine" subjects.<sup>2</sup> Jonson then writes of "timely favours" already received, which have moved his "gratefull soule" to use "some happy houres,/To her remembrance". As the "Epistle" was written in 1599, it is difficult to determine which "remembrances" Jonson could mean. He might refer to his lost pastoral The May Lord, in which, as Drummond recorded, a character called Ethra was to represent Lady Bedford.<sup>3</sup> These 'Orphean songs' could be identified as the various undated poems addressed to her and later brought "to curious light" in the 1616 Folio: it is doubtful, however, that any of these, except the probable first version of the "Ode ἐν θουρασιλική" were written before 1600.<sup>4</sup>

Compared to this familiar yet judicious statement, the "Ode ἐν-" seems rather simplistic and hyperbolic in its praise. The qualities he attributes to Lady Bedford--the "illustrate brightnesse" of "splendor"

(or beauty); wit; "judgement (adornd with Learning)"; and in the final lines, neither false modesty nor pride--are in this poem, as compared to "Epigramme LXXVI", rather at odds with the disingenuous, too straightforward tone. Similarly, the jangling rhyme scheme undermines any vestige of subtlety: Jonson is guilty here of the fault he decries in "A Fit of Rime Against Rime", of "Cosening Judgement with a measure". Finally, the penultimate stanza approaches bathos:

Alas: then whither wade I,  
In thought to praise this Ladie;  
When seeking her renowning,  
My selfe am so neare drowning?

Such poetic infelicities perhaps argue an early date for the "Ode <sup>2</sup>Ev-": the title seems to betray the 'enthusiasm' characteristic of juvenilia rather than true furor poeticus.

The charming lyric "Goe little Booke, Goe little Fable" addressed to Lady Bedford appears on "a leaf of special dedication inserted after the title-page"<sup>5</sup> of a gift copy of Cynthia's Revels.<sup>6</sup> As the play was acted in late 1600,<sup>7</sup> and performed at court 6 January 1600/01,<sup>8</sup> this little poem is the next evidence of their continuing acquaintance. The "Bounty" he expects is "a Kisse.../Of her white Hand", a gesture of salutation familiar in the period as the conclusion to letters from petitioners to noble ladies, and indicative of her favour to himself and his work. The tone is familiar, one would almost say avuncular; the delicate, humorous chiding addressed 'ad librum' in fact encourages her to continue "bright, and amiable" in her generosity.

The tone and intention of "Epigramme LXXXIV" are similar. Jonson contrasts Lady Bedford's generosity with the miserliness of a



nobleman whose refusal to give him "a buck" Jonson has resented. After this opening statement, the entire poem, in tone similar to Jonson's hearty, familiar addresses to his noblemen friends, is conditional and rather enigmatic. He "fancied" his response to her "most noble offer" to "supply" him: returned home, he would wish to celebrate both her proposed generosity and the feast for which it would provide. Her "offer" makes him "most like a Poet", as he changes from his everyday (hungry) self to his ideal poetic voice. In the fancied expenditure of wine and wit, Jonson has a delightful, down-to-earth image of the transforming effect of her generosity. The concluding couplet is almost a challenge: "O Madame, if your grant did thus transferre mee,/Make it your gift. See whither that will beare mee". Her "grant", the original "offer" to supply his needs, had the effect of awakening the poet in him: if she confirms the "offer" by making it a "gift", she will see to what heights of praise his wit will be borne.

"Epigramme XCIV" begins as such a tribute. "To Lucy, Countesse of Bedford, with Mr. Donnes Satyres" opens with the now familiar etymology of her name: "Lucy, you brightnesse of our spheare, who are/Life of the Muses day, their morning-starre!" The poem closes with the same address, but there Lady Bedford has become "The Muses evening, as their morning-starre!" This reiterated image forms an ornate frame, identifying Lady Bedford with Venus, goddess of love, the morning and the evening star. Within this frame, almost in contrast to it, is a tribute which is direct, familiar, and discriminating.

Jonson is careful to explain why poets like Donne value her interest and approval. "Rare poemes aske rare friends" gracefully

compliments both Donne and the Countess. Poet and patroness live "where the matter is bred"; yet, as she has no reason to take offence, she is capable of appreciating the moral purpose of satire. She is that "best" of the "few" who live at that centre of folly, the Court, without becoming foolish. It is as the "best" of those "best" few that Lucy is the "brightnesse of our spheare". The tribute and the frame combined suggest that the light of Lucy's beauty turns mortals' night into Muses' day, while her understanding brings "life" and "light" to the poet's world.

Donne's satires were written between 1593 and 1598.<sup>9</sup> Jonson suggests that Lady Bedford asked for a copy--"desir'd by you": if she asked, not because she knew Donne, but because the satires were circulating in manuscript, and she knew of them, then Jonson's accompanying address could have been written as early as 1600.<sup>10</sup>

In his finest poem addressed to Lady Bedford, "Epigramme LXXVI", Jonson anatomizes this best of ladies. He begins with the conventional situation of formulating, "as Poets use", an imaginary lady to serve as Muse personified and object of poetic devotion:

This morning, timely rapt with holy fire,  
I thought to forme unto my zealous Muse,  
What kinde of creature I could most desire,  
To honor, serve, and love; as Poets use.

Wesley Trimpi finds here a "sophisticated attitude" of lightly ironic objectivity. Jonson deliberately places himself as poet within an artificial literary convention, in this instance courtly Petrarchanism. He then proceeds to treat his subject seriously and straightforwardly, not with "a strong satiric purpose" but with "irony of the gentlest

kind...humorously directed toward his own participation in the convention".<sup>11</sup> Trimpi appears to develop this interpretation from the single appositive phrase "as Poets use": there is little evidence in the remainder of the poem, or indeed in any of Jonson's addresses to noble ladies, of the acerbic touch of Jonson's ironic wit or self-mockery. Except for lines 7 and 8, which present the familiar light-star etymology in an expanded formula, Jonson's character sketch of his ideal lady is extremely straightforward. It has the eloquence and grace of unadorned statement:

I meant to make her faire, and free, and wise,  
 Of greatest bloud, and yet more good then great;  
 I meant the day-starre should not brighter rise,  
 Nor lend like influence from his lucent seat.  
 I meant shee should be curteous, facile, sweet,  
 Hating that solemne vice of greatnesse, pride;  
 I meant each softest vertue, there should meet,  
 Fit in that softer bosome to reside.

Herford and Simpson fault the poem for Jonson's failure to stress specifically 'feminine' virtues:

it honours the countess either for masculine virtues or for virtues in which men and women have equal share. She is credited with scarcely a single definitely feminine attribute, and the finest lines are those which convey a compliment to her strength of mind in terms suggestive of a man's superiority to feminine avocations.<sup>12</sup>

A reader unaware of Jonson's other poems "of cynical distrust and disparagement"<sup>13</sup> of women in general would find this poem a portrait of an humane ideal in which sexual identity is definitely secondary to nobility of character. Yet Jonson does speak of "each softest vertue" residing in "that softer bosome": in fair, free, wise, more good than great, curteous, facile, sweet and modest he celebrates the more passive, non-valorous virtues which may indeed have seemed properly 'feminine'.

In the lines which compliment her "strength of mind", Jonson combines a familiar classical allusion with a sense of real activity in the world and a genuine quality of spirit:<sup>14</sup>

Onely a learned, and a manly soule  
 I purpos'd her; that should, with even powers,  
 The rock, the spindle, and the sheeres controule  
 Of destinie, and spin her owne free houres.

Jonson places the three Fates within the human spirit, creating a beautiful image of "the power and freedom of the human mind to control its own destiny".<sup>15</sup> This image provides both an appropriate resolution for his character sketch, elevating the ideal to mythic proportion, and at the same time, in the idea of her "manly soule" directing life and time, a transition from his imaginary lady to the real and particular person: "Such when I meant to faine, and wish'd to see,/My Muse bad, Bedford write, and that was shee". These final lines reinforce our realization that the portrait itself has been entirely conditional-- "I thought to forme...I could most desire...I meant...I purpos'd...I meant to faine and wish'd to see"--and in the past tense. The superb compliment is thus further enhanced: as a poet, he intended to imagine such a paragon, but there is implicitly no need for his creative effort, for his ideal already exists as a reality, "and that was shee".

In an interesting article on "the wit of Jonson's poetry", Hugh MacLean discussed the three major epigrams to Lady Bedford as a complimentary "triad":

each...is set out in terms appropriate to a particular aspect of her being: three ways of looking at a Countess, one might say. It seems also to be true that in each epigram the place and role assumed by the poet are decorously adjusted to match the controlling modes of the several poems.

Thus, Epigram LXXIV (Lucy's "gift" of a "buck") is social, and the poet is jovial. Epigram LXXVI ("This morning, timely rapt with holy fire") "adopts a more precisely ethical emphasis" and the poet himself enters the scene, "quietly collaborating with a single 'zealous Muse', introducing and, as it were, 'signing' the portrait they have made together." Finally, Epigram XCIV ("Lucy, you brightnesse of our spheare") "May perhaps be termed metaphysical in tone", and the poet "absents himself altogether", speaking as a disembodied voice.<sup>16</sup>

This sense of Jonson's changing viewpoint and voice is important.

Jonson's poems to Lady Bedford are not personal in the way that Donne's poems are: they are depictions of and addresses to an idealized figure.

Jonson's idealization of Lady Bedford, however exquisitely expressed, is of the kind which precedes, if it does not prevent, the realities of personal relationship. Trimpi describes "This morning, timely rapt with holy fire" as "the character sketch which the conventional poet presumably makes in his imagination before constructing the relationship described in his poems."<sup>17</sup> But the poem was not the first of a definable sequence, and no relationship, personal or poetic, could be constructed from it. No one would ask that Jonson look to Lucy Bedford for a complete human relationship, but it is important to note that in this, his finest address to her, she is only an embodied ideal. For to identify a real person with an ideal is to risk disillusion should that person cease to correspond to the ideal.

As his idealized lady-muse, Lady Bedford may have served as Jonson's 'model' for the character of Arete in Cynthia's Revels: the

depiction of Crites' patroness is entirely consonant with the poetic ideal expressed in the poems to Lady Bedford.

Cynthia's Revels was acted at Blackfriars by the Children of the Queen's Chapel late in 1600,<sup>18</sup> entered in the Stationer's Register on May 23, 1601, and published in quarto in the same year.<sup>19</sup> The play was also performed at Court on 6 January 1600/01.<sup>20</sup> Jonson "had Camden for his master and Lucy Bedford for his muse":<sup>21</sup> he sent a gift copy of Cynthia's Revels to each.

Herford and Simpson identified Cynthia's Revels and Poetaster as "dramas of personal satire"<sup>22</sup> and linked Cynthia's Revels with The Alchemist and Bartholomew Fair as plays which "lay bare 'nerves and sinews' of the times deformity".<sup>23</sup> As Jonson's first full-scale salvo in the war of the theatres, Cynthia's Revels seems to invite identification between characters and contemporary figures. As the play is "a palpable bid for the Queen's favour",<sup>24</sup> the personified abstraction Cynthia can be identified directly with Elizabeth I. The play is in effect an attempted defense, in overtly allegorical fashion, of Jonson's introduction of the Queen in the Epilogue to Every Man Out of his Humour, "the utterance of a proud and sensitive man, who had imperilled his dignity and his self-respect by an extravagant bid for the recognition of the Queen, without obtaining it".<sup>25</sup> The satirist and the satirized seemed directly identifiable, at least to Jonson's contemporaries: it is not difficult to link Crites with Jonson himself (or his ideal of himself as 'the poet'), Anaides and Hedon with the rival playwrights Marston and Dekker.<sup>26</sup> With the idealized figures in the play, however, such identification apparently falters:

"But is it necessary in this play to find personal portraits for the chief characters? Who, in that case, is Arete?"<sup>27</sup>

Within the play there is some evidence for the possible identification of Lucy Bedford with Arete. The existence of the dedicatory poem, with its charmingly familiar tone, suggests that, if the play was a bid for the Queen's favour, one access to that favour was through Lady Bedford, whom Jonson already identified as his patroness. In the dedicatory poem Jonson styles Lady Bedford "Cynthia's fairest nymph"; in his "Epistle to the Countess of Rutland" he described her as "that other starre, that purest light,/Of all Lucina's traine": only Jonson himself claimed for Lady Bedford such preeminence in Elizabeth's court. In the play, Arete is described in similar terms as "the worthiest lady in court (next to Cynthia)".<sup>28</sup>

The inference that the action and characters of the play have relevance to the contemporary situation is present in Jonson's prose dedication "To the special fountain of manners, The Court". Though this dedication was written fifteen years after the first performance, for the 1616 folio, the last sentence quoted here seems to suggest that Jonson had particular people in mind.

Beware, then, thou render mens figures truly, and teach them no lesse to hate their deformities, then to loue their formes: For, to grace, there should come reuerence; and no man can call that louely, which is not also venerable. It is not pould'ring, perfuming, and euery day smelling of the taylor, that conuerteth to a beautiful obiect: but a mind, shining through any sute, which needes no false light either of riches, or honors to helpe it. Such shalt thou find some here, euen in the raigne of CYNTHIA (a CRITES, and an ARETE.)

The qualities that mark "a beautiful object", the particular insistence on "mind", are similar to the terms of Jonson's depiction of his ideal

patroness in his poems to Lady Bedford.

In the Induction, one of the 'children' again specifically links Crites and Arete, giving the character of each:

And then, there's a retired scholler there, you would not wish a thing to be better contemn'd of a societie of gallants, then it is: and hee applies his seruice (good gentleman) to the ladie ARETE, or vertue, a poore Nymph of CYNTHIAS traine, that's scarce able to buy her selfe a gowne, you shall see her play in a blacke robe anon: An creature, that (I assure you) is no lesse scorn'd, then himselfe. (Induction, ll. 86-93)

Arete is thus directly linked to Crites as his patroness; the description of Arete as poor and scorned relates of course to the abstraction Virtue, not to the identification with Lady Bedford. Indeed she was as far from being "a poor nymph...scarce able to buy herselfe a gowne" as Jonson was from being "a retired scholar...contemn'd of a societie of gallants".

At her first entrance, Arete instructs Crites to prepare an entertainment for Cynthia:

Thinke on some sweet, and choice inuention, now,  
Worthie her serious, and illustrious eyes,  
That from the merit of it we may take  
Desir'd occasion to preferre your worth,  
And make your seruice knowne to CYNTHIA (III:4:95-99)

The "invention" is the masque in Act V which Crites devises for Cynthia's amusement. It requires little ingenuity to see in this scene an analogue of what Jonson hoped for Cynthia's Revels and perhaps for himself as a masque-writer through the assistance of Lady Bedford.

Arete returns later in the play to encourage the wits to "provide for solemne revels" giving Crites "the inventive part". After she withdraws, the courtiers and court ladies "anatomize" her:



Philautia Let her goe, I pray you, good ladie Sobrietie, I am glad wee are rid of her.

Phantaste What a set face the gentlewoman has, as shee were still going to a sacrifice?

Philautia O, shee is the extraction of a dozen of Puritans, for a looke.

Moria Of all Nymphs i' the court, I cannot away with her;  
'tis the coarsest thing \_\_\_\_\_

Philautia I wonder, how CYNTHIA can affect her so aboue the rest!  
(IV:5:18-27)

To be condemned by Self-love (Philautia), Light Wittiness (Phantaste) and mistress Folly (Moria) is in itself a compliment; that Arete is sober and like a Puritan may glance (approvingly?) at the supposed Puritan tendencies in Lady Bedford's piety.

In Act V Arete brings Cynthia's 'commission' to Crites: he is to write a masque which, "under the pretext of sports and triumphs" will reveal the follies of the courtiers and "effect the reformation shee intends". Jonson involves both his noble patroness and the Queen in his oft-repeated intention to 'instruct' as well as to 'amuse'. In tone and language, Crites' grateful response seems similar to Jonson's epigram to Lady Bedford, "This morning, timely rapt with holy fire":

Admired Arete (of them admired,  
Whose souls are not enkindled by the sense)  
Disdaine not my chaste fire, but feede the flame  
Devoted truely to thy gracious name.

Finally, at the introduction of the masque, bright and noble Arete identifies Crites to Cynthia as its inventor, and effects the preferment promised earlier:

One, whom the MVSES, and MINERVA loue.  
For whom should they, then CRITES, more esteeme,

Whom PHŒBVS (though not Fortune) holdeth dear?  
 And (which conuinceth excellence in him,)  
 A principall admirer of your self.  
 Euen, through the' vngentle injuries of fate,  
 And difficulties, which doe vertue choake,  
 Thus much of him appeares. What other things  
 Of farther note, doe lye vnborne in him,  
 Them I doe leaue for cherishment to shew,  
 And for a Goddesse graciously to judge. (V:6:90-100)

The "theoretic"<sup>29</sup> and allegorical abstraction of Cynthia's Revels makes it not unlike Jonson's masques, with which Lady Bedford was soon to be involved: a noteworthy similarity is the discomposure and banishment of vice or folly, as in the anti-masque, by the final assertion of embodied abstract virtue. The extravagant idealization in Cynthia's Revels, particularly in the final scenes, extends not only to Cynthia and Arete, but to the ideal poet-critic Crites. It is understandable that this projection of his ideal of himself as the poet brought down on Jonson the derision of his contemporaries. Cynthia's Revels appears to embody an elaborate wish-fulfilment: the ideal poet, assisted by his ideal patroness, receives the just reward for his poetic labours and abilities from the ideal sovereign. There is at most an interesting general correspondence between the character Arete and Jonson's poetic descriptions of Lady Bedford, but we must treat such speculations with considerable skepticism. There is too little direct correspondence, and there are too many inconsistencies. Suffice it to say that Jonson's ideal of the noble lady-muse is expressed in similar terms in his poems to the Countess and in the character of Arete. In fact, Jonson hoped for, and for a time received,

Lady Bedford's assistance to preferment, though not in the reign of "Cynthia"; he of course never achieved the exalted position as arbiter of taste and moral advisor to which his 'ideal' self aspired.

The beginning of Jonson's relationship with Lady Bedford cannot be precisely dated. He certainly knew of her by 1600. As a largely self-educated man, Jonson adhered to the values of the previous generation rather than to those of the new university wits; the influence of the Sidneyean aristocratic ideal would encourage his interest in Lady Bedford, who as we have seen inherited and continued some aspects of the Sidney-Pembroke style of patronage. Jonson probably hoped for Lady Bedford's preferment at court. While his desire to be a court poet was fulfilled in the first years of the new reign, it was not Lady Bedford who first introduced Jonson to the court circle.

In the round of festivities in 1603, Daniel wrote for the Haringtons' entertainment of the king; Jonson wrote a masque for Sir John Spencer. Lady Bedford may have been in Queen Anne's train at Althorpe on that occasion,<sup>30</sup> but "*c'est sans doute à Sir John Spencer et à sa fille qu'il doit sa longue carrière à la cour.*"<sup>31</sup> Spencer was one of the great London merchants; he had recently begun to invest in land;<sup>32</sup> his daughter, who was the third wife of Egerton, the Lord Chancellor, became one of the Queen's attendants. The rewards of amusing the king and queen were great: Spencer was made

a baron, and perhaps through his influence Jonson became known to the queen. Though Spencer's influence may have helped, it is unlikely that any one person was responsible for Jonson's rise to favour. Jonson wrote not only the Althorpe masque, but welcoming speeches for King James' entrance into the City of London, and a second masque for Sir William Cornwallis' entertainment of the royal couple at his house at Highgate. Jonson's new popularity was probably the result of this wide exposure and the influence of an array of friends. But it seems that it was only after Lady Bedford took him up that Jonson became successful at court.

As we have seen, Lady Bedford first supported Daniel, and he was commissioned to write the great Twelfth Night masque in 1604. It was not a complete success. If Queen Anne had been pleased with the entertainments at Althorpe and Highgate, Lady Bedford, a crafty player of court games alert to the Queen's tastes, perhaps arranged to become Jonson's intercessor, to consolidate his position in the Queen's favour. "The Queen's estimation of his merits was industriously cherished by the Countess of Bedford".<sup>33</sup> It was a situation of mutual advantage: Jonson sought an influential patron; Lady Bedford needed a new divertissement to offer to the Queen. Jonson was commissioned to write the Twelfth Night masque for 1605.

How Jonson first came to Lady Bedford's attention is not known. He knew Goodyer and Donne; he was known to the Egerton household; he knew Cornwallis well. And of course he knew and revered the Sidney-Pembroke heirs--Sir Robert Sidney, the Wroths, Pembroke and

Montgomery. From any of these quarters could have come the suggestion that she turn her eye favourably toward him. In the first two years of the new reign, Sir Henry Goodyer was on the court fringe, assiduously courting Lady Bedford's interest and assistance for himself. In the Twickenham circle Goodyer seems to have had a function similar to that Lady Bedford had toward the Queen: he introduced new and interesting people. It is probable that he introduced Donne to the Twickenham circle;<sup>34</sup> he may earlier have introduced Jonson.

In spite of Drayton's aspersions, Lady Bedford was loyal to her poets. She first helped Daniel to preferment, then turned to Jonson. If, in the eighteen months between the 1603 festivities and his first court masque, Jonson kept his name before her, perhaps the undated poems previously examined were written in this period. It is interesting to recall here that he praises her for precisely those virtues valued in a discriminating patron: wit, judgement, generosity, influence.

The most magnificent social amusement of the court of James I was the masque. Members of the aristocracy and royal attendants entertained themselves and the Sovereign with elaborate pageant-like presentations which depicted an ideal 'golden' world: the noble masquers often appeared as personifications of ideal abstract virtues. In the final dance movement, the masquers chose partners from the courtly audience, merging the ideal world of the masque-vision with the

real court it was designed to celebrate.

"Next to Anne herself, the most conspicuous performer in the Queen's masks was perhaps Lucy Countess of Bedford".<sup>35</sup> Lady Bedford apparently took part in only five masques, four of which were Jonson's. For the new Queen's first Christmas masque, Anne and her ladies presented Samuel Daniel's The Vision of Twelve Goddesses in January 1604. In his dedication to the Countess, Daniel expresses his gratitude to her for recommending him to the Queen as inventor of the masque for that year.<sup>36</sup> Daniel had written the welcoming speeches for King James' visit with Lord Harington during his first progress southward, and it is possible that Lady Bedford, acting as "tactful and energetic general manager", chose Daniel herself.<sup>37</sup>

The following year it was Jonson who provided the great Twelfth Night masque, his first. Queen Anne fancied that the ladies should appear as 'blackamoors', so Jonson devised a charming tale of twelve daughters of the Nile. In the Masque of Blackness, presented 6 January 1605 at Whitehall, Lady Bedford played 'Aglaia'. With the Queen, 'Euphoris', her symbol was "A golden tree, laden with fruit".<sup>38</sup>

Euphoris ('abundance') and Aglaia ('splendour') with their golden tree symbolize fertility: Aglaia is the only name...which Johnson [sic] has not invented; she was one of the Graces, but he uses her here as an embodiment of splendour.<sup>39</sup>

It would be pleasant to think that the Ode "Splendor! O more then mortall" was written to celebrate this occasion, but the version dedicated to Lady Bedford begins "Beautye, more then mortall". At least one observer thought that black was not beautiful: Dudley Carleton observed that

...their Apparell was rich, but too light and Curtizan-like for such great ones. Instead of Vizzards, their Faces, and Arms up to the Elbows, were painted black, which was Disguise sufficient, for they were hard to be known; but it became them nothing so well as their red and white, and you cannot imagine a more ugly sight, then a Troop of lean-cheek'd Moors....<sup>40</sup>

The second of Jonson's masques in which Lady Bedford appeared was the Hymenaei, performed 5 January 1606 to celebrate the ill-fated Essex marriage.<sup>41</sup> Lady Bedford played one of the eight "powers" of June: Jonson's description of the costumes, and a portrait of Lady Bedford in such a gown, have survived.<sup>42</sup>

The Masque of Beautie, performed 10 January 1608 at Whitehall, was designed as a sequel to the Masque of Blackness. In it the daughters of the Nile, after much wandering, reach an earthly paradise with a more moderate climate which will not destroy their beauty with blackness. Lady Bedford played one of these nymphs "received on land by the river god" father Thames.<sup>43</sup>

The following year, Lady Bedford appeared for the last time in a Jonson masque, the Masque of Queenes, presented 2 February 1609.<sup>44</sup> Costume designs for the lady masquers show Jonson's elaborate concern for appropriate detail:

The Countess of Bedford was the Amazon Penthesilea, wearing a classical helmet and a close-fitting lorica and resting her left hand on a sword-hilt; the colours of her dress were deep pink, mulberry ('deep murrey'), and sky-blue (Design 18).<sup>45</sup>

Lady Bedford's time of service to Queen Anne appears to have been the quarter from October through December. Since such periods of service were not rigidly scheduled, and preparations for the Christmas and Twelfth Night festivities always began some weeks in advance, it is quite possible that Lady Bedford was present at other Jonson masques

in the ten years between 1609 and the death of Queen Anne in 1619.

There is no record of her participation in any but these four masques, and such participation or even attendance becomes unlikely after her serious illness in 1612.

The only other evidence of Lady Bedford's direct involvement in Jonson's affairs may be a letter of 1605, written while Jonson was in prison for his part in Eastward Ho. The play caused offense "for some incidental satire upon the Scots including an amusing but doubtless offensive caricature of James himself."<sup>46</sup> The letter is addressed to the "Excellentest of Ladies. And most honor'd of the Graces, Muses, and mee". He "intreates some little of her Ayde, to the defence of his Innocence" and explains with simple directness both his situation and the cause:

...I am commytted and with mee, a worthy Friend, one Mr. Chapman, a man, I can not say how knowne to your Ladishipp, but I am sure knowne to mee to honor you; And our offence a Play, so mistaken, so misconstrued, so misapplied, as I do wonder whether their Ignorance, or Impudence be most, who are our adversaries.<sup>47</sup>

The mention that Chapman too honors the lady perhaps confirms Herford and Simpson's suggestion that the recipient was probably Lady Bedford, for he too was connected with the Twickenham circle, and definitely knew Lady Bedford well enough in 1609 to presume to give her moral advice.

Not all within the Bedford Circle, that "little court of literature", remained consistently ideal. Twickenham was a hothouse environment in which courtly love, and some not entirely courtly amours, with all the accompanying intrigue, flourished. One such



'affair' is important here, for in his role as self-constituted moral advisor to his noble friends, Jonson struck out at one of Lady Bedford's friends whose behaviour was apparently less than ideal.

Cecilia Bulstrode was the daughter of Edward Bulstrode of Hedgerley in Buckinghamshire; she was baptized at Beaconsfield on 12 Feb., 1584.<sup>48</sup> She was thus three years younger than the Countess. Little is known of her life before 1600, when she appears as a close friend, perhaps a distant cousin of Lady Bedford. Later, she became a gentlewoman of the bedchamber to Queen Anne.

It would appear that in 1602 this lady became involved in an affair of questionable discretion with Jonson's close friend, Sir John Roe. Two poems, which Grierson concluded were written by Roe,<sup>49</sup> are only less virulent than Jonson's later attack on the same lady because they are more personal: one of these poems is addressed to Mistress Bulstrode. The first poem, "Deare love, continue nice and chaste"<sup>50</sup> seems to consider the same situation from a slightly different viewpoint. With more than a polite hint that the lady surrenders too easily, the poet refuses her erotic capitulation. He pleads with her to 'prolong his suite', for fear that "Satietie our love may kill". Her quick surrender lessens the pleasure of the chase, and makes the prize less valuable.

The second poem, headed "An Elegie to M<sup>ris</sup> Boulstred: 1602"<sup>51</sup> is an erotic elegie of the Donnian variety, which begins

Shall I goe force an Elegie? abuse  
My witt? and breake the Hymen of my muse  
For one poore houres love?

Grierson is surely correct in concluding that Roe's wit is like

Jonson's in its coarser moments, lacking the delicacy of Donne's "witty depravity".<sup>52</sup> The poet contrasts hope before loving with fear of loss after, and attempts to offer a limited reassurance: "But when these toys are past, and hott blood ends,/The best enjoying is, we still are friends". The ambiguity is pervasive: the poem is either a refusal to enjoy, for friendship is of greater worth, or a rejection after enjoyment, because sexual love is less 'pure' than friendship. Percy Simpson concludes that Sir John Roewas in fact her lover:

It is a lover's ironic farewell to a woman virtually dead to him...If there is any truth in the lines, there can be no doubt about the relations of the pair.<sup>53</sup>

Jonson's poem on Mistress Bulstrode, "An Epigram on the Court Pucell" (Underwoods XLIX) is more virulent and entirely unambiguous:

What Jonson's special quarrel with Cecily Bulstrode was, we do not know. Certainly few men in his day, or in any day, have assailed a woman with the foul-mouthed ferocity of his lines to 'The Court Pucell'. The erotic verses addressed to her by one of her intimates ...sufficiently attest her character. But Jonson impatiently flings aside the dignity of just rebuke (which indeed he had little title to administer), in order to outdo her in ribald abuse.<sup>54</sup>

One wonders if, in distributing her favours so freely, she had for some reason refused Jonson. The opening lines indicate that his outburst is in response to her presumption in upbraiding or perhaps mocking him. Jonson castigates her for her feeble pretensions to understanding, wit, and poetic ability; for attention to her wardrobe rather than the state of her soul; for having twice broken an engagement; for being unchaste with a circle of wits, and with lords whom she chases and 'clings' to; for feigning illness to attract 'Sermoneeres'. The outburst is scathing and vindictive, but perhaps less harsh than Jonson's editors would have it. Certainly the main criticism is of sexual license and breach of

trust. Herford and Simpson note a probable source or influence--"In sheer brutality the epigram...falls little short of Martial's verses to Galla; and more cannot be said"<sup>55</sup>--but this hardly explains the obviously personal nature of the attack. Jonson read the poem to Drummond during his 1619 visit, identified the lady involved as Mistress Bulstrode, and related that "that piece of the Pucell of the court, was stollen out of his pocket by a Gentleman who drank him drowsie and given to Mistress Bulstrode, which brought him great displeasure".<sup>56</sup> Lady Bedford, for instance, would hardly approve of such an attack on a close friend of hers.

Jonson's poem unfortunately cannot be dated, and nothing of any significance is known of Cecilia Bulstrode until her death, when this earlier unpleasantness becomes important again. A few days previous to her death, Donne reported to Goodyer his impression during a visit to her sick-chamber:

I fear earnestly that Mistresse Bolstrod will not escape that sicknesse in which she labours at this time. I sent this morning to aske of her passage of this night; and the return is, that she is as I left her yesternight, and then by the strength of her understanding, and voyce, (~~pro~~portionally to her fashion, which was ever remise) by the evennesse and life of her pulse, and by her temper, I could allow her long life, and impute all her sicknesse to her minde. But the History of her sicknesse, makes me justly fear, that she will scarce last so long, as that you when you receive this letter, may do her any good office, in praying for her; for she hath not for many days received so much as a preserved Barbary, but it returnes, and all accompanied by a Fever, the mother, and an extream ill spleen.<sup>57</sup>

One notes the similarity between this description of "the History of her sicknesse" and Jonson's abusive suggestion, in the Epigram, that she feigned illness: "For Sermoneeres: of which now one, now other,/ They say you weekly invite with fits o'th'Mother,/And practise for a

Miracle". In his epitaph on the same lady, Lord Herbert of Cherbury writes of Death's "strict siege" against her, through "a mutin in her powers", and yet attests that "her fasts" counteracted "their excess".<sup>58</sup> "Mistress Bulstrode died after a lingering and painful illness and in great distress of mind",<sup>59</sup> as the headnote to Herbert's epitaph attests: "quae post languescentem morbum non sine inquietudine spiritus et conscientiae obiit".

Cecilia Bulstrode died at Lady Bedford's house at Twickenham 4 August 1609; her burial is recorded 6 August.<sup>60</sup> George Garrard, perhaps at Lady Bedford's behest, "busied himself going about to secure memorials".<sup>61</sup> Donne's elegy is as elaborate as it is insincere: "it is untouched by any real feeling for the subject of the elegy".<sup>62</sup> In the midst of praising her as one whose "virtues did outgoe/Her yeares", Donne suggests that longer life would make sin inevitable:

What though thou found'st her prooffe 'gainst sins of youth?  
 Oh, every age a diverse sinne pursueth.  
 Thou should'st have stay'd, and taken better hold,  
 Shortly, ambitious; covetous, when old,  
 She might have prov'd: and such devotion  
 Might once have stray'd to superstition.  
 If all her vertues must have growne, yet might  
 Abundant virtue have bred a proud delight.

In the succeeding lines, Donne seems to hint at the scandalous behaviour for which Jonson had rebuked her while at the same time castigating others, perhaps including Jonson, for mis-thinking and mis-calling the lady:

Had she persever'd just, there would have bin  
 Some that would sinne, mis-thinking she did sinne.  
 Such as would call her friendship, love, and faine  
 To sociablenesse, a name profane;  
 Or sinne, by tempting or, not daring that,  
 By wishing, though they never told her what.<sup>63</sup>

Significantly, Jonson's own elegy on Mistress Bulstrode, also solicited by Garrard, is a complete rebuttal to his own earlier attack, a forthright defense of her chastity and a hyperbolic statement of her virtues. Almost **point by point**, but more succinctly, Jonson appears to refute each of his earlier charges: more concise than Donne's elegy, Jonson's effort is certainly no less extravagant.

Of most importance in the present connection, however, is Jonson's letter to Garrard, "my right worthy friend", which accompanied the poem: it contains a rather puzzling possible explanation of Jonson's reason for writing this 'retractive' elegy:

If it be well, as I thinke it is, for my invention hath not cooled so much to judge, show it, though the greater Witts have gone before.....for till your letter came, I was not so much as acquainted with the sad argument, which both strooke me and keepes me a heavy man, Would God, I had seene her before that some [who] yet live might have corrected some prejudices they have had injuriously of mee. By your next commodity, write mee your liking of it, and some newes;....<sup>64</sup>

Percy Simpson notes a certain insincerity in Jonson's admission of an ulterior motive:

'Would God, I had seene her before' would be a simple and sincere statement if it were not followed by an equivocal reason. Jonson suggests that some living critics, including perhaps Lady Bedford, might then have corrected their 'prejudices' against him.<sup>65</sup>

Jonson's intention in writing the elegy is the problem which really disturbs Mr. Simpson:

Did he, on hearing of his victim's lingering agony, yield to a natural impulse of pity and, writing under pressure, force the note? Or was he honestly convinced that he had slandered her? The 'greater Witts', who had already penned their eulogies, certainly included Donne, and Donne was a friend whose judgement would weigh powerfully with Jonson. Without Garrard's letter we shall have no final solution of the problem.<sup>66</sup>

Jonson's letter, and Simpson's elucidation of the problem, in fact point

the way to a probable solution. It was not 'judgement' that Donne was exercising: his elegy is a masterpiece of subtle equivocation, in which while hyperbolically praising the lady's virtues, he manages to suggest that she was far from virtuous. The elegy was written, not out of any sincere feeling for the dead lady, but because in 1609, Donne "acted almost as if he were Lady Bedford's officially appointed laureate",<sup>67</sup> providing suitable verses for funereal occasions. A similar intention governed Jonson's contribution. It is important to notice, as Simpson fails to do, that Jonson's briefer elegy is as equivocating as Donne's. It is almost entirely in the conditional: "She might have claim'd t'have made the Graces foure"; "As fit to have encreas'd the harmony/Of Spheares"; "bound" to religion, not by "Rites", but by "conscience"; "In which name, I call/Up so much truth, as could I it pursue/Might make the Fable of Good Women true". The reader, experiencing a vague uneasiness with Jonson's tone on first reading, will notice that the conditional in effect undercuts the effort at praise, as Jonson deliberately suggests that she who might have been, was fit to be, a paragon of virtue, was in fact nothing of the kind. The letter to Garrard suggests why Jonson would accompany Donne in so questionable a pursuit: he asks Garrard to "show" the poem, if it is acceptable, surely in an effort to 'correct the prejudices which some yet living had' of him. In 1609, George Garrard was still attached to the Twickenham household: there can be little doubt that Jonson hastily complied with Garrard's request for a memorial in a manner which would suit Lady Bedford.

Thus, what is important in the entire Bulstrode episode is

Jonson's attempt to 'correct some prejudices' which Lady Bedford harboured about his part in the matter. A possible explanation for Jonson's fears and her displeasure itself must be sought. If the "Epigram on the Court Pucell" was written closer to 1609 than to the 1602 Roe affair,<sup>68</sup> then the virulence of Jonson's attack on her friend would be still in Lady Bedford's mind; wishing to comply with her wishes, expressed through Garrard, Jonson would write his elegy, appearing to retract his earlier insult. On the other hand, if some time had passed since the earlier incident, when Mistress Bulstrode's discovery of the poem brought Jonson "great displeasure", Jonson would seize the present opportunity to reassure Lady Bedford of his good offices to her circle.

However, the most important clue to unravelling the puzzle of Jonson's intention, and indeed to why the Bulstrode episode is important here, is in the date of the elegy. Cecilia Bulstrode died in August 1609, and Jonson's letter implies that the elegy was composed immediately after her death. It was Jonson's self-interests which were disturbed by her death, not only because of the expressed necessity to 'correct some prejudices' of him already existing, but to counteract misinterpretations which he anticipated. For in 1609 Jonson was at work on a play in which he satirically anatomized the immoral behaviour of a circle of ladies whose conduct is not unlike that depicted in Roe's poems and Jonson's epigrams.

Epicoene, or The Silent Woman was probably the work of 1609.

There exists no precise information as to the date of the first

performance, though late 1609 or very early 1610 seems likely; it was entered for publication in the Stationer's Register on September 20 of 1610.<sup>69</sup> Jonson's editors interpret the first prologue as an indication of a change of attitude and intention in Jonson's comic method: he is "deliberately seeking to amuse:...he no longer hectors his audience; he hardly even instructs them".<sup>70</sup> The second prologue was "an afterthought..written to refute the charge of personal satire";<sup>71</sup> Jonson in fact disclaims direct personal satire, but not similitude: "So persons were not touch'd, to taxe the crimes"; "poet never credit gain'd/By writing truths, but things (like truths) well fain'd".<sup>72</sup> The two points are complimentary. The moral point of the play is made, not by overt instruction to the audience, but by the comic action itself: satiric comedy as a mirror of the times, which castigates folly so it may be avoided. The mirror showed perhaps too true a reflection: the first performance apparently aroused considerable displeasure "due to the supposed personal application of one or more of this motley crowd of comic characters".<sup>73</sup> Herford and Simpson note an important distinction here: dramatic character and real person are not 'identified' as being in direct correspondence, but the created character may be a figure similar in some (or many) respects to an individual person.<sup>74</sup>

With that distinction in mind, it is possible to suggest that Jonson's satire of the 'Ladies Collegiats' reflects a jaundiced view of Lady Bedford's Twickenham circle.<sup>75</sup> Lady Bedford and her female friends were in fact not as the 'Ladies Collegiats' are depicted; yet the Roe-Bulstrode controversy, the romantic potential of Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford herself, and the liasons in which Jonson



himself admitted indulging would suggest that alliances to some degree immoral were formed within this circle of wits and ladies. Jonson would undoubtedly feel that such behaviour compromised the courtly ideal he had at first found embodied in Lady Bedford.

Early in the first scene, Truewit describes the 'Ladies Collegiates' to Clerimont, newly returned from court:

Why, is it not arriv'd there yet, the newes? A new foundation, sir, here i' the town, of ladies, that call themselves the Collegiates, an order betweene courtiers, and country-madames, that live from their husbands; and give entertainment to all the Wits, and Braveries o' the time, as they call 'hem: crie down, or up, what they like, or dislike in a braine or a fashion, with most masculine, or rather hermaphroditicall authority: and, every day, gaine to their colledge some new probationer.

While it is true that much of the satire may have classical models-- Jonson's editors find "Aristophanic satire on women's clubs and leagues"<sup>76</sup> in Truewit's description; and the influence of Juvenal's Sixth Satire is obvious in Truewit's 'advice' to Morose not to marry--it is also firmly rooted in the contemporary situation. Herford and Simpson note that "'colleges' of this kind were known to Jacobean as to Elizabethan London"<sup>77</sup> and support this reflection with a rather curious footnote:

Truewit describes this as 'a new foundation here i' the towne'. But Nashe, in Christ's Tears (Works, ii.151) had alluded to similar 'foundations' as already familiar: 'A great office is not so gainefull as the principalship of a College of Curtizans'.<sup>78</sup>

This a delightfully ironic connection, and may be an intentionally satiric implication. Jonson would understand the ironic kinship between a circle of 'Ladies Collegiates' and a brothel as Fielding did that between Newgate and Vauxhall; one is life with the mask on, the other with the mask off. Though Jonson's editors attest that "Some

society of the kind must have existed, but it has left no trace",<sup>79</sup>  
 it seems not too 'far-fet' to view the 'Ladies Collegiates' as at least  
 representative of a less-than-ideal courtly circle.

Lady Bedford's circle of friends and literary acquaintances  
 was probably established before she acquired Twickenham Park in 1607.  
 It was there, however, that she established her "little court of  
 literature".<sup>80</sup> Jacobean London perhaps boasted other such circles--  
 indeed the court of Queen Anne was one--but I think no other group  
 which included ladies of rank and fortune met as definably as the  
 Bedford circle. If Lady Bedford's "little court of literature" is  
 unusual if not unique, there is some reason to suspect that the  
 'Ladies Collegiates' reflect the worst potential of that circle.

It is important to reflect that 1609 was a 'crisis year' in  
 the Twickenham circle. Several of the known members died or departed:  
 Sir John Roe died in 1608; Lady Markham in May, Mistress Bulstrode in  
 August 1609; Sir Thomas Roe left England early in 1609; Sir Toby  
 Matthew was already in Europe. Lady Bedford herself was ill in June.  
 Finally, the emotional crisis of Donne's affair with Lady Bedford,  
 however that 'affair' be defined, occurred in mid 1609, probably between  
 June and August.<sup>81</sup> Closer to the focus of the satire in Epicoene is  
 a sonnet of George Chapman's addressed to Lady Bedford and printed with  
 his Homer in 1609. Chapman's sonnet is an explicit "forewarning" to  
 Lady Bedford to avoid "Vulgar pleasure" to which "Custom seduceth" and  
 to 'beat' the "narrow path" of virtue.

Attempts have been made to connect characters in the play to  
 specific persons. Grierson thought that Clerimont's exclamation

about "the grave and youthful matron, the lady Haughty"--"A poxe of her autumnall face, her peec'd beauty"--looked "very like an allusion" to Donne's 'Elegy' to Mrs. Magdalen Herbert:

The resemblance may be accidental, yet the frequency with which the poem is dubbed An Autumnal Face or The Autumnall shows that the phrase had struck home. Jonson's comedies seethe with such allusions, and I rather suspect that he was poking fun at his friend's paradoxes, perhaps in a sly way at that 'grave and youthful matron' Lady Danvers.<sup>82</sup>

Jonson's editors are horrified at the suggestion:

The grotesque suggestion has been made that Jonson in this phrase was sneering at the beautiful opening lines of Donne's ninth Elegie, 'The Autumnall':....The context of the two passages is a sufficient refutation. Both beauty and decay can be associated with autumn.<sup>83</sup>

Yet the special grace of Donne's compliment is precisely this, that he praises the beauty without denying the decay. Even Jonson's deliberate use of Donne's word, could it be proven, would not establish a direct identification of Mrs. Herbert as Lady Haughty. However, such interpretations suggest the topicality of the satiric portrait, and perhaps indicate that Lady Haughty is a composite figure drawn from familiar details of the two beloved ladies of Jonson's friend Donne.

In fact, certain details of the portrait would suit Mrs. Herbert better than they would Lady Bedford. In 1609, Magdalen Herbert was 44 or 45 years of age, which is closer to Lady Haughty's "above fifty" than is Lady Bedford's 28 years. Moreover, in 1609 Mrs. Herbert married Sir John Danvers, a young man who was at least 20 years her junior. This would make Jonson's supposed allusion all the more telling except that, as Grierson noted, "Mrs. Herbert's marriage was due to no 'heyday of the blood'. It was the gravity of Danvers' temper which

attracted her, and he became the steady friend and adviser of her children".<sup>84</sup> This reflection does not alter the fact that her new husband was younger than her eldest son, and that Donne could scarcely conceal his distress at the event: "Mad paper stay..." contrasts his own abject state with that of "him that shall be loved of her".

In Act V Jonson seems to allude to one of his own poems, suggesting a less hypothetical identification. When Haughty, Centaure, and Mavis each attempt to seduce Dauphine in turn, Centaure cattily describes Mavis: "here comes Mavis, a worse face then shee [Lady Haughty]! you would not like this, by candle-light". In "An Epigram on the Court Pucell" Jonson wrote of Cecilia Bulstrode, "Her face there's none can like by candle-light". The connection would be slight were it not reinforced by the ensuing dramatic situation: Mavis gives Dauphine an "Italian riddle" as her love-gift. As Dauphine exclaims, her 'subtlety' cannot be distinguished from "plaine dealing", as the riddle proves to be an invitation to Dauphine to become her lover. If the two poems by Sir John Roe do refer to a similar situation between Mistress Bulstrode and himself, in which he, like Dauphine, refuses to accept the lady's favours, the allusion would seem unusually direct.<sup>85</sup>

In one slight instance, Herford and Simpson refer directly to Lady Bedford in explaining the habits of the 'Ladies Collegiates'. When Epicoene joins the 'college', Haughty declares "I'll call you Morose still now, as I call Centaure, and Mavis; we four wille be all one". The editors note: "It was the etiquette among ladies. The

Countess of Bedford, Jonson's patron, addressed Lady Cornwallis in fifteen extant letters as 'Dear Cornwallis'." 86

An extant letter from Jonson to Donne may refer to the displeasure caused by what was interpreted as personal satire in the play. Herford and Simpson suggest the Countess may be the lady referred to. Jonson has offended her in some undisclosed way, and Donne has advised him not to attempt further self-defence:

My mind is not yet so deafned by injuries, but it hath an ear for counsell. Yet, in this point, that you presently disswade, I wonder how I am misunderstood; or that you should call that an imaginarie right, which is the proper justice, that every clear man owes to his innocency. Exasperations I intend none, for Truth cannot be sharp but to ill natures, or such weak ones, whom the ill spirit's suspition or credulity still possesse. My Lady may believe whisperinsg [ sic ], receive tales, suspect and condemn my honestie; and I may not answer, on the pain of losing her; as if she, who had this prejudice of me, were not already lost. O no, she will do me no hurt, she will think and speak well of any faculties. She cannot there judge me; or if she could, I would exchange all glory, (if I had all mens abilities) which could come that way for honest simplicity.<sup>87</sup>

It is possible that Lady Bedford was offended by what she considered to be references to particular people in Epicoene, perhaps the tactless reference to Cecilia Bulstrode in the character of Mavis, or the general satiric depiction of a courtly circle in the 'Ladies Collegiates'.

It is possible to suggest a general sequence for these events. After some quarrel with Cecilia Bulstrode, perhaps with reference to her affair with Sir John Roe, Jonson wrote his ferocious epigram which earned him the temporary displeasure of Lady Bedford. In 1609, Mistress Bulstrode died, and Jonson penned his elaborate but equivocal 'epitaph', probably at Lady Bedford's request. He feared Lady Bedford's displeasure, not only for his past conduct toward her friend, but because

he was at the time engaged in completing Epicoene, which included a satiric attack on a circle of ladies and wits not unlike her Twickenham circle. The play when performed did in fact occasion the further displeasure he feared, if his letter to Donne refers to this situation. This outcome to the order of events is supported by the fact that after 1609 there is no record of any but the slightest association between Jonson and Lady Bedford.

I do not wish to suggest that Jonson's attack on the 'Ladies Collegiates' in Epicoene is to be interpreted as personal satire directed against Lady Bedford and her friends, except in the very probable reference to Cecilia Bulstrode in the character of Mavis. However, it seems clear from the events of 1609, in the collapse of the relationship between Donne and Lady Bedford, and especially in Chapman's warning sonnet, that Lady Bedford herself no longer approximated to Jonson's exquisite poetic ideal of the courtly lady-Muse. Jonson had in fact seen beneath the surface, and unlike Truewit, was not amused by the artistry of the facade:

But I who live, and have liv'd twentie yeare  
 Where I may handle Silke, as free, and neere,  
 As any Mercer; or the whale-bone man  
 That quilts those bodies, I have leave to span:  
 Have eaten with the Beauties, and the wits,  
 And braveries of Court, and felt their fits  
 Of love, and hate: and came so nigh to know  
 Whether their faces were their owne, or no.<sup>88</sup>

With the didactic function of comedy foremost in mind, it is possible to suggest that, in his satiric presentation of the 'Ladies Collegiates' in Epicoene, Jonson revealed the abuses to which a social 'organization' like the Twickenham circle, or indeed the Jacobean court itself, was prone.

A satirized character in a later play may reflect an element of Jonson's disillusion with Lady Bedford. In The Devil is an Ass in 1616 Jonson anatomized the folly of the gullible but wealthy victims who were encouraged by unscrupulous projectors to invest in monopolies on new schemes and inventions. One such projector, who has been identified as the model for Jonson's character Meercraft, was the London alderman Cockaigne.<sup>89</sup> By 1616, Cockaigne's project to create a domestic industry for dyeing cloth was in serious financial difficulties. He arranged a lavish royal banquet in an attempt to maintain the King's interest and Jonson may have written the script for the evening's entertainment.<sup>90</sup> Lady Bedford was one of Cockaigne's chief court contacts; she herself had a large interest in a monopoly on silver and gold thread. It is thus possible that the character of Lady Tailbush, Meercraft's contact at court, glances satirically at Lady Bedford's financial interests.<sup>91</sup>

The correspondence between Lady Bedford and these characters in Jonson's dramatic works is not a direct biographical one: the events of her life and the details of her life-style, however, seem to be reflected in his satiric portraits of court ladies in several plays. These plays in turn indicate a change in Jonson's attitude toward his social or courtly ideal.

After 1609, there is little evidence which connects Jonson with Lady Bedford. It is possible that she was present at the performance of some or all of Jonson's ten court masques between 1611 and

1618, but she took part in none, and there is no report of her attendance.

They may have met on one later occasion. Early in 1617, Jonson was commissioned to write a masque for Lord Hay. This was Lovers Made Men, written for the entertainment which Lord Hay, a former ambassador to France, gave in honour of Henri, Baron de la Tour, ambassador extraordinary from the court of France.<sup>92</sup> Lady Bedford organized the masque for her friend, and apparently acted as his hostess. The masque and a great feast took place 22 February 1617; the king may have been present. At this time, Lady Bedford was assisting Lord Hay in his courtship of Lady Lucy Percy. Jonson's masque was part of Hay's lavish expenditures in maintaining his position at court. If Jonson was present during the preparations for the masque, or for the performance, he and Lady Bedford would perhaps have met once again.

If events within the Twickenham circle made Lady Bedford herself seem less conformable to Jonson's ideal, and if Jonson vented his disillusion in Epicoene, then the proposed sequence of events in 1609 would explain the end of their relationship. Jonson's letter to Donne which may refer to Lady Bedford's displeasure with Epicoene indicates his disappointment that she would "believe whisperings, receive tales, suspect and condemn" his honesty, and includes this revealing comment: "and I may not answer, on the pain of losing her; as if she, who had this prejudice of me, were not lost already."<sup>93</sup> Jonson is hurt and defensive; dejection and sense of loss arise the moment idealization fails.



It is interesting to note that Donne reacted in a similar manner. In a letter to Goodyer, expressing his disappointment that she is unable (he suggests unwilling) to assist him in clearing his debts before entering the Church, Donne wrote with obvious vexation. He is more self-righteous, less straightforward than Jonson.<sup>94</sup> Donne was by nature more socially crafty than Jonson; perhaps also he was careful to maintain the courtly facade even with Goodyer. Both poets--and both difficult men--on different occasions and for different reasons, came to disparage Lady Bedford when she ceased to conform to their idea of her.

A comparison with Donne is illuminating in several points. Both Donne and Jonson disparage women in general and hyperbolically praise an ideal few, though Jonson is admittedly more judicious; both entered into unsatisfactory marriages with women who were, for different reasons, far from ideal, and both lived apart from their wives and families at least temporarily; both apparently engaged in affairs with other women; both counterbalanced these 'real' activities with idealization of attractive, noble ladies who were, for the most part, unavailable to anything except idealization. Here a marked difference should interest us. Donne tried to locate his ideal in a real person, and to establish a complete human relationship with her, yet he chose ladies who were by position if not by inclination unavailable: thus, as in his relationship with Lucy Bedford, the relationship itself failed, and disillusion with the ideal set in. I would suggest that Jonson, by contrast, did not want the ideal lady to cease being ideal. There is in the Charis poems, for instance, an implication that it is

now safe for him to love, because his age and unattractive physique protect him. It is safe to love where no return is possible, when the love is by circumstance, if not by definition, unreal. His projection of himself as 'the poet' worked psychologically in the same way: the disembodied poetic voice happily adored ideal ladies while the real self remained rude and licentious. As the integration of poetic voice and real self were rarely if ever attempted, there need never be a conjunction between ideal lady and real relationship. This is one explanation of the considerable disjunction, evident in Jonson's poems, between what he felt was the despicable female reality, devotion to vanity and lust, and what he wished for in his ideal, and thought he found in his noble ladies. Yet his idealization of his noble lady-muse, when it took substance in a particular lady, left Jonson equally open to disillusion.

Jonson's poems to Lady Bedford are quite unlike the moral epistles characteristic of his addresses to noble ladies: for this reason I have termed her his 'familiar' ideal. More than either Lady Mary Wroth or the Countess of Rutland, Lady Bedford failed to sustain the ideal level Jonson thought appropriate to her: 'Lucy the bright' was simply too real to be ideal.

Lady Bedford was involved in the life of her time, and became known for things of which Jonson disapproved. Her generosity too often bordered on extravagance, and she did in fact sell lands to pay for gowns and entertainment; she perhaps became more and more Puritan in her religious outlook at the time when Jonson was castigating the Brethren for their more affected ways; after 1609, when her participation

in court-life declined, her activities in commercial monopolies, in court-intrigues, and in elaborate match-making among younger friends and relatives, reached proportions Jonson would certainly have found 'indecorous'.

Jonson's 'relationship' with Lady Bedford is of course not solely or directly responsible for a change in his attitude to his ideal, but it is illustrative of a discernible pattern. Jonson's plays do not become more satiric, but the satire is differently directed: there is a gradual development toward the idea that folly is universal, that neither the ideal world of the court, nor certain ideal persons, nor indeed the poet-censor himself, is exempt. There is at the same time an increase in the so-called 'realistic' elements of the plays: they are increasingly more topical; the action is located in the contemporary London milieu; the setting is frequently restricted to particular, identifiable areas, for instance the Blackfriars. At the same time, the human landscape which the dramatic action mirrors becomes less and less ideal.

A corresponding development is discernible in the masques. The personages of the first masques are Jonson's idealism embodied. The charmingly diaphanous unreality of this ideal world was intended to reflect and compliment the royal court. In the later masques, the 'realistic' (or, more correctly, the grotesque) anti-masque develops to a point where it seems more important than the masque itself: it certainly engaged Jonson's faculties to a greater extent. It seems to 'threaten' the idealized masque sequence, as the final resolution of the 'real' into the ideal becomes increasingly arbitrary: the anti-

masque is simply banished from the 'stage' by the reappearance and assertion of the ideal.

A similar pattern exists in the relationship of Jonson to Lady Bedford. In the poems addressed to her which probably mark an early phase, Jonson's praises of his 'familiar' idea, however judicious, are still coloured by considerable idealization; however familiar his address, the ideal is none the less depersonalized, un-individual. This idealization is then embodied in Arete, and in the masque figures whom Lady Bedford 'impersonated'. It is interesting that there is no explanation why Lady Bedford ceased to perform in the masques after 1609, though she was still involved in the life of the court, and still kept the same quarter of service to Queen Anne. With the Bulstrode episode and Epicoene, it is clear, however, that there has been a marked change in attitude. The play is not to be interpreted, except perhaps in the character of Mavis, as direct personal satire: however, it illustrates the potential for immorality and folly implicit in a life-style recognizably similar to that of Lady Bedford's Twickenham circle. Perhaps there is little evidence of acquaintance between Jonson and Lucy Bedford after 1609 because the depiction was true enough to be offensive.

## FOOTNOTES

## (CHAPTER THREE)

<sup>1</sup> C. H. Herford, P. and E. Simpson, Ben Jonson (Oxford: 1925-1952), XI (1952) 43. Hereafter cited as Ben Jonson.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.; for a fuller discussion, see R. W. Short, "Jonson's Sanguine Rival", RES 15, No. 59, July 1939. If the epistle had been written a few years later, the rival would have been Daniel. Jonson probably resented that Daniel was chosen to write the first great Twelfth Night masque for the new court. He and Sir John Roe were "thrust out from the performance of Daniel's Vision by the Lord Chamberlain" 8 Jan. 1604. Ben Jonson, XI (1952) 6. Newdigate (Michael Drayton and his Circle, p. 65) thought Daniel was the rival in 1601.

<sup>3</sup> Ben Jonson, I (1925) 143.

<sup>4</sup> This ode, in a slightly altered form, was one of the poems appended to Robert Chester's Loves Martyr, 1601.

<sup>5</sup> Ben Jonson, VII (1947) 662n.

<sup>6</sup> This copy is in the William Andrewes Clark Memorial Library, Los Angeles (Ben Jonson, VIII (1947) 662n). "The Bedford copy, bound in limp vellum, has the Russell crest, a goat passant, stamped on both covers" (Ben Jonson, XI (1952) 301). The use of her husband's symbol is quite unusual: Lady Bedford "used her husband's crest, which was heraldically quite incorrect, but in order to mark her own ownership of a book she stamped in the corners of the binding a fret, taken from the arms of her father, Lord Harington" (H. J. B. Clements, "Armorial Book-Stamps and their Owners", Library, 4th series, No. 20, 27 Sept. 1939).

<sup>7</sup> Ben Jonson, I (1925) 393.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., IX (1950) 188.

<sup>9</sup> H. J. C. Grierson, The Poems of John Donne, II, 102-4; W. Milgate, ed., The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters, pp. lvi-lx.

<sup>10</sup> W. Milgate (p. lix) suggested that Donne revised the satires to send to Lady Bedford, probably between 1607 and 1609. Although at the earlier date, Jonson's tribute might seem not only unusual but extravagant, for in 1600 Lucy Bedford was not yet twenty years old, I suggest this poem and Jonson's other addresses to Lady Bedford were written between 1603 and 1605. See above p. 177.

<sup>11</sup> Wesley Trimpi, Ben Jonson's Poems: A Study in the Plain Style (California: Stanford University Press, 1962), p. 140.

<sup>12</sup> Ben Jonson, II (1925) 368.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 367.

<sup>14</sup> See Trimpi, p. 181.

<sup>15</sup> Trimpi, p. 140.

<sup>16</sup> Hugh MacLean, "'A More Secret Cause': The Wit of Jonson's Poetry" in A Celebration of Ben Jonson, eds. William Blissett et al (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), pp. 145-149.

<sup>17</sup> Trimpi, p. 140. The opening sonnet of Sidney's Astrophil and Stella is somewhat similar in structure, language and detail to "This morning timely rapt with holy fire". Sidney's poem opens with a description of the sequence of emotions the poet hopes to arouse in his lady through his poems; it is again in the conditional. Lines 5-11 describe the poet's unavailing search for "fit words" to describe, not the lady herself as in Jonson's poem, but his own lover's despair. The final line of Sidney's poem, which Jonson surely knew, presents the greatest similarity: "'Foole', said my Muse to me, 'looke in thy heart and write.'" The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, William A. Ringler, Jr., ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 165.

<sup>18</sup> Ben Jonson, IX (1950) 188.

<sup>19</sup> I (1925) 393.

<sup>20</sup> IX (1950) 188.

<sup>21</sup> I (1925) 63.

<sup>22</sup> I (1925) 21.

<sup>23</sup> I (1925) 384.

<sup>24</sup> I (1925) 26.

- 25 I (1925) 393.
- 26 IX (1950) 486-7.
- 27 IX (1950) 487.
- 28 Ben Jonson, Cynthias Revels, in Ben Jonson IV (1932) 1-184.  
IV: 4: 25-6. All subsequent references are to this text.
- 29 Ben Jonson, I (1925) 339.
- 30 Newdigate, Michael Drayton and His Circle, p. 127.
- 31 Reyher, Les Masques Anglais (Paris, Londres: Hachette et Cie, 1909), p. 102.
- 32 Lawrence Stone, Family and Fortune, p. 37.
- 33 Wiffen, II, 75.
- 34 Bald, p. 170.
- 35 E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, I, 200.
- 36 Alexander B. Grosart, ed., The Complete Works . . . of Samuel Daniel, III, 185f.
- 37 Marchette Chute, Ben Jonson of Westminster (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1960), p. 126.
- 38 Ben Jonson, VII (1941) 178.
- 39 Ben Jonson, X (1950) 454.
- 40 Quoted in Ben Jonson, X (1950) 448.
- 41 Ben Jonson, X (1950) 465.
- 42 Jonson's description is included with the text of the masque, VII (1941) 230f.
- 43 Ben Jonson, VII (1941) 191; X (1950) 455.  
Though Beautie was designed as a sequel to Blacknesse, its performance was delayed for three years. January explains to Boreas that he has been ready to change the 'blackamoor' ladies to a more acceptable rosy pink hue, but  
Twice have I come, in pompe here, to expect  
Their presence; Twice deluded, have been faine  
With other Rites my Feasts to entertaine.

Herford and Simpson note that the "other Rites" were the Essex marriage in 1606 and the Hay marriage in 1607; since both weddings occurred in the new year season, the wedding masques replaced the Twelfth Night masques for those two years. Ben Jonson, VII, 183, ll. 64-66 and marginal note.

44 Ben Jonson, VII (1941) 316.

45 Ben Jonson, X (1950) 495; reference to Shakespeare's England, ii, article on the Masque.

46 I (1925) 38.

47 Letter printed in full in Ben Jonson, I (1925) 197-8.

48 Percy Simpson, "Ben Jonson and Cecilia Bulstrode", TLS March 6, 1930, p. 187. Unless otherwise noted, relevant biographical information on Mistress Bulstrode comes from this article, the best discussion of the matter; a less complete version, presenting the salient facts, appears in Ben Jonson, XI (1952) 130-131.

49 Grierson, II, cxxix-cxxxiii.

50 Printed in Grierson, I, 412-13.

51 Printed in Grierson, I, 410-11.

52 Grierson, II, cxxxii.

53 Simpson, TLS, p. 187.

54 Ben Jonson, I (1925) 59.

55 Ben Jonson, II (1925) 356.

In a comment on Jonson's marginalia in a 1619 text of Martial, David McPherson noted that "in reference to 'In Gallam', 'Jonson has written what appears to be 'vel Lu. Co: B.'" McPherson speculated on the meaning of this notation:

In the epigram the speaker insultingly refuses the lascivious advances of an aging lady. Could Jonson possibly be implying that he has enjoyed Lucy's favors but is now refusing them? The letters are not formed very clearly, and I could be easily mistaken in my reading. Furthermore, "Lu. Co: B" could mean many things besides "Lucy, Countess of Bedford."

He also noted that Herford and Simpson omitted or ignored this reference. "Ben Jonson's Library and Marginalia: An Annotated Catalogue", Studies in Philology, LXXI (Dec. 1974), iii-106.



It seems to me that this suggestion is interesting, indeed provocative, but irresponsible. The Martial epigram in question, IX:xxxvii, seems to me very similar to Roe's poem to Miss Bulstrode. I would suggest that, if Jonson's annotation means anything, it refers to that situation, and reflects on Lady Bedford only indirectly.

56 Ben Jonson, I (1925) 150.

57 Bald, p. 177; also Simpson, TLS, p. 187; Letters, pp. 213-217.

58 "Epitaph. Cæcil. Boulstr." The Poems of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, G. C. Moore Smith, ed., (Oxford: 1923), p. 20.

59 Simpson, TLS, p. 187.

60 Bald, p. 177; Simpson, TLS, p. 187.

61 Bald, p. 178.

62 Grierson, II, cxliv-cxlv.

63 Grierson, I, 282-284: ll. 53-60, 61-66.

Two points are of interest here. In the middle of the first movement of the poem, a general address to death in which the subject of the poem is not even introduced, Donne included a purely gratuitous image of death, unsatisfied by all the fodder earth supplied, "sinking the deep":

Where harmlesse fish monastique silence keepe,  
Who (were Death dead) by Roes of living sand,  
Might sponge that element, and make it land.

It seems that Donne, always fond of puns, could not resist mentioning Roe even indirectly.

Grierson's conjecture of a sequence is a much more important point. Lady Bedford asked Donne for an elegy. He wrote "Death I recant". She was displeased with the tone, and herself wrote the elegy "Death be not proud" (printed in Grierson, I, 422-3). Donne then wrote a second elegy, "Language thou art too narrow", which is both more explicit and more hyperbolic in its statement of her virtues. See Grierson, II, cxliv-cxlv.

64 Letter quoted in full in Simpson, TLS, p. 187; slightly normalized.

65 Simpson, TLS, p. 187; Ben Jonson XI (1952) 131.

66 Ibid.

67 Bald, p. 177.

<sup>68</sup> It is also possible that there were two affairs, the earlier one in 1602 with Sir John Roe, and the one in 1609 at the time of her death with Sir Thomas Roe (Bald, p. 177). The second affair would recall the first to mind, occasioning Donne's reference to "Roe" in his first elegy, and possibly renewing Lady Bedford's "displeasure", and thus reinforcing Jonson's need to 'correct those prejudices'.

<sup>69</sup> Ben Jonson, II (1925) 69; also E. K. Chambers, III, 369-70.

<sup>70</sup> Ben Jonson, II (1925) 69.

<sup>71</sup> Ben Jonson, X (1950) 4.

<sup>72</sup> Ben Jonson, Epicoene, or The Silent Woman in Ben Jonson, V (1937) 139-272. All subsequent references to the play are to this text.

<sup>73</sup> Ben Jonson, II (1925) 70.

<sup>74</sup> Ben Jonson, II (1925) 71.

In an interesting investigation of the problems of dating Epicoene, Herford and Simson discuss the possibility that the play was suppressed because the reference in the first act to "the Prince of Moldavia, and of his mistress, mistress Epicoene" was interpreted as an insult to Lady Arabella Stuart. Ben Jonson, V (1937), 143-148.

<sup>75</sup> In Jonson's masque for the Haddington wedding in 1608, Venus is attended by three graces--Aglaiia, Thalia and Euphrosyne: Ben Jonson, VII (1941) 250. Aglaiia was also the name of the character Lady Bedford impersonated in the Masque of Blacknesse in 1605. This connection perhaps suggests that Lady Haughty and the 'Ladies Collegiates' parody Venus and the three graces in this Haddington masque, and thus indirectly the Queen and her court.

One critic has also linked Lady Would-be and Lady Bedford. In Act III, scene 4, Lady Would-be outlines for Volpone the ideal education of a lady, and it is very like the education Lady Bedford received: physic, painting, all letters and arts; rhetoric, writing, painting; but first and last, music. "In this exchange Jonson appears to be fresh from a reading of the preface to Florio's World of Words (1598) where Florio commends Lucie, Countess of Bedford . . . Lady Would-be is perhaps a would-be Countess of Bedford." Philip Brockbank, ed., Volpone (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1968), p. 76n. Why would Jonson read Florio's World of Words "fresh" seven years after its appearance? It is much more likely that, if Jonson is recalling Florio, it is the dedication to the Montaigne translation published in 1603 that he has in mind; indeed, I wonder if Lady Would-be is not only a would-be Lady Bedford, but a negative image of what a Lady Bedford could be?

- 76 Ben Jonson, II (1925) 82.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 Ibid. The OED indicates that 'Curtizan' meant then, as it does now, whore or prostitute.
- 79 Ben Jonson, X (1950) 3.
- 80 Ben Jonson, I (1925) 54.
- 81 See below, Ch. 5.
- 82 Grierson, II, 63.
- 83 Ben Jonson, X (1950) 6.
- 84 Grierson, II, 63.
- 85 Barbara De Luna reviews Jonson's poems about and relationship with Cecilia Bulstrode as part of an argument identifying Mistress Bulstrode as Fulvia in Catiline and Celia in the love lyrics (several of which appear in Volpone's seduction of the character of the same name). Ms. De Luna makes a series of suggestions:
- Jonson's letter to Donne was written "about 1610" and refers to the Bulstrode situation--the epigram, not Epicoene;
  - Jonson's concern that Donne's reputation might be damaged can only be explained by "Jonson's too-eager co-operating with the Government in its campaign to root out Papistry";
  - Jonson wrote the epigram because Mistress Bulstrode had refused him as a lover; he wrote it, not in 1602 in reference to the Roe affair, but close to the time of her death in 1609: the scandal of its discovery and the consequent displeasure were therefore fresh in everyone's mind;
  - Underwoods XXXVIII "'Tis true, I'm broke!" was written at the same time as the letter, addressed to Lady Bedford, and designed to win her forgiveness for the same offence;
  - the chambermaid named Cis in The New Inn 1629 also represented Mistress Bulstrode, because Jonson borrowed lines from Roe's poem to her to describe the character.
- Of all Ms. De Luna's suggestions, the only one I can agree with without considerable hesitation is that Mavis in Epicoene represents Mistress Bulstrode, and that suggestion is made in a footnote. Jonson's Romish Plot: A Study of Catiline and its Historical Context (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 154-170.
- 86 Ben Jonson, X (1950) 34.

87 Letter printed in full in Ben Jonson, I (1925) 203-4. There is no evidence for any particular date for this letter. One phrase in this letter--"as if she, who had this prejudice of me, were not already lost"--is similar to a phrase in Jonson's letter to Garrard enclosing the elegy on Mistress Bulstrode--"that some who yet live might have corrected some prejudices they have had injuriously of mee". This continuing concern about prejudice against him may indicate that the letters refer to the same situation, and that they were written in sequence, as I have suggested.

88 "Let me be what I am", Underwoods, in Ben Jonson, VII (1947) 200, 11. 29-36.

89 L. C. Knights makes this connection in "Jonson and the Anti-Acquisitive Attitude", Ch. 7. of Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1962; originally published London: Chatto and Windus, 1937), pp. 168-191. See also Chute, p. 224.

90 Chute, p. 224. As usual, there is no reference to the source, and I have been unable to verify this.

91 Lady Bedford, after the death of her father and brother, held the monopoly on the small farthing coins called "Harringtons". In drawing Fitz-Dottrel into a deal for "bottle-ale" Meercraft asks "two and twenty thousand pound" as the purchase price, and "will not bate a Harrington of the sum". The Devil is an Ass, II: 1. 83.

92 Ben Jonson, X (1950) 566.

93 This letter is quoted p. 193 above, and printed in full in Ben Jonson, I (1925), 203-204.

94 This letter is quoted pp. 315-6 below; Letters, pp. 218-220; Gosse, I, 73-4; Bald, p. 297.

## CHAPTER FOUR:  DONNE: POEMS OF TRANSITION, 1606-1613

### Introduction

In the past three decades, the work of editors, biographers, and critics of Donne has shown that Donne's 'conversion' occurred not as a single cataclysmic event but as a conscious and voluntary regenerative change. It is no longer possible to view Donne's ordination in 1615 as the definitive watershed of life experience separating Jack and the Doctor, nor to see Donne quite so simply, as Walton did, and as no doubt Doctor Donne wished to be seen, as the Augustine of seventeenth-century England. His fundamental redirection of self toward a personal relationship with God and a life in the Church was accomplished in stages of increasing moral and spiritual awareness and self-dedication in a period of personal crisis. Thus the years 1606-1613 constitute a period of transition in Donne's life. The poems written during this period reflect both essential inner conflict and the willed change in life-direction which became its resolution.<sup>1</sup>

A brief account of the body of Donne's poetry provides a framework for the consideration of these poems of transition. For the sake of simplicity, it is possible to divide Donne's work into four basic groups, and to relate these to fairly particular time periods. Considered as personal statement, as a modified form of spiritual autobiography, Donne's poetry reflects his inner life in terms of his changing concerns of spirit.

The early poems, those written before 1601,<sup>2</sup> are intensely

dramatic, often highly ironic, characterized by agile wit and a certain defensive role-playing. This early period includes the Elegies, and others identified as the 'promiscuity' poems: for example, "Goe, and catche a falling starre", "The Indifferent", "Communitie", "Confined Love". Also of this period are the witty seduction pieces, "The Prohibition", "The Flea", "The Dream", and early poems of unrequited love such as "The Broken Heart", "The Paradox", and "The Triple Fool". Most are poems of profligacy and misogyny, reflecting distrust of woman and of himself. They are cynical, completely unidealized and almost devoid of sentiment in their depiction of the love relationship. In these early poems Donne proceeds with little self-knowledge and discovers himself and the truths of his situation through the poetry. The most notable feature of his self-presentation in these poems is the absence of stability in the self or in relationship with woman. He defines himself in defining what he desires: that is, his attitude to woman is a statement about himself. In turn, he berates inconstancy in woman, revels in his own sexual license, scorns fidelity to another lover, and attacks constancy through attempted seduction. His declarations of sexual and emotional independence reflect his distrust of woman and his fears of his own emotional incapacity. His insecurity is projected as defiant masculinity. He demands freedom because he fears his own inability to achieve a sustained emotional relationship; that incapacity in himself he projects as incapacity in woman. The volatile masculine persona is thus a 'mask' for personal vulnerability.

The poems of mutual and contented love which are usually identified

with the years immediately following Donne's marriage in 1601 reflect a development toward emotional maturity. Ambivalence about woman and about the self in relationship is temporarily resolved, replaced by idealization of the love relationship combined with a certain realism of personal feeling. In his adoration, the ideal woman is conflated with God. Sex as ritual represents the consummation of the love religion; in "The Canonization" he and the beloved become votive objects for other less perfect lovers. Complete human love provides personal salvation from a limbo of vanity, detachment and fear, a secular redemption. Donne sees their miraculous union as a perfect circle of being, their relationship as a world center.<sup>3</sup>

"The Good-morrow" is an aubade of achieved union, presenting a far less voluble persona than that of the 'promiscuity' poems. In this poem, "The Sunne Rising" and "The Anniversarie", Donne achieves a revelation of the life-affirming qualities of human love. The relationship he celebrates represents the only true sense of mutuality Donne ever achieved, and lends a degree of emotional stability not previously evident in the projected personality. Yet within these poems of positive love vision Donne provides for the possibility of the failure of the love religion: even at the center of a personally-redeeming love he is afflicted with endemic distrust, of himself, of woman, of change and time. In "The Good-morrow", a suspicion of inconstancy: "If our two loves be one, or, thou and I/Love so alike, that none doe slacken, none can die"; in "The Anniversarie", an explicit fear of betrayal which is not faced but avoided: "Who is so safe as wee? where none can doe/Treason

to us, except one of us two./True and false feares let us refraine"<sup>4</sup>-- these represent a defensive reaction, as he prepares himself for later failure. In "The Sunne Rising" and "The Canonization" love is a stronghold against the displeasure of the outside world. Donne is hyperbolic in his defense of their mutuality as a celebration of life itself, and vituperative in his attack against the interference of the material world. An important element in these poems is that the persona is looking outward defensively: human relationship becomes an exclusive enclosure of protective security. Yet there remains the possibility that this earthly paradise will be undermined from within: distrust and fear are never entirely overcome. 'Perfect love' is known to be impossible, or at least recognized as flawed. Following the first great fervour of love union, there is a recognition that human reality includes the possibility of change if not decline: "Where can we find two better hemispheres/Without sharpe North, without declining West?" becomes "If our loves faint, and westwardly decline".<sup>5</sup> However, this recognition is advanced in a tone neither bitter nor reproachful, as he reaches a more mature understanding of the inevitability of change.

The poems of transition--the late lyrics of disillusion in love, the earliest divine poems, the Holy Sonnets, "Goodfriday, 1613", and The Anniversaries--these are poems of the years 1606-1613, a period when Donne was living with his growing family in a small house at Mitcham. In these years, Donne suffered an intense personal crisis compounded of many elements: extreme poverty, recurrent illness, lack of employment or valid life-direction, intense dejection of spirits.



Guilt for 'sin' and for the imperfection of human relationship culminated in self-distrust and despair. Desire for death and the next life was set against fear of physical death itself and a search for a new life-center. Donne sought that new center in personal relationships, for example his intimate friendships with Lucy Countess of Bedford and Mrs. Herbert. It is possible that Donne found in these two ladies appropriate emblems of two ideal feminine figures, the younger woman as ideal love, the older woman as motherly affection. Poems usually associated with these ladies reflect the failure of relation to a female figure to provide needed stability, and Donne's final disillusion with the love religion. In "The Funeral" and "The Relique" it is important that the persona speaks from death, that the love religion is imagined as past and ultimately unavailing. In "The Funeral" the tone is reproachful, as he still believes in the idealization of woman. In "The Relique" his mood is tempered by the realization that the idealization itself is in the past; the implication is that he is freed by his disillusion to search elsewhere for a sustaining relational center. Thus too "Twickenham Garden" chronicles within itself the disintegration of the love religion. The garden changes from an earthly paradise of springtime and renewal to a personal hell of winter and spiritual death. To a degree the poem is self-pitying, as he places the responsibility for his unhappiness at the failure of love on the woman; yet he admits he is himself the agent of the change--"I have the serpent brought"--and the poem provides a limited resolution in that he becomes a votive object for other lovers. "A Nocturnall upon S. Lucies day" laments the 'death' of a saint in the religion of love. This 'death' could represent her rejection of him and

thus the death of their relationship rather than the actual death of the beloved. The metaphoric tension between grief and a sense of nothingness enclosing the self, and earthly renewal in the spring is a secular equivalent of Christ's agony in the garden; so too the devotee in love's religion sanctifies himself to accept a new life-direction as the poem closes.

The failure of the love religion to provide emotional security more than temporarily forced Donne to search elsewhere for a relational center which would not fail. In the earliest divine poems, his need for a devotional object shifts toward relation to a masculine God: this search underlies the formal and ritual structure of "La Corona " and "A Litanie". The Holy Sonnets reflect the beginning of a regenerative phase. Purgatorial and confessional aspects reflect a need to enclose and then transcend the self. The sonnets express the spiritual agony of his search for fulfilment in religious devotion; they describe the phases of upheaval--self-blame, self-distrust, self-castigation for sinfulness; fear of death; distrust of God, fear of rejection--in his approach to resolution of his inner conflicts. The Holy Sonnets are remarkable for the formal control brought to bear on lacerating self-examination and tortured self-presentation. The sonnet form and available religious metaphor combine with a certain depressive candor in Donne's will to resolution. In the movement toward personal regeneration, the Holy Sonnets are themselves a remaking process: locating the ultimate center in God, Donne appeals for healing, for reattachment, for possession by the force of primal unity which is God.

In the latter part of the Mitcham period, 1610-1611, this self-adaptation becomes a more formal commitment to the Anglican position and to the possibility of accepting a life within the Church. Pseudo-Martyr is violently anti-Jesuit if not anti-Catholic, and represents Donne's final renunciation of his personal background: in the preface Donne for the first time acknowledges having reached accomodation within the established Church. The personal aspect of this new commitment is expressed in "Goodfriday, 1613". As personal statements, the Anniversaries represent the inverse movement: as in the prose works he divests himself of his Catholic heritage, so in these poems he releases himself from devotion to an idealized female figure.

The works which followed Donne's ordination, the Devotions, the late "Hymnes", and the Sermons are essentially meditations on the central theme of death and dying well. They reveal a penitential submissiveness to the will of God which dispels remaining fears, and a modulation toward peace of mind in the absence of strident self-laceration. Even then, however, the fear of rejection recurs: in the Sermons, hell is most often described as an eternity of deprivation and exclusion from the presence and sight of God; and in the "Hymne to God the Father", only the assurance of forgiveness contained in the promise to Abraham, "Sweare by thy selfe", will suffice to countervail his remaining fears. Following his ordination and the death of his wife, Donne consciously rededicated himself to his role in the Church and a life in God. God provided both authority and affection: loving acceptance finally removed both guilt and fear.

1601-1609

The poems written in the first years of the period of transition reflect the opening phase of Donne's mental transition from devotion to woman and his secular ideal of fulfilling love toward devotion to God. The earliest divine poems are founded upon formal meditative and liturgical structures; poetic and devotional forms serve to restrain elements of personal distress which yet at times break through the imposed control. Almost contemporaneous with the early divine poems are the late 'love' lyrics: these poems of disillusion with relationship to woman detail a parallel movement of spirit as Donne disengages himself from woman while at the same time turning toward God.

As the earliest of the divine poems, "La Corona", written in July 1607,<sup>6</sup> and "A Litanie", written in autumn 1608,<sup>7</sup> reflect Donne's first attempts to alleviate personal distress through religious devotion: they illustrate this transitional phase in Donne's poetry both structurally and thematically. The emphasis of major critics has been to establish the formal religious traditions to which these poems are related. This traditional context, liturgical and meditative, is clearly present in "La Corona": however, the relation of the "La Corona" sequence to formal religious traditions only serves to underline its obvious personal elements. The focus of self-concern and the imagery employed in its expression, while detailing Donne's mood and state of mind, point forward to the later Holy Sonnets.

A brief examination of the opening and closing sonnets of the "La Corona" sequence reveals Donne's personal sensibilities operating

within that traditional context. The opening word "Daigne" creates with soft-spoken emphasis an immediate sense of humility and personal unworthiness, a supplicant pose underlined in the second line by Donne's admission of a prevailing depression, "in my low devout melancholie". Indeed, the absence of strident emotion or intense conviction carries through until the last six lines of the sequence, an underlying sadness of spirit which Donne, in a letter of 1608, called 'my weary soul'. The implied rejection of secular poetry through denying the secular muse-- "But doe not, with a vile crowne of fraile bayes,/Reward my muses white sincerity," (11.5-6)<sup>8</sup>--taken together with

The ends crowne our workes, but thou crown'st our ends,  
For, at our end begins our endlesse rest,  
This first last end, now zealously possesse, (11.9-11)

becomes an effort to convince himself, to deny what he is and has been in favour of what he now wishes to be: in effect, the essence of man-at-prayer. This in turn becomes a spiritual state of inaction, typical of Donne, and magnificently expressed in "With a strong sober thirst, my soule attends" (1.12) which emphasizes both passivity and need. This preliminary attempt at self-conviction concludes with "'Tis time" (1.13), a recognition of his present state of mind and of the need for renewal.

The central sequence of "La Corona", the four sonnets on "Annunciation", "Nativitie", "Temple", and "Crucyfying", however ingenious, remain a somewhat pedestrian catalogue of aspects of the essential Christian paradox of God-in-man. Only in scattered moments of increased intensity and personal concern, which indicate the difficulty of the very

accommodation Donne feels compelled to make, does the sequence escape the commonplace.

In contrast, the concluding sonnet, "Ascention", approaches the later Holy Sonnets in quality and intensity of effect. The emphasis on imperative verbs, "Salute", "Joy", "Behold ", "quench", and "Deigne", addressed to the penitent self first, then to the Saviour, gives an impression of positive resolution. Indeed, the structure of the final petition underlines this impression, as it moves through the three parallel phrases of address to Christ toward the verb "quench", emphatically situated in the center of a balanced phrase:

O strong Ramme, which hast batter'd heaven for mee,  
Milde lambe, which with thy blood, hast mark'd the path;  
Bright torch, which shin'st, that I the way may see,  
Oh, with thine own blood quench thine own just wrath. (9-12)

The resolution, however, remains at best tentative: "And if thy holy Spirit, my Muse did raise,/Deigne at my hands this crowne of prayer and praise." (11.13-14). The sequence ends in genuine hesitation, which recalls the attempts at self-conviction of the first sonnet and underlines the mood of self-abnegation and the passive necessity of seeking God's condescension.

As probably the earliest of Donne's divine poems, "La Corona" illustrates what Helen Gardner calls "the continuity of his religious life".<sup>9</sup> These sonnets reveal Donne's essential concerns, which remain constant throughout the religious poems and recur in the sermons: a conviction of personal unworthiness, dejection, a desperate necessity to achieve a basis of assurance, absence of trust in the reality of divine love, and fear of death. Yet the similarity of imagery in "La

Corona" and in the later Holy Sonnets indicates that this early sonnet sequence served as a form of notebook, in which these personal concerns and the images used to express them were first collected, to be expanded in the later sonnets as Donne worked toward resolution of inner conflict.

Critical commentary on "A Litanie" usually focusses on the tension between an impersonal form and personal content. Gardner's excellent analysis, for example, contrasts the simple traditional outline with the stanza of his own invention, indicating the conflict between Donne's intellectual ingenuity and verbal audacity and the essential Anglican ideal of moderation in all things.<sup>10</sup> An understanding of the more personal reflections within the poem needs a basis in such formal appreciation, if only for the context it provides. Thus Gardner recognizes that, while parts of the poem relate to current religious controversy, "A Litanie" also reflects "Donne's personal searchings of conscience in his years of failure."<sup>11</sup> She commends Donne's unusual "sobriety", and concludes that it is "a singularly unbitter poem, although it was written at a bitter time."<sup>12</sup>

'Sobriety' is a characteristic of the ideal Donne is seeking and of the way it is sought through the paradox and balance of witty analysis, the form of expression giving obvious evidence to himself and others that he can become what he wishes to be. A prevailing sobriety, however, does not dismiss the importance of the poem's personal reflections. The poem itself reveals an individual temperament forcing itself to adapt to an external system, the via media of early Anglicanism being made acceptable to a volatile personality given to extremes. With

admittedly limited success, Donne attempts to rationalize the conscious choice of the middle way between the martyrdom of his Catholic relatives and the prodigality of his early life.

"A Litanie" begins with a plea to God the Father:

And re-create mee, now growne ruinous:  
 My heart is by dejection, clay,  
 And by selfe-murder, red  
 From this red earth, O Father, purge away  
 All vicious tinctures, that new fashioned  
 I may rise up from death, before I'am dead. (11.4-9)

As in "La Corona", Donne assumes a passive stance and in a calmer tone than that of the Holy Sonnets makes an appeal which introduces the possibility of a gentle God. Considering Donne's melancholy and physical illness in these years, this plea is a simple self-presentation, a statement of emotional fact: not a black soul, but a grey state of mind. The calmer tone is only temporary, however, as Donne addresses a more strident plea to God the Son: "O be thou nail'd unto my heart,/And crucified againe," (11.14-15). As later in the Holy Sonnets, only a violent redemption will serve: "Drown'd in thy blood, and in thy passion slaine" (1.18). To the Holy Ghost, he appeals for repentance and humility, admitting his past errors: "And being sacrilegiously/Halfe wasted with youths fires, of pride and lust," (11.21-22). To the assembled Trinity he reiterates his plea to be made anew: "Of these let all mee elemented bee,/Of power, to love, to know, you unnumbered three" (11.35-36). The 'elementing' of secular love has proved incomplete; his disillusion and dejection, as much as consciousness of past misdeeds, bring him to prayer.

Throughout the remaining twenty-four stanzas Donne details his



appeal for rebirth through grace. His attempt to contemplate each extreme and choose the middle course becomes a plea for life-direction and for protection, in large part protection from himself. His self-adjustment to the Anglican ideal finds its best expression in stanza XV, which echoes the concerns of the letters of the Mitcham period:

From being anxious, or secure,  
Dead clods of sadness, or light squibs of mirth,  
From thinking, that great courts immure  
All, or no happiness, or that this earth  
Is only for our prison fram'd,  
Or that thou art covetous  
To them whom thou lov'st, or that they are maim'd  
From reaching this world's sweet, who seek thee thus,  
With all their might, Good Lord deliver us. (ll.127-135)<sup>13</sup>

Systematic self-examination produced in Donne a recognition of his inability to stabilize his own personality without reference to an external loving and directing authority figure. Religious devotion brought not mystic ecstasy but emotional security.

"A Litany" represents a deliberate attempt to accommodate personal distress within an externally motivated formal devotional structure. The absence of cohesion of personal concern to formal structure leads Gardner to judge the poem unsatisfactory:

One may sympathize with Donne's desire to find a form for his meditation; but the incompatibility between the material of the poem and the chosen form is too great. The form has had to be too much twisted to fit the material, and the material has been moulded to the poem rather than expressed by it.<sup>14</sup>

This difficulty is the essence of the poem. The attempted accommodation to an external ideal fails because the intended self-adjustment, personal and artistic, is not achieved. Donne was only beginning to approach the emotional security he sought, and, through an exploration of the

Anglican ideal of 'moderation in all things', hoping to find his place within the established Church.

Finding in this poem "the special interest of poems which are the product of a period of transition, when in the process of re-shaping a personality some elements are stressed to the exclusion of others",<sup>15</sup> Gardner approaches an explanation of Donne's personal motivation for writing in a formal meditative and liturgical structure at this time. He attempts to channel his awareness of his own ambivalence, his personal uncertainties, into the available structure of religious metaphor. The public nature of Donne's 'Litany' is itself a device for personal control, the resultant sobriety an achieved effect of the strained attempt to acknowledge his extremes without surrendering to them.

The predominant mood of "La Corona" is humility, the speaker pleading but passively waiting for the mercy of God. In "A Litanie", with repeated reference to dejection, waste, blindness, anxiety, inner 'war', and despair, Donne works his genuine sense of the particularity of sin into a form which allows some artistic control of that feeling. Donne's legalistic tone is a necessary first step in testing his acceptability. He seeks to move beyond the feeling of useless detachment evident in a letter to Sir Henry Goodyer:

Therefore I would fain do something, but that I  
cannot tell what is no wonder. For to choose is  
to do; but to be no part of any body is to be  
nothing. At most, the greatest persons are but  
great wens and excrescences; men of wit and  
delightful conversation but as moles for  
ornament, except they be so incorporated into  
the body of the world that they contribute  
something to the sustentation of the whole.<sup>16</sup>

The voice of "A Litanie" begins as "I" and becomes "we", moving through

this need to identify himself as part of something external toward establishing that continuity of identity. Much of his earlier poetry served only to negate the viability of alternative, secular solutions. In the early divine poems Donne begins his attempt to accomodate himself to the external forms of the Anglican Church, and to find in personal devotion the lasting emotional security which relationship with woman had failed to provide.

As a poem of transition, "Twicknam Garden" is related to the early divine poems in the essential way delineated by Judah Stampfer: "As the female figure thinned to insubstantiality in his late love lyrics, Donne began sketching a context...for a fresh alter ego in God. The two movements overlap."<sup>17</sup> "Twicknam Garden" and the later "Nocturnall" reflect different phases of Donne's disillusion with relationship with woman. In "Twicknam Garden" this disillusion, though real enough, arises more from ironic bitterness than from despairing loss. Indeed the loss seems only temporary, and known to be temporary, as the last couplet wittily relates the loss of her to the loss of all others. Compared to the sombre yet ultimately hopeful "Nocturnall", "Twicknam Garden" is a self-mocking palliative.

The formal basis of "Twicknam Garden" is in the Petrarchan convention: the poem is a highly individual variation on a traditional theme--the contrast between the dejection of the lover whose love is hopeless, and the life and beauty of the spring.<sup>18</sup> Relating the poem to a formal tradition only, critics fail to recognize that it is the poet's motivation to choose a particular form rather than the form for itself which is significant. The use of a 'stock theme' indicates the

poet's personal need for a tradition, a structure, an archetype, within which personal experience and intense emotion can reach adequate expression. What "Twicknam Garden" illustrates is the use of art as a control for an intensity of feeling which could be accommodated to conventional terms.

A letter to Sir Henry Goodyer, probably written in the spring of 1608, indicates that the contrast between personal dejection and seasonal renewal was much more than a convenient literary device for Donne:

Because I am in a place and season where I see everything bud forth, I must do so too, and vent some of my meditations to you; the rather because all other buds being yet without taste and virtue, my letters may be like them. The pleasantness of the season displeases me. Everything refreshes, and I wither, and I grow older and not better, my strength diminishes, and my load grows,...<sup>19</sup>

In "Twicknam Garden" this traditional contrast underlies the tension between the literary theme and imagery and the subjective material. A close examination of the poem reveals that Donne's concentration of self-concern in effect undermines the traditional elements.

The first stanza establishes that he is himself the cause of the failure of this love, of the darkening of the garden. "The spider love" which converts affection to distrust is within himself; the serpent he brings is not only envy, but deceit. His ironic self-concern extends to extreme pathetic fallacy which borders on paranoia. He appears incapable of a 'purer', less self-interested affection, and must disrupt the beauty and serenity of the garden itself: this is the true origin of his wish to remain. That wish could indicate a desire to

overcome this negative self, but instead it establishes a perverse security in dejection. With the third stanza the rhythm of the poem breaks down, his forced and bitter jocularity falls away. Changed to a fountain, he wishes to become a votive object for other lovers. As together he and his beloved were the emblem of true love in "The Canonization", so now he becomes the emblem of failed love. His attempt to restructure his crumbling self leads him into two essentially negative actions: he seeks public confirmation of his failure through the presence of "the hypothetical votary or voyeur, the watching eye of the world,"<sup>20</sup> and he tries to cast the responsibility for that failure upon the woman.

To identify rejection with death--"her truth kills me"--is a childish response indicating a lack of emotional self-sufficiency. Yet the idea that 'if my existence is not confirmed by her, I shall cease to exist' is not an honest recognition within himself of his inability to survive without a sustaining ideal figure, but an hysterical pose. This pose becomes the basis for false solutions, which avoid coming to terms with the inner distress which occasions the poem and its causes: in the poem he wishes to remain in the garden as a galling reminder of her unkindness, and to be metamorphosed into a personified inanimate object because he cannot deal with the emotional difficulties of being human. 'I shall simply die' rather than face the problem which is within me. The admission that he is responsible for the negative change in the garden--"I have the serpent brought" has not led to an honest examination of self and situation. However witty, brilliant, and successful it is as a poem, "Twickenham Garden" provided only a limited resolution of the

personal problem: within the poem, he becomes a votive object for other lovers; with the poem, he commands the attention of the woman addressed and of the reader. Compared to the deep concentration of personal negativity in the later "Nocturnall", in "Twicknam Garden" Donne is playing image games with his distress, fooling only himself, and only temporarily.

What would be the final resolution, devotion to God, was further consolidated in the Holy Sonnets. Probably written in 1609,<sup>21</sup> the Holy Sonnets reflect the elements of the personal crisis of the years of transition and help to define the nature of Donne's inner distress. The sonnets themselves are a series of self-presentations and dramatizations; though some are false starts, some attempt genuine self-examination and adumbrate a resolution of inner conflict. They reveal that the spiritual movement toward acceptance of the love of God was for Donne personal and relational. Donne's state of inner incompleteness led him to seek emotional security in a relationship to a personal devotional object. When relationship to woman failed to provide this needed security more than temporarily, Donne sought an analogous relationship with God.

Traditionally, the Holy Sonnets have been interpreted as formal meditative structures intended by Donne to order a purely religious commitment. The personal insights the sonnets afford move outward from these structures to provide a portrait of a distressed personality which is in fundamental accord with the content of the letters of the Mitcham period. What critics like Martz see as a process for defining "election" is in personal terms an aspect of a process of transition. In the Holy

Sonnets known and available traditions become vehicles for this re-direction of focus toward God. This movement is not a 'progress' through the Holy Sonnets as poetic or emotional sequence, but a portrait of the inner man from different angles, almost simultaneously highlighting different aspects of a complex personality and its fundamental concerns.

To a great extent critics have endeavoured to ignore the focus of self-concern and the significance of the wealth of intense personal content in the divine poems. Yet if Donne is fundamentally a great and complex personality, and if that personality is as powerfully present in the Holy Sonnets as in the great love lyrics, then this aspect deserves close attention. Unlike the Songs and Sonnets, the question here is not one of biographical relation to specific persons or events, but rather of the expression in the poetry of a fundamental reorganization of the self arising out of intense personal distress.

In the sequence established by Helen Gardner, the first six of the Holy Sonnets of the 1633 edition concentrate on the meditative themes of death and judgement. In using a traditional form--meditative structure within a sonnet--to examine traditional themes, Donne uses art to control personal distress. He consistently avoids the central issue, his genuine fears of death, of sinfulness, of rejection by God, and veers off into evasions and denials of uncertain effect. Several times he returns to his essential fear of God the Father who is for him the Old Testament Figure of righteousness and wrath. Thus, in the third sonnet ("This is my playes last scene, here heavens appoint") the speaker expresses his hesitation, not about the physical fact of death which usually preoccupies

him, but about the soul's reception: "But my'ever-waking part shall see that face,/Whose feare already shakes my every joynt". His appeals to the efficacy of the redemption through Christ as a defense against this fear remain unconvincing even to himself. "Teach mee how to repent", the central request of the fourth sonnet ("At the round earths imagin'd corners, blow"), is undermined by the superficial wit of just such an appeal: "for that's as good/As if thou hadst sealed my pardon with thy blood." Anyone who genuinely sought repentance would "begin" by accepting as an article of faith, as a "title" to God's mercy, the reality of the redemption through Christ's sacrifice as the 'seal of pardon' for personal sin. Here, he resorts to the doctrine of the redemption without experiencing it as personally relevant. He remains essentially passive, perhaps because to strive for acceptance and still be denied is too painful a possibility. He is unable to invest himself without prior assurance of acceptability and returned affection. Until honestly faced his fears cannot be resolved: unresolved, his fears remain the major obstacle to the achievement of an affirming and enabling relationship with God.

The second group of sonnets from the 1633 edition, sonnets 7-12, focus on the theme of love, attempting to establish a reciprocal relation as God's love overcomes man's unworthiness and moves him to love in return. In the first sonnets, 7, 8, and 9, the incarnation, crucifixion and redemption through Christ are doctrinal tags given as arbitrary conclusions intended to mask unresolved distress. Thus, at the close of the seventh sonnet ("Spit in my face yee Jewes, and pierce my side,") the incarnation remains a mystery set apart from the personal



dilemma. That "God cloth'd himselfe in vile mans flesh, that so/Hee might be weake enough to suffer woe" does not answer the actual problem, that "I have sinn'd, and sinn'd". The self remains imprisoned in weakness and woe, as Christ's participation in the general human misery is not felt as curative of present personal distress. The disjunction between the self who admires and the Saviour who loves prohibits effective resolution. In the most violent sonnet, 10, Donne abruptly faces the problem of establishing a relationship with God when the self is fearful, passive, unable to act. Only a violent reclamation is possible. What he desires is love; what he feels at present is fear and violation. He fears relationship itself, and the loss of self-hood it entails: while he remains passive, he demands that God act as a proof of love. His fear of rejection underlies his passivity. He cannot imagine a love which will reclaim him from sin and despair if it is not violent; the only reclaiming, fulfilling love he has known, however temporary, has been a sexual relationship. He depicts the love of God in the same way, facing his fears by challenging the fearful personality and evoking the fearful situation. Once these fears have been faced, they can to an extent be laid aside. The final sonnets, 11 and 12, are more fully "divine meditations": somewhat formal, definitely restrained, they give the impression of a calmer spirit achieved after great struggle with the self. It is difficult to avoid the sense that these two sonnets represent a concluding movement in an overall sequence.

The four sonnets added in the 1635 edition at first appear to share the calmer tone of sonnets 11 and 12: in the first three, however, this tone reveals not an achieved peace of mind but a reduction of

spirit very near to despair. These three sonnets provide three inter-related self-presentations summarizing his state of mind. In them his dejection echoes the mental exhaustion and physical debility evident in the letters of these years. That such shattering self-truths become poetry at all is a measure of the strength of will Donne brought to bear on the urgent necessity for resolution of personal distress. That the poetry is sometimes fine and beautiful gives evidence of his conscious effort toward control as he sought expression and accomodation for that distress in formal structure. The fourth sonnet seems quite separate, a concluding statement in which he presents his "minde white truth" to God the Father and to the soul of his own father.

The first sonnet of 1633 reveals the confusion of possibilities, the need to investigate and define the nature of the relationship between the self and God, the available terms of the definition, and Donne's essential concerns of spirit. It begins as a formal document in religious litigation: "As due by many titles I resigne/My selfe to thee, O God." Clearly his self-surrender is in payment for a truly mortgaged soul, not a free gift of love. The detached, judicious voice, the legalistic tone suggest a will not an innate desire toward religious devotion; on the other hand, there is the sense that he is responding, somewhat reluctantly, to God's just claims. "First made" and "blood bought" present the two possibilities for general redemption which man has failed to accept, creation by God and resurrection through Christ. But his 'decay', and an undertone of passive weariness, indicate that a general redemption was not enough to protect him from himself, that he now needs a more radically personal redemption. The sequence of "titles"

begins with the redemption and moves backward to the 'general beginning' of man in the Old Testament. He is son, servant, sheep, Image of God, and finally temple of the Holy Spirit: this reversal of the Biblical order from creation to redemption emphasizes the personal nature of his subsequent appeal. "I was decay'd" suggests his attempt to evade responsibility for his own degeneration; the catalogue of God's "titles" serves to remind him that the evasion must cease: thus, "I betray'd/My selfe". The sestet opens with two questions which undermine the contractual foundations he has been at such pains to establish. Although his questions maintain his formal tone, the repeated "why? why?" indicates that he is unable to understand his own sinfulness, Job-like in his incomprehension of God's passivity implied in the Devil's power. At the same time, the images of forced possession in war or in sexual passion, "usurpe", "steale", "ravish", are intended to absolve him once again of responsibility for his sinfulness, while his appeal to God to "rise and for thine owne worke fight" underlines his failure to seek redemption actively. The closing lines offer not a resolution but a reiteration in calmer terms of the situation presented in his central questions: "Thou lov'st mankind well, yet wilt'not chuse me,/And Satan hates mee, yet is loth to lose mee." In this return to passivity his cry "Oh I shall soon despaire" amounts to emotional blackmail. Only now does he approach his true concern which underlies both his legalistic detachment and his anguished questioning. He seeks not legal possession but love; his deepest fear is not of the devil's power or of his own sinfulness, but a fear of rejection by God.

The relationship between the self and God will be either forced

possession or loving choice; the definition is his, the action God's, as he himself remains passive and fearful. Suggested here in the first sonnet, this essential issue is first evaded, then directly faced and finally resolved, in the later sonnets.

Simplicity of structure and diction in the opening lines of the ninth sonnet, a meditation on the possibility of apocalypse, prevent the question being hysterical: "What if this present were the worlds last night?" The tone of rational enquiry belies the very real fear aroused by such a prospect. The effort of calling forth "the picture of Christ crucified", rather than providing an antidote to such terror, seems to shatter any last vestige of self-possession. In panic he tries to view "that countenance" in its merciful aspects; he hopes Christ's tears and blood will overcome his dreadful and frowning perception of man's sinfulness. In graphically confronting the terrible reality of man crucifying God, he attempts to see beyond the supposed signs of anger and retribution in Christ's face, which are occasioned by his own all-consuming fear, toward the truth of divine mercy. After this fearful tumult, image clashing against image, the flat denial with which the sestet opens remains unemphatic, unconvincing. He veers away from his fear of rejection and denial into a weak Petrarchan pose as he compares Christ to the "profane mistresses" of his "idolatrie". Pity of the lover's plight would lead the lady to accept his suit: thus he attempts to assure his soul that in true pity Christ will extend loving acceptance to him, however unworthy. The crabbed and tortured logic of these lines creates a confusion of thought and image. The relation of "horrid shapes" to "beauteous forme" is too indistinct for contrast; justice and

mercy, blood and tears, horror and beauty, fear and assurance remain inextricably entwined in his confused perception. Imagining Christ as his soul's pitying lover provides only a shallow assurance, and no resolution for his original fear.

The tenth sonnet opens with a traditional if startlingly violent appeal:

Batter my heart, three person'd God; for, you  
As yet but knocke, breathe, shine, and seeke to mend;  
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow mee, 'and bend  
Your force, to breake, blowe, burn and make me new.

The sinful heart, obdurate and stony, needs violent reclamation; half measures will not suffice. The speaker is, in spite of despair and awareness of sin, still too controlled, too contained, too self-possessed. This self must be 'overthrown', its imprisoning boundaries destroyed. The appeal is for the direct and immediate involvement of the Lord as the speaker remains consciously passive:

I, like an usurpt towne, to 'another due,  
Labour to 'admit you, but Oh, to no end.

Self-surrender is impossible to a nature so centrally self-conscious. The attempted resignation of the self to God's just claims remains as inefficacious as it was in sonnet one, but the situation is more desperate. For his passivity, his abdication of responsibility, some explanation must be attempted:

Reason your viceroy in mee, mee should defend,  
But is captiv'd, and proves weake or untrue.

With that inability to define his own situation, to say more than is already obvious, any strength remaining in his position as plaintiff disappears. He can only repeat his self-presentation, now more tact-

fully:

Yet dearely 'I love you, and would be lov'd faine,  
But am betroth'd unto your enemye.

All that remains is this feeble assertion of devotion and its accompanying admission of his perversion into sin. Yet there is finally this first statement of affection toward his Lord as a motive for his opening appeal for violent reclamation.

In its least offensive interpretation, this imagery is a startling adaptation of the metaphor of spiritual combat, as God and the devil fight for possession of the individual soul. Taking the metaphor literally, Donne draws up the Lord's forces before the beleaguered city of the self, and sends urgent dispatches appealing for a brutal counter-attack to dislodge the intruder. Yet the confusion of images suggests something more disquieting, as possession in war is expressed as sexual surrender ("Labour to 'admit you, but Oh, to no end") and betrothal as an act of war. As in the love lyrics he considered the female figure a minor divinity, so here he imagines God as a sexual lover. The sexual metaphor is undeniably explicit in the closing quatrain:

Divorce mee, 'untie mee, or breake that knot againe,  
Take mee to you, imprison mee, for I  
Except you 'enthrall mee, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish mee.

The appeal for such a relationship is overt if ill-defined; in retrospect, the opening invocation of violence indicates a fascination with physical brutality which is more than vaguely suggestive.

The difficulty is to interpret the imagery of this sonnet without doing violence to the work of art or to the personality which created

it. The problem is not to define a masked sexual perversion involuntarily breaking through Donne's usual self-possession in a radical use of traditional imagery, but to understand the desperate emotional need which sought expression in the violent intimacy of sexual metaphor. Stampfer elucidates an important distinction in metaphors of personal relation to God, defining the metaphor as either parental or romantic: "the parental metaphor suggests orderly structure, hierarchy, and enduring commitment, the romantic metaphor mystical experience, insecurity, and the suspension of any hierarchy of being."<sup>22</sup> The romantic metaphor not only captures the imagination, it arouses the whole self from its imprisoning passivity. In the preceding sonnets Donne sought an undefined but basically parental relation with God issuing in acceptance and affirmation. The attempt has been to divide his sense of relation between these two possibilities, and deliberately to ignore the more threatening one in the search for definition of relationship. Absence of effective emotional resolution in the other sonnets indicates the inadequacy of this attempt. In sonnet 10 he confronts the other possibility, a romantic relationship with God: this form of relation, and the element of self which seeks it, have been pushed aside in his attempts to achieve a parental relation. He must come to terms with this possibility of a different consummation, and assimilate at least that possibility into a more unified personality. Relation to a male authority figure must include both aggression and loving acceptance; only then is true resolution possible. The sonnet itself presents only a reiterated appeal, not a complete resolution. Fear of exclusion leads to his appeal for violent

action. A mind so painfully self-conscious remains incapable of complete self-surrender, seeing it as personal extinction; he demands to be taken by force, and finds in the aggression involved an exhilarating proof of divine love.

The evenness of tone in the eleventh sonnet suggests that once thus honestly faced, the violence and extreme fear can be laid aside. In the opening address to his soul, the love of God for individual man is accepted as personally relevant, as he calmly urges his soul to learn to return that love. "Wholesome meditation" replaces violent appeal or indignant question. His personal application of doctrine involves the Trinity in all its aspects: what was attempted in the imagery of the opening lines of sonnet 10 is now simply stated. Each person of God enters voluntarily into relation with man: the Spirit chooses the heart of man as its temple; the Father begets the Son who retrieves the 'adopted' son from sin and damnation. God's entry into the world through Christ is seen as an eternal begetting which becomes an image of the infusion of grace in the individual soul. The motion to love God in response to God loving man adumbrates the possibility of resolution of fear in an affirming relationship. He is no longer merely appealing to traditional metaphor as a bulwark against fear. His explanations of the action of grace in repurchasing mortgaged souls and loosing the bonds of sin have a simplicity of conviction entirely absent from his earlier attempts. There is a certain calm assurance in his recognition that God's love provides exactly the relation necessary: "deign'd to chuse thee by adoption" presents that relation in a doc-



trinally acceptable metaphor. In personal terms, it is a literal adoption, as God becomes a Father to replace the original father. Metaphorically, this adoption answers the problem broached in sonnet 1, and not yet resolved: "thou lov'st mankind well, yet wilt'not chuse mee,/And Satan hates mee, yet is loth to lose mee." The conclusion of the poem identifies the original creation with the incarnation, linking God and man in a reflexive relation as divine and human are linked in the person of Christ. The eternal begetting thus comes to symbolize an eternal reciprocity of love.

Like the ninth sonnet of 1633, the third of 1635 ("O might those sighes and teares returne againe") attempts to bring together his secular idolatry and his religious devotion. The sonnet seems unusually unified in tone: the single focus of self-concern is emphasized by the absence of address outside the self. The sonnet advances descriptions of his present situation which are not really explorations of his state of mind, but entirely static self-presentations. His situation is slightly clarified in restating, but the sonnet evinces no movement of spirit and no development toward resolution. The contrast implicit in his opening self-presentation in the first quatrain expands upon the distinction made in sonnet 2 between tears for failed love and tears of repentance: that his present discontent is "holy" implies an earlier 'unholy discontent'. The multiple meanings of "returne againe" reinforce this contrast. "Sighes and teares" are a Petrarchan emblem which was available to him in his secular verse: now he needs a similar emblem, and recalls this one to use. As an experience as well as an image, his "sighes and teares" are remembered and called forth again, his 'grief' deliberately

recreated in the meditative method of recollection. He remembers them in order to examine and then to deny them and to replace them with pure tears shed for his new purpose: "That I might in this holy discontent/ Mourne with some fruit, as I have mourn'd in vaine." Mourning the lost love was "in vain" because his pose as sighing lover did not restore the beloved woman to him, and because his mourning could not purge him of an affection which was not dead.

The second quatrain clarifies his opening presentation as he identifies the implicit 'unholy' discontent as his "Idolatry". 'Unholy' was merely a different form of 'holy', for in his devotion in the love religion, the female figure was conflated with God. "That sufferance was my sin": the suffering itself was sin, that he grieved so deeply for so trivial a thing as earthly love and its failure; sufferance was sin, that he allowed himself excessive grief. After these ambiguous admissions, how convincing is his announcement "Now I repent"? The reader is allowed a little scepticism: there is more than a hint that his renunciation of the world and the flesh is far from complete, as he cannot refrain from thinking of his worldly discontents. He is to be punished now for his earlier sin: "Because I did suffer I must suffer paine." This punishment is for self-indulgence, not in the sins of the flesh themselves but in exaggerated grief at the loss of sinful pleasure, at the failure of love, at the imperfection of fleshly affection. His excess of grief indicated how much such human relation meant to him, as does his seeming inability to abandon it here.

Ordinary sinners have the memory of earthly joy to offset pain or punishment; of his four categories of earth-bound men, "Th'hydroptique

drunkard, and night-scouting theife,/The itchy Lecher, and selfe tickling proud," the uncharitable reader suspects Donne has been at least the last two. There is a certain measure of self-pity, "To (poore) me is allow'd/No ease," in defining past and present existence as a cycle of unrelieved pain. "Long, yet vehement grief" summarizes a life of suffering: at best, he exchanges one pain for another. Grief at the loss of sinful pleasures, or at the failure of love, was itself a sin; that sin is now the cause of his "holy discontent": his present grief is thus the effect of and the punishment for his earlier 'vain' grief.

This third sonnet presents in some detail Donne's unresolved inner conflict. His secular ideal expressed in his devotion to woman is more than a disturbing memory: it remains a presence, a part of his personality which he cannot effectively deny. It is important to remember that he regrets only his grief at the failure of love, not the love itself: only his grief is acknowledged as futile. In the sequence established by Helen Gardner, Donne's identification of Christ with his "profane mistresses" and Christ's mercy toward an unworthy soul with a beautiful woman's pity for a scorned lover (in sonnet 9) immediately precedes his appeal for violent possession by God, conveyed in sexual metaphor (in sonnet 10). The female figure remains a central and disturbing presence. The involuntary mental association of woman with God creates a basic confusion as he seems incapable of defining the distinction between essential forms of relation. He returns repeatedly to admissions of his secular devotion: "my Idolatry", "all my profane mistresses" (sonnet 9), "the fire/Of lust and envie" (2), "my Idolatry"

(3), "idolatrous lovers weepe and mourne" (4). In sonnet 9 his reference to 'all the profane mistresses' of his "Idolatry" is a candid personal admission: here, selective memory affirms that nothing existed except the pain. This sonnet shows no extension beyond the self and its immediate situation, no movement of his self-awareness toward resolution of fundamental conflicts, but rather a deliberate fragmentation of experience which pushes aside aspects which cannot be assimilated into the single focus of his new self-direction.

The fourth sonnet is quite different in tone and theme. It appears to be a formal enquiry into the scholastic debate whether a human soul once in heaven perceives immediately and directly as angels do, or if it still perceives from appearances as men do on earth. The opening quatrain presents the first possibility. Thus his father's soul, presumed to be in "full felicitie", sees "That valiantly I helms wide mouth o'rstride". That position usually refers to man's combat with sin. With Donne one is tempted to give such an image a more personal reference: caught between his earlier life and life in the church; between the profligacy of his youth and the martyrdom of his Catholic relatives; between devotion to woman, which has proved insufficient, and devotion to God, in which he is just beginning to trust. In the middle, an abyss of dejection, self-distrust, despair, fear of which makes action impossible.

The second quatrain turns to the other possibility, that souls perceive as men do, "By circumstances, and by signes that be/Apparent in us, not immediately". The problem then becomes not only to do good,

but to be seen to do it. "How shall my mindes white truth to them be try'd?": he fears that even in making the appearance reflect the inner truth of his new life-direction he cannot be distinguished from those who cultivate the appearance only.<sup>23</sup> Yet in the assertion of his "mindes white truth" there is at least a measure of assurance, as he suggests that he is at last worthy. "Then turne/O pensive soule, to God": there is a suggestion that he now turns away from the kind of hollow posturing he here condemns. He has already admitted his "Idolatry", with frequent emphasis on 'weeping and mourning'. It is not much of an imaginative leap to equate his attempts to use the redemption through Christ as doctrinal salve for his wounded spirit with 'vile blasphemous Conjuring', or some of the Holy Sonnets themselves, where Donne is particularly disingenuous, with 'feigned devotion'. At the very least, from his misdevotion he turns his now pensive soul toward God.

His "true grief" remains ambiguous, identified only as coming from God. How is this undefined grief related to the grief of sonnet 3? There, repentant grief replaced grief at the loss of love: that is, grief at the failure of his secular ideal was replaced but not resolved by his later remorse. "Long, yet vehement grieffe" by deliberately selective memory becomes the essence of his experience and his personality.

Indeed the entire sonnet is ambiguous. What is the present relationship between his father's soul in bliss and his self struggling against the threatening abyss? How is the reader, the father's soul, or Donne himself to distinguish his "mindes white truth" from the appearances maintained by dissemblers? What is the true relationship of the pensive soul to the true grief located in his heart, or to the God

who put it there? Conjunctions between areas of experience which seem arbitrary actually reflect the normal operation of the unconscious mind; what order the sonnet itself imposes indicates an effort of the conscious mind which prevents unconscious associations from breaking through uncontrolled. This sonnet articulates the mental association between his own father, long dead and mentioned in his poems only this once, his new-found "mindes white truth" and his gradually deepening relationship with God. There is a sense that, in being the true son of his adoptive heavenly father, he fulfils his destiny as the son of his dead earthly father. This final assurance, and his "mindes white truth" make an idealized parental relationship with God the Father possible as the final resolution of personal distress.

The sonnets examined show that, when accepted as arranged thematically if not in order of composition, the Holy Sonnets are central in time and in personal meaning to the fundamental reorganization of the self Donne accomplished in this period of transition. The first sonnet introduces the need to articulate a viable definition of the relationship between self and God and suggests a confusion of possibilities--a personal relationship with Christ, a union with God expressed in sexual or romantic metaphor, an idealized parental relationship with God the Father. The ninth sonnet presents Christ as the pitying lover of the poet's soul, but leaves unresolved the essential fears of physical death, judgement and the loss of the love of God. In the tenth sonnet, Donne confronts in explicit sexual terms the possibility of a romantic, mystical possession of the soul by a loving God. In the latter three sonnets, these possibilities are laid aside, as in "wholesome meditations" he consoli-

dates his adoption as son of God and "coheire" of Christ, at the same time implying by frequent reference that the difficulties of relationship with woman are not as yet fully resolved. Donne's struggle in the Holy Sonnets was against the self as well as toward God: appeals for re-possession reflect an alliance of conscious will and subconscious forces in his attempt to move from sinfulness, the sense of present incompleteness, toward God, the positive ideal which the self desires to encompass.

It is interesting to note that this first period of transition was bounded by two prose works, treatises on the morality of suicide and the true nature of martyrdom. Donne's prefaces to these works reveal the spiritual distance he had travelled, through the Holy Sonnets, between 1607 and 1610. Though these prose works do not form part of the subject of this study, their prefaces, which are personal statements, contribute to our understanding of Donne's inner life in this period.

As Bald notes, Pseudo-Martyr is connected to Biathanatos thematically by Donne's conviction that human beings harbour an "innate and universal urge...towards self-destruction".<sup>24</sup> Donne made the connection more directly personal in the preface to Biathanatos, speculating that his inclination toward suicide might have been influenced by his Catholic heritage: "I had my first breeding and conversation with men of a suppressed and afflicted Religion, accustomed to the despite of death, and hungry of an imagin'd Martyrdome...".<sup>25</sup> Though this statement implies Donne was no longer Catholic, there is no indication that his deeper spiritual dilemma had been resolved by this time.

As Burton did with his endemic depression in the Anatomy of

Melancholy, Donne wrote Biathanatos at least in part to exorcize his own suicidal urges, to bring his formidable if quirky intellect to bear on a philosophical question which was of intense personal import. Biathanatos may be a philosophical exploration of one of his deepest fears--that without some sustaining ideal figure, life was difficult if not impossible.

Pseudo-Martyr, written in defence of the Oath of Allegiance, was Donne's first independent contribution to the contemporary religious debate. In the preface, Donne makes a dignified and moving statement of his spiritual progress:

...I used no inordinate haste nor precipitation in binding my conscience to any local religion. I had a longer work to do than many other men, for I was first to blot out certain impressions of the Roman religion, and to wrestle both against the examples and against the reasons by which some hold was taken and some anticipations early laid upon my conscience,...And although I apprehended well enough that this irresolution not only retarded my fortune but also bred some scandal, and endangered my spiritual reputation by laying me open to many misinterpretations, yet all these respects did not transport me to any violent and sudden determination till I had, to the measure of my poor wit and judgement, surveyed and digested the whole body of Divinity controverted between ours and the Roman Church. In which search and disquisition, that God which awakened me then, and hath never forsaken me in that industry, as He is the author of that purpose, so is He a witness of this protestation, that I behaved myself, and proceeded therein with humility and diffidence in myself  
...<sup>26</sup>

In contrast to the preface of Biathanatos, this statement reveals that by 1610 much of the spiritual questing and questioning was past; Donne had argued his way to a measure of assurance with "that God" and in 'our local' Church.

These prefaces deal with only the spiritual aspect of the transition in the self. Between 1607 and 1610, between the earliest divine poems and the first draft of "Goodfriday 1613", between Biathanatos and



Pseudo-Martyr, Donne discovered and defined his spiritual commitment. Years later, his redirected self and his life in the church consolidated, Donne summarized this transition in terms which identified the essential dichotomy in his personality. Sending Biathanatos to Sir Robert Ker for preservation in 1619, Donne noted: "it is a Book written by Jack Donne, and not by D. Donne."<sup>27</sup> In 1610, that redefinition of self was still in process. The works of the first years of this period of transition acknowledge the problems--as we have seen, even in the Holy Sonnets themselves the female figure is still a disturbing presence--and adumbrate the solution. Some difficulties in relationship with woman and with God remained to be resolved. The works of the second phase of transition explore those unresolved problems and consolidate the final solution, a sustaining personal relationship with God.

#### 1609-1613

The two Anniversaries, written in 1611 and 1612,<sup>28</sup> are a diffuse exploration of the theme which is given remarkably concise and coherent statement in the "Nocturnall": the attempt to reconcile idealization of a female figure with a developing personal relationship with God. Examined as personal statement, the Anniversaries show in detail the movement toward resolution of inner conflict in accepting the love of God as a personal redemption. The Anniversaries are personal statement, not that of the first person speaker of the Holy Sonnets, nor that of the voice of the "Nocturnall" which I assume is Donne's own, but personal in the sense that the problem, the subject, the theme are personal. The ostensible occasion--the death of Elizabeth Drury--called for an appropriate

response--an encomiastic elegy. But these poems became the vehicles for an exploration of the fundamental problem preoccupying Donne at the time: the failure of his secular ideal, the metaphoric death of the idealized female figure. The Anniversaries and the "Nocturnall" complete the secular phase of the change in focus and life-direction, from devotion to a secular ideal to devotion to God, effected in this period of transition.

In the Introduction to The First Anniversary (1-90),<sup>29</sup> the death of "Shee" is identified with the decay of the world: the world is "sicke", "yea dead, yea putrified, since shee/Thy'intrinsique Balme, and thy preservative" is dead. The "riche soule" he is celebrating has gone to heaven. His intention is to "follow worthinesse" and "praise it". "Her death did wound" the world, which could more easily do without the sun or mankind itself. She gave the world "sense and memory", speech, and a name; the world was "nothing but shee"; "her name defin'd thee, gave thee forme and frame": she is thus analogous to both Christ as the creator of the world and Adam as the giver of names. Her death proved that the world's heart, its "purest part" was "corrupt and mortall", because she "did inanimate and fill/The world" and she is dead.

Yet her "ghost", a "glimmering light" reflected from her virtue, "creates a new world", a paradise of the mind. Her virtue is "the matter and stuffe" of this new world; his "practise"--his intention to follow worthiness and praise it--is its form. This new world of the mind, thus "elemented" of virtue and praise "may be the safer, being told/The dangers and diseases of the old". This is the reason for his "anatomy". The poem

has a didactic purpose for his own soul, in that he views the decay of this world as a meditative preparation for his spiritual progress toward the next world.

The body of The First Anniversary consists of five sections, each illustrating an aspect of the decay of this world. The first section (91-190) presents an anatomy of the decayed state of mankind. "There is no health" physical or spiritual: "we are borne ruinous" and life is only a process of decay. In a lengthy misogynist diatribe (100-110) he attributes the decay to the action of women, from Eve and original sin through all women generally. The decay of the world from the first creation is paralleled by the decay of man "in length of life, in physical size, in mental capacity".<sup>30</sup> "Shee" was quite different from women in general. Man is "nothing now" not because of her sinfulness, but because in losing her, mankind "lost its hart". "She in whom virtue was so much refin'd,/ That for Allay unto so pure a minde/Shee tooke the weaker Sex" was virtue itself, able to "purifie/All by a true religious Alchimy". In keeping with his intention to follow her example, he is thus purified and turns toward religion for sustenance.

The second section (191-246) begins the anatomy of the world: as man the microcosm is decayed, so is the macrocosm. The fall of the angels warped the "universall frame". "The effects of the new philosophy represent the final stages in a long and universal sequence of decay"<sup>31</sup> through sin. Universe, state, society, family, thought are "all in pieces, all coherence gone". "Shee" could have brought "all parts to union". She was a "magnetique force" drawing "sundred parts" together; she was the "new

compass" pointing man's proper life-direction as "the general/Steward to Fate". She was the true macrocosm, the world a microcosm reflecting the richness and beauty and sweetness of her being. Without her, the world is "a cripple", "rotten at the hart". "She that was best, and first originall/Of all faire copies" becomes the universal idea of virtue which underlies the particular. The only response to "this worlds generall sicknesse" is to follow her example and "be none of it".

The third section (247-338) presents the anatomy of the decay of the world in more particular terms. "The worlds immateriall parts" show also the effect of this wound: the wound is generally the sinfulness of man after the fall and particularly her death. "Beauty", both colour and proportion, is decayed. The result is disproportion in the heavens and in the firmament: the universal order is warped out of proportion by new knowledge; the earth is not a perfect sphere and, if the "Vault infernall" of hell exists beneath it, earth cannot be either solid or round. Proportion is lost in the spiritual realm as well, as "Reward and punishment are bent awrie" and even grief, which is all that remains to poor mortals, is overdone--perhaps a touch of ironic self-awareness, not only about his performance here, but reflecting on this "long, yet vehement grief", the "true grief" given by God, in the last two Holy Sonnets.

"Shee" was the "measure of all Symmetree", the embodiment of "Harmony". Indeed, if as the ancient philosophers believed, the soul is "made/Of Harmony", then our souls issued from her being into our bodies. Shee and the Ark are type and anti-type, as "both Elements and Passions" live at peace within them. Without her, there is only "discord, and rude

incongruity" in the world, which therefore contains "nothing to enamor" man. Yet while we must be in this world, we must observe proportion both in our selves and in our deeds: "not only...corruptions in our braines, or in our harts, ...endanger us", but actions must be, and be seen to be "done fitly and in proportion".

The fourth section (339-376) concentrates upon the decay of "Beauty's second element", colour. Not only is all proportion gone, but colour is "neere spent". The "worlds complexion" is decayed, and the "noblest sense", sight, has only faded objects. "Shee" had the perfection of all colours "as in an unvest Paradise". Like celestial light, she gave colours to the world: the "composition" of her being was "miraculous,/ Being all colour, all Diaphanous". Her death therefore reduces the world to a "wan Ghost" which should "affright" man.

The fifth section (377-434) attempts to summarize the general cause of the decay of the world and man. The physical 'influence' of the heavens upon earth is reduced. Generation and regeneration in man and nature are imperfect. Her 'influence' on man has been weakened by the failure of the 'correspondence' between heaven and earth. Though the 'influence' of her virtue is rendered less effectual by her physical absence, yet while she lived, her virtue encouraged others to be virtuous. Since both she and her influence are lost, "nothing/Is worth our travaile, grieve, or perishing,/But those rich joyes, which did possesse her hart,/Of which shee's now partaker, and a part".

The conclusion (435-474) is quite different in tone from the body of the poem, and is in places typically irreverent. He decides to end the anatomy of the world arbitrarily, because, as a dead body kept about

for dissection putrifies, so "the worlds carcasse" will not last out further detailed anatomy. In a direct address to the "blessed maid" who is the ostensible subject of this poem, he announces that the poem represents "his first yeares rent", and promises a similar 'tribute' every year for the rest of his life, in which he will celebrate her death as her "second birth", the birth of the soul into eternal life. The poem ends with a justification of the suitability of verse as a memorial. God commanded Moses to summarize the Law in song, so that the people could remember it: following "such an opinion" he decided to 'rehearse her praises' in verse.

The Second Anniversary opens in a similarly irreverent tone, but the superficial wittiness is short-lived, as even within the short introduction (1-44) Donne announces the obvious religious direction of the poem. A year has passed: the dead world struggles on, despite the loss of her. "All have forgot all good" in "a new Deluge": against this flood of forgetfulness, he strives to give his life meaning in praising her. The confusion in roles in a sexual metaphor for creativity perhaps indicates Donne's difficulty in defining himself and his relationship to God earlier evidenced in "Holy Sonnet 10". As a "maid", she would "refuse/ The name of mother", so he asks her to be the Father of his muse, as he intends "from the womb of his mind"<sup>32</sup> "Yearly to bring forth such a child as this". Through successive poems "these Hymnes" will continue until the last judgement, when earthly praise will end as God "change[s] the song".

In the first section (45-84) Donne consolidates the religious

focus of the poem in direct address to his soul. He desires that his "insatiate soule" "thirst for that time" of the last judgement. Paradoxically that spiritual thirst both remains unsatiated throughout life and is "served" or satisfied by "God's safe-sealing Bowle" in the communion rite. He urges upon his soul a 'just disestimation of this world' (marginal note): it is "but a Carkas" on which man feeds "but as a worme". He encourages his soul to "forget this rotten world", "Forget this world", and "Looke upward" towards her whom he "congratulates" rather than laments. This first section echoes the hyperbolic praise of The First Anniversary in again relating the insignificance of this world to the loss of her who was "The forme, that made it live". The refrain from The First Anniversary, "shee, shee is dead" is repeated as "shee, shee is gone", but significantly, after this one instance, the refrain is abandoned entirely.

In the second section (65-156) he exhorts his soul to think on death. The exhortation "thinke" repeated seventeen times is an incantation to his meditation on the diseases and decay of the body, the state of the self on its death-bed, and death itself. He completes this meditation with an exhortation to his soul to "thinke these things cheerfully" and to forget and forego the world in contemplation of death as release from the world. His soul is to remember that "shee", in whom "the Elements and Humors" were mixed in perfect and indivisible "proportion", "she embraced a sicknesse" "and hath taught us" that even for a good man who has "Title to Heaven", the only entrance is through Death who "must usher, and unlocke the doore".

The third section (157-250) presents a contrasting exhortation for

his soul to think on "the incommodities of the soul in the body,"<sup>33</sup> and thus reconcile itself to physical death. The exhortation to think is again repeated eleven times: he emphasizes the idea of "this curded milke, this poore unlittered whelpe/My body" as a prison from which the soul seeks release. The imagery, in the traditional medieval pattern of contemptus mundi, stresses the loathsomeness of the physical body: the flesh, "usurped" and "threatened" by disease, "infects" the soul with original sin at birth, and "poisons" it throughout life. Death is thus not a fearsome end but a positive beginning: "thinke that Death hath now enfranchis'd thee,/Thou hast thy'expansion now and libertee"; "Thinke thy shell broke, thinke thy Soule hatch'd but now".

The soul thus released from physical bondage journeys through the universe to heaven, unhindered by the "vain controversies"<sup>34</sup> of the new philosophy. The "speed undistinguish'd" of death joins heaven and earth like adjoining beads on a string. Death is a "third birth" for the soul-- "Creation gave her one, a second, grace"--which brings heaven "as neare/as colours are, and objects, in a room/Where darknesse was before, when Tapers come".

"To'advance these thoughts" is the true "Progresse" of his own soul, engaged in following her. "Shee", who was the pattern of beauty; the sum, and more than the sum, of the best parts of the world; who assigned both "tutelar" angels and men their rank and places; whose soul was gold and body translucent form: "shee" "chides us" to forget "our prisons prison, earth" and shed willingly the "brittle shell" of our mortality.



In the fourth section (251-320) Donne considers the soul's "ignorance in this life and knowledge in the next" (marginal gloss). We are "in this our living Tombe/Oppress'd with ignorance". The soul knows neither itself--its origin, nature, or destiny--nor the body. Men search in vain for understanding of the body and its diseases; of the physical world; of the history and philosophy of mankind. Knowledge gained through the senses is only "fantasy" compared to that which the soul in heaven "knows straight". "Shee" was the compendium of all virtuous thought, and is the "example" for all "virtuous action". "Shee" "calls us after her" both to imitate her example in earthly life and to follow her soul to heaven.

In the fifth section (321-382) this "meditation" on her perfection is a spiritual "extasie" from which he does not wish to return "to earthly thoughts". All human company is infected: both the church and the court are poisoned by sin. Rather than think further on these earthly subjects, he exhorts his "drowsie soule" to rise to the contemplation of the company of heaven: Mary, exalted in the Protestant spirit "more for being good,/ Then for her interest, of motherhood"; the Patriarches, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Martyrs, the Virgins, and "shee". "Shee" subsumed in her being all the virtues of state and church. "Shee" has left this world for heaven, and man must strive to follow her to joy.

The sixth (383-470) and seventh (471-510) sections differentiate what joy is possible on earth from the true joy of heaven. On earth there is only "accidental" not "essential" joy because there can be no "permanent effect" from "transitory causes". Beauty decays; love is inconstant;

honour is built upon "opinions and capacities" which "rise and fall". "True joy" is singular, as the true God is singular, but mankind seeks "severall". He encourages his soul "to thy first pitch worke up againe", to "Double on Heaven, thy thoughts on Earth employ'd". "The sight of God, in fulnesse" is "essentiall joye". "Shee" "whom we celebrate" now partakes of that essential joy in heaven who in life kept "God's Image" in her heart so perfectly that she became for other mortals an earthly equivalent of essential joy itself.

Even "heavens accidental joyes" are greater than any essential joy of earthly life. Honour and health are "casuall" and changing; in heaven, even accidental joy is "permanent". "Joy that their last great Consummation/Approaches in the resurrection" grows but never diminishes. "Shee" is ["iniure d"] in this joy, whose earthly being seemed to be two souls rather than soul and body, because her outward form was a visible reflection of her inner virtue.

The brief conclusion (511-528) presents an explicit rejection of "misdevotion" in that he 'might invoke' her name but does not: for "this, my second yeares true Rent" is acceptable to her only if dedicated to Him "that gave thee power to do, me, to say this". Thus "The purpose, and th'Authority" for his "proclamation" of her as "a patterne" for both life and death issue from God.

There have been numerous attempts to decide what the true subject of The Anniversaries is. They were ostensibly written in commemoration of the fifteen year old daughter of Sir Robert Drury who died in 1610:

her father certainly accepted them as such, and became Donne's patron. Donne's friends were outraged by the ridiculous weight of hyperbolic praise laid upon the frail shoulders of the poor dead girl. Donne defended himself by saying that since he had never seen the girl, he had simply projected upon her "the best that I could conceive".<sup>35</sup> The major critics are agreed that, except for the labored introduction and conclusion to each poem, The Anniversaries are not in fact about the ostensible subject, Elizabeth Drury; but there the agreement ends, and the search for explanation begins.

The problem of the true meaning of the subject "Shee" is most important in The First Anniversarie, as in The Second Anniversary the ostensible subject is subordinated to the poet's new religious direction. As a meditative subject, Louis Martz suggests " 'the Idea' of human perfection and the source of hope".<sup>36</sup> The editor of The Anniversaries, Manley, suggests "a female emblem of Wisdom", but also more generally "a symbolic creature: the idealized form in Donne's own mind of a perfect pattern of virtue".<sup>37</sup> Grierson describes the poem as "a rapt and extravagantly conceited laudation of an ideal woman".<sup>38</sup> To an extent, all such commentators are correct, as the wealth of imagery dredged up from Donne's eclectic mind supports a variety of interpretations. The problem is to separate the ostensible and real subject, the general and particular purposes, the philosophic reflection and the personal statement.

Most critics find the First Anniversary lacking in unity and coherence. What unity the poem has comes from its consistent focus on "Shee" and its fairly well-articulated formal structure. Inconsistencies

and infelicities reflect the lack of direction in the creating mind and the intrusion of the personal breaking through the third person facade, both the result of unresolved difficulties and tensions. The First Anniversary is an admirable but largely unsuccessful attempt to bring together two areas of experience, devotion to an idealized female figure and devotion to God. The Second Anniversary is a much more coherent expression, the coherence a result of subordinating secular idealization to religious devotion, in effect consolidating them in an acceptable and traditional way by imagining the female figure as a spiritual guide. Louis Martz is right to emphasize the importance of the change of direction in The Second Anniversary. Through the realization of the profundity of personal loss, Donne redirects his attention toward God.

The most succinct and most appropriate definition of the subject of The First Anniversary is Donne's own. In reply to Ben Jonson's suggestion that "if it had been written of the Virgin Mary, it had been something" Donne declared that he had described "the Idea of a woman and not as she was".<sup>39</sup>

Manley reflects on "the central emotion of the poem" in terms which make clear its thematic connection with the "Nocturnall". The poem expresses an "overwhelming sense of loss":<sup>40</sup> "Through the poetry, the fundamental poetic act, what emerges is a mythical figure of woman on whom literally the entire world depends".<sup>41</sup> The similarity between this comment and Grierson's summary of the "Nocturnall" is unmistakable. Grierson describes the "Nocturnall" as "a sombre and sincere description of the emptiness of life without love"<sup>42</sup> and defines the central emotion

of the poem as "the sense of nothingness which can overtake one who has lost the central motive of his life".<sup>43</sup>

The female figure lamented in The First Anniversary is an extreme idealization, a conflation of the idealized woman with God. She gives the world form, shape, and meaning, and is thus an analogue of the creator. Devotion to her creates a new world in the spirit of her followers: she is thus an analogue of Christ, the creator of the Kingdom of God within the mind. She gave form to the old world and is the substance of the new. Her death means the death of the world: the world ceases to have significance for him, and he announces, more obliquely than in The Second Anniversary, his decision to abandon the world and follow her.

His devotion to her first reduces him to nothing, and then purifies and redirects that essence. This "true religious Alchimy" reappears as the central metaphor of the "Nocturnall", which ends with his decision to "prepare towards her". In The Second Anniversary, the female figure becomes the anima, the symbol of the eternal feminine principle, the creator/mother of the soul and the source of peace, especially that internal peace when the mind is free of all conflicting passions. She is as unreal, as incorporeal as light, yet her death reduces the world to unreality and insignificance. His renunciation of the world represents a reaffirmation that he will follow "that riche soule" he celebrates toward "those riche joyes" promised in heaven. The two Anniversaries taken together represent a self-educative process: he anatomizes the decay of the world as a mental preparation for his spiritual progress

toward the next world.

The emphasis on direct address and exhortation to his own soul indicates the change in direction between the First and Second Anniversaries. The reduced and less hyperbolic introduction, and the abandonment of the "shee, shee is dead" refrain suggest his decreased interest in the nominal subject, the idealized "shee", and reinforce that changed intention.

The meditations on death in The Second Anniversary are in contrast to fears of death so stridently expressed in the Holy Sonnets. They show not a forced self-accomodation of fear to doctrine, but something very like the tone of resignation of the late hymns, especially the "Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse". At the conclusion of The First Anniversary, Donne stated his intention to "celebrate" her "second birth" with yearly tribute. Death was interpreted as birth into eternal life. In his meditation on the flight of the soul to heaven in The Second Anniversary, Donne speaks of death as a "third birth"--"Creation gave her one, a second, grace". This discovery of another 'birth' in the metaphor of spiritual progress through life and physical death to eternal life, the rebirth through grace, defines an essential element in Donne's reorganization of attitudes effected in the period of transition. Between the First Anniversary and the Second, between 1611 and 1612, perhaps at the time of writing the 1610 draft of "Goodfriday 1613" or the revealing preface to Pseudo-Martyr, Donne discovered grace, no longer doubted but assumed through the love of God the Father, grace as the essential principle consolidating his new life-direction.

"A Nocturnall upon S. Lucies day", probably written in 1612,<sup>44</sup> laments the 'death' of a saint in the religion of love. It shares with "Twicknam Garden" the traditional contrast between grief and loss in the soul and earthly renewal in spring. The essence of the poem is that the exalted and idealized love of the great lyrics has failed: the symbolism of the love religion has not proved viable to sustain Donne's life-direction more than temporarily.

Unreconciled conflicts and unresolved sexual energy underlie the opening imagery. Two sources of light, Lucie and the sun, are both unavailing. The sun, male energy, is "spent", not constant; Lucie, the female energy, is masked. Donne here suggests two reasons why this is an especially dark midnight: the failure of potency--sexual, emotional, and creative--and the problem of inspiration. For a brief period, Lucie "unmasks", and that little light is the only hopeful sign for the speaker, who is the "Epitaph" of all that is "sunke", "shrunke", "dead and enterr'd".

The second stanza presents the possibility of regeneration in that the world recreates itself in spring (l. 11), and for others love renews. As with the fountain at the end of "Twicknam Garden", he again becomes a votive object for other lovers to "study". The image of love's "Alchimie" is potentially positive, and it is not until he describes himself as "A quintessence even from nothingnesse" that it is clear that love's recreation has been entirely negative: he is "ruin'd" and "re-begot" as the absolute essence of nothing.

In the great love lyrics, the self-in-love was set against the world and its pedestrian concerns. In the third stanza, that contrast

recurs, as a prelude to his reminiscence of love. "All others, from all things, draw all that's good": all others have "Life, soule, forme, spirit"; he is, and has, nothing. Love itself is recalled only negatively, with images from the great love lyrics ironically reversed. The tears which overflowed no man's ground in "The Canonization" he now thinks "drownd the whole world"; the two whose separation meant not "a breach, but an expansion" in "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" he now feels were reduced to "carcasses" when "often absences/Withdrew our soules". As in "Holy Sonnet 3" of 1635, where all he remembered of love was the "long, yet vehement grief" of his "idolatry", here he recalls only the negative experiences of love; a deliberately selective memory excludes all else.

He recalls past unhappiness as a prelude to present tragedy: "But I am by her death, (which word wrongs her)/Of the first nothing, the Elixir grown". The "death" of the beloved woman signifies the end of love, the end of "we", the end of their world. "We" breaks down into "she" and "I". Because of her "death", however that is interpreted, he becomes the essence of that absolute nothing which preceded the creation, without life, untouched by God. The image is primordial, audacious--and cathartic.

The central personal experience of the "Nocturnall" is contained in this ritualistic incantation of nothingness which is at the core of the poem. The self-reduction began with the wish to be "some senslesse peece of this place" in "Twicknam Garden"; here, since even the plants and stones "detest,/And Love", this too must be abandoned in order to achieve



a drastically complete self-reduction. There is still, it seems, a bitter pride in being even less than "an ordinary nothing" without self or shadow. Donne is not merely playing an intellectual word game with the idea of 'nothing', though his fascination with the word during this period has many similarities to his life-long punning on his name. By experimenting with degrees of 'nothing', Donne attempts to achieve an expression of a very real feeling of non-existence, of incapacity, of personal nullity. In the attempt to define personal nothingness begins the possibility of regeneration. The effect is of extreme concentration, a willed self-analysis. To achieve definition is to establish a measure of control. The incantation of nothingness is at once a self-defense against emotional reality and a presentation of that reality, a coming-to-terms with personal distress, protected by words.

The opening lines of the final stanza recapitulate the I--all others contrast. "But I am None; nor will my Sunne renew." He is not even "an ordinary nothing". His sun is not the world's sun, not the lovers' "lesser Sunne" which "At this time to the Goat is runne/To fetch new lust". His sun must be "shee", the masked Lucie. He enjoins the world of lovers to "Enjoy your summer all", to celebrate sexual love. "Shee" in contrast celebrates "her long nights festivall". She is masked, she hides her light; yet she "enjoyes", and he understands her hidden intention:

Let mee prepare towards her, and let mee call  
This houre her Vigill, and her Eve, since this  
Both the yeares, and the dayes deep midnight is.

The possibility of regeneration carries through the poem from the potential

offered by Lucie's seven hours of unmasked light and the image of "the next world, that is, at the next Spring", through the ironically reversed alchemy of love which reduces him to nothing, to his recreation through a different devotion in these final lines. Personal realization is no longer possible within the confines of the religion of love, yet the creation of new life-direction arises from personal devotion to a female figure. The contrast is no longer between joy in love and sorrow in loss, but between diverse qualities of celebration. Only with positive vision gained through intense self-examination can 'her long night' through 'midnight' and 'deep midnight' be experienced as a 'festivall'. The religious imagery is entirely positive: a devotional watch on the eve of the celebration of a joyful mystery--not self-defeat but regeneration.

"A Nocturnall" registers Donne's final disillusion with his secular ideal, with the possibility of realization--of self, of mutuality, of any sustained relatedness--within the context of the adoration of woman. The "nothing else is" of the great love lyrics had become nothing itself. Yet the existence of the poem indicates that a sense of nothingness which achieves well-wrought formal expression is already to an extent overcome. Within the poem itself, the increment of life-possibility, and the gradual modulation in tone affirm this positive sense. The center of despair in the poem is not in the closing lines, but within the metaphoric suicide of persistent self-reduction. Even if "her death" is an actual death, it is difficult to find suicidal despair<sup>45</sup> in "Let mee prepare towards her": the intention is toward a new life-direction, a re-weaving of those strands of human potential disjunctured by personal loss.

"Let mee prepare towards her" reiterates the intention expressed in The Second Anniversary to follow "that riche soule" of the idealized female figure he celebrates towards "those riche joyes" promised in heaven. This possibility of new life-direction and its consolidation at the end of the soul's dark night define in terms appropriate to the period of transition the choice articulated at the close of "A Hymne to Christ, at the Author's last going into Germany":

Churches are best for Prayer, that have least light:  
To see God Only, I goe out of sight:  
And to scape stormy days, I chuse  
An everlasting night.

Donne's later choice of "an everlasting night" had its foundation in his desire "to see God Only", to limit focus and life-direction to what was by 1619 a consolidated purpose. The change in focus toward that purpose is most succinctly described in the "Nocturnall" as the qualitative difference between "midnight" and "deep midnight", and it was in the depths of that dark transition that Donne's final choice was clarified.

A manuscript discovery in 1974 indicated that the first draft of "Goodfriday 1613" was in fact composed in 1610:<sup>46</sup> the poem is thus contemporary with The First Anniversary, and precedes the "Nocturnall" by approximately two years. As the "Nocturnall" represents the culmination of the process of Donne disengaging himself from the female figure, so "Goodfriday 1613" reflects another aspect of his accommodation to religious devotion. The Holy Sonnets adumbrate the possibility of an affirming relationship between the self and God the Father; "Goodfriday 1613" ends with the possibility of a similar relationship between the self and Christ.

The poem opens with an extended metaphor comparing the individual

soul to the operation of the universe as it was then understood. A sphere, governed by an "intelligence" (an angel), is nevertheless influenced by other forces and thus deflected from its true path. Similarly, the soul, which should be governed by devotion, is instead influenced by "pleasure or business". "This day", some such secondary purpose 'carries' him toward the West when his devotion should direct his soul toward the East. Life-direction is thus metaphored as geographical direction: West and East represent spiritual polarities, business and devotion, the world and God.

Yet in imagination his "Soules forme" does turn toward the east, toward Christ. Christ is both son and sun: raised on the cross, his mortal light sets; raised in resurrection, he promises the "endlesse day" of eternal life. However, "that spectacle" of the crucifixion would be "of too much weight" for his soul if actually seen. "God's face" which is the source of true life is seen only by the dead, cannot be seen by the living: "What a death were it then to see God dye?", since at the crucifixion Nature recoiled, earth 'cracked' and the sun went dark. In a series of rhetorical questions ("Could I behold? Could I behold?") Donne imagines the details of the crucifixion which confirm that the sight would be overwhelming, and concludes "I durst not look". Nor does he dare look at Christ's "miserable mother" who is the image of the universal anguish of which he is so aware.

It is interesting to compare the vision of the crucifixion presented here with that found in "Holy Sonnet 9", in which Donne calls forth "the picture of Christ crucified" as an antidote to the terror of contemplating

"the world's last night". That picture, however, is not reassuring but equally terrifying. In graphically confronting the terrible reality of man crucifying God, he acknowledges the supposed signs of anger and retribution in Christ's face, which are occasioned by his own all-consuming fear, but attempts to see beyond them to the truth of divine mercy. The change in response to the vision of the crucifixion is a particular example of the transition effected between 1608 and 1612: he has now at least some hope, some assurance, that what he suggested so hesitantly will come to pass, that Christ's "beauteous forme assures a pitious minde".

Journeying toward the West, he faces away, and cannot literally see the events of the crucifixion, but "they are present yet unto my memory". In spirit he looks toward "that Sacrifice", and Christ looks toward him: one recalls "My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears", the assurance of mutuality in "The Good-morrow". Thus 'turning his back' now has a different connotation: rather than showing his neglect of true devotion, it indicates he is willing "to receive/Corrections".

The conclusion of "Goodfriday 1613" in effect brings together the traditional imagery of religious regeneration used in Holy Sonnets and the sense of assurance which underlies the late hymns:

O thinke mee worth thine anger, punish mee,  
Burne off my rusts, and my deformity,  
Restore thine Image, so much, by thy grace,  
That thou may'st know me, and I'll turne my face.

Correction and mercy, anger and grace, sense of sinfulness and sense of assurance: that essential ambivalence can be stated calmly and coherently suggests that it can be resolved. As a result of religious alchemy, he is reduced to his true self by the fire of purgation. Through grace,

that self will find acceptance. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known".<sup>47</sup> St. Paul's phrase, of which Donne was very fond, refers not only to vision but to acceptance. To be known and accepted includes the possibility of knowing and accepting. Turning to face the face of Christ is a metaphor for an ultimate act of trust, possible only from the basis of assurance which became the foundation of Donne's new life-direction.

Although it was drafted in 1610, "Goodfriday 1613" was probably revised and completed after The Second Anniversary and the "Nocturnall". Two variant manuscript headings for the poem suggest that it was completed for a particular occasion:

Mr. J. Dunn goeing from Sir H. G. on good fryday  
sent him back this meditation, on the Waye

Riding to S<sup>r</sup> Edward Harbert in Wales<sup>48</sup>

Bald suggests that the first heading is in a manuscript "compiled by someone with access to Goodyer's papers". The heading may represent Goodyer's reference to the occasion, or perhaps Donne's own dating of the poem. In any case, these headings indicate that Donne at least reproduced if not completed this poem for this specific occasion. Such care to date a poem three years after its first composition suggests a conscious decision to announce--to himself, if to no one else--the completion of a sequence.

In the poems written in the years 1606-1613, Donne worked and reworked the essential problem of this period of transition in search of

effective resolution to personal distress. The First Anniversary shares with the "Nocturnall" the theme of the supreme loss felt in the 'death' of the idealized woman. It focusses directly on the disillusioning limitations and failures of human life, and attributes human unworthiness and incompleteness to this profound loss. In The Second Anniversary, this loss is to an extent overcome in personal religious renunciation, as Donne imagines his bereaved soul following the soul of the idealized female figure to heaven. The deep concentration of negativity and personal nullity reflected in "A Nocturnall" in fact represents that abyss of self-reduction from within which regeneration begins, as Donne disengages himself from the female figure and turns toward God in his search for personal security and a basis of assurance. The personal religious aspect of that process of transition is expressed in "Goodfriday 1613" where, in return for the assurance of the love of God in Christ, Donne agrees to 'turn his face' toward the Lord.

These poems of transition seem to me to be examples of what Wallace Stevens described as poems "of the mind in the act of finding/What will suffice".<sup>49</sup> For Donne, self-definition in reference to an idealized female figure proved inadequate as a focus for life-direction; woman as sexual partner or as idealized devotional object did not ensure self-completion. The transition toward relationship with a male authority figure was extremely difficult and distressful because the inner self was not strong. Poetry became a therapeutic agent in a fundamental reorganization of the self, Donne disengaging from the female figure and turning toward God in a search for personal security. This change in

focus and life-direction from devotion to a secular ideal to devotion to God redefines the familiar dichotomy between Jack and the Doctor. Donne gradually abandoned as unsatisfactory the quest for an ideal / sustaining relationship with woman and turned toward God in his search / for a relational center which would not fail.



## FOOTNOTES

### (CHAPTER FOUR)

<sup>1</sup> For a more complete discussion of the intense personal crisis Donne suffered in the Mitcham years, see my unpublished M.A. thesis, John Donne: The Mitcham Years, 1606-1611, McMaster University, 1973.

<sup>2</sup> In accord with the common critical opinion that the great lyrics of mutual and contented love date from the years immediately following Donne's marriage in 1601.

In the "Introduction" to her edition of The Elegies and the Songs and Sonnets (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), Helen Gardner stated: "I believe that . . . we can, on objective grounds, distinguish groups of poems and that we can assign those to certain periods of Donne's life. Having done so we are presented with a coherent development. We can then see a true relation between the story of Donne's life, his intellectual growth and his translation of his experience of life and literature into works of art. . . (p. xxiii).

Gardner divided the poems on thematic grounds. The Elegies, which are Ovidian and Paradoxical, were written between 1593 and 1596 (pp. xxiii-xxiv). The first group of the Songs and Sonnets were also written before 1600: these include the songs, the love-epigrams, and a collection of poems Gardner described as cynical, unidealized, unmystical, and spoken by a dominant male persona (pp. xxv, li, lx-lxi). This group corresponds to my first group, the early poems.

Gardner's second group of the Songs and Sonnets included the great love lyrics, which she dates between 1602 and 1605 (pp. lx-lxi), the four valedictions, and the poems treating of the end of love. She noted that some of these poems were contemporary with the early divine poems. I counted the great love lyrics as a separate group, combined the end-of-love poems and the early divine poems including the Holy Sonnets in my new category the poems of transition, and considered the late hymns, with the Sermons and later prose works, a separate and final category.

On the question of the order of composition, Gardner hedged in a footnote (p. xxv): "I am not claiming that this arrangement necessarily coincides with the order of composition, though in some cases it probably does." For most of the Songs and Sonnets that is, I agree, as specific as anyone would dare to be.

<sup>3</sup> This concept of the "religion of love" defines Donne's ambivalent but adoring relation to a usually dominant female figure who becomes the ideal object of his secular devotion. The structure of idealization appropriates traditional religious metaphor; the female figure becomes a saint in love's religion to whom, as to the god of love, adoration and devotion are due. This concept is an essential

element in my overall understanding of Donne.

That Donne appropriated religious imagery to write of sexual love is a critical commonplace. In its more particular form, this concept of a "religion of love" was articulated by C. S. Lewis: the "religion of love" in poems of the courtly love tradition was an Ovidian inheritance, transmitted through and transmuted by Petrarch and Dante. The Allegory of Love (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), pp. 18-22. Theodore Redpath first discussed Donne's poems in these terms, though indirectly:

. . . love is a mystery in which Donne and his lady are adepts . . . Clearly linked with this idea is Donne's practice of crediting his beloved with religious significance, as in The Relic, A Nocturnal upon St Lucy's Day and Air and Angels. In The Dream he even goes so far as to maintain that his lady has some of the divine attributes. This practice seems to associate some of the poems with the tradition of the amour courtois.

The Songs and Sonnets of John Donne (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1956), p. xxv. Helen Gardner seemed to accept the concept of the "religion of love" in her discussion of the great love lyrics: The superb egoisme a deux of these poems, their scorn for the world of everyday and the duties of daily life, their stress on secrecy and insistence on the esoteric nature of love--a religion of which Donne and his mistress are the only saints, alone fit to give 'rule and example' to other lovers and communicating their mystery only to adepts, 'loves clergie'--make these poems a quintessence of the romantic conception of passionate love as the summum bonum.

"Introduction", The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets, p. xxix.

<sup>4</sup> "The Good-morrow", ll. 20-21; "The Anniversarie", ll. 25-27; The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets, ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965). All subsequent quotations from The Songs and Sonnets are from this text.

<sup>5</sup> "The Good-morrow", ll. 17-18; "A Lecture upon the Shadow", l. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Gardner, "Commentary", Divine Poems, p. 56.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>8</sup> The Divine Poems of John Donne, ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952). All subsequent quotations from the divine poems are from this text.

<sup>9</sup> Gardner, "Introduction", Divine Poems, p. xxi.

<sup>10</sup> Though Gardner's analysis ("Introduction", Divine Poems, pp. xxiv-xxviii) could be qualified or expanded almost point by point, it does provide helpful clues.

11 Ibid., p. xxv.

12 Ibid., p. xxvi.

13 Compare this stanza with the following paragraph:

But of the diseases of the mind there is no criterion, no canon, no rule, for our own taste and apprehension and interpretation should be the judge, and that is the disease itself. Therefore sometimes when I find myself transported with jollity and love of company, I hang leads at my heels, and reduce to my thoughts my fortunes, my years, the duties of a man, of a friend, of a husband, of a father, and all the incumbrances of a family; when sadness dejects me, either I countermine it with another sadness, or I kindle light squibs about me again, and fly into sportfulness and company: and I find ever after all, that I am like an exorcist, which had long labored about one, which at last appears to have the mother, that I still mistake my disease.

In this letter to Goodyer, probably written in 1608, Donne carefully distinguishes between sicknesses of the soul and diseases of the mind, and acknowledges that it is the latter under which he suffers. Letter quoted in Gosse, The Life and Letters of John Donne, I, 184; Letters to Severall Persons of Honour: Written by John Donne, Sometime Deane of St. Pauls London, ed. John Donne the Younger (London: J. Flesher, for Richard Marriot, 1651), p. 71. Hereafter cited as Letters.

14 Gardner, "Introduction", Divine Poems, p. xxvii.

15 Ibid., p. xxiv.

16 Letter quoted in Gosse, I, 191, and dated September 1608; Letters, pp. 50-1.

17 Judah Stampfer, John Donne and the Metaphysical Gesture, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), p. 231.

18 See Gardner, "Lady Bedford and Mrs. Herbert", Appendix C in The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets, p. 249; also Bald, pp. 175-6.

19 Letter quoted in Gosse, I, 185; also Bald, p. 175; Letters, p. 78.

20 Wilbur Sanders, John Donne's Poetry, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1971), p. 23.

21 I have accepted Gardner's arrangement of the sonnets, a thematic order based on that of the early printed editions, as a sensible order on which to base a coherent reading.

Gardner marshalls evidence to indicate that the first six of the 1633 sonnets were written between February and August 1609, the second six at approximately the same time (See "Introduction", Divine Poems, pp. xliii-xlix ). The four penitential sonnets added in the 1635 edition were probably written between 1609 and 1611 (See Divine Poems, p. 1 ). The three 'Westmoreland sonnets' are more difficult to date, but all were probably written after 1615 (See "Commentary", Divine Poems, pp. 77-78 ). The existence of the 'Westmoreland sonnets' only in the one manuscript, their probable later date of composition, and their quite independent themes effectively separate them from the sixteen Holy Sonnets written during this period of transition. They are, therefore, excluded from my discussion.

For a discussion of the traditional meditative context of the Holy Sonnets as examined by Gardner and Martz, and a complete reading of them as personal statement, see my unpublished M.A. thesis, John Donne: The Mitcham Years, 1606-1611.

22 Stampfer, p. 261.

23 The similarity between the problem discussed in this sonnet and Walton's account of Donne's reasons for refusing Morton's offer of a clerical position in 1607 is well worth noting:

. . . some irregularities of my life have been so visible to some men, that though I have, I thank God, made my peace with him by penitential resolutions against them, and by the assistance of his Grace banish'd them my affections; yet this, which God knows to be so, is not so visible to man, as to free me from their censures, and it may be that sacred calling from a dishonour.

Isaak Walton, Walton's Lives of Dr. John Donne . . . revised and edited by A. H. Bullen (London: George Bell and Sons, 1884), pp. 20-21.

24 Bald, p. 342.

25 Quoted in Bald, p. 231.

26 Quoted in Gosse, I, 250.

27 Letters, p. 22.

28 In his edition of The Anniversaries, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1963), Manley noted that The First Anniversary was printed "sometime in 1611"; The Second Anniversary was begun at Amiens in Dec. 1611 and completed in France (p. 4); Bald appears to concur, suggesting that The First Anniversary was written between July and November 1611 (pp. 241-243), and The Second Anniversary begun if not completed during Donne's stay in Amiens after November 1611 (p. 245). Martz suggests that both Anniversaries were written in 1611: The Poetry of Meditation (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University

Press, 1954; revised ed. 1962), Appendix 2, pp. 353-356.

All references to The Anniversaries are to the Manley edition.

29 In the discussion which follows, I am indebted to Louis Martz for the division of the poems into manageable thought units, in his commentary on the meditative structure of The Anniversaries, Chapter 6, pp. 211-248, The Poetry of Meditation.

30 Martz, p. 222.

31 Martz, p. 232.

32 Manley, p. 176.

33 Marginal gloss, 1612 edition: Donne's own, or the printer's. Manley, p. 52.

34 Martz, p. 243.

35 Gosse, I, 306. Bald refers to criticism of The Anniversaries by Donne's friends, pp. 248-9, 251.

36 Martz, p. 221.

37 Manley, p. 14.

38 Grierson, The Poems of John Donne, II, 187. Hereafter cited as Grierson, Poems.

39 Herford and Simpson, Ben Johnson, I (1925), 133.

40 Manley, p. 10.

41 Manley, p. 15.

42 Grierson, Poems, II, xxii.

43 Grierson, Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the seventeenth century: Donne to Butler (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), p. 220.

44 For my discussion of the date of the "Nocturnall", see Chapter Five, footnote 71, pp. 331-333 below.

45 As Sanders does, p. 119.

46 R. S. Thomson and David McKitterick, "John Donne's Kimbolton Papers", TLS, 16 Aug. 1974, pp. 869-873.

47 Holy Bible, King James Version: I Corinthians 13:12.

<sup>48</sup> In 1613, Goodfriday occurred on 2 April; on 7 April Donne was in fact with Sir Edward Herbert, as a letter survives written from Montgomery Castle on that date. Montgomery Castle "is about 65 miles due west of Polesworth" which would confirm both headings, and thus the date of completion. See Bald, p. 270.

Gardner notes that Montgomery Castle belonged not to Sir Edward but to his cousin Philip Herbert in 1613, but states "The date, 1613, may be taken as established by the general agreement of the MSS". See Divine Poems, p. 98.

<sup>49</sup> Wallace Stevens, "Modern Poetry", The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 239.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DONNE AND LADY BEDFORD

While it must be acknowledged at the outset that any account of the relationship between Donne and Lady Bedford rests on a considerable degree of conjecture, it is possible to outline at least the major features of their long and intimate friendship. Numerous prose and verse letters from Donne to the Countess survive, and she is mentioned frequently in his correspondence with others, especially his life-long friend Sir Henry Goodyer. In addition, both "Twicknam Garden" and "A Nocturnall" refer, it will be argued, to Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford.

When Donne and Lady Bedford became acquainted is not known. There is considerable circumstantial evidence that they were aware of each other's existence before 1607, but no record of a first meeting. It is possible, but unlikely, that they met at the court of Elizabeth I as early as 1597, when Donne was among Essex's followers. In a letter of 23 February 1601/2 Donne informed Goodyer of the death of Lady Bedford's infant son:<sup>1</sup> this indicates only that Donne was aware of his friend's connection with the Bedford family. When Donne sat in parliament in 1601, his fellow member for Brackley, Northants was Edward Montagu, a cousin of the Countess.<sup>2</sup> Jonson's poem to Lady Bedford accompanying a copy of Donne's satires, probably written after 1601,<sup>3</sup> reveals little more: if the Countess had asked for the poems, she perhaps knew Donne's name, the scandal of his marriage, and his poetic reputation. From 1601 to 1605, Donne lived with his growing family at Pyrford, the estate of his wife's cousin Francis Wooley. James I and his court spent the first night of

his first progress 10 August 1603 at Pyrford:<sup>4</sup> if Lady Bedford was in Queen Anne's entourage, she and Donne may have met on that occasion. Goodyer, a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, and by June 1605 attached in some way to the Bedford household,<sup>5</sup> probably introduced Donne to the Countess.<sup>6</sup>

The first evidence of direct acquaintance is a letter written from Peckham, probably in the late spring of 1606, in which Donne presents his regards and his humble thanks to Lady Bedford and her brother.<sup>7</sup> A note to Goodyer written in 31 December 1607 indicates that Donne had begun sending messages to Lady Bedford through Goodyer: he asks his friend to present an enclosed letter to her "now, or when the rage of the mask is past."<sup>8</sup> After this, Donne mentions the Countess in almost all his letters to Goodyer. The opening phrase of a letter of 14 March 1607/8 is the earliest confirmation of their meetings: "When I saw your good Countess last, she let me think that her message by her foot-man would hasten you up [to London]."<sup>9</sup> During 1608, a close personal relationship was established.

The friendship with Lady Bedford developed with rapidity and fervour. There was a strong element of mutual attraction between them. ... Lady Bedford was as eager as Donne to explore all the possibilities of her new friendship, and as anxious to find out all she could about him as he was to celebrate her beauty and virtue.<sup>10</sup>

Donne's correspondence during the spring and autumn of 1608 shows that he visited Lady Bedford frequently, always a welcome guest.<sup>11</sup> In August 1608 she stood godmother for the baptism of his daughter whom he named Lucy for her.<sup>12</sup> The christening took place on August 8; a letter dated August 10 seems to refer to their meeting on this occasion. Donne mentioned to Goodyer "a Translation" of some unspecified book in "Poetical



form":

I spake of this to my Lady of Bedford, thinking then I had had a copy which I made long since, at sea, but because I find it not, I have done that again: when you find it not unseasonable, let her see it; and if you can think it fit, that a thing that hath either wearied you, or distasted you, should receive so much favour, put it amongst her papers.<sup>13</sup>

By 1609, Lady Bedford became "the center of the principal group of Donne's friends .... his patron, inspiration and support.... He found in her delightful company everything which he required to stimulate and develop him".<sup>14</sup> Donne's severe illness in the winter of 1608/9 which enforced his 'imprisonment' at Mitcham prevented him from visiting the Countess quite so frequently. What may be Donne's earliest surviving prose letter to the Countess seems to refer to this illness; it echoes the descriptions given in several letters to Goodyer at this time.<sup>15</sup>

The Tyranny of a sudden raging sickness (comfortable in nothing but the violence of it) assures that either it or I are short lived having found either virtue or stubbornness enough in me to disdain all bitterness that it can make against my body, now assails my mind and shows me that (by imprisoning me in my chamber) it is able to deprive me of that happiness which by your grace was allowed me when you gave me the privilege of having leave to visit you. I confess that this is my sickness worst fit and as fearfully ominous as Tamberlaine's last days black ensigns whose threatenings none scaped. Let not your charity therefore disdain to coin with me, in an honest deceit, to break this tempest of my sickness, and since this letter hath my name, and hand, and words and thoughts be content to think it me, and to give it leave thus to speak to you, though you vouchsafe not to speak to it again. It shall tell you truly (for from me it sucked no levin of flattery) with what height or rather lowness of devotion I reverence you: who besides the commandment of a noble birth, and your persuasive eloquence of beauty, have the advantage of the furniture of arts and languages, and such other virtues as might serve to justify a reprobate fortune and the lowest condition: so that if these things whereby some few other are named and are made worthy, are to you but ornaments such as might be left without leaving you unperfect. To that treasure of your virtues whereof your fair eyes courtesy is not the least jewel I present this paper: and if it be not too much boldness in it my excuse of not visiting you. And so kindly kissing your fair hand that vouchsafes the receipt of these lines I take leave.<sup>16</sup>

When his illness subsided, and Sir George More relieved their worst financial distress by finally agreeing to pay Ann Donne's dower, Donne began appearing in fashionable circles again, and their "intimacy was renewed on an even closer footing."<sup>17</sup> The letters of early 1609 "illustrate the growing hold the Countess took upon Donne's thoughts and aspirations."<sup>18</sup> Donne's warm respect is evident in all the references to the Countess in his letters:

...for I have made her opinion of me the balance by which I weigh myself;

...I would write apace to her, whilst it is possible to express that which I yet know of her, for by this growth I see how soon she will be ineffable.<sup>19</sup>

Almost every letter to Gooyer contained some such phrase celebrating her and his good fortune in knowing her. "With a curiosity bordering on jealousy Donne scanned Lady Bedford's actions, observed her household, and delighted in the warmth with which he was received."<sup>20</sup> Donne's involvement with Lady Bedford's household was intimate enough in 1609 that "he acted almost as if he were Lady Bedford's officially appointed laureate."<sup>21</sup> When Bridget, Lady Markham died at Twickenham in May, and Cecilia Bulstrode in August, Donne supplied elaborate if artificial elegies to commemorate these close friends of the Countess.

Most of the time Lady Bedford apparently lived apart from her husband. Donne quickly became the most favoured of her literary acquaintances. At Twickenham, Donne and the Countess made love in the courtly or Petrarchan sense, exchanging compliments and verses. They were playing a conventional social game, in which she no doubt displayed consummate abilities. He was not her only partner, though probably the

most attractive one:

Of Lady Bedford's feeling for Donne we have only what his letters reveal, and that is no more than that she was his warm friend and generous patroness. It is clear, however, from their enduring friendship and from the tone of that correspondence that she found in him a friend of rarer and finer calibre than in the other poets whom she patronized in turn, Daniel and Drayton and Jonson--some one whose sensitive, complex, fascinating personality could hardly fail to touch a woman's imagination and heart.<sup>22</sup>

During 1608, Donne became an intimate of Lady Bedford's household. The first surviving verse letter, "Reason is our Soules left hand, Faith her right,"<sup>23</sup> probably written in that year, has at least in general "the tone of an introductory address."<sup>24</sup> It seems to define the terms of the first phase of their relationship, reflecting a development from "far faith" that she is good, through "study" of her life, to an acceptance of "implicite faith" not only in her virtue but in her goodness toward him. This progress is echoed in Donne's later description, in a 1609 letter to Goodyer, of the development of his relationship with Lady Bedford, "of whose worthinesse though I swallowed your opinion at first upon your words, yet I have had since an explicit faith, and now a knowledge."<sup>25</sup> Here, however, "backe againe t'implicite faith I fall": when he attempts to analyze his feelings and their relationship, study and knowledge prove insufficient, and he resorts to idealization. Donne differentiates himself from those "who have the blessing of your sight" and love from "reason" whereas he loves from "faith". He glorifies her as a "divinity" not in a genuine religious sense but in the courtly convention of the pseudo-religion of love: her social circle are her "Saints", he an adoring acolyte.

The focus becomes more personal if not more intimate when he

seeks to "understand" as fully as he believes. "With a curiosity bordering on jealousy",<sup>26</sup> he admits:

Therefore I study you first in your Saints,  
 Those friends, whom your election glorifies,  
 Then in your deeds, accesses, and restraints,  
 And what you reade, and what your selfe devize.

In his ensuing effort to praise her as "The first good Angell, since the worlds frame stood,/That ever did in womans shape appeare", there are at least two teasing ambiguities. First, though his "implicite faith" and "the Catholique voice" affirm that she is "good", there is some hint that she is perhaps not perfect: "That you are good: and not one Heretique/Denies it: if he did, yet you are so". Is there possibly some heretic to love's doctrine who does deny her goodness? Donne's only other reference to heretics against the religion of love is in the early poem "The Indifferent" where "poore heretics in love" are those who believe in constancy--an interesting conjunction, that one who believes in constancy might deny her goodness. The second ambiguity is not an "if" but an "or". Her virtue is "a Balsamum", "a methridate, whose operation/Keepes off, or cures what can be done or said." But if her virtue "Keepes off" evils, what need for "cures"? Though what is "said"--the heretic's denial?--can be kept off, what is it that "done" will require cure? Could it be that Donne must be kept off or cured?

The closing stanza is equally suggestive in connotation:

Since you are then Gods masterpeece, and so  
 His Factor for our loves; do as you doe,  
 Make your returne home gracious; and bestow  
 This life on that; so make one life of two.  
 For so God helpe mee, 'I would not miss you there  
 For all the good which you can do me here.

If this verse letter is a serious philosophical address, then as God's agent (Factor) she wins men's love for him by illuminating (as angels do) the minds and consciences of men. He advises her to devote this life on earth to the life in heaven, to "make one life of two" by conjoining earthly and heavenly life.<sup>27</sup> But this line has also a personal reference: "when she (already an angel) and Donne (who by her influence will become one) meet as redeemed spirits in heaven...in this state she and Donne will be united."<sup>28</sup> The closing contrast, between "there" and "here", between "home" and wherever she is now, echoes the opening contrast between those who have her in sight and he who has her only in mind. Since he is "here" and she is returning "home", can "bestow/This life on that" include his wish to be admitted "there"? The verse letter permits serious religious interpretation, in which this final stanza expresses his wish that she live and die well, so that they will meet in heaven. Note that he assumes that he will be "there"--if "there" is heaven, this was not a casual assumption for Donne in 1608. Indeed, there is little other evidence that at this early stage in their acquaintance, theirs was a philosophical exchange. This verse letter is a tribute in the finest sense: the ambiguities are intentional, part of the appeal (his and the poem's) and the hallmark of the metaphysical style. He is both serious and personal, because she challenges both his subtle wit and his deepest self. .

In the second surviving verse letter, "You have refin'd mee", such ambiguity of tone and focus are all but eliminated. Written in late 1608 or early 1609, it reveals "a further stage in Donne's relations with

the Countess".<sup>29</sup> It is entirely social, and more directly personal, and offers little possibility of serious philosophical meaning. In fact a blatant worldly appeal is thinly disguised in superficial complexities. The first stanza is deceptive in this way:

You have refin'd mee, and to worthyest things  
 (Vertue, Art, Beauty, Fortune,) now I see  
 Rarenesse, or use, not nature value brings;  
 And such, as they are circumstanc'd, they bee.  
 Two illls can ne're perplexe us, sinne to'excuse;  
 But of two good things, we may leave and chuse.

Apparently opening a discussion of the source and effect of "worthyest things", this first stanza is in fact an over-elaborate introduction to a simple problem: how to choose between "two good things". It is circumstance not nature which gives value. One good thing is 'rare', virtue at court; the other is 'in use', beauty in the country. He dispenses with the first choice in one stanza, leaving ten for the contemplation of beauty in use.

Even "at Court, which is not vertues clime" she is virtue itself, and through his "rime" praising her, he is virtue's herald. In the country, she is beauty, the better of two good things. She is "the season" and "the day", both springtime and daylight. She is the sun, opening buds and releasing scents. Whenever she arrives--making her return home gracious, as he asked in the first verse letter--it is morning. Her light creates a new world, and a new nature: where she is, it is always natural day; paradoxically, the sunrise to sunset measured day is "artificial". At Court, that is in the outside world, "the vulgar Sunne" does "profane autumnall offices" but "here" in the garden sanctuary of love's religion there is a perpetual springtime of cult celebrations. He and her circle

are "sacrificers", either "Organs" sounding her "influence" or "Priests" repeating her "Dictates".

His devotion in the religion of love is not to her influence and dictates, but to her physical beauty:

Yet to that Deity which dwels in you,  
Your vertuous Soule, I now not sacrifice;  
These are Petitions, and not Hymnes; they sue  
But that I may survay the edifice.

Wit not substance, argument not conviction--these attract:

As all which goe to Rome, doe not thereby  
Esteeme religions, and hold fast the best,  
But serve discourse, and curiosity,  
With that which doth religion but invest,  
...  
So in this pilgrimage I would behold  
You as you're vertues temple, not as shee.

He worships not virtue, but virtue's temple; not the virtuous soul, but the beautiful body. As direct as this statement is, it is not explicit enough: he abandons his pose as love's priest, to be only--himself:

Yet not as consecrate, but merely'as faire,  
On these I cast a lay and country eye.  
Of past and future stories, which are rare,  
I finde you all record, all prophecie.  
Purge but the booke of Fate, that it admit  
No sad nor guilty legends, you are it.

Try as he will to correct it in the last couplet, that is the voice of the great love lyrics: in fact, this stanza is reminiscent of the opening stanza of "The Good-Morrow".<sup>30</sup> But the statement is too explicit, and he must correct the tone. He announces that in describing her as the "originall", the "All" of both "good and lovely", his lines "Tast of Poëtique rage, or flattery", which only causes confusion, as "Oft from new proofes, and new phrase, new doubts grow". Therefore, he withdraws from argument and "praise". Declaring that "senses decree is true", beauty is in

Twickenham and in her, he closes with a graceful compliment, suggestive in its ambiguity: "Who hath seene one, would both; As who had bin,/In Paradise, would seeke the Cherubin." He returns to the original choice between virtue and beauty, inward value and outward appearance, soul and body, giving it a final, and misleading, interpretation--herself and Twickenham. He has not wished to contemplate her soul, nor to see Twickenham; he wishes to be both less intimate, and more. This verse letter is thus both direct and delicate: what the self must say, the courtly voice can at least embellish.

Donne's comments in a letter to Goodyer suggest the sequence of these exchanges with Lady Bedford in 1608-9:

I send you, with this, a Letter which I sent to the Countesse....I also writ to her Ladyship for the verses she shewed in the garden, which I did not only to exhort them, nor only to keep my promise of writing, for that I had done in the other Letter, and perchance she hath forgotten the promise; nor only because I think my Letters just good enough for a progress, but because I would write apace to her, whilst it is possible to express that which I yet know of her, for by this growth I see how soon she will be ineffable.<sup>31</sup>

This indicates that Donne sent both a petition in verse--"You have refin'd mee": "These are Petitions, and not Hymnes; they sue"--and a petition for verse--this prose letter:

Happiest and Worthiest Lady,--I do not remember that ever I have seen a petition in verse. I would not therefore be singular, nor add these to your other papers. I have yet adventured so near as to make a petition for verse, it is for those your Ladyship did me the honour to see in Twickenham garden, except you repent your making; and having mended your judgment by thinking worse, that is, better, because juster, of their subject. They must needs be an excellent exercise of your wit, which speak so well of so ill: I humbly beg them of your Ladyship, with two such promises, as to any other of your compositions were threatenings; that I will not show them, and that I will not believe them; and nothing should be so used that comes from your brain or breast. If I should confess a fault in the boldness of asking them, or make a fault by doing it



in a longer letter, your Ladyship might use your style and old fashion of the court towards me, and pay me with a pardon. Here therefore I humbly kiss your Ladyship's fair learned hands, and wish you good wishes and speedy grants.<sup>32</sup>

He has already seen her poems, and fears she has now thought "worse, that is, better, because juster, of their subject"--himself?<sup>33</sup> If her verses were Petrarchan love poems, perhaps too personal, it would prove embarrassing if they were read generally by her friends: therefore he promises not to show them. Neither will he believe them, that is take them seriously as declarations of affection.<sup>34</sup>

The teasing ambiguity of these prose and verse letters, the indication of an exchange of letters and poems, the warmth of feeling shown here and in Donne's other references to the Countess: such evidence suggests at least a plausible sequence of events. Between 1607 and 1609 their friendship "developed with rapidity and fervour... Lady Bedford was as eager as Donne to explore all the possibilities of her new friendship...the ripening of the intimacy can be observed."<sup>35</sup> The gradual deepening of his feelings toward her was the result of their frequent meetings, exchanges of letters and poems, and the "strong element of mutual attraction between them."<sup>36</sup> The Countess became alarmed at his over-seriousness, at his failure to play their game of love on a sufficiently detached and unreal level. Lady Bedford did not entirely reject Donne, but insisted that he return to a more discreet and socially acceptable devotion. Donne, who had misunderstood the nature of their relationship, felt this as actual rejection. "Twickenham Garden" reveals his response.

There can, I think, be little doubt that it is to her [Lady Bedford], and neither to his wife nor the mistresses of his earlier, wandering fancy, that these lines, conventional in theme but given an amazing timbre by the impulse of Donne's subtle and passionate mind, were addressed.<sup>37</sup>

Though based upon a traditional Petrarchan theme, the contrast between the unhappiness of the lover and the beauty of the spring, "Twicknam Garden" extends beyond the conventional toward intensely personal statement. The poem reveals a considerable depth of emotional involvement on his part: he admits that he brought into the garden the "spider love" which transforms spiritualized adoration into sexual love, the "serpent" of his own emotion which destroys their paradisaical relationship. Grierson's diplomatic comment perhaps suggests Donne's solution to his emotional problem:

Friendship between man and woman is love in some degree. There is no need to exaggerate the situation, or to reflect on either her loyalty or his to other claims, to recognize that their mutual feeling was of the kind for which the Petrarchan convention afforded a ready and recognized vehicle of expression.<sup>38</sup>

Donne retreated into the conventional to escape from an intensity of feeling which could have been damaging both personally and socially. That "Twicknam Garden" is self-mocking, witty and superficial confirms this idea. The poem conveys both his serious sense of loss and his effort to maintain the superficial pose necessary to his self-respect and her social position.

In the "Epitaph on Himselfe" and its preliminary epistle to the Countess, Donne better maintains the social balance. Though the poem cannot be dated with any certainty, the possibility that it is "a mock-heroic gesture of apology when he has been 'killed' by the Countess's

slight displeasure"<sup>39</sup> suggests that it may be contemporary with "Twicknam Garden". At the least, the short epistle speaks of personal intimacy with engaging wit. It is easy to understand how this epistle could be transformed into a love lyric:<sup>40</sup>

That I might make your Cabinet my tombe,  
 And for my fame, which I love next my soule,  
 Next to my soule provide the happiest roome,  
 Admit to that place this last funerall Scrowle.  
 Others by Testament give Legacies, but I  
 Dying, of you doe beg a Legacie.

He wishes to use her private chamber as a tombe, leaving both his body and this "Scrowle" there; in "Twicknam Garden" he wished to remain in her garden as a fountain: as revenge for rejection, he will be as much memento amoris as memento mori. Though the epitaph itself is addressed "Omnibus", the "thou" addressed is singular, and the advice personal. Indeed the epitaph has a touch of the sardonic vituperation of one of the early rejection poems, "The Apparition": "When by thy scorn, O murderess, I am dead". However, the epitaph is a warning to "mend", not a threat of 'painful repentance'. Still alive, she is only "stubborne Clay" whereas decaying in the grave his body "grow[s] gold"; she is thus "not yet so good" as he is. Moreover, while in the living body, "soules become wormeaten carcases" because "sinne bred and pamper'd is"; so he is better dead, because at the "Trumpets" of the last judgment, bodies will be "enabled [here] to scale heaven". He implies that she is gloating that she is still alive, and rather than the traditional warning 'you too must die', he gloats that he has already suffered the worst, and turns fear of decay into triumph. Yet his final wishes seem to show genuine concern, and are almost poignant:

Heare this, and mend thy selfe, and thou mendst me,  
 By making me being dead, doe good to thee,  
 And thinke me well compos'd, that I could now  
 A last-sicke houre to syllables allow.

Since he, 'killed' by her rejection, at his last hour thought of her, he hopes she will think of him, and 'mend herself'--love wisely in this world, rather than too well? Perhaps if she mends herself, she will mend him, restoring him to life and her favour.

A letter to Goodyer written 14 August 1609 may refer to either "Twicknam Garden" or this "Epitaph" as marking the end of a particular phase of their relationship.

Therefore instead of a Letter to you, I send you one to another, to the best Lady, who did me the honour to acknowledge the receipt of one of mine, by one of hers; and who only hath power to cast the fetters of verse upon my free meditations: It should give you some delight, and some comfort, because you are the first which see it, and it is the last which you shall see of this kind from me.<sup>41</sup>

This letter was written ten days after the death of Lady Bedford's close friend Cecilia Bulstrode: the exchange of "one of mine" and "one of hers" may refer to Donne's artificial and unfeeling elegy "Death, I recant" and Lady Bedford's own reply beginning "Death be not proud".<sup>42</sup> The unspecified enclosure, "the last which you shall see of this kind from me" must be some other work: though an elegy might "comfort", it would not "delight". It is more than probable that, after 1609, that is after "Twicknam Garden" and this "Epitaph", Donne abandoned secular verse in the Petrarchan mode of the religion of love.

These poems and this letter suggest that what occurred between Donne and Lady Bedford in 1609 was a fundamental change in the nature of their relationship; personal intensity was redefined, directed toward philosophical exchange. This deepening seriousness in Donne's relation-

ship with the Countess corresponded to the first stage of that fundamental reorganization of self accomplished in the period of transition. These prose and verse letters, the Holy Sonnets, the treatise on suicide Biathanatos, and "Twickenham Garden", all written in 1608-9, reveal the diversity of Donne's emotional and intellectual concerns, his efforts to reorganize and redirect his deepest self, and his unreconciled ambivalence. He was almost literally half in a blatantly secular world and half in a world of strident personal religiosity, an ambivalence which Louis Martz describes as Donne's " 'Great Divide' between the sacred and the profane, now facing one way, now another, but always remaining intensely aware of both sides."<sup>43</sup> That this transition involved turning toward the religious did not necessitate a denial of the profane world gradually left behind: the essence of the transition is that Donne came to terms with the secular alternative he rejected.

With the possibility of a love relationship with Lady Bedford eliminated, Donne could now ascribe to her in earnest that idealization of the female figure typical of the courtly convention. Originally a disguise for genuine personal emotion, that idealization now became a vehicle for a measure of emotional detachment. In general, the tone of the verse letters after 1609 reflects both that detachment and the new seriousness of their exchange. However, unity of tone is rare, because complexity of feeling remained. Idealization and courtly compliment, moral advice and sardonic comment often occur in uneasy conjunction in a single verse letter. This ambiguity of tone reflects the tension of unresolved ambivalence, in his relationship with Lady Bedford

a tension between the personal and the Petrarchan, the sexual and the ideal.

"You that are she and you" was probably sent as a covering letter accompanying Donne's elegy on the Countess' cousin and friend, Lady Markham, who died at Twickenham 4 May 1609.<sup>44</sup> Both sombre and delicate, the verse letter itself consoles through praise, not the least element of which is the tacit assumption that Lady Bedford will be interested in a rather abstruse discussion of the nature of friendship and the disposition of virtue.

In a true friendship such as that between these ladies, the two friends "become one", and each is two, both herself and the other. Theirs was perfect equality and unity, destined so before they were born. Of their whole, the half now dead is the soul, the living half "the other halfe of clay". This is not a reduction, but a 'contraction': though of this "all" of friendship, the parts (separate bodies) decay, the essence remains, and is reconstituted "in one All", the surviving friend. This represents a proper distribution of "parts": soul to heaven, flesh to earth, virtues return to the Countess, their "proper spheare" and source. Like gold which can be "expans'd" but not "impaire[d]", so "yourselfe" can take "additions" but cannot be changed or diminished. New friends will be no "match" for her; the Countess will still "be without". Only a "faithfull booke" will supply her place, and only The Book of Judith is sufficiently like her. This allusion is the finest compliment of the letter, that the Countess absorbs into herself the virtues of a friend who was like Judith, who "feared God greatly" and was renowned "for beauty of face, and wisdom of words."<sup>45</sup> This verse letter, combining

graceful compliment and quiet consolation, is entirely suitable to its supposed occasion, and a much finer tribute than the artificial elegy it accompanied. There is not a hint of playful wit, or of any ambiguity of meaning, except perhaps in the admonition not to seek new friends because the old are invaluable and irreplaceable; even here it is difficult to find dual meaning or personal reference.

"T'have written then, when you writ", probably written later in 1609,<sup>46</sup> is more personal and consequently less straightforward. The opening lines explain his negligence in not replying to some message from her. To excuse himself, he must accuse himself of one of two vices:

T'have written then, when you writ, seem'd to mee  
Worst of all spirituall vices, Simony,  
And not t'have written then, seemes little lesse  
Then worst of civill vices, thanklesnesse.

He tacitly acknowledges guilt of both kinds as he gracefully excuses himself through self-abnegation: "nothings, as I am, may/Pay all they have, and yet have all to pay." Though a "barren ground", he may yet yield something to her influence. What he yields is judicious praise of her, reflections on the current state of the world, and the redirection of his own energies. That he is not entirely certain in his view of her, of himself, and of their situation is evident in the cryptic conclusion.

Temples were not demolish'd, though prophane:  
Here Peter, Joves; there Paul hath Dian's Fane.  
So whether my hymnes you admit or chuse,  
In me you've hallowed a Pagan Muse,  
And denizend a stranger, who mistaught  
By blamers of the times they mard, hath sought  
Vertues in corners, which now bravely doe  
Shine in the worlds best part, or all It; You.<sup>47</sup>

This impressive statement of her effect on his work may mean that "her

influence had caused him to renounce satire for religious verse",<sup>48</sup> but Donne had not written satires per se for a decade, and this has perhaps a more general implication. Her influence has encouraged him to accept a view not natural to him but right: not a native of the "Commonwealth" of virtue, he is a stranger "denizend", a naturalized citizen allowed to enter and reside by her good offices.<sup>49</sup> What he is announcing is a different attitude to the world, a new life-direction.

With this direct statement in mind, it is difficult to accept the 'meditation' on "others ills" which follows as a generalized and impersonal view.

Oh! to confesse we know not what we should,  
Is halfe excuse; wee know not what we would:  
Lightnesse depresseth us, emptinesse fills,  
We sweat and faint, yet still goe down the hills.  
As new Philosophy arrests the Sunne,  
And bids the passive earth about it runne,  
So wee have dull'd our minde, it hath no ends;  
Onely the bodie's busie, and pretends;  
As dead low earth eclipses and controules  
The quick high Moone: so doth the body, Soules.

This reflection on the times echoes the letters of the Mitcham period and presents in a general way Donne's personal preoccupations: dejection; lack of purpose or direction; philosophic uncertainty; growing unhappiness with mere physical life, a concomitant of the failure of the love religion. He is himself a "mixt engine[s]" with "hands of double office", lamenting that his "minds thoughts" are "transplanted" into the body which diverts them ignobly. The body, which contains "first seeds" of everything "the world hath bad, or pretious", produces only the bad. The entire subject is personal by implication and in two instances more explicitly so. He interrupts his meditation on the corrupting influence of the body with a



question of considerable personal force--"What hate could hurt our bodies like our love?"--and in the suggestion that we should accept death as an escape from the prison of the body, hints at his own thoughts of death: "Why grudge wee us (not heaven) the dignity/T'increase with ours, those faire soules company?"

Of the first four verse letters, this one is most like a letter. It is written in three clearly defined verse paragraphs, an introduction in which he presents his apologies, and then praises her virtue, followed by a central paragraph in which he discusses the evils of the world and by implication of himself, a "nothing" quite opposite to her "All" of virtue. The third verse paragraph is his conclusion: "But I must end this letter; though it doe/Stand on two truths, neither is true to you." Her generosity prevents her believing the truth of "others ill"; her humility precludes her recognition of the truth of his praise. The ideas of the first two paragraphs are brought together in his conclusion, but with disquieting implications. He attributes to her, "vertues best paradise", some "wise degrees of vice" which in effect make her human. That "some aspersion/Of vice becomes well some complexion" could, were he in a nastier mood, be a well-tempered insult. Here such suggestions are only "riddles". She is a "Commonwealth", a "world" of virtue, too perfect to need "vice" put to "good worke". But the final couplet is ambiguous, again potentially insulting: "Take then no vitious purge, but be content/With cordiall vertue, your knowne nourishment". If virtue is her "knowne nourishment", what need of "cordiall"? Is this an ironic warning, to forego great sins which call for a "vicious purge" in favour

of lesser ones which need only the restorative tonic of virtue? The reader is left with the uneasy sense that much has been left unsaid. She is all, he nothing; she is virtue personified, he one of those "others" wallowing in the corruptions of the body; under her influence, he has changed his worldly, satiric tone for a moral voice--and now, with obvious irony, he turns that moral voice against her. The warning has the slightly sardonic tone of the scorned lover: if you will not join me in vice, make sure you are virtuous in fact as well as in my idealization.

Bewilderment, distrust born of rejection, scorn were temporary; complexity and depth of feeling remained. Lady Bedford was too valuable as a patron, too essential as the ideal object of his secular devotion: necessity both practical and psychological decreed that he maintain his relationship with her. To his credit, the personal reasons were predominant. At some point in 1609, Sir Henry Goodyer tried to interest Donne in approaching Lady Huntingdon with some poetic tribute, perhaps as a new patron. Since she was one of the three stepdaughters of Lord Chancellor Egerton, Donne must have had some earlier acquaintance with her. Donne's reply is interesting.

For the other part of your letter, spent in praise of the Countesse, I am always very apt to beleieve it of her, and can never beleieve it so well, and so reasonably, as now, when it is averred by you; but for the expressing it to her, in that sort as you seem to consaile, I have these two reasons to declare it. That that knowledge which she hath of me, was in the beginning of a graver course, then of a Poet, into which (that I may also keep my dignity) I would not seem to relapse. The Spanish proverb informes me, that he is a fool which cannot make one Sonnet, and he is mad which makes two. The other stronger reason is my integrity to the other Countesse, of whose worthinesse though I swallowed your opinion at first upon your words, yet I have had since an explicit faith, and now a knowledge: and for her delight (since she descends to them) I had reserved not only all the verses, which I should make, but all the thoughts of womens

worthinesse. But because I hope she will not disdain, that I should write well of her Picture, I have obeyed you thus far, as to write: but intreat you by your friendship, that by this occasion of versifying, I be not traduced, nor esteemed light in that Tribe, and that house where I have lived. If those reasons which moved you to bid me write be not constant in you still, or if you meant not that I should write verses; or if these verses be too bad, or too good, over or under her understanding, and not fit; I pray receive them, as a companion and supplement of this Letter to you.<sup>50</sup>

The close of this paragraph indicates that Donne did not refuse Goodyer's overture, but doubted the young lady's intelligence. His reasons for hesitating reflect that in his private thoughts, the practical and the personal are conjoined. Still unemployed, he does not wish to be known to the Lord Chancellor's family as a trifling poet; besides, he owes all his allegiance to Lady Bedford.

In the latter half of 1609, as "T'have written then, when you writ" reveals, Donne was in search of a tone and attitude suitable to his redefined relationship with Lady Bedford. At the same time, in the Holy Sonnets he attempted to articulate an alternative to his secular ideal, devotion to woman, and to establish a personal relationship with God the Father. Late in 1609 Donne wrote in the preface to Pseudo-Martyr his dignified statement of his personal and intellectual difficulties in his self-accomodation to the Anglican church. Something of those difficulties, of the psychological distress evident in the Holy Sonnets, colours the tone of the next verse letter, "This twilight of two years". Written a few months after the preface, to celebrate the 'new year' in March 1610,<sup>51</sup> this verse letter is evidence of Donne's effort to unite his personal relationship to Lady Bedford with his new religious direction. They had shared great worldly affection; now they could encourage each

other in the serious pursuit of virtue and truth.

This twilight of two yeares, not past nor next,  
 Some embleme is of mee, or I of this,  
 Who Meteor-like, of stuffe and form perplext,  
 Whose what, and where, in disputation is,  
 If I should call mee any thing, should misse.

I summe the yeares, and mee, and finde mee not  
 Debtor to th'old, nor Creditor to th'new,  
 That cannot say, My thanks I have forgot,  
 Nor trust I this with hopes, and yet scarce true  
 This bravery is, since these times shew'd mee you.

Characteristic self-examination issues in this calm reflection on his personal state. This opening has the quiet dignity, the almost depressive candour of his best letters to Goodyer, or of the autobiographical passages in the Sermons. The relation of form and matter, body and spirit, is "perplexed"--and perplexing; both "what, and where", self and occupation are in dispute; he is not "any thing", therefore nothing. He has neither regret for the past nor expectation of the future, but "since these times shew'd mee you", both "thanks" and "hopes" are connected to her. "In recompense" he promises the traditional gift of immortality in poetry, in an unusual form: "verse embalms vertue". The "tincture" of her name in his verse creates "new spirits", but destroys them as quickly, because "strong agents" can be too powerful. Is this a reevaluation of her effect on him? In "future times" his "just praise" will seem exaggerated because based on "faith" and "made of miracle" rather than on "reason and likelihood". Even if rational sceptics accept his report as truth, "they will doubt how" his nothing could express her all--and it is a valid question. In the more personal of these verse letters there is often the sense that Donne narrowly escaped direct

statement of unfortunate, embarrassing or unacceptable truths. Here he evades the issue, with considerable ambiguity:

I cannot tell them, nor myselfe, nor you,  
 But leave, lest truth b'endanger'd by my praise,  
 And turne to God, who knowes I thinke this true.

What is this truth, and how is it endangered? Why does God verify only his opinion and not the truth of her virtue itself? Yet "turne to God" is more than an apt and witty excuse. As God turns praise into prayer, Donne changes the focus of his address, and praise becomes advice.

He will best teach you, how you should lay out  
 His stock of beauty, learning, favour, blood;  
 He will perplex security with doubt,  
 And cleare those doubttes; hide from you, and shew you good,  
 And so increase your appetite and food.

Has she "laid out" her qualities so badly that her life needs reformation? There is surely an echo of Donne's deepest personal concern, for security against doubt, in the teasing suggestiveness of his description of God's relationship to man as a sophisticated version of cat and mouse. The list of things she must learn does suggest that her life needs radical reorganization:

He will teach you, that good and bad have not  
 One latitude in cloysters, and in Court;  
 ...  
 Yet he, as hee bounds seas, will fixe your houres,  
 Which pleasure, and delight may not ingresse,  
 ...  
 He will make you speake truths, and credibly,  
 ... and hee will show  
 What you may not acknowledge, what not know.  
 For your owne conscience, he gives innocence,  
 But for your fame, a discreet warinesse,  
 ...  
 From need of teares he will defend your soule,  
 Or make a rebaptizing of one tear.

This is a strange "private Ghospell", hardly conducive to "active joy".

Has her "vaine disport" strayed too far "on this side sinne"? Are the hours she gives to pleasure as boundless as seas? Does she usually lie? Is he counselling discretion, or pretence? Does God "give" innocence because she does not possess it? In spite of God's defence of her soul, will she need tears of repentance as a rebaptism? The implications are disquieting, but the force of this advice may be quite different. Though he may now doubt that she is the "All" of virtue, the sins he warns against are those to which he was most prone himself; thus "we" hear, and it is "our" new year. This appeal is not unlike that which concludes his "Epitaph": "heare this, and mend thy self, and thou mendst me". In turning toward God himself, he encourages her to do so, with gentle warnings which are also a renunciation: it is God who will teach her, not Donne.

"Honour is so sublime perfection," the only verse letter to the Countess which cannot be dated with any accuracy, successfully unites flattery with the sobriety of genuine moral conviction. It is difficult to think that this dignified address concerned with honour, discretion, and religion could have been written before 1610; a very close verbal echo in the discussion of honour with a similar discussion in The Second Anniversary suggests 1611 as a probable date.<sup>52</sup> Distinguished by a unity of tone unusual in his addresses to the Countess, "Honour is so sublime perfection" summarizes the extravagant imagery of the earlier verse letters and redirects it to judicious praise and a moral purpose.

As God needed to create man to honour Himself, so she needs "low persons" to praise her:

Should I say I lived darker then were true,  
 Your radiation can all clouds subdue;  
 But one, 'tis best light to contemplate you:

You, for whose body God made better clay,  
 Or tooke Soules stuffe as shall late decay,  
 Or such as needs small change at the last day.

She is no longer a raging sun which melts his heart or a strong agent which destroys what it creates, but a spiritual light second only to God. He does not cast "a lay and country eye" on physical beauty for itself, but gazes in contemplation of a body so beautiful it reflects, so transparent it reveals the soul.

From such delicate compliments he proceeds to a discussion of "beeing and seeming", the relationship between virtue and discretion. As the "Soules of growth and Soules of sense" neither "fly from" nor "seeke presidence" over "reasons Soule", so discretion and zeal must not strive against religion. Discretion and religion are not contradictory; it is not our effort which brings them together, because it is only in our perception that they are separate. If in the Countess's life, discretion or religion acted independently, "then religion/Wrought your ends, and your wayes discretion". He encourages her to "Goe thither still, goe the same way you went", through discretion toward religion. Anyone who would change either her ways or her ends is either covetous or guilty. Neither 'covet or repent' is true of her, for she is "great and innocent". With this affirmation, Donne's regular correspondence with Lady Bedford came to a close.

In 1611 Donne acquired a new patron, Sir Robert Drury. The Anniversaries were ostensibly addressed as a tribute to his daughter

Elizabeth, who died in her fifteenth year in December 1610.<sup>53</sup> The rewards for the apparent prostitution of his muse were considerable: Donne accompanied the Drurys on their European journey, and on their return was given a house in Drury Lane at a nominal rent.<sup>54</sup> In his farewell letter to Goodyer, written probably in October 1611,<sup>55</sup> Donne excuses Lady Bedford from any further "care of my fortune". The letter is fascinating for its revelation of Donne's state of mind, and for his remarks concerning the Countess. Donne addresses Goodyer "at this time of departing, as I should do at my last upon my death-bed" which gives to his prevailing sobriety the depth of sincerity. He speaks of "repentance and contrition" to discharge "spiritual debts", and of "acknowledgement and thankfulnesse" for "morall and civill" ones. He apologizes to Goodyer that he cannot repay either money or surety. This first part of the letter has the reflective qualities of a personal preamble to a will: "in the afternoon of my life...it is ill to look back, or give over in a course; but worse never to set out".<sup>56</sup> This refers only superficially to the intended journey. The memory of his early life, his many loves, his failing secular devotion, was a source of embarrassment and psychological pain: to change his life-direction causes great distress; not to change it, even greater. The journey was to have the effect of a creative pause. He completed The Second Anniversary while abroad, consolidating through poetry his new life-direction. Though he was to make one last attempt, through Hay and Rochester, to gain employment at Court, it was with the deepening sense that external and internal necessity combined to direct him into the church.



Donne's remarks concerning the Countess indicate he was willing to dispense with her patronage, though not her friendly regard. They show more discretion than affection:

I must entreat you to continue that wherein you have most expressed your love to me, which is, to maintain me in the same room in my Lady Bedford's opinion, in the which you placed me. I profess to you that I am too much bound to her for expressing every way her care of my fortune, that I am weary before she is; and out of a loathness, that so good works should be bestowed upon so ill stuff, or that so much ill fortune should be mingled with hers, as that she should miss anything that she desired, though it were but for me; I am willing to depart from further exercising her endeavours in that kind.

In a paragraph which refers largely to financial considerations, "that I am weary before she is" seems discordant. This paragraph too has the tone of a leave-taking. It is almost as if, expecting not to return from his European adventure, speaking 'as on his death-bed', Donne asks Goodyer to speak well of him, to keep his memory alive and well before her. Of his 'moral and civil debts' to her, there is some 'acknowledgment' but little genuine "thankfulness". Though he concluded this letter to Goodyer with the promise "I shall be bold to deliver my poor letters to her ladyship's hands, through yours, whilst I am abroad...", his later letters from the continent attest that he did not write to Lady Bedford. Their intimate friendship had ended.

Considered as verses commemorative of a young girl, Donne's Anniversaries are ingenious, extravagant, hyperbolic in the extreme. Donne was soon aware of the resentment these poems caused among the ladies of fashion to whom his usual tributes were addressed. In a letter to George Garrard, written while Donne was still in Paris with the Drurys,<sup>57</sup> Donne reacted quite peevishly to the censures of his publication

of these poems: "If any of those ladies think that Mistress Drury was not so, let that lady make herself fit for all those praises in the book, and it shall be hers."<sup>58</sup> Whatever the ostensible subject, "it shall be hers" seems to imply that the real subject is open to interpretation. Of course, the Anniversaries are much greater than their occasion, and are vital evidence of the movement of Donne's spirit in the period of transition. As was argued in the previous chapter, the main personal focus of the first is the loss of the idealized female figure; of the second, the concomitant redirection of idealization toward God: together, the Anniversaries represent a discursive commentary on the fundamental psychological reorganization of Donne's deepest self. They also reflect, in however tenuous a fashion, Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford.

Donne wrote The First Anniversary in London while waiting to go abroad with Drury, perhaps in September and October, because they left in early November 1611.<sup>59</sup> Though nothing is known of their relationship in that year, there is at least a possibility that Lady Bedford occupied some of his thoughts more particularly than his farewell letter to Goodyer indicates. Chamberlain reported to Carleton on 5 October 1611 that the Countess had recently suffered a miscarriage.<sup>60</sup> Donne had some understanding of childbed illnesses, and probably some sympathy for Lady Bedford's repeated efforts to produce an heir. This event may have contributed to his sense of the frailty and futility of life.

The compelling conjunctions, however, are more general. The Anniversaries are a discursive and somewhat unfocussed product of an eclectic mind, the examination and summary of idealization of the female

figure which was necessary before such secular devotion could be exchanged for the spiritual. Since the language of idealization is limited, it is not surprising to find that imagery borrowed from the courtly convention pervades the Anniversaries as well as the verse letters to the Countess. There are obvious verbal echoes and numerous direct connections of thought and theme, of which one example will suffice. In "You have refin'd mee", written in 1609 during the period of their most intense relationship, Donne imagines Lady Bedford as the sun. She makes natural day (sunrise to sunset) artificial because it is always morning where she is; she makes the natural cycle artificial because it is always springtime in her presence. Thus her light creates a new world and her influence in the religion of love "refines" and recreates him. Add the machinery of elegy to such secular devotion, and the result is the description of "shee", the subject of the Anniversaries. In The First Anniversary, "her name defin'd" the world, gave it "forme, and frame". Without her light "which did inanimate and fill/The world" all that remains is "this last long night". "A faint weake love of vertue, and of good,/Reflects from her" and "Creates a new world".

It is in their revelation of personal psychological truth that the Anniversaries reflect Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford, echo his verse letters to her, and refer forward to the "Nocturnall".<sup>61</sup> The loss of the sustaining female figure is related in general to the failure of the love religion and in particular to the redefinition of his relationship with Lady Bedford. This was an involuntary but inevitable subconscious association, the idealized female figure--"the idea of a woman

and not as she was"--and the particular example of his personal devotion, Lady Bedford--"the first good Angell, since the worlds frame stood,/That ever did in woman's shape appeare".

Donne finished The Second Anniversary in France, between November 1611 and March 1612.<sup>62</sup> The Anniversaries were published together in April 1612, and brought almost immediate adverse reaction. That Lady Bedford in particular objected to his extravagance, and that her displeasure moved him as none other could, an unfinished verse letter attests. Since it is headed "Begun in France but never perfected", it must have been written between April and July 1612, for the Drury party left France for Germany in that month. On first reading, one suspects it was abandoned as over-ingenious, an illustration rather than a refutation of the poetic fault it sought to excuse. The problem is not failure of inspiration. Donne "might have already used up most of the poetic energy he felt worth expending in writing the letter to Lady Carey,"<sup>63</sup> but that letter is entirely conventional, and itself rather tired. The real difficulty here is that which created the ambiguities of the verse letters: how can he say what he means within an acceptable framework? The first ten lines form an introduction in which he maintains the courtly pose with dignity and grace. He gathers as if for final statement the most potent images of the courtly convention in lines as effective as any he ever wrote to her.

Though I be dead, and buried, yet I have  
 (Living in you,) Court enough in my grave,  
 And oft as there I thinke my selfe to bee,  
 So many resurrections waken mee.  
 That thankfulnessse your favours have begot

In mee, embalmes mee, that I doe not rot.  
 This season as 'tis Easter, as 'tis Spring,  
 Must both to growth and to confession bring  
 My thoughts dispos'd unto your influence; so,  
 These verses bud, so these confessions grow.

The conventions of compliment ordered as personal statement, this is another acknowledgement of her influence in his life and work, of his devotion to her who "only hath power to cast the fetters of verse upon my free meditations".<sup>64</sup> Though dead, that is, parted from her, if he is 'living in her' he is resurrected; or rather, whenever he thinks of himself dead, he is recalled to life by thoughts of her. That resurrection is both physical and spiritual: because it is spring, his "verses bud"; because it is Easter, "his thoughts dispos'd unto her influence" bring him to confession--of his sins against her, chief saint of the religion of love.

The verse buds, but does not flower; the confessions, though on the surface disarmingly frank, are ambiguous and incomplete. The full confession--that resurrection through love is impossible for him--comes to complete poetic expression only with the "Nocturnall". But the unfinished confessions are interesting in their own right. The first is a general summary of the substance of his verse letters and an apology for the Anniversaries:

First I confesse I have to others lent  
 Your stock, and over prodigally spent  
 Your treasure, for since I had never knowne  
 Vertue or beautie, but as they are growne  
 In you, I should not thinke or say they shine,  
 (So as I have) in any other Mine.

If he thinks it, he could at least refrain from saying it: compare his letter to Goodyer in 1609, when his "integrity" to Lady Bedford made him

reserve for her "not only all the verses, which I should make, but all the thoughts of womens worthinesse", but did not prevent him enclosing a tribute for the Countess of Huntingdon.<sup>65</sup> His apology here is half-hearted, matter of fact; he is saying the expected, the necessary thing. The only unexpected note is the possible pun on "Mine". The second confession is more intriguing:

Next I confesse this my confession,  
For, 'tis some fault thus much to touch upon  
Your praise to you, where half rights seem too much,  
And make your minds sincere complexion blush.

Is it, as in "T'have written then, when you writ" that she blushes to hear herself praised? Or is it something more serious, since it is the "minds sincere complexion" which blushes? What are the "half rights" which "seeme too much" and contribute to her embarrassment? This seems to be one of those half-uttered unacceptable truths, and rather than pursue it, in his third confession he returns to the conventional.

Next I confesse my'impenitence, for I  
Can scarce repent my first fault, since thereby  
Remote low Spirits, which shall ne'er see you,  
May in lesse lessons finde enough to doe,  
By studying copies, not Originals,....

He ought not to have praised another, but cannot deny he did so, and therefore must make the best of it: Elizabeth Drury was only a "copy" of "the transcript, and originall"<sup>66</sup> of virtue which is the Countess. This is suitable to an apology, and also true to his fundamental personal reality. In the Anniversaries he wrote of "the idea of a woman and not as she was", a concept not a person. If the copy was true, then it reflects the original, the Countess. And she reflects it: in the platonic sense, he lamented the ultimate 'form' of the idealized female figure, of

which Lady Bedford is the earthly embodiment. His confession amounts to this: he should have written about her, but couldn't; he wrote the right substance in the wrong context, and apologizes only for that context. In "lesse lessons" and "copies", "shee" was a mere substitute for the feelings he would address to Lady Bedford if he could. The best clue to his real feeling is the phrase "where half rights seeme too much". His "rights" to speak of her, to 'live in her', are only the half rights of a lover, not a husband; of an intimate friend who is neither lover nor husband; of one who has been rejected, but still loves. The personal truth can only be hinted at, and the conventional is clearly inadequate: to continue would be to parody himself.

Donne's indirect apologies, or at least explanations, probably reached Lady Bedford through Goodyer or Garrard. He wrote to both his friends on 14 April 1612, to Goodyer discussing general criticism of the Anniversaries, to Garrard replying to specific criticism from "ladies".<sup>67</sup> In the letter to Goodyer, Donne makes an ironic point of specifically not sending his greetings to Lady Bedford:

Therefore give me leave to end this, in which if you did not find the remembrance of my humblest services to my Lady Bedford, your love and faith ought to try all the experiments of pouders, and dryings, and waterings to discover some lines which appeared not; because it is impossible that a Letter should come from me, with such an ungrateful silence.<sup>68</sup>

His verse apology remained unfinished and was probably never sent. Indeed it seems that regular correspondence between Donne and Lady Bedford was never resumed. A letter to Goodyer, written from Spa on 26 July 1612 suggests this:

I can glory of nothing in this voyage, but that I have afflicted my Lady Bedford with few Letters. I protest earnestly to you, it troubles me much more to dispatch a packet into England, without a Letter to

her, then it would to put in three. But I have been heretofore too immodest towards her, and I suffer this Purgatory for it.<sup>69</sup>

Donne does not suggest that his failure to write is recent or temporary: in fact he implies he has refrained from writing throughout the journey, by then a period of nine months.<sup>70</sup> In the past he was "too immodest" in writing too frequently and perhaps saying too much; for that sin, he is condemned to a "Purgatory" of not writing. From that purgatory of lost connection he could be released only when he had accepted detachment from her, but Donne never found a social role or a suitable tone which would allow him a friendly distance in relation to her. After 1612, in fact, contact between them was infrequent, on isolated occasions.

In late 1612, shortly after Donne's return to England, Lady Bedford suffered a serious illness. "A Nocturnall upon S. Lucies day" reflects his fear of her actual death and his sense of loss at her 'death to him', the end of their intimate relationship.<sup>71</sup> The actual effort to divest himself of devotion to an idealized female figure was accomplished in the Anniversaries. Donne's journey on the continent provided physical distance; not writing to her provided emotional distance: for almost a year, Donne had enjoyed a time of reflection. Marked by the calm solemnity which succeeds the first wild anguish of loss, the "Nocturnall" was the fruit of that creative pause. The idealized woman, now lost to him, becomes a focus for his idealization rather than its object: that is, his personal devotion is redirected through adoration of her toward genuine religious feeling. The "Nocturnall" reviews their personal relationship and summarizes the movement of spirit which occupied his deepest self in the years of transition.



Of critics other than Grierson, Louis Martz expresses most effectively the personal force of the poem:

In accordance with the ancient ecclesiastical usage of the term "nocturnal", or "nocturne", Donne presents a midnight service, a "vigill", commemorating the death of his beloved--his saint. He recalls the passionate fluctuations of their worldly career, in terms that suggest a long period of frustrated spiritual devotion.... But with her death his physical life has died.... His only life now lies in the spiritual realm where she now lives.<sup>72</sup>

What Donne recognized as the loss of the "All" which was she reinforced his sense of being 'nothing'. Grierson defined this as "the sense of nothingness which can overtake one who has lost the central motive of his life".<sup>73</sup>

The poem is reflective. Donne looks back on this period of psychological and spiritual distress through which he has passed and summarizes the changes in his deepest self effected in these years of transition. The experience reflected is not a single event, not an actual occasion of everyday life, but a symbolic process. The one, particular loss--indeed fear of loss--involves all loss. The 'death' of the idealized woman--Lady Bedford's feared death in illness, or her death to him metaphorically because their relationship had changed--involved other fears and other losses: his wife's childbed illness, his fears for his own safety in travelling, the failure of his secular ideals, the culmination of a long period of unemployment, the onset of middle-age.<sup>74</sup> The poem captures both the process of personality change in the metaphor of alchemical reduction, and the moment of realization of a new life-direction in the intention to "prepare toward her".

In the poem, Lucie, who had been his sun, his inspiration, is masked; "The lesser Sunne", the light of the general world, at first

weak and inconstant, will renew as it moves into Capricorn (the Ram) and toward spring. Lucy Bedford had been the sun of his secular devotion. In an early verse letter attesting her influence on him, "You have refin'd mee", she is both springtime and daylight; she is the light of beauty at the centre of the love cult in which he is sacrificer and priest. In contrast, "the vulgar Sunne" in the outside world celebrates only "autumnal offices".<sup>75</sup> In his reminiscence of love in stanza 3, the imagery of the great love lyrics is reversed as he stresses only the negative experiences of love. So too this image of her influence on him: the light of love has failed to inspire and sustain him. Paradoxically, however, it is Lucy's unmasking which contributes to the emotional distress. She shows her true light, becomes her true self, and that truth involves the rejection of him, as stated earlier in the last line of "Twicknam Garden". This implicit revelation of her true self recalls the image in another verse letter, "T'have written then", that he who had sought "vertues in corners" now found them 'shining' openly in her.<sup>76</sup>

"Twicknam Garden" reflects his bitter yet almost playfully ironic response to rejection. The ideal lady refused to be real in the particular terms he sought; the paradisal vision of love failed. The disturbing presence of the female figure reflected in some of the Holy Sonnets remained unresolved in the Anniversaries because all sexual energy was omitted. In the "Nocturnall" Donne attempted a more complete resolution.

After 1609, after ~~that~~ first rejection, Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford continued. The verse letters show his attempt to redefine the nature of their exchange, to find a new tone of address. To the extent

that he succeeded, the "Nocturnall" indicates how--by acknowledging but redirecting the sexual energy which even in the verse letters breaks through occasionally. By 1612, he had for the most part accepted their situation, adjusted to a different and more serious relationship. But his fear of the final loss of her in illness and death brought to the surface all these unreconciled emotions. The "Nocturnall" shows the very process of reconciliation. In the closing stanza he articulates a viable solution for this aspect of his personal dilemma: by conflating the idealized woman with God, he could subsume his feelings for her in his new devotion. The "Nocturnall" is thus his farewell to their past, to his earlier self, to the secular world that devotion to woman represented.

That Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford changed his life there can be little doubt. There may be as much truth as compliment in his acknowledgements of her influence on himself and his work, that she "refined" him, that in him she had "hallowed a Pagan Muse, / And denizend a stranger". Within the "Nocturnall" that influence is imagined as an alchemical process, one of Donne's favourite metaphors for personal change. Before loving, he was a "dead thing"; by love's "Alchimie", he is "ruin'd and re-begot" as the "quintessence" of nothingness; by her "death", he is reduced even further, becoming the "elixir" of that "first nothing", an extraordinary nothing without shadow, light, or substance. This is both effective imagery and psychological truth: in this refining process, through love and loss of her, he is reduced to the absolute essence of self, the "immutable bedrock" of personality,<sup>77</sup> all social, cultural, relational overlay stripped away. Then by following her example, that essential self is re-directed: "Since shee enjoys her long nights

festivall,/Let mee prepare towards her". The "Nocturnall" is not only his deeply personal response to the feared loss of the idealized woman, it is his supreme compliment--he credits her with anticipating and influencing his change of heart. She had redefined and redirected their relationship: if her "death" in "A Nocturnall" marked the end of their intimate friendship, his sense of loss could have reinforced his religious re-orientation.

After 1612 Donne's contact with Lady Bedford was very infrequent. His interest in new patrons is evidence that Donne no longer felt bound to her: her 'death to him' became literally true. In a letter to Goodyer written in August or September 1613, Donne related a curious incident:

...to convey to you this Letter, which mine hath the honour to bring, any little Letter would serve, and be acceptable for that. Because it came not last week, I went now to solicit it, and she sent it me next day with some thanks, and some excuse that she knew not me, when I was with her. You know, I do not easily put myself into those hazards, nor do much brag of my valor now, otherwise then I purposed it for a service to you.<sup>78</sup>

"She knew not me, when I was with her" may mean that Lady Bedford was unaware that it was Donne who called the day before, but the comment seems more general. Donne visited her only as a service to Goodyer, and with considerable hesitation. To do so exposed him to "hazards" which tested his "valor": perhaps he feared an emotional encounter. At the least, his uneasiness is obvious, as is the implication that he does not usually visit her at this time.

The end of their personal relationship left Donne free to court others: it was no longer a question of his "integrity" to her.

It would not be fair to say that his praises were at the disposal of any great lady who could be persuaded to take an interest in him and open her purse-strings, but his friends had less difficulty than

might have been anticipated in persuading him to accede to their requests for such complimentary verses.<sup>79</sup>

Goodyer had exchanged Lady Bedford for the Countess of Huntingdon, and renewed his effort of 1609 to bring Donne into her circle. In 1613 and 1614, Donne revived the old pattern of sending messages to the lady through his friend, now seeking the "protection" and "good opinion" of the Countess of Huntingdon, whose intellectual capabilities he had earlier questioned.<sup>80</sup> Another old friend, George Garrard, was then in the service of the young Earl of Salisbury; Donne wrote in praise of the Countess of Salisbury but with some hesitation. To Garrard he confided:

I should be loath that in any thing of mine, composed of her, she should not appear much better then some of those of whom I have written. And yet I cannot hope for better expressings then I have given of them. So you see how much I should wrong her, by making her but equall to others. I would I could be beleaved, when I say that all that is written of them is but prophecy of her.<sup>81</sup>

But that too he had said before, at least once, of Lady Bedford. The problem was the one he faced in the unfinished verse letter to Lady Bedford, apologizing for the Anniversaries: the language of idealization is limited. It seems as if Donne was going through too-accustomed motions, with some embarrassment. Bald comments almost cynically that Donne "was soon to be freed from the need to seek patronage by such means".<sup>82</sup> Patronage was surely only part of the problem. Donne wrote some impressive lines to these other ladies, but the resonance of personal feeling so much a part of the verse letters to Lady Bedford was gone. Bald notes that the verse letter to the Countess of Salisbury was Donne's last exercise of the kind, and links it to Donne's declaration at the close of "Obsequies to the Lord Harrington" that his Muse had "spoke her last".<sup>83</sup>

The Countess of Bedford's brother, the second Lord Harrington,

died at Twickenham in February 1614. Bald suggests Donne's elegy was written at Lady Bedford's request;<sup>84</sup> if this is true, it perhaps helps to explain the tone of the accompanying letter. In his elegy Donne laments the untimely death of the gifted young man whom he may have known personally.<sup>85</sup> The elegy is elaborate, artificial, and entirely conventional, except for his closing vow to abandon poetry:

Do not, fair soul, this sacrifice refuse,  
That in thy grave I do inter my Muse,  
Which, by my grief, great as thy worth, being cast  
Behindhand, yet hath spoke, and spoke her last.

A gallant gesture, and with few exceptions, one to which Donne adhered, if the reader accepts this Muse as the muse of his secular verse. Indeed between his return to England in September 1612 and his ordination in January 1615, with the exception of the "Nocturnall" Donne wrote only occasional pieces, responses to a particular event or an individual request.<sup>86</sup>

Donne enclosed his "Obsequies" in a brief letter in which he tactlessly reminded Lady Bedford that she now had the use of her brother's fortune:

Madam, I have learn'd by those lawes wherein I am a little conversant, that hee which bestowes any cost upon the dead, obliges him which is dead, but not the heirs; I do not therefore send this paper to your Ladyship, that you should thanke mee for it, or thinke that I thanke you in it; your favours and benefits to mee are so much above my merits, that they are even above my gratitude, if that were to be judged by words, which must expresse it: But, Madame, since your noble brothers fortune being yours, the evidences also concerning it are yours, so his vertue being yours, the evidences concerning it, belong also to you, of which by your acceptance this may be one peece, in which quality I humbly present it, and as a testimony how intirely your family possesses

Your Ladyships most humble and  
thankfull servant...<sup>87</sup>

This letter shows how completely his attitude toward her had changed:

if fulsome praise wouldn't move her, mercenary cynicism might; she could possess him entirely as a humble servant, if she would continue to bestow "favours and benefits". That this tasteless effort obviously seeking financial reward accompanied the elaborate elegy could hardly have renewed Donne in Lady Bedford's favour.

The events surrounding Donne's proposed entrance into the Anglican priesthood widened the rift between them. Lady Bedford may have been offended by his proposal to publish his poems in 1614 as a way to meet his debts, especially if he intended to include his verse letters or poems to her; or perhaps she was offended that he intended to dedicate the collection to Somerset, of whom she disapproved, rather than to herself.<sup>88</sup> In any case, she would probably have considered publication on the eve of ordination an improper action.

Following her own misfortunes of 1611-1614--her own severe illness, an injury to her husband which left him partially paralyzed, the deaths of her father and brother--Lady Bedford seemed "a much-changed woman".<sup>89</sup> As we have seen, during her 1612 illness, Lady Bedford came under the influence of Dr. John Burgess, a silenced Puritan preacher turned medical doctor. Her own deepening seriousness might have encouraged her to accept Donne's religious orientation as genuine, but in fact she appears to have been the one close acquaintance to object strongly. Her actual objection is not known, but Donne disclosed in a letter to Goodyer that she questioned the sincerity of his calling. The long paragraph about Lady Bedford is a masterpiece of tasteless anger and bitter disappointment:

Of my Lady Bedford, I must say so much as must importune you to burn the letter; for I would say nothing of her upon record, that should

not testify my thankfulness for all her graces. But upon this motion, which I made to her by letter, and by Sir Thomas Roe's assistance, if any scruple should arise in her, she was somewhat more startling, than I looked for from her; she had more suspicion of my calling, a better memory of my past life, than I thought her nobility could have admitted; of all which, though I humbly thank God, I can make good use, as one that needs as many remembrances in that kind, as not only friends but enemies can present, yet I am afraid they proceed in her rather from some ill impression taken from Dr. Burges, than that they grow in herself. But whosoever be the conduit, the water is the Holy Ghost's, and in that acceptation I take it. For her other way of expressing her favour to me, I must say, it is not with that cheerfulness as heretofore she hath delivered herself towards me. I am almost sorry, that an elegy should have been able to move her to so much compassion heretofore, as to offer to pay my debts; and my greater wants now, and for so good a purpose, as to come disengaged into that profession, being plainly laid open to her, should work no farther but that she sent me £30, which in good faith she excused with that, which is in both parts true, that her present debts were burdensome, and that I could not doubt of her inclination, upon all future emergent occasions, to assist me. In confess to you, her former fashion towards me had given a better confidence;....<sup>90</sup>

Donne was encouraged by his other friends, and had the personal approval of King James. Why did Lady Bedford object, and strongly enough to occasion this outburst? Donne cites three issues: financial, spiritual, personal. In response to his elegy for her brother, she had offered to pay his debts; called upon to do so, she helped him less handsomely than he expected. Donne is angry and disappointed. She had some "suspicion" of the sincerity of his calling, the result Donne attests of "some ill impression taken from Dr. Burges". Donne is jealous, and thus quite characteristically attributes her objection to the malign influence of his rival.

That the influence of Burgess was the deciding factor in Lady Bedford's opinion has been argued by Patricia Thomson and Richard Hughes. Both base their arguments on the assumption that Lady Bedford was "by upbringing and inclination also a Puritan", an assumption which, as we



have seen, is questionable. The verse letters supposedly represent Donne's efforts in a competition for religious and financial patronage. Thomson suggested Donne was "trying to set himself up as spiritual adviser to the Twickenham ladies", but that he was unsuccessful because "there were grounds for a disagreement in religious outlook between Donne and the Countess". "In any event, in their rival bids for the Countess's favour, Doctor Burges's Puritanism and physic counted for more than Donne's poetry and metaphysics".<sup>91</sup> The assumptions on which such a view rests are even more explicit in Hughes. He speaks of the Countess' "conversion", which is surely not the right word and a questionable idea in itself. Hughes also stresses Donne's supposed anti-Puritan feeling, and quotes later sermons in support. Both Hughes and Thomson assume that we can, on Donne's angry word alone, conclude that Burgess was "destroying Donne's reputation in Lady Bedford's mind".<sup>92</sup>

That there was some rivalry, I do not doubt, but I question these assumptions and the emphasis placed on Burgess' influence. The evidence for Lady Bedford's supposed Puritanism is at best circumstantial. Moreover, we have seen that her vow to abandon the court, made under Burgess' influence during her 1612 illness, held for less than six months. That she supported and encouraged Burgess and took his advice--for example, he recommended the Mr. Preston whom Lady Bedford in turn recommended to Princess Elizabeth--as much reflects Burgess' personal influence as her adherence to a particular religious view. Chamberlain's frequent references to Burgess characterize him as an aggressive man, using his contacts with court ladies--he was very popular--to gain places and promotions for relatives and friends.<sup>93</sup> Donne too was ambitious. He

had suffered more from exclusion and unemployment than Burgess had: for one undecided in religion, no network of private support existed; moreover, because of the scandal of his marriage, he had not been successful in finding alternative employment. In his efforts to find secular employment, Lady Bedford had not been particularly helpful; perhaps he had concluded pragmatically that she would not be. At the time he still enjoyed the support of Lord Hay, and was beginning to court Buckingham: indeed, one reason for agreeing to court the Countess of Huntingdon may have been that her step-father Egerton, as Lord Chancellor, "was largely responsible for dispensing the ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown".<sup>94</sup>

Though I would not deny the possibility of a difference in religious viewpoint between Donne and Lady Bedford, I would question the extent of Donne's supposed anti-Puritan feeling. That he rejected his Catholic heritage and found a place within the established church does not prove that "he was opposed...doctrinally, liturgically, and personally" to the Puritans.<sup>95</sup> Though there were cynical exclamations against the "monstrous, superstitious puritan" in the "Satire I" and other early works, there is considerable evidence that Donne endeavoured throughout his life to be a moderate, what might today be called an ecumenicist. Quotations from two letters to Goodyer, both probably written in 1608, support this view.

As to the Roman Church, magnificence and splendour hath ever been an argument of God's favour, and poverty and affliction to the Greek. Out of this variety of minds it proceeds, that though our souls would go to one end, heaven, and all our bodies must go to one end, the earth; yet our third part, the mind, which is our natural guide here, chooses to every man a several way: scarce any man likes what another doth, nor advisedly, that which himself.<sup>96</sup>

You know I never fettered nor imprisoned the word Religion, not straightening it friarly, ad Religiones factitias (as the Romans call well their orders of Religion), nor immuring it in a Rome, or a Wittenberg, or a Geneva; they are all virtual beams of one Sun... they are co-natural pieces of one circle.<sup>97</sup>

In a letter to Tobie Matthew, probably written Nov.-Dec. 1611, at the time of the composition of the Anniversaries, Donne expressed a similar view. Though Matthew was a Roman Catholic convert, there is no reason to assume Donne would not extend the same tolerance to a Puritan:

That we differ in our ways [to heaven], I hope we pardon one another. Men go to China, both by the Straights, and by the Cape. I never mis-interpreted your way; nor suffered it to be so, wheresoever I found it in discourse. For I was sure, you took not up your Religion upon trust, but payed ready money for it, and at a High Rate. And this taste of mine towards you, makes me hope for, and claime the same disposition in you towards me.<sup>98</sup>

It is interesting to note that here, as in his statement of his own efforts in the preface to Pseudo-Martyr, Donne emphasizes due thought in decision and sincerity in belief, and that Lady Bedford's 'suspicion of his calling' would seem to question these ideals. Finally, a passage in a sermon of 1621 indicates that Donne's tolerance had not changed in later years.

Beloved, there are some things in which all religions agree: the worship of God, the holiness of life. Therefore, if (when I study this holiness of life, and fast, and pray, and submit myself to discreet and individual mortifications for the subduing of my body) any man will say, "This is papistical! Papists do this!"--it is a blessed protestation, and no man is the less a Protestant nor the worse a Protestant for making it--"I am a Papist! that is, I will fast and pray as much as any Papist, and enable myself for the service of my God, as seriously, as sedulously, as laboriously as any Papist."

So if--when I startle and am affected at the blasphemous oath, as at a wound upon my Saviour--if--when I avoid the conversation of those men that profane the Lord's day--any other will say, "This is puritanical! Puritans do this!"--it is a blessed protestation, and no man is the less a Protestant nor the worse a Protestant for making it--"Men and brethren, I am a Puritan! that is, I will endeavour to be pure as my Father in heaven is pure--as far as any Puritan!"<sup>99</sup>

Instead of emphasizing Burgess' influence, Jessopp placed Lady Bedford's objections in a personal perspective:

Lady Bedford had first known Donne in his bright and joyous youth; he was a trifler then and a courtier, whom it was hard to look upon as anything more; she had not learned to see the real earnestness that lay below the surface, and could not at first, when she herself was beginning to feel sobered and saddened by her sorrow, bring herself to approve of her poet friend entering upon the ministry of Christ's Church.<sup>100</sup>

That is, I think, the correct--and most sympathetic--perspective. Her most significant objections are the undefined personal ones. Donne admits that the Countess has "a better memory of my past life" than charity should allow. It seems she objected on the basis of her personal knowledge of him--not the circumstances of his marriage, nor the licentiousness of his early verse, nor his efforts to find secular employment, for these were public knowledge. Did she doubt that his "Idolatrie", his devotion to her, could be so easily exchanged for true religious devotion?

Even a sympathetic reader, coming upon this letter, is tempted to agree with the Countess in her objection: Donne's self-righteous indignation in his attempt to turn her galling criticism to good use, and his hypocrisy in writing so ungraciously of her in secret while outwardly 'testifying his thankfulness for all her graces' are hardly characteristic of a man newly devoted to a sincere religious calling. Donne barely controlled his bitterness against Lady Bedford when he discussed her inability to assist him financially. Though he admits that her own situation prohibited her usual generosity, he seemed to attribute her refusal to that "ill impression" of the sincerity of his calling. Finally, he again asks Goodyer to burn the letter, not to

prevent Lady Bedford discovering his ingratitude, but to ensure that a new patroness is not influenced by the negative opinion of 'one who knows no better'. Outside the early poems of negative abuse of woman, Donne is rarely this vituperative.

After this 1614 letter, there are only brief notes of infrequent encounters between Donne and Lady Bedford. Donne's daughter Lucy, who had been named for her godmother Lady Bedford in 1608, became a member of the Countess' household in 1617.<sup>101</sup> Goodyer's daughter Lucy already was. In a letter of 9 March 1619, as he was preparing to accompany Lord Hay (Doncaster) to Germany, Donne sent through Goodyer a general greeting to Lady Bedford.<sup>102</sup> In his farewell letter 4 April 1619 Donne presented to Goodyer his "thanks for all your favours, and benefits, so principally for keeping me alive in the memory of the noblest Countess", and offered to do anything which could be "said or done in her service, at Heidelberg",<sup>103</sup> at the court of Princess Elizabeth. When they finally set out on their journey, Doncaster and Donne met Lady Bedford in late May at Dover, where she had gone to meet her mother returning from Heidelberg.<sup>104</sup> On 7 January 1621, he preached before Lady Bedford at Harington House.<sup>105</sup> She perhaps invited him as a famous preacher, popular at court and in the royal family. In a letter of 30 August 1621, Donne told Goodyer he had intended to 'present his services' to Lady Bedford, "and so asked leave to have waited upon them at supper", but she was just going out.<sup>106</sup> This perhaps indicates that some social exchange still occurred between them, though this entire letter is chatty, full of gossip and bits of news, a style quite unusual for Donne. On 26 Feb. 1622, Donne sent some unspeci-

fied enclosure for Lady Bedford in a letter to Goodyer.<sup>107</sup> Other than these isolated incidents, there is no evidence of further acquaintance. Lady Bedford died 31 May 1627. Donne did not commemorate the final loss of his once beloved friend in any way.

## FOOTNOTES

### (CHAPTER FIVE)

<sup>1</sup> Gosse, I, 209; Bald, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> Bald, p. 114.

Jessopp was convinced that Donne knew Lady Bedford before 1601: Lady Bedford appears to have taken up young Donne before his marriage . . . Lady Huntingdon (the lord keeper's stepdaughter and ward) and Lady Bedford were first cousins. This may perhaps have brought the young secretary under the personal notice of her ladyship, but so fashionable a man of letters as Donne had by this time become was not likely to escape the fascinations of the great lady, with her enthusiasm for literature, her eagerness to excel, her love of patronising notorieties, and her craving for admiration from those whose homage redounded to her glory (pp. 43-44).

<sup>3</sup> See p. 166, 177 above.

<sup>4</sup> Bald, p. 141. Jessopp, John Donne, Sometime Dean of St. Paul's added that the next day King James went to visit Donne's father-in-law, Sir George More, at Losely (p. 27).

<sup>5</sup> Bald, p. 172n.

<sup>6</sup> Bald, p. 170.

<sup>7</sup> Letters, p. 151; Bald, p. 172.

<sup>8</sup> Letters, p. 204; Bald, p. 173: R. E. Bennett "Donne's Letters to Severall Persons of Honour", PMLA lvi (1941), 137 identified Goodyer as the recipient. In Letters, the letter is addressed to Sir Thomas Roe, and that could be correct.

<sup>9</sup> Letters, p. 140; dated, but addressed to Wotton. Bennett (PMLA, 123) identified Goodyer as the recipient. Bald (p. 165) quotes and discusses the personal advice in this letter, accepts that it is addressed to Goodyer, but does not confirm the date.

However, Donne mentions that "M. Mathew" will soon be leaving England: Sir Toby Mathew returned to the continent in April 1608 (Bald, p. 187), which suggests that the date is correct.

<sup>10</sup> Bald, p. 173.

<sup>11</sup> Bald, p. 176; Donne refers to supper with Lady Bedford in September 1608: Letters, p. 53-4 (Bald, pp. 176, 188-9); also to supper in November 1608: Letters, p. 143 (Bald, p. 160).

<sup>12</sup> Bald, p. 158. A letter of 6 August 1608 (Letters, pp. 118-9), mentioning the christening and inviting the recipient to attend, may be addressed to Lady Bedford's brother. Bennett (PMLA, 121-2) identified Goodyer as the recipient, but the line "my poor house is in your way" makes this questionable: Mitcham was not 'in the way' between Polesworth and London. Bald (p. 158) is doubtful about either attribution.

<sup>13</sup> Letters, pp. 207-8; Gosse, II, 14f; Bald, p. 176.

<sup>14</sup> Gosse, I, 211.

<sup>15</sup> See Gosse, I, 184, 195-7, 214-5.

<sup>16</sup> Simpson, pp. 331-2: modernized. Simpson suggests this letters was addressed to Lady Bedford (333); I. A. Shapiro, "The Burley Letters", TLS, 12 Sept. 1952, p. 597, admits it is possible; Bald accepts that it is (p. 73n).

<sup>17</sup> Bald, p. 177.

<sup>18</sup> Gosse, I, 212.

<sup>19</sup> 1) Letters, pp. 150-1; Gosse, I, 213; C. E. Merrill, Jr., ed., Letters to Several Persons of Honour (New York: Sturgis and Walton, 1910), p. 130 dates this later 1608; Bald (p. 172) suggests "soon after return from continent with Chute", which suggests late 1606, which seems too early.

2) Letters, p. 64; Gosse, I, 220; Bald (pp. 176-7) suggests latter half of 1608 as the date.

<sup>20</sup> Bald, p. 174.

<sup>21</sup> Bald, p. 177.

<sup>22</sup> Grierson, II, xxiii.

<sup>23</sup> Milgate, The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters (Oxford, 1967). All quotations from the verse letters are from this text.



In an interesting recent article on the verse letters, Patricia Thomson contrasted Donne with Jonson and Daniel, whose verse letters "breathe an air of greater security". She gave two explanations for this insecurity. Jonson and Daniel were "professional" poets seeking literary patronage, whereas Donne "belonged with his own kind, with Sir Henry Wotton, Sir Henry Goodyer, Sir Thomas Roe, and his other courtier friends, and had his place in a scheme of social rather than literary patronage." Secondly, Donne's verse letters to Lady Bedford "illustrate the lengths to which Donne, here at his furthest from Jonson and Daniel, is prepared to carry the self-depreciation of the Petrarchan tradition." However, she also noted that Donne "rejects as much as he accepts from the Petrarchan common market." Discounting the personal elements in the verse letters to Lady Bedford, Thomson admitted only grudgingly: "They had much in common, so that the years of their closest acquaintance, from about 1608 to 1615, were, in their way, fruitful to his genius." "Donne and the Poetry of Patronage: The Verse Letters", in A. J. Smith, ed., John Donne: Essays in Celebration (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1972), pp. 308-323.

Even more recently, Marcia Mascolini Brown studied four of Donne's verse letters to Lady Bedford in detail as models of formal rhetorical and epistolary patterns. Her opening chapter presenting biographical and historical background of Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford is sketchy, inaccurate, and out-of-date: for example, she seems to have been unaware of the Bald biography, though it was published six years earlier. "John Donne and the Countess of Bedford", unpublished doctoral dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago, February 1976.

<sup>24</sup> Milgate, p. 253.

<sup>25</sup> Bald, p. 180.

<sup>26</sup> Bald, p. 174.

<sup>27</sup> See Milgate, pp. 225-6.

<sup>28</sup> Milgate, p. 256.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> The first stanza of "The Good-morrow" is as follows:

I wonder by my troth, what thou, and I  
Did, till we lov'd? were we not wean'd till then?  
But suck'd on countrey pleasures, childishly?  
Or snorted we i'the seaven sleepers den?  
'Twas so; But this, all pleasures fancies bee.  
If ever any beauty I did see,  
Which I desir'd, and got, 'twas but a dreame of thee.

(Gardner, Songs and Sonnets, p. 70)

<sup>31</sup> Letters, p. 64; Bald (pp. 176-7) suggests the latter half of 1608.

<sup>32</sup> Letters, pp. 67-8; Gosse, I, 217-8; quoted and discussed in part in Bald (p. 175): Bald suggests late 1608--early 1609, which is appropriate to my proposed sequence of exchanges.

<sup>33</sup> Grierson thought so, II, cxliv.

<sup>34</sup> A letter in the Burley ms. (No. 16 in E. M. Simpson, A Study of the Prose Works of John Donne (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948), p. 321.) may be from Donne to Lady Bedford. If so, this letter reveals a more passionate intimacy than other surviving evidence suggests.

Madam. I will have leave to speak like a lover, I am not altogether one: for though I love more than any yet my love hath not the same mark and end with others. How charitably you deal with us of these parts? that at this time of the year, (when the sun forsakes us) you come to us and suffer us not (out of your mercy) to taste the bitterness of a winter; but Madam you owe me this relief because in all that part of this summer which I spent in your presence you doubled the heat and I lived under the rage of a hot sun and your eyes. That heart which you melted then no winter shall freeze but it shall ever keep that equal temper which you gave it soft enough to receive your impressions and hard enough to retain them. It must not taste to you as a negligence or carelessness that I have not visited your Ladyship: in these days of your being here call it rather a devout humility that I thus ask leave and be content to believe from him that can as impossibly lie to you as hate you that by commandment I am suddenly thrown out of the town so daily and diversely are we tempested that are not our owne. at my return (which therefore I will hasten) I will be bold to kiss that fair virtuous hand which doth much in receiving this letter and may do easily much more in sending another to him whose best honor is that he is your lieutenant of himself.

I hesitate to accept this letter as Donne's, though to do so would strengthen my theory of the sequence of events. Simpson (p. 322) notes the similarity between the close of this letter--"I will be bold to kiss that fair virtuous hand which doth much in receiving this letter . . ."--and that of the letter quoted above. There is also a close similarity between this phrase and the conclusion of No. 30--"And so kindly kissing your fair hand that vouchsafes the receipt of these lines"--the one letter to Lady Bedford in the Burley ms. generally accepted as written by Donne (Letter quoted p. 277 above; see also footnote 16). In the time however, and in Donne's letters to others, both lords and ladies, this phrase is very common, a formulaic salutation which provides very little.

Simpson raises an editorial problem in accepting No. 16 as Donne's: "it is strange, however, that this letter should be marked out from the rest of the D<sub>1</sub> group [ie. works in the Burley ms. in the D<sub>1</sub> hand] by the signature Anonimous. Donne never disguised his Platonic admiration for Lady Bedford, . . . (p. 332). Shapiro (TLS, 597) suggests No. 16 was copied "at second or third hand" from a miscellaneous collection of letters, but rejects the possibility that it was written by Donne. If the letter is Donne's however, there is a basic reason why it would be distinguished from works identifiably his. It is the same reason why Donne promised not to "show" the Countess's own verses, and why the "Nocturnall" does not appear in any ms. which antedates Lady Bedford's death in 1627 (See footnote 71 ; Grierson, II, 10). The reason was not that Donne needed to disguise his Platonic admiration for the Countess, but that his real feelings could not be described as Platonic admiration.

In tone, language, and imagery, much of this letter could be Donne's, but these are insufficient and too subjective grounds for the attribution. Moreover, before the writer of this letter can be identified, some explanation must be found for the puzzling statement "that by commandment I am suddenly thrown out of the town".

35 Bald, pp. 173-4.

36 Bald, p. 173.

37 Grierson, II, xxii. Gardner disagrees:

In view of all we know of Donne's relations with the Countess of Bedford and the tone of his letters to her in prose and in verse, it seems incredible that either poem ["Twicknam Garden" and the "Nocturnall"] should be thought to be concerned with Donne's actual feelings for his patroness.

The poems may, all the same, very well be connected with her, although it is not her cruelty or her imagined death that they mourn. A poem may be written 'for' someone without necessarily being 'about that person'. . . . The sombre and passionate intensity of both poems, their haunting slow rhythms, may more properly be ascribed to the date at which they were written than to some imagined crisis in Donne's relations with his patron. If they are connected with Lucy Bedford they must have been written after 1607 when Donne was approaching middle age and his verse was developing the intensity of his Divine Poems, . . . ("Lady Bedford and Mrs. Herbert", Appendix C in Songs and Sonnets, pp. 250-1).

The "tone of his letters to her in prose and in verse", at least in the 1607-1609 period, as I have shown, supports the idea that "Twicknam Garden" reflects "Donne's actual feelings" for Lady Bedford. That "Twicknam Garden" and the "Nocturnall" were written in the same period cannot be assumed: Gardner herself suggested 1611, 1612, and 1617 as possible dates of composition for the "Nocturnall".

"Sombre and passionate intensity" and "haunting slow rhythms" accurately describe the "Nocturnall", but are quite inappropriate to "Twicknam Garden". Finally, that Donne was "approaching middle age"--in 1609 he was 37, the Countess 28--hardly rendered him incapable of passion.

38 Grierson, II, xxiii.

39 Milgate, p. 272. He also suggests that "it may be a valedictory gesture before leaving for France" in late 1611. However, it has little in common with Donne's remarks concerning the Countess in his farewell letter to Goodyer (see below pp. 315-6) or with The First Anniversary, and its style and substance to me suggest an earlier date.

40 See Milgate, p. 272.

41 Letters, p. 117.

42 See Grierson, II, cxlii-cxlv; Bald, pp. 176-7.

43 Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 215.

44 Milgate, p. 260.

45 Holy Bible, King James Version: Judith 8:8, and 11:21.

46 Milgate, p. 262; Bald, p. 179.

47 "Virtues in dark corners" was a common Elizabethan image for illicit sexual relationship. For instance, in Measure for Measure Lucio the fantastic refers to the Duke as "the old fantastical duke of dark corners" (IV.3.156). J. W. Lever, ed., Measure for Measure (the Arden Edition; London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 119, noted "duke of dark corners" meant "keeper of secret assignations with women". Thus Donne's image here may be a hidden reference which reinforces the idea that in redefining their relationship, they are turning away from sexual love.

48 Bald, p. 174.

49 Milgate, p. 228. Under "denizen", the OED interestingly cites Donne Sermon xxxviii. "Can in an instant denizen and naturalize that Soule that was an alien to the Covenant".

50 Letters, pp. 103-5; quoted in Bald (pp. 179-180), and dated early in 1608 (p. 180n); quoted in part in Grierson (II, cxl-cxli) who notes its similarity to the letters of the Mitcham period.

51 Milgate, p. 266; not, as Bald suggests (p. 173), a New Year's gift in 1607.

52 Serious discussion of virtue and discretion, integrity and proper conduct, is characteristic of Donne's verse letters to men friends; his verse letters to ladies are generally lighter, more entertaining, perhaps because he often doubted their intellectual capacity. The gradually deepening seriousness of his exchanges with Lady Bedford led Donne to combine this more philosophical tone with the imagery of the courtly convention.

Compare the first stanza of this verse letter with The Second Anniversary, ll. 402-405:

Because that God did live so long above  
Without this Honour, and then lov'd it so,  
That he at last made Creatures to bestow  
Honour on him;

and also ll. 7-9,

So from low persons doth all honour flow,  
Kings, whom they would have honour'd, to us show,  
And but direct our honour, not bestow.

with The Second Anniversary, ll. 407-409:

But since all honours from inferiours flow,  
(For they do give it; Princes doe but shew,  
Whom they would have so honour'd) . . . .

53 Gosse (I, 273) suggested that Sir Robert hoped for an advantageous marriage, possibly with Prince Henry. Bald makes no mention of this in Donne and the Drurys.

54 Bald, pp. 263-4.

55 The Drury party left England in early November 1611 (Bald, p. 244).

56 This first part of the letter is quoted in Bald (p. 244): he identified Goodyer as the person addressed. Gosse, I, 284; Letters, pp. 93-96.

57 See Bald, p. 251.

58 Letters, p. 255; Gosse, I, 302. This letter is No. 92 in the Letters of 1651; it is not addressed to anyone. The central part of the letter, including this sentence, appears in No. 85, with slight alterations; it is addressed to "my honoured friend G. G. Esquire". Bennett (PQ, 70-74) argues that Letter No. 26, Letters pp. 73-78, in which Donne refers to general criticism of the Anniversaries, was to Goodyer (see p. 307 above, and footnote 68 below). This letter, No. 92, answers specific criticism from the noble ladies, reported to Donne by Garrard; the similar passage in No. 85 is a corrupt copy of No. 92. For a full discussion of this issue, see R. E. Bennett, "Donne's Letters from the Continent in 1611-12", Philological Quarterly, XIX, I (January, 1940), p. 67. Bald (p. 247) accepts that this letter is to Garrard.

<sup>59</sup> Bald, pp. 242-3.

<sup>60</sup> Chamberlain, Letters, I, 306.

<sup>61</sup> Derek Parker, John Donne and His World (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975) makes an interesting connection: Elizabeth Drury died on the Eve of St. Lucy's day. In Donne and the Drurys Bald noted only that "her death is first alluded to in a letter of 13 December" (p. 68). If so, the coincidence of dates perhaps created a conjunction between the surface event and its subconscious association: the Anniversaries and the "Nocturnall" are related in theme and personal content; perhaps they are also related more directly as meditations on the same "long last night" of his secular devotion.

<sup>62</sup> Bald, pp. 245-6.

<sup>63</sup> Milgate, p. 274.

<sup>64</sup> Letters, p. 177; quoted in Bald, p. 176.

<sup>65</sup> Letters, pp. 103-105; Bald, pp. 179-80; see above, pp. 294-5.

<sup>66</sup> "You have refin'd mee", l. 56.

It is interesting to compare Donne's use of this metaphor, the "originall" and its "copies" in the verse letters to Lady Bedford and in the Anniversaries.

"You have refin'd mee" 1608-9:

If good and lovely were not one, of both  
You were the transcript, and originall. (ll. 55-6)

First Anniversary 1611:

She that was best, and first originall  
Of all faire copies (ll. 227-8)

unfinished verse letter 1612:

Remote low Spirits, which shall ne'r read you,  
May in lesse lessons finde enough to doe,  
By studying copies, not Originals. (ll. 23-5)

Donne's only other use of this image was in a 1604 verse letter to Wotton, who as James' ambassador, was "a copie writ / From his Originall" (ll. 5-6).

There is a similar recurrence of the image of prophecy.

"You have refin'd mee":

Of past and future stories, which are rare,  
I find you all record, and prophesie. (ll. 51-2)

First Anniversary:

She, of whom th'Ancients seem'd to prophesie,  
When they called vertues by the name of shee (ll. 175-6)

There is an interesting variation of this image in a verse letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, written probably in 1609 when Goodyer solicited Donne's praises of her, and Donne avowed his "integrity"

to Lady Bedford, but wrote something for the other countess: he excuses his "flattery" of her by affirming that he "did long agoe / Pronounce" that "vertue should your beauty, 'and birth outgorw" and concludes that his "prophesies are all fulfill'd". These lines also include a variation of the closing image of "Twicknam Garden", as in contrast to the Countess of Huntingdon, he remains "a poyson'd fountaine still" (ll. 49-61: for the date, see Grierson, II, cxli and Milgate, p. 247).

Repetition of such images is an example of the limitations of the language of idealization, and an indication of the strength to the subconscious connection between the subject of the Anniversaries and Lady Bedford.

67 See footnote 58 above.

68 Letters, pp. 76-7; Gosse, I, 305-307; Merrill (p. 66), I. A. Shapiro, "The Text of Donne's Letters to Severall Persons", Review of English Studies, 7 (No. 27, July 1931), p. 301, Bennett (PQ, 67) and Bald, (p. 251) confirm the date, and Goodyer as the person addressed.

69 Letters, pp. 92-3; Gosse, I, 283-4; Bald, p. 275.

70 It is interesting to note that in an earlier letter to Wotton, January 1612, Donne mentioned he had sent some "French verses" to Lady Bedford for her enjoyment, but declared "I have been a great while more mannerly towards my Lady Bedford, then to trouble her with any of mine own verses". Letters, p. 125; Gosse, I, 290-294; Bald, p. 149.

71 There exists a wide range of critical opinion as to the possible date of composition of "A Nocturnall". Most critics agree with Grierson that "Twicknam Garden" and "A Nocturnall" are related to Donne's friendship with Lady Bedford, and attempt to refer at least the "Nocturnall" to some specific event.

Doniphan Louthan, The Poetry of John Donne, A Study in Explication (New York: Bookman Associates, 1951), suggested that "A Nocturnall" marked Lucy Harrington's marriage to the young Earl of Bedford, 12 December 1594. Sir Edmund Gosse (I, 74) related the poem to Donne's early unsatisfactory loves, before his marriage in 1601. Leishman felt that "A Nocturnall" was written while Donne was in France with the Drurys, in anticipation of the death of his wife from her childbed illness in late 1611: The Monarch of Wit (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1951), p. 176. Grierson related "A Nocturnall" to Lady Bedford's severe illness in 1612 (II, xxiii). Gardner was more than usually undecided on this question. She acknowledged several possibilities, 1611, 1612, or 1617--the death of Donne's wife--and concluded only that "A Nocturnall" was probably connected to Lady Bedford and therefore was written after 1607 (The Elegies and The Songs and Sonnets, p. 251). A final possibility

is that "A Nocturnall" referred to the death of Lady Bedford in 1627, since textual work of Grierson and Gardner established that the poem is not included in any manuscript which antedates that year (Grierson, II, 10).

Though the sardonic wit of "Twicknam Garden" echoes the mood of the early poems of negative abuse of women, its greater emotional intensity and more masterful, refined style differentiate it from the superficial and cynical wit of the 'promiscuity' poems. It seems to me even more unlikely that the sombre and serious "Nocturnall" could have been written before the great lyrics of mutual and contented love which are usually identified with the early years of Donne's marriage, following 1601. It is difficult to think that such a statement of profound loss could precede the experience of mutual and sustaining love.

There remain two serious possibilities, 1612 and 1617. Here we face the basic difficulty of the poem's biographical reference, whether "A Nocturnall" concerns Donne's relationship with his wife or with Lady Bedford. Richard E. Hughes has recently argued that the "Nocturnall" was Donne's elegy for his wife in 1617. He gave two reasons: the woman in the poem is already dead, and the "Nocturnall" is close in mood and statement to the "Holy Sonnet" usually regarded as commemorative of his wife. The Progress of the Soule: The Interior Career of John Donne (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1968), pp. 215, footnote 36 pp. 296-7. "A Nocturnall" does share with "Since she whom I lov'd . . ." both general tone and specific intention, the profound sense of loss and the decision to turn from the world and toward God. However, the most complete expression of the change of life-direction is, as we have seen, in The Anniversaries, which would suggest that "A Nocturnall" may be contemporary with them.

Accepting with Grierson that "A Nocturnall" does in fact refer to Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford, we must consider the final possibility for date of composition, 1627. It is improbable that, with the exception of the "Hymne to God the Father", "A Nocturnall" should be the last poem Donne wrote. Rather than reflecting the general tenor of mind of the religious man Donne had willed himself to become, it summarizes the first phase in the movement of spirit toward that goal; it conveys not acceptance and assurance, but transition. Its survival only in one late manuscript can be easily explained. "Twicknam Garden" is a set piece on a traditional theme, while the "Nocturnall" is intensely personal. There would be no difficulty in circulating the former, while Donne perhaps prevented the circulation of "A Nocturnall", in the same way that he promised not "to show" Lady Bedford's own poems. "A Nocturnall" thus did not circulate until after the deaths of those who would understand its personal meaning: Lady Bedford and Sir Henry Goodyer both died in 1627.

In an interesting article comparing the form and language of the "Nocturnall" to "the nocturne of the matins service as contained in the traditional Roman breviary", Richard E. Hughes agreed with Grierson's 1612 date, but identified two problems: the language of



the poem seems ill-suited to an idealized patroness; and, if the poem is "an anticipation of her death" (Grierson, II, 10), it is a singularly tasteless poem. Deciding that 1612 was the date of composition, Hughes arrived at two explanations: "that the poem 'The Nocturnall' is a lament, not for the Countess' death but for her renunciation of Donne's friendship; and that the poem represents an attempt on Donne's part to convince Lucy of his own conversion which he has undergone through her example." "John Donne's 'Nocturnall Upon S. Lucies Day': A Suggested Resolution", Cithara, 4 (1965), pp. 60-68. (Hughes later changed his mind, as we saw above.)

In general, this is an interpretation similar to my own; in particular, however, Hughes offered many questionable interpretations based on equally questionable assumptions. For instance, he accepted Grierson's suggestion that the more serious verse letters to Lady Bedford were written after 1612, and thus concluded that the "Nocturnall" and not "Twickenham Garden" marked the first "crisis" in Donne's relationship with the Countess. Hughes made no attempt to place the "Nocturnall" in a sequence of Donne's works, or to relate it to the Anniversaries. Not doing so left Hughes open to misapprehensions: for example, in discussing Donne's anxiety about Lady Bedford's attitudes while he was abroad with Drury, Hughes omitted any mention of the Anniversaries, which caused most of that uneasiness, as Donne's letters to Garrard and Goodyer show. And of course Hughes did not recognize that the "Nocturnal" is personal, that its tone does not suit an idealized patroness because Donne was not addressing Lady Bedford in those terms, that it is not a tasteless anticipation of her death but a deeply felt expression of his fear of the final loss her death would entail.

I suggest that "A Nocturnall" was written in 1612, and refers in general to the movement of spirit in the years of transition and in particular to Lady Bedford. The bitterness of rejection in "Twickenham Garden" has been modified, and deepened, to a sense of personal nullity in the loss of sustaining relation. "A Nocturnall" shares with The Anniversaries the theme of the shattering loss of a personally redeeming female figure. The Anniversaries and "A Nocturnall" represent successive phases in the same movement of spirit, as Donne disengages himself from woman as devotional object. The Second Anniversary more discursively, and the "Nocturnall" with effective concentration, indicate the conclusion of this movement: for in both works Donne imagines that his soul follows the soul of the idealized woman toward a religious resolution for personal distress. In disillusion with his secular ideals, Donne disengages himself from devotion to an idealized female figure, and consolidates his self-adjustment to personal relationship with God and a life in the Church.

<sup>72</sup> Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 214.

<sup>73</sup> Grierson, Metaphysical Lyrics . . ., p. 220.

74 It seems to me that Donne's state of mind when writing the "Nocturnall" was similar to Milton's state of mind when writing Lycidas. Lycidas is and is not about Edward King, the ostensible subject.

To understand why this pastoral elegy was composed, why the long silence was at last broken, and why Lycidas is one of the most autobiographical of all Milton's minor verse, it is necessary to know, not only the specific event, but also the state of mind that prompted the form and content of the poem. This state of mind held in anxious suspension all the happenings of the year 1637.

In 1637, Milton suffered a period of acute restlessness and mental anguish. He had written no verse for almost three years. While he had been in retirement at his father's estate at Horton, "Milton's conception of his own Christian ministry [outside the Church] had slowly crystallized". Milton's mother died on April 3rd. Ben Jonson was buried in Westminster Abbey on August 9th, "and men told each other that English poetry was dead". Edward King was drowned August 10th. Returned to Horton after a brief journey, perhaps to Cambridge, Milton was restless and lonely: in November, he wrote Lycidas. See William Riley Parker, Milton: A Biography, I, 145-157.

75 For my discussion of "You have refin'd mee", see above p. 281-284.

76 For my discussion of "T'have written then", see above, p. 291-294.

77 Erik H. Erikson, Young Man Luther: A study in psychoanalysis and history (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1958), p. 103. In discussing the "depth of regression" which can ensue from an identity crisis, Erikson concludes:

. . . at no other time in life can severe regression to a play with nothingness appear in such systematized form, and yet be, as it were, experimental, an adventure in reaching inner rock bottom to find something firm to stand on. (pp. 103-104)

A similar state of mind perhaps accounts for Donne's fascination with nothingness in the transition years. The "Nocturnall" is reflective; the regressive process, and the consolidation of new identity, is near completion, as Donne found "something firm to stand on" in personal devotion to a loving God.

78 Letters, p. 178; reference to the birth of Donne's son Nicholas confirms the date; Bald, p. 268.

79 Bald, p. 276.

80 See Bald, p. 276.

<sup>81</sup> Letters, pp. 259-261; Gosse, I, 294-5; quoted and dated 4 August 1614 in Bald (p. 277); Merrill (pp. 223-4) identified Lady Bedford as the lady referred to, but this is unlikely.

<sup>82</sup> Bald, p. 277.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. Gardner also suggested the "Obsequies" were written after the verse letter to the Countess of Salisbury (Divine Poems, p. lxiv), and that Donne thus kept his promise.

<sup>84</sup> Bald, p. 274.

<sup>85</sup> See Bald, p. 276. Donne's reference in Letters (p. 153) to Harington's recovery from an earlier bout of his illness is very slight proof for an affectionate friendship. It may have been intended only to convey to Lady Bedford through Goodyer his continuing interest in the welfare of her nearest relatives. Grierson says of the elegy itself: "There is not much in Donne's ingenious, tasteless poem which evinces affection for Harington or sorrow for his tragic end" (II, 206).

However, an undated letter to Lady Bedford attests Donne's acquaintance with her brother:

Madam, Amongst many other dignities which this letter hath by being received and seen by you, it is not the least, that it was prophesied of before it was born: for your brother told you in his letter, that I had written: he did me much honour both in advancing my truth so farre as to call a promise an act already done; and to provide me a means of doing him a service in this act, which is but doing right to my self: for by this performance of mine own word, I have also justified that part of his Letter which concerned me; and it had been a double guiltinesse in me, to have made him guilty towards you. It makes no difference that this came not the same day, nor bears the same date as his; for though in inheritances and worldly possessions we consider the dates of Evidences, yet in Letters, by which we deliver over our affections, and assurances of friendship, and the best faculties of our souls, times and days cannot have interest, nor be considerable, because that which passes by them, is eternall, and out of the measure of time. Because therefore it is the office of this Letter, to convey my best wishes, and all the effects of a noble love unto you, (which are the best fruits that so poor a soil, as my poor soul is, can produce) you may be pleased to allow the Letter thus much of the souls privilege, as to exempt it from straitnesse of hours, or any measure of times, and so beleieve it came then. And for my part, I shall make it so like my soul, that

as that affection, of which it is the messenger, begun  
in me without my knowing when, any more than I know when  
my soul began; so it shall continue as long as that.

Your most affectionate friend and servant J.D.

There is no internal evidence which would indicate the date. Merrill (pp. 20-21) suggested only that it was written before the death of Lord Harington in 1614. The unadorned style, the absence of Petrarchan compliment, the general tenor of the "noble love" expressed suggest a date after their relationship had taken its serious turn: I suggest 1612 or 1613.

<sup>86</sup> One such poem was the epithalamium on the Somerset-Essex marriage. A letter to Sir Robert Ker, written probably in January 1614, indicates that Donne understood the necessity of writing the poem, but was reluctant to do so:

If my Muse were only out of fashion, and but wounded and maimed like Free-will in the Roman Church, I should adventure to put her to an Epithalamion. But since she is dead, like Free-will in our Church, I have not so much Muse left as to lament her loss. Perchance this business may produce occasions, wherein I may express my opinion of it, in a more serious manner. Letters, pp. 270-271.

<sup>87</sup> Grierson, I, 270.

<sup>88</sup> See Bald, pp. 295-6. In his letter to Goodyer on 20 December 1614 announcing the project, Donne anticipates the reaction of a noble patron identified only as "that good lady":

One thing more I must tell you; but so softly, that I am loath to hear my self: and so softly, that if that good Lady were in the room, with you and this Letter, she might not hear. It is, that I am brought to a necessity of printing my Poems, and addressing them to my Lord Chamberlain. This I mean to do forthwith; not for much publique view, but at mine own cost, a few Copies. I apprehend some incongruities in the resolution; and I know what I shall suffer from many interpretations: but I am at an end, of much considering that; and, if I were as startling in that kinde, as ever I was, yet in this particular, I am under an unescapable necessity, as I shall let you perceive, when I see you. By this occasion I am made a Rhapsoder of mine own rags, and that cost me more diligence, to seek them, then it did to make them. This made me aske to borrow that old book of you, which it will be too late to see, for that use, when I see you: for I must do this, as a valediction to the world, before I take Orders. But this is it, I am to aske you; whether you ever made any such use of the letter in verse, A nostre

Countesse chez vous, as that I may not put it in, amongst the rest to persons of that rank; for I desire very very much, that something should bear her name in the book, and I would be just to my written words to my Lord Harrington, to write nothing after that. I pray tell me as soon as you can, if I be at liberty to insert that: for if you have by any occasion applied any piece of it, I see not, that it will be discerned, when it appears in the whole piece. Letters, pp. 196-8.

Bald assumes that this passage refer to Lady Bedford, but for two reasons, I hesitate to agree. Shapiro (RES, p. 297) says that by January 1613, Goodyer "seems to have established" with the Countess of Huntingdon "a relation similar to that existing formerly between himself and Lady Bedford". Bald himself confirms this (p. 276). Donne continued to send greetings to Lady Bedford through Goodyer, it is true: Lady Bedford and Goodyer would meet at court, and continue their social contact, though on a less regular, less familiar basis. However, Donne's concern here seems to echo that of the 1609 letter in response to Goodyer's attempt to interest Donne in approaching the Countess of Huntingdon: he agreed with some hesitation to write a verse letter to her, with this reservation: ". . . [I] intreat you by our friendship, that by this occasion of versifying, I be not traduced, nor esteemed light, in that Tribe, and that house where I have lived" because "that knowledge which she hath of me, was in the beginning of a graver course, then of a Poet". (Letters, pp. 103-5; Bald, pp. 179-80).

The second reference to the lady confirms that she was not Lady Bedford. Donne worried that Goodyer had copied "the letter in verse" to this lady, and used it for his own purposes; he wanted to include some tribute to her, but could not if Goodyer had appropriated it, because he did not wish to write something new. This suggests that only one verse letter to this lady existed: if there were more, he could have used another, so that "something should bear her name in the book". It is interesting to note that, in the 1609 letter, Donne cited his "integrity" to Lady Bedford as the reason for not writing to the Countess of Huntingdon; here he cites his integrity to his promise at the close of the elegy on Lord Harrington, as the reason for not writing something new.

It is also interesting to note what the 1614 collection may have included. In her comment on the manuscripts (Divine Poems, pp. lxii-lxvi) Gardner established that the hypothetical manuscript X represents Donne's own 1613 collection. It includes only two of the verse letters to Lady Bedford, and does not include the verse letter to the Countess of Huntingdon. It does, however, include the verse letter to the Countess of Salisbury, and that introduces another possible interpretation of this letter. Only one verse letter to the Countess of Salisbury survives, written at the request of George Garrard, early in 1614, and just before Donne wrote the "Obsequies"

on Lord Harington. If this letter were actually written to Garrard, then the lady referred to would probably be the Countess of Salisbury. There is, however, no reason to think this letter was not addressed to Goodyer, and no evidence of acquaintance between Goodyer and Lady Salisbury.

<sup>89</sup> Bald, p. 275.

<sup>90</sup> Letters, pp. 217-221; Gosse, II, 73; Bald, p. 297. Donne may be excused a little of his tone because on the strength of her earlier offer to pay his debts, made in response to the elegy on her brother, he had told his creditors they would be repaid. In a letter of 13 December 1614, he told Goodyer that trusting "to the constancy of that noble lady" he had 'fixed times to his creditors'. Letters, pp. 148-50; Bald, p. 295.

<sup>91</sup> Patricia Thomson, "John Donne and the Countess of Bedford", MLR, 44 (April 1949), 332-335.

<sup>92</sup> Richard E. Hughes, "John Donne's 'Nocturnall Upon S. Lucies Day': A Suggested Resolution", Cithara, 4 (May 1965), 62-64.

<sup>93</sup> For example, this note from a letter to Carleton on 5 July 1617:

Dr. Burgess preached at Paul's Cross on Sunday, where Mr. Secretary and his lady were present, and as great an auditory as hath been seen there; but whatsoever other men say, for my part I can discover nothing so extraordinary in him but opinion. There is a business of a son-in-law of his at the Hague, wherein I think you will be moved to assist him with your favour. Whatsoever you shall please to do for him will be well bestowed, as well in regard of himself as his friends that wish him well, specially the Lady Winwood and the Lady Vere, with whom he is very potent. Letters, II: 269; 86.

<sup>94</sup> Akrigg, Jacobean Pageant, p. 317.

<sup>95</sup> Hughes, p. 62.

<sup>96</sup> Gosse, I, 185; Letters, p. 72. .

<sup>97</sup> Gosse, I, 226; Letters, p. 29.

<sup>98</sup> Sir Tobie Matthew, A Collection of Letters (London: for Henry Herringman, 1660), pp. 67-69; for the date, see Bald, p. 330n.

<sup>99</sup> Quoted in Jessopp, p. 201. Considering Donne's position as Dean, Jessopp commented:

As a theologian, Donne occupied a middle position between the two extreme parties among the clergy, whose differences were becoming daily more pronounced, and their attitude more hostile towards each other. On the burning questions of the ceremonies and the sacraments, he was emphatically a High Churchman, outspoken, uncompromising, definite, though gentle, sympathetic, and animated by a large-hearted tolerance. But in his treatment of Holy Scriptures no Puritan of them all insisted more frequently upon the inspiration of every syllable in the Old Testament and the New. (p. 143)

100 Jessopp, p. 47.

101 Bald, p. 331.

102 Letters, pp. 174-o; Gosse, II, 122; Bald, p. 340.

103 Letters, pp. 224-5, addressed to Sir Thomas Lucy; Bald, pp. 342, 345 suggests it was actually addressed to Goodyer; so does Bennett, PQ, 75.

104 Bald, p. 347. Jessopp confused the details and conflated this meeting with Lady Bedford's illness the next month:  
Lady Bedford was returning from Heidelberg, where she had been seriously ill. Donne was himself on his way to Germany. Lady Bedford was at Antwerp, and she was lying in a darkened room suffering from some affection of the eyes (p. 48).

105 This sermon is No. 8 in Vol. III, The Sermons of John Donne, G. R. Potter and E. M. Simpson, eds., (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957). Donne preached on the text of Job 13: 15, "Loe, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him". This sermon is not, I think, of much importance here, but it is interesting that the subject of this last document of their relationship should be "trust". In defining man's relation to God in this sermon, Donne used a phrase which echoed the imagery of the "Nocturnal": ". . . all that is, is nothing, but with relation to him".

106 Letters, p. 155; Bald, pp. 372-3.

107 Letters, pp. 176-7; Gosse, II, 157; Bald, p. 413.

## CONCLUSION

Patron: One who countenances, supports or protects.  
Commonly a wretch who supports with insolence,  
and is paid with flattery.  
A guardian saint.

Samuel Johnson (Dictionary)

In the latter half of the seventeenth century, patronage in the older Elizabethan sense--that reciprocity of interest, concern and duty which marked the aristocratic ideal of "housekeeping"-- declined and disappeared. By the time of Samuel Johnson, the individual highly-cultured patron who provided both an intelligent audience and financial support was an anachronism: the ideal still existed, but there were few such patrons in reality. The widening distribution of wealth, education, and taste created a new reading public in the literate middle class. The writer could live by his pen, a 'professional' in a new sense, supported by subscription publishing, magazines and newspapers. And of course there were patrons of a different sort in the political parties and the press. As the inheritor of aspects of the Sidney-Pembroke tradition and "the last noted representative"<sup>1</sup> of the literary patroness in England, Lady Bedford provides an interesting example in the first phase of this transition in the nature of patronage.

Johnson's definition also points to an essential ambivalence



in the poet-patron relationship. The patron's generosity was appreciated, but the poet often resented the vicissitudes of that generosity, and his own dependence on it. The patron's interest merited high praise, but self-interest or indifference brought scorn, for the poet needed a sympathetic audience as much as he needed financial support. To the writers for whom she was patron and friend, Lady Bedford must have seemed to combine all the aspects of this definition. Only Daniel, financially and emotionally the most independent, sought her approval while caring little for her frowns.

A clear pattern has emerged in Lady Bedford's relationships with writers. Often at the suggestion of a friend, a relative, or another writer, she became the patron and friend of a series of literary figures. In this she followed a combination of current court fads and her own personal interest. All hoped to use her to gain entrance to the royal circle; each in turn was left behind when her tastes and interests changed; most felt rejected by her, quarrelled with her, and used poetic conventions to express a more-or-less personal sense of outrage and loss.

"Bequeathed" to her by his first patron the older Sir Henry Goodyer, Drayton found that Lady Bedford's tastes were those of the new generation of young aristocrats; his earlier Elizabethan style--the long, moralizing, 'heroical', descriptive chronicle-poem--seemed out of date. To remain his ideal "Great Lady", Lady Bedford should have continued favourable; the "Selena" verses indicate she did not. That allegorical attack reveals Drayton's hurt disillusion with

Lady Bedford when she preferred some rival poet.

Florio was the foremost of several refugee protestant writers and teachers supported by the Haringtons and Lady Bedford. His long dedicatory epistle in 1603 provides a provocative character sketch of Lady Bedford as a generous but demanding patron. His descriptive narrative suggests that, in her relationship with a writer, Lady Bedford took the platonic-love situation seriously-- as lady-muse, she cajoled and threatened, teased and ordered; she was the ideal lady in an almost-too-real incarnation.

Though he shared Drayton's moralizing tone and somewhat of the chronicle style, Daniel was more adaptable. His epistles to noble friends are lofty and admonitory, but in masques and pastorals he learned to suit the lighter tastes of the Jacobean court. His relationship with Lady Bedford was strictly professional: protected by that distance, only he suffered neither pain nor disillusion.

At the end of the series, and for the longest period of time, Jonson and Donne shared her attentions. The greatest of the Jacobean masque writers, Jonson was the most useful to Lady Bedford in her role as queen's favourite; Donne was the most compatible to her tastes, the most personally appealing. For Jonson and Donne, each for different reasons and in a different way, the crisis of their relationship with her came in 1609. There is no evidence that Jonson ever again had direct contact with Lady Bedford; Donne attempted to redefine his relationship with her as part of the re-direction of his spiritual life. Their contrasting reactions reflected the different nature

of their relationship with and idealization of her. For Jonson, Lady Bedford proved to be too human to sustain the role of ideal patron and lady-muse. For Donne, she remained too much the great lady to be his human ideal.

Speculative as the undertaking must be, it has been possible to suggest a significant pattern in the following events of the crisis-year 1609:

Winter 1608-1609: Donne's verse letter to Magdalen Herbert "Mad paper stay"--written when Donne "learnt that Mrs. Herbert resolved to remarry";

February 1609: Magdalen Herbert's marriage to Sir John Danvers;

February to August 1609: Donne's Holy Sonnets 1633, 1-6;

Spring 1609: Donne's "Twicknam Garden";

Donne's verse letter to Lady Bedford "Epitaph on Himself";

4 May 1609: death of Bridget, Lady Markham: Donne's elegy was probably written before the funeral 19 May;

Donne's verse letter to Lady Bedford "You that are she and you";

Lady Bedford's illness in early June;

4 August 1609: death of Cecilia Bulstrode--Donne, Jonson and Sir Edward Herbert wrote elegies;

August to December, 1609: Donne's Holy Sonnets 7-12;

Donne's verse letter to Lady Bedford "T'have written then";

Late summer 1609: Donne engaged in religious controversy, preparing Pseudo-Martyr ;

Summer 1609: Jonson preparing Epicoene; first performance probably  
late 1609 or early 1610; entered in the Stationer's Register  
20 Sept. 1610;

New year's (25 March) 1610:<sup>2</sup> Donne's verse letter to Lady Bedford  
"This twilight of two yeares".

This sequence of events suggests that, during the winter of 1608-09, Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford reached its most intense, most personally involving phase. Either she became aware for the first time of the nature of his feeling for her, or she became frightened at its intensity and the threat to her social position, and she withdrew. Donne experienced her withdrawal as rejection; his reaction was complex. Superficially, he attempted a sophisticated management of the situation, the ironic acceptance and witty self-deprecation of "Twickenham Garden". Rather than abandon his relationship with her, he attempted to find a new tone of address in his verse letters, and to change the outward nature of their relationship, perhaps by becoming her spiritual advisor.

Two other incidents within the Bedford circle may be related to this crisis in Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford. Chapman appended to his Homer a sonnet of moral admonition, "forewarning" Lady Bedford to beat "the narrow path to happiness" by avoiding "vulgar pleasure": "Still please with virtue, Madame: That will last".<sup>3</sup> In Epicoene, Jonson anatomized the negative potential which a social circle like Lady Bedford's at Twickenham would have if

frivolity and amorous intrigue were carried to an immoral extreme.<sup>4</sup>

Jonson was less intimately involved with Lady Bedford, and therefore more able to separate the person from the ideal. He also had the advantage of speaking in different voices in different modes. In his poems to noble friends, Jonson articulated his social ideal, and occasionally noted some deviation from it. In his plays, he focussed on human failings as examples of ideals unachieved or distorted. Yet Lady Bedford had, for different reasons and with different results, a similar effect on Jonson as on Donne. Her failure to uphold or to correspond to his ideal occasioned a change of focus and tone, not in his direct addresses to her, but in his dramatic works.

What Jonson himself thought of Lady Bedford is impossible to tell. His poetic self first approved, later disapproved. He tended to think of great ladies in black or white terms, and found it difficult, at least in his writings, to contemplate a human blend of saint and sinner. Lady Bedford's relationship with Donne, however defined, must have struck Jonson as a dangerous compromise of virtue on the part of both. His response to the situation can be seen to have precipitated the central social criticism of Epicoene.

With regard to Donne, there can be little question that his poems of 1609-10 reflect the nature, development and eventual resolution of a psychological crisis. "Twickenham Garden", The Anniversaries and the "Nocturnal" mark the different stages in Donne's effort to articulate his sense of loss and to project a resolution for his

personal dilemma. "Twicknam Garden" is a first stance, a reaction to the withdrawal and rejection he realized was developing; it is essentially a public pose--controlled, ironic, defensive, self-pitying--designed to convince both the lady and himself that he will survive. The Petrarchan convention allowed a measure of emotional and psychological truth to find expression, while ironic wit ensured distance--his distance from the object and the cause, the lady, but more importantly, a protective distance from his own feeling of loss. The particular loss, the actual change in the relationship, could only be expressed in this way. The feeling itself was too deep, too potentially self-destroying, to be articulated immediately. In the Anniversaries, he explored in an entirely different poetic framework the significance of the loss of a personally sustaining idealized feminine figure. It was the threat of final loss in death and its reminder of the earlier rejection--Lady Bedford's 1612 illness--not the first searing realization of rejection itself, which occasioned the "Nocturnal". There he captured, not the immediate feeling of loss, but the knowledge experienced through time of its emotional and psychological significance, and there he restated the connection adumbrated in the Anniversaries between his loss of the idealized female figure and his discovery of God. Such an interpretation in no way diminishes the poetic achievement of the "Nocturnal" itself. For the "Nocturnal" is, I think, Donne's finest poem, his tribute to Lady Bedford's central place in his imaginative life and his announcement of the new direction it was about to take.

Lady Bedford's withdrawal and Mrs. Herbert's second marriage--events which Donne interpreted as rejection and loss--occurred almost simultaneously. Donne's feelings about his two closest female friends and his reactions to these events combined in the depths of his self to reinforce the impression that devotion to an idealized female figure was no longer psychologically sustaining. Before these events of 1608-09, Donne had, in his relationships with these two ladies, split off two aspects of his idealization of woman: Mrs. Herbert was friend, mentor, spiritual guide, almost mother; Lady Bedford was his romantic ideal. At the very time that the idealized lady toward whom he felt more-than-platonic adoration rejected him in favour of "truth" to her husband, the beloved friend married a younger man.<sup>5</sup> As Lady Danvers, Magdalen Herbert remained the strong but warm, serious but charming lady she had always been, and after 1609 Lady Bedford became, in her relationship with Donne, rather more like her. But Donne, in response to this feeling of rejection, conflated his sense of these two actual women into an idealized female figure who was in all but spiritual terms "dead" to him. And then he endeavoured, first to maintain his idealization in spiritual terms, and finally to assimilate that idealization within the new religious direction of his life.

It is possible to see Donne's life as a series of idealizations, or as a search for an ideal figure who would be psychologically and spiritually sustaining. The idealized object was necessary because Donne's inner self was neither strong nor self-sufficient: he needed

the confirming force of an idealized external being--a woman or a God. He first sought a human ideal in sexual love, while at the same time cynically proclaiming that the ideal was impossible. But in "Satire III" he suggested the outline of the search: first he would pursue "Truth", imagined as a female figure, and eventually that pursuit would lead him to God. He found his secular ideal temporarily in his marriage, and more permanently in his idealization of his noble lady-friends. Then, when he attempted with Lady Bedford a personal relationship with the ideal figure, he was rejected, and retreated from that failure into renewed and redefined idealization. Leaving Petrarch's pose of adoring the person of the lady, he assumed Dante's of adoring the idea. Finally, he followed the soul of the idealized female figure to God, the ultimate idealization.

What I have tried to articulate in the conjunction of Donne's life and art in the years 1606-1613 is an emotional, spiritual and psychological development connected to and perhaps occasioned by his relationship with Lady Bedford, and reflected in what I have called the "poems of transition". The concept of a process of transition and the importance of Donne's relationship with Lady Bedford in that process are essential elements in an explanation of Donne's inner life in the decade before he entered the church. An understanding of that process and that relationship, and of the poems written between 1606 and 1613 which reflect both, redefines the development within Donne's inner self which changed him from Jack Donne into the Doctor.



As for Lady Bedford herself, although she was influential in the social and political life of her time, she was not as important as has been generally assumed. In her political and religious opinions, she was influenced by personal alliances, by relatives and friends. Her surviving letters show no great political acumen but some intelligent observation; they reveal only a conventional piety. Even in her passion for gardens, she was not original.<sup>6</sup> As a patron of poetry and painting, she followed court fad and current taste, yet she was praised for her intelligence and discrimination. For ten years at Twickenham she gave generous hospitality to her literary and social circle, providing an ambience conducive to poetic activity and open exchange. Living in a more settled and retired style at Moor Park in the last decade of her life, she became "a collector of great taste".<sup>7</sup> She was attractive, well-educated, lively and gracious, the "Great Lady" in agreeable human form. For the foremost writers of her time, she was a generous patron, an intelligent audience, and most importantly an imaginative ideal. She was adored and attacked with equal vehemence. The poems written of her, in either vein, still convey the involvement her presence and interest evoked, and the power of the human ideal she appeared to embody.

## FOOTNOTES

## (CONCLUSION)

<sup>1</sup> Myra Reynolds, The Learned Lady in England, 1650-1760, p. 433.

<sup>2</sup> For the suggested dates, see the following: "Mad paper stay", Bald, p. 183; the Herbert-Danvers marriage, Bald, p. 183 and Chamberlain, Letters, I, 288; Holy Sonnets 1-6, Gardner, Divine Poems, p. xliii-xlix; "Twicknam Garden", p. 223-4, 284-6 above; "Epitaph on Himself", Milgate, Satires, . . . , p. 272, and p. 286-7 above; Markham death, Bald, p. 177; "You that are she and you", Milgate, p. 260; Lady Bedford's illness, HMCR, VII, 527; Bulstrode death, Bald, pp. 177-8; Holy Sonnets 7-12, Gardner, Divine Poems, pp. xlii-xlix; "T'have written then", Milgate, p. 262; Pseudo-Martyr, Bald, pp. 218-19; Epicoene, Herford and Simpson, II (1925) 69; "This twilight of two yeares", Milgate, p. 266.

<sup>3</sup> Chapman's sonnet "To the most honored Patroness and Grace of Virtue, the Countess of Bedford":

To you, fair patroness and muse to learning;  
 The fount of learning and the Muses sends  
 This cordial for your virtues; and forewarning  
 To leave no good for th'ill the world commends.  
 Custom seduceth but the vulgar sort:  
 With whom, when Noblesse mixeth, she is vulgar;  
 The truly noble, still repair their fort,  
 With gracing good excitements, and gifts rare;  
 In which the narrow path, to happiness,  
 Is only beaten. Vulgar pleasure sets  
 Nets for herself, in swings of her excess;  
 And beats herself there dead, ere free she gets.  
 Since pleasure then with pleasure still doth waste,  
 Still please with virtue, Madame: That will last.

The Poems of George Chapman, ed. Phyllis Brooks Bartlett (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962), pp. 400-401: slightly modernized. Bartlett notes "the haughty and puritanical tone" (p. 484) is quite different from that of the other addresses, which are conventional and laudatory.

<sup>4</sup> The major event in the wider literary world of London in 1609 was the publication of Shakespeare's sonnets. What connection, if any, existed between that publication and these events in the Bedford circle, I do not know. Jonson may have seen in the poet-dark lady-young lord triangle another example of immorality and intrigue. If that sequence were autobiographical, Jonson would surely have known the facts; autobiographical or fictional, in that situation, as in the Donne-Lady Bedford one, the poet suffers the lady's change of heart.

<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to note in "Twicknam Garden" and the verse letter to Mrs. Herbert "Mad paper stay" both the similar ironic tone and the fact that it is only in the last line that Donne mentions his rival for the lady's affection, and connects her "truth" to his rival with her rejection of him.

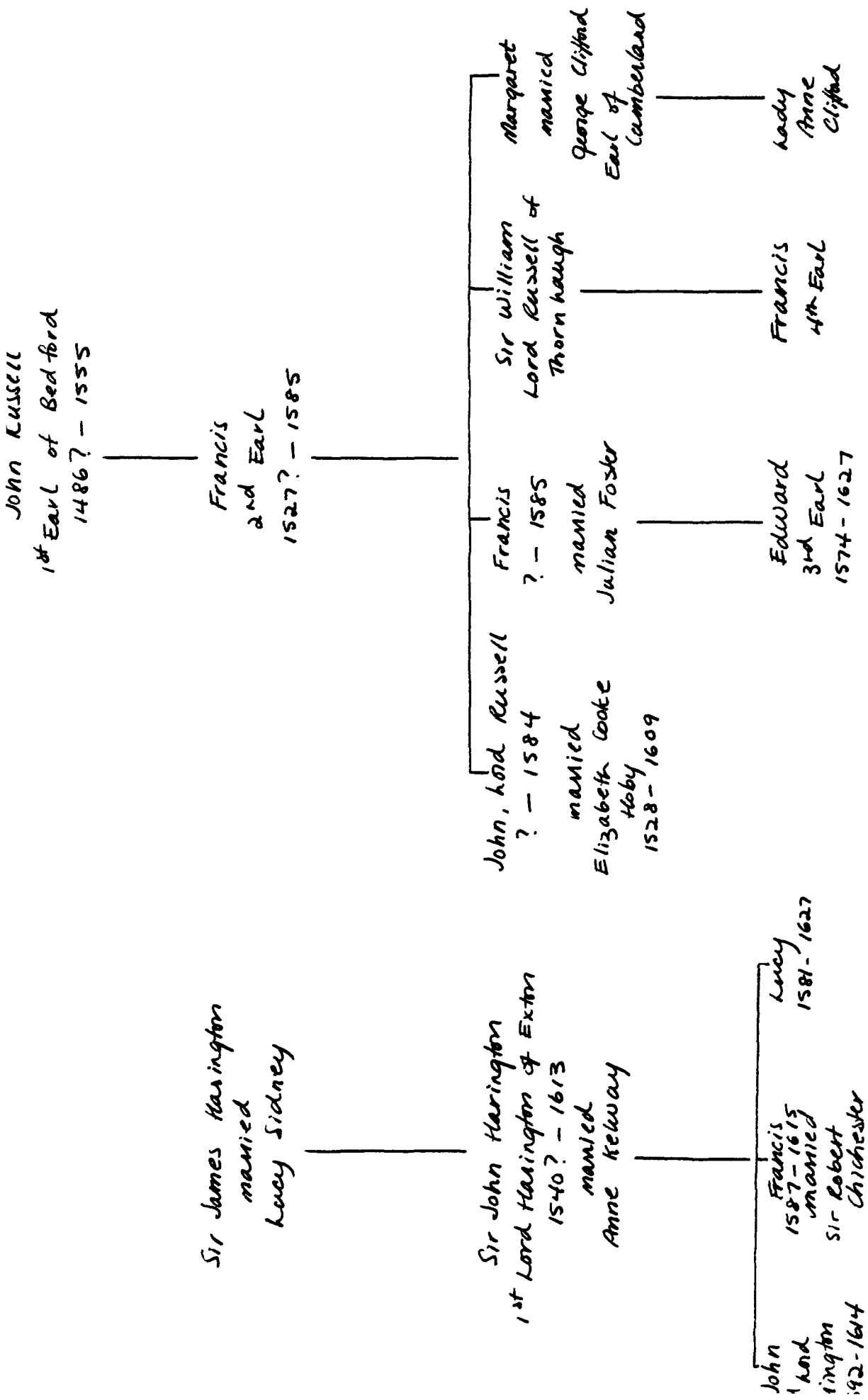
We will not know the full story of Donne's life in the years of transition until we have a complete understanding of his relationship with Mrs. Herbert. Pending further studies, I can only suggest a comparison with Lady Bedford and a different idealization which in its outcome contributed to Donne's new religious direction.

<sup>6</sup> Before 1612, Cecil, Burghley, Northumberland, Sir Thomas Fanshawe, and Lord Cobham had all "distinguished themselves" in planning gardens. Lawrence Stone, Fortune and Family, p. 87.

<sup>7</sup> Ben Jonson, VII (1947), xv-xix.

APPENDIX I:

A BRIEF FAMILY TREE



APPENDIX II:

LADY BEDFORD'S LETTERS

1

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

THE K. of Denmarcke's unexpected coming hath constrayned me to defer my setting forward towards Rutland from the 8th of August to the tenth, which is Wensday comse'night, and so itt will be the 11th before I shall be at Huntingdon, whear I promis myselfe the contentment of meeting you; whearof to have a confirmation, and that you may not be ignorant of this alteration, I send this bearer, whom lett me intreatt you to dispatch as soone as you may: and suffer not any thing lesse then neccessity to change your purpose, and Mr Bacon's, to take this jorney for her sake that will ever be to you both a most assured and affectionate freind,

L. BEDFORD.

My mistres comanded me not to forget her kindest comendations to you.

Bedford House, in haste, this Saterdag morneinge, 30th July (1614)

To my worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Lord Braybrooke, The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Cornwallis 1613-1644 (London: S. & J. Bentley, et al, 1842), Letter XVIII, p. 23.

DEARE LADY,

You should not have had so just cause to acuse me for being thus long without sending to you could I have told what sertayne account to have given you of my fortune, which finding in ballance att my retorne out of Rutland, I still wayted to see which way itt would settle before I writte. Now I thanke God I can say, that out of a very great and almost hopeles danger my Lord of Bedford hath recovered so much health and strength as we are out of all fear of him, and doe conseave that the violent fever he hath had hath done him some good for his palsy, his speach being better then itt was before he fell sick, though his lamenes be nothing amended. His present state setts me at liberty to follow my terme businesses, which daylie are multiplid upon me, and make me heavile feel the burden of a broken estate; yett doe I not doubt but by the assistance of Almighty God I shall ear long overcum all those difficulties which at the present contest with me. Though yesterday Sir John Haryngton hath begunne a course in the Chaunsery against my mother, but indeed most concerning me, wherby he will gett nothing but lost labor, nor will itt cost me more then som few lawyers' fees, and a litle troble, which I am borne to, and therfore imbrace it as part of my portion. I extreamly desier to hear wheather your ill health this sommer have had so happy an issue as I hoped it wold, which lett me intreatt you by this bearer I may, and wheather you have any purpos to see London this winter or no, because, if you have not, I will then send to you againe before the ende of the terme. Your cousin Killegrew is gone to see your neyghbour for a while, nothing altered. My La. Uvedale is become the fonde mother of a sonne. My La. Marquis of Winchester is dead, and our noble freind my Lord Mounteagle very ill of a swelling in his throat. John Elviston died on Tuesday last, to the great griefe of all good daunsers. My La. of Roxbrough grows big, and lookes her for about the latter ende of the next month or begineing of December, which I fear will draw me to more attendance then of late I have putt myselfe unto. My mother affectionately salutes you, and this is all the nuese this dull towne afords; else by this you may see I should be easily invited to lengthen my letter, which now I will conclude with my best wishes to Mr Bacon, little Fred., and yourselfe, that have no whear a faithfuller freind then

L. BEDFORD.

Bedford House, this 27th of October (1614).

To my worthy freind the La. Cornewallis att Broome.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXI, pp. 28 - 30.



3

Bedford House, this            day of Desember (1615)

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

BECAUSE your woeman went so sodainely out of the towne as my letters fayled comming tyme enough to goe by her, I send this bearer, by whos journey I shall not only have the means to bring myselfe to your remembrance, whear I desier to live as your most affectionat freind, but the contentment to hear how you and yours doe. If I might also by him understand that Mr Bacon and you wold shortly be in towne, itt wold be very wellcome newse to me that am like to be a Londoner the most of this winter, to ayer my house at Twicknam against the spring. I am shuer the busshesses now a foote hear flie over all the kingdom, and therfore cannot be unknown to you; yett Sir Thomas Monson's being sent this morning to the Tower perhaps will not be so soone with you by any other hand as by this letter; therfore itt tells you of that, and that the change of his prison is a signe ther is more to be laid to his charge then what consernes Overbury's death only. My La. of Somersett is not yett brought to bed, but this is her last day of reckoning. Whear and when this tragedy will ende I thinke God only knows; to whom, with my best devotion, I comende you, and beg of you that no omission of seremonis may make you thinke me the lesse

Your faithfull freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Sweet Madam, comend me to Mr Bacon and continue me in his good opinion, which I will be ever ready to deserve by any office of an affectionat freind.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXIV, pp. 33-34.

4

DEAR CORNEWALLIS,

HAD I not continually for a long tyme expected your coming up, it had been more needfull for me then you to have excused so long a silence. Now, having that to allege for myselfe, I will tell you that I cannot so easily forgett the many proofes I have had of your affection as for the omission of any seremony to suspect itt. I should have binne extream sorry to hear of your children not being well, if withall I had not heard so good newse of ther amendment, whos health I will hartely pray may so fast increase as I may see both you and them shortly hear, which I know cannot be but that I shall have Mr Bacon's company too, whos good opinion and love I shall ever declare my redines to observe whensoever I shall be so happy as to know any ocation whearby I may wittnes what I am to him for his owne worth and your sake, whos

Most faithfull and affectionat freind I am,

L. BEDFORD

Whight hall, in hast, this Good-friday at 12 o'clock (1616).

My La. of Roxbrough is so near her tyme as she is not able to wait, which tyes me to a very strickt attendance. Her sonne is dead. My La. of Somersett is sent to the Tower, and will be very shortly arraigned. The Queen's leg is holle; to prevent a relapse, as soone as the K. is gone, she retornes to Grenwich and enters into a diet this spring. This is all the newse I can wright you.

To my worthy friend the La. Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXV, pp. 35-36.

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

I know you thinke itt strange that you have not all this while heardefrom me; but, so I know too, when you know the occasions, you will acquitte me of deserving much blame. When I went from hence itt was with a full resolution, if God contradicted not my purpos, to have seen you at Broome before my retorne heather, and to have intreated you to have made a journey to Exton to have been my gieste; but, because I could not sett a sertaine day for my goeing with you, I deferred my wrighting to you till I cam into the contry, wheare within 8 days the K. overtooke me; against whos coming, and during his stay att my house, all my tyme and litle witt was so taken up about the busnes of house keepinge as itt made me lay all else aside. Within 3 days after, my promis carried me to my Lo. of Huntingdon's, wheare I intended to have made but 2 days' stay, and then to have retorned to Exton; but ther I mett with a peremtory comandement from the Queene to wayte upon her at Woodstocke, which I did, though with so ill health as I much adoe to get heather to use the helpe of some phisicke: yett I thanke God he strengthened me to beare out the extream distempers I was in till I camme to this house of mine, where I thought to have rested but a very few days, and so have gonne into Rutland againe wheare I left my Lord; but itt pleased God to order itt otherwise, for within 2 days after my arrivall here I fell so extream sick as I was forced to take my bed, out of which I have not for the space of these 6 weekes binne 3 days together, nor yett have ventured out of my chamber; though I thanke God my health is much better than when I cam heather. Thus, Madam, may you see what hath soe long withheld me from sending to you, who I now hope winter will bring to this towne, which I should be extream glad to have confirmed by this bearer, and to hear that you and yours have escaped free from the danger or canker of this sickly tyme, wherein my people every whear have binne vissited with much sickness, which hath concluded at Exton with the death of poor Francke Markham, the newse whearof camme to me yesterday and brought me a great deale of sorrow, haveing ever had cause to hope, if God had spared her lyfe, she wold have repayd my care of her with honnor and comfort; whearin at her ende she hath not deseaved me, though my hope of seeing her happily bestowed be frustrate. Had she lived till Allhollandtyde she had died a wyfe, for I had concluded such a match for her, as I had reason to beleive she should have lived contentedly; but He that disposeth of all things hathprovided far better for her. Other then sad newse I cannot sende you, the rest I have to wrighte being that my mother goes presently into Germany be my La. Elizabeth's extreame earnest desier, and the K.'s commandement; which, the season of the yeare considered, is so cruell a jorney I much feare how she will passe itt. But her affection to her Highnes keeps her from being frighted with any difficultie; and her spiritt caries her body beyond

what almost could be hoped att her years, which I trust will not faile her in this no more then in other labors; which my weake hand begins to do me, and makes me remember how unexcusable my teadiousnes is, if part of the cause of itt weare not my care to satisfie you, who shall never have cause to acuse me of leaveing you unsatisfied, howsoever I may faile in seremonis, in any real proof I may give you that I am unchangeably

Your La most affectionat and faithfull freind,

L. BEDFORD

Deare Madam, do me the honnor to keepe me in Mr Bacon's favor, whos good opinion I should be proude to deserve in any thing wherin I can be of use to him. Kisse litle Fred. from me, and desier him to weare the token I send him, that he may somtymes remember he hath such a freind. I hartely beseech Allmighty God to make him, your other, and all He shall give you, lasting comforts.

Bedford House, from whence I shall remove as I am able to Harington House, and ther winter, this 9th of Sept. (1614)

To my worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis, at Broome.

Private Correspondence, Letter XIX, pp. 24-27  
My date 9 Sept. 1616

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

IF your lines are ever exceedinge wellcome to me, both because they comme from you and that they bringe with them the assurance of the continuance of your affection to me, which I infinitely prize and will never live not to deserve with the best proofes I can ever give you of mine, which I must acknowledge but a dew debt to you, as is the vissit I owe you at your owne house; which that I have not according to my promis performed ther hath binne no fault in my will, nor other hindrance then His that disposeth of His, att His, not our pleasure, and, as I formerly writte to you, made my health such all the last sommer, and till itt was within this very few weakes, as I was forsed to setle hear and breake all my purposes to recover my selfe owt of a very ill state of body; which I thanke God I have now so donne as I hope I shall be as well able to travell againe as ever, and if I be so I will, if beyond my power to helpe I be not againe prevented, see you att Broome before my goeing into Germany, wheather my duty to my mother and her Highnes will carry me this springe if I be forsed, as I thinke I shall, to use the helpe of the Spaw for the confirmation of my health and prevention of som infirmities I have of late years been subject to, for which Mayerne counsellis me to goe theather, which I shall doe with much the more willingnes that I may wayte by that ocasion on my mother, who crossed the sea theatherward on Thursday last, and I hope landed well that night at Callis, though I have not yett heard so much. I have not forgotten to putte the Queen in mind of her promis to you, but in that as all others she is sloe in performance; I will not be so in soliciting her till you have your desier in that as I wishe itt you in all else with as much unfainedness as I do any good to,

Your most affectionat, most faithfull freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Doe me the favor to commend me affectionatly to Mr Bacon.

Bedford House, whear I am stayed in expectation of the Queen's daylie remoove to Wight Hall, which hath binne hindred by paine in her foote; this Sunday morninge, in hast (1616).

To my dear and worthy freind the La. Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXX, pp. 40-41.

My date December 1616

7

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

THIS day I could not meet you because the rest of our company could not be ther, and tomorrow my La. of Roxborough's busnes, whom I must not forsake, will passe a triall, so as I can neither goe my jorney nor hope to see you, if you goe away on Wensday, before your retorne into the contry, which I am extream sorry for; but I will in the morninge send to you againe eyther my farewell or to reseave the good newse that you goe not so soone, which if you doe not, I will, God willing, com to you on Wensday, till when I kisse your hands. In extream hast, with the best affection of

Your most faithfull freind,  
L. BEDFORD.

Grenwidge, this Monday night att 7 o'clock (1616).

Private Correspondence, Letter XXVII, p. 37.

My date early 1617

DEAR MADAM,

IT troubled me much that you should thinke me so negligent as not to have written to you againe upon so many sommons as itt semes the messenger of your last sayth he gave me: but in my excuse I must first say, the letter was left hear in my absence, and certainly so hath his caulings binne for an answer, if at all; for I have examined all my servants to whom I thought itt likely he might have addressed himselfe, and neyther I nor they can remember any such matter. Yett perhaps the fault hath not binne his neyther, soe he may well have binne often hear and missed me; for some litle building I have in hand att the More, or other businesses thear, against our goeing theather this sommer, hath for thes many weekes carried me often from hom. Shewr I am neyther want of affection or desier to make all demonstrations therof hath kept my letters from you, which I desier you will believe, and that the long deferring of my promis to vissitt you hath binne inforsed by those occasions I could not avoid; but this sommer I hope to find a tyme more freely mine to dispose of, though I cannot yett name any, being to attend a bargain I am making with my Lo. of Buckingham's officers for the fee farme of Combe, which will carry me sooner or later theather, as we conclude or breake: but I will first injoine you to give me your word, that you shall not make my coming eyther a troble or a charge for you. This dull towne afords nothing worthy for wrighting, for ther is almost nobody of quality left in itt. Of the Queen's court I can say litle good, for her resolution to part with Roxbrough still continues, which makes her looke big upon all she thinkes loves that good woeman, and they attend her very seldom: of which matter I am one that price her favor, but upon such an occasion cannot be sorry for her frownes, which are now litle to me, all my court businesses being so dispatched as they will not much requier my attendance ther; and I am growne to love my ease and liberty so well as no measuer of favor could often invite me theather, whear ther is no hope of any good to be donne. My Lo. Mownteagle and my Lo. Chandos are very shortly goeing to the Spaw, though not togeather; for my Lo. Mownteagle is growne so in love with a plentifull fortune and a privat injoyeing therof, as he shuns all other conversation. When they are gone ther will scarce be a gentleman to be seen about this towne, whence I shall not stirre till after Midsommer terme. Out of Scotland I hear no newse but that the English of quality are very kindly and royally entertained by the nobility, but the meaner sort not so well used by the common people; which troubles the K. extreamly, who entertains all the noblemen went with him not as servants but guests. This is all his jorney hath yett brought forth. By the next you can send to London by, lett me know when you looke you, that I may not appoint to com to you att an unseasonable tyme; and I beseech you be more confident in my love to you then to suspect

the declination thereof upon the omission of any seremony, which I confesse I am often guilty of towards my freinds, though never willingly of any such neglect as may give them a just cause to suspect me; which you shall never have, but all the proofes in my power that I am as much as you can wishe, or is in me to be to any,

Your most faithfull and affectionat freind,

L. BEDFORD.

I am very glad to hear by Mrs Kendrick that your children are so well. He that hat given them you, give you with them all the comforts children can be to a mother. Lett my best wishes be remembred to Mr Bacon as I make them for him, and give me leave to entreate you to do me the favor to lett som servant of yours carry the ten peeses I have delivered this bearer to Norwidge, whence I have had two letters lately from the fine Mr Russell, who itt seems the fayr Queen hath forsaken, for he wrights me word he is ther prisoner, in the under sheriff's house, in great necessity; and it wear a great pittty so compleate a foole should starve, yett I am loth to send on purpose so farre to his worship.

Harington House, this 26th of May (1617).

To my dear and worthy freind the La. Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXXII, pp. 43 - 46.



DEARE MADAM,

BECAUSE I putte you by such a messenger to a needles troble to read thes lines, they shall only beseech you to take from him all the assurance of my love, and desier to manifest itt, that an honest hart can professe, till I have the happines to see you myselfe, which I hope God will not denie me before your tyme of deliverance; though I am not able to sett a certain day when, by reason of my building and som busnes I have with the dilatory Chancellor of the Exchequer. So soone itt cannot be as I wish, that long extreamly to tell you how unalterably I am

Your most affectionat freind to serve you,

L. BEDFORD.

From the More, this Wensday morning, in hast.

To my noble and worthy freind the La. Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXVIII, p. 38.  
My date mid 1617.

DEARE MADAM,—I have nothing to acuse you of, though you cannot but condemne me as a promis breaker, and so unmannerly a one as not so much as to have excused myselfe to you; but I must treuly protest that every weeke since my coming out of Warwickshier I have binne setting a day to com to you. From thence I was forsed to follow the K. by his comandement for the setling of a busnes I have long had in hand for his servis and my profitt, and so could not gett the liberty of 2 or 3 days to goe into Rutland, nor since my coming to this towne to leave itt so many days as wold have brought me to you and backe againe; which I protest I have as much desired as I now do any thing, and resolve if you com up this winter, which I am putte in some hopes you will, to lett you see neither winter weather nor ways can fright me from performing before Christmas what I could not in the sommer; though I should be extream glad to hear we should meete in this good towne, because then I should hope to be much the longer in your company, and to have your advise and Mr Bacon's in my workes att the More, whear I have binne a patcher this sommer, and I am still adding som trifles of pleasure to that place I am so much in love with, as, if I wear so fond of any man, I wear in hard case. The last busness of this letter is, to beg of you the knowledge how you and yours doe, and the favor I may be affectionatly remembred to Mr Bacon, and ever by you, as in all essentiall things I will be found, the trewest of your freinds,

L. BEDFORD.

The Queene hath binne very ill of late, but is now well againe. The noble Lady Roxbrough is in Scotland, which makes me perfectly hate the court.

Bedford House, this 22d of October (1617).

To my very worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXXIII, pp. 46-48.

11

DEARE MADAM,

I THINKE the tyme too long since I heard from you and cannot longer rest doubtfull how you and yours do, which makes me send this messenger, by whom I also desier to understand wheather you intend to com to London this spring as I was told, which I should be extream glad of, because I should the oftener and longer have your company; but, if you do not, I have now so settled those letts of my businesses have heatherto hindred the performance of my promis to vissitt you, as I can now, if God Almighty continue my health, make good my word whensoever you will after St George's day, when the ways will be fairer and the weather better for a jorney, by which I promis myselve a great deale of pleasure in surveinge your good huswyfery: sooner I could and wold comme to you, if you wold have itt so, but that som occasions of my owne and my freinds make me not a free woeman till the K. goe to Newmarkett or Theatford, which will not be before that tyme. Till then, if ther be any thing hear whearin I may serve you, lett me know itt; and if I do itt not with as much care and affection as possible for a faithfull freind, never beleeve again that I have any treuth in me, or am worthy to bear the title of your most unfainedly loveing freind, L. BEDFORD.

Bedford House, this 7th of March (1617-18).

I had almost forgotten an earnest request I am to make by you to Mr Bacon, but that a tricke my Lo. of Arundell putt upon me yesterday to the cusning me of some pictures promissed me, putt me in mind of itt. I was told the last night that your father in law was like to die, and that he had som peeses of painting of Holben's; which I am shewr, as soon as Arundell hears, he will trye all means to gett: but I beseech you entreate Mr Bacon, if they will be parted with to any, to lay hold of them afore hand for me, who better than any other I am shewr may prevale with his brother, to whos share I conseave they will falle; for I am a very diligent gatherer of all I can gett of Holdben's or any other excellent master's hand; I do not care at what rate I have them for price, but shall thinke itt an extraordinary favor if Mr Bacon can procure me those, or any others, if he know any such therabouts, upon any conditions; whos judgement is so extraordinary good as I know nonne can better tell what is worth the haveing. Som of those I have, I found in obscure places, and gentleman's houses, that, because they wear old, made no reckoning of them; and that makes me thinke itt likely that ther may yett be in divers places many excellent unknown peeses, for which I lat wayghte with all my freinds; and when Mr Bacon coms to London, he shall see that though I be but a late beginner, I have prety store of choise peeses. Dear Madam, lett me hear by this bearer, wheather I have not binne misinformed concerning thes pictures, and if I have not, make them shewr eyther for me or nobody;

and be not curious to thinke I may pay too much, for I had rather have them then juels. If any copies of them be desired, I will retorne such as he must extraordinarily well know paintings, that shall distinguish them from the originalls.

To my dear and worth freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXXV, pp. 49-51.  
My date 7 March 1618.

12

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

IF this honest man had not offered me a means to convaigh these lines to you, I had sent a footeman of my owne with them, to lett you know that though business hear falls out as crossely to my purpos of coming to you at this tyme as can be, (the K. jorney to Theatford being stayed,) yett nothing shall make me leave you longer in doubt that I make promisses to you I intend not to performe; therefore you may be confident that if the hand of God Almighty impose not the contrary, I will be with you about a fortnight hence, though I cannot yett name the certain day, because I canot well leave this towne till the Court removes to Grenwidge, which will be about that tyme, but no day yett sett; my stay with you will be so short as I wish you wold resolve my journey might be to fetch you to London; whear I might have yor company longer, for necessity will compel me to goe and come post, and rest but one day with you; which I know you will alowe when you shall understand the occasions command my being hear, which I reserve till we meet; hoping that desired tyme to be now so near, yett so long I will not defer all my thanks to Mr Bacon; of whos care to do me the kindnes I unman- nerly desired of him for some good pienes of paintinge, your chaplain hathbeen a faithful relator and made me a thankelesser debtor; which you both shall find if ever it be in my power to witness how unfeignedly I am

Your faithfullest freind,

L. BEDFORD.

(April 1618)

To my dear and worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXXVI, pp. 51-52.

13

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

YOU may see how unable they are to dispose of their own tymes that attend debts and other occasions, by my no sooner sending you word when I will be with you, which now I intend, by God's permission, to be on Tuesday com se'night att night, & staying with you all Wensday; but on Thursday you must give me leave to retorne home-wards, for I must needs be hear againe on Friday night. I wright this in extream haste, therefore excuse me that I saye no more but that I will ever be found

Yr most affectionat & faithful freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Bedford House, this 7th of May (1618)

To my honorable frend the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXXVII, p. 53.

14

DEAR MADAM,

I SEND this messenger to bring me word how you, Mr Bacon, & all your little ones doe, and by him send my servant Fred. a sword to defend him from the malice of the buckes in this their colericke season. This monthe putts me in minde to intreate the performance of your promisse for som of the little white single rose rootes I saw att Brome, & to chalenge Mr Bacon's promis for som flowers, if about you ther be any extraordinary ones; for I am now very busy furnishing my gardens. Thus you see itt is not good being too free an offerer to a free taker; but be not discouraged, for I shall be as free a requiter whensoever you shall make me know itt is in my power. I can not send you much newse from hence: the best is, that after many difficultis I have made an end, according to my wishes, of my busness with the K. & reseaved his graunt, with many excuses for the delays it hath had, and so much complimente as hath made amends; the worst, that the Queen hath bled extreamly of late, whh hath so weakened her as I much fear how she will recover itt, for I never saw her look so dangerously ill, wch makes me oftener a courtier than I intended, and, with my other ocasions, will, I think, draw me to winter att London, whear I should be glad to hear you minded to go. Howsoever, I thinke I shall invite you towards the spring to do my niese an honor, if I can compose things according to my wishes; an offer being made me for her pleases me well, & I doubt not will take effect, if her unreasonable father can be brought to do what he ought, which if love will not make him, I hope fear will prevaile: but of this lett no speache passe you, because itt is yett too early days; but as soone as itt is settled to any certainty, & that the K. hath declared himselffe, whos work it is, you shall hear of itt more perticularly from me, to whom itt will be of a great deal of use & comfort, if itt pleas God to prosper itt. So may He blesse all yor indevors, & continue to adde to yor happiness, which is not more hartily wished by any than by your most affectionat & faithful freind,

L. BEDFORD.

More Lodge, this 4th of October (1618).

To my noble &amp; dear freind the Lady Cornewallis, att Brome.

Private Correspondence, Letter XL, pp. 56-58.

15

DEAR CORNEWALLIS,

I MUST not lett this bearer retorne without my intreaty to you that to mine you will joyne your thankes to Mr Bacon for the favor he hath donne me in furnishing me with such helpes for my garden, and lett me beg itt of you both that you will believe that I shall be gladder to deserve then reseave obligations from you, though the demonstrations of good will to me are not wellcommer from any then your selves, whos love I infintely prise, and requite with the best affection of

Your most affectionat and faithfull freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Bedford House, in haste, this 6th of November (1618).

To my noble and worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis, att Broome.

Private Correspondence, Letter XLI, pp. 58-59.



16

DEAR CORNEWALLIS,

I SEND this bearer to inquire of my sicke freinds, into which number I am extream sorry to hear Mr Bacon is fallen, both for his own sake and yours, and as desirous as any can be to hear of his amendement, which I hartely pray for, and hope to reseave the good newse of att this messenger's retorne. I heard not of his being ill till my Lo. Chamberlain told me of itt, and that upon that occasion you had excused your selfe from coming to the Queen's funeral, whear I hoped to have seen you, and am doubly sory upon this occasion to faile of that contentment; ear long I trust a happier one will bring us with gladnes to meete, which I wish to you in as great a measure as I do to

Your most affectionat freind and servant,

L. BEDFORD.

The K. is earnest to have the funeral hastened, and sayth itt shall be on Saturday com se'night; but, for all that, I thinke it will not be till this day fortnight.

Bedford House, in haste, this Thursday morning.

(April 1619)

Private Correspondence, Letter XLIII, p. 63.

DEAR MADAM,

As full of just sorrow as my hart can bear, I retorne you affectionat thanks for your kind sending. What a mother I have lost I need not tell you, that know what she was in herselfe, and to me. Yett God, that sees no affliction to worke sufficiently upon me, hath this last night added another heavie one to my former woe, having taken my Lord Chamberlain's sonne. Yett with this mersy to him, that he hath given him the hope of another, my Lady being, as we thinke, with child againe. But alas! this is but a fearfull comfort to him and his freinds, considering her estate, which gives him too much cause of doubt wheather she will ever bring any well into the world or no, for certainly this tooke much harme by her unrulynes both in the breeding and bearth. Yett God is all sufficient, and I trust will blesse so good a father with the joye of leaveing som of his owne to succeed him; and the rather am I incouraged to be confident He will show favor to him and to the prayers of his freinds therin, because though he was very fond of this, yett, in those tymes of fear the child's being subject to som infirmities gave us, he ever kept a mind ready prepared to resigne att God's pleasure so unexpected a blessing. Now itt is com to the trial I am confident he will show well tempered effects of that religious resolution, and bear with pacience what the Almighty hath donne, though itt be more to him then the losse of an only sonne to another father. My losse of a dear mother camme not so unexpectedly as my Lord Chamberlain's did att this tyme, for to outward appearance his child mended, but my mother so manifestly decayed daylie as I could not flatter myselfe with hope she could continue long; though I looked not her ende wold have binne so sodaine, yett the disease she was subject to threatened no lesse, which I, soring with that opinion she ever had since I knew her, that her ende wold be sodaine, made itt, I thanke God, not so to her, who hath left many seremonis how well she was prepared for itt, which is my unspeakeable comfort. Itt now rests for me to follow as well as I can her good example, which God graunt I may, in liveing for his servis, that I may die in his favor, whom I beseech to blesse you and yours, and you to comende me affectionatly to Mr Bacon, who made me hope att his last seeing in June I should have seen you hear before this tyme, whear you have not so true a friend as you shall ever find your sad servant,  
L. BEDFORD.

Harington House, in hast, this 1st of June (1620).

To my honorable dear freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XLV, pp. 65-67.

18

DEAR MADAM,

ITT wold have eased me a great deale of care if I might by your servant have heard that you had recovered better health; which good newse since I cannot yett reseave, I will content myselfe with this hope, that this sicknes will in the ende pay you much comfort for the payne and troble it putts you to, and so make me amends that am by itt denied your company, which I so much desired, as I also did Mr Bacon's, but not with the least wishe to deprive you in this state of your greatest comfort. Som other tyme, I hope, will be more fortunat to me then this any way is, and nonne shall I esteem more so then that which may bring forth an oportunity for me to testify the unfaynednes of that respect hath so often binne vowed unto you by your most affectionat and faythfull freind,

L. BEDFORD

Huntingdon, this 11th of April (1618).

My Lo. Mownteagle and Sir Francis Goodwinne affectionatly kisse your hands, as I do Mr Bacon's. You have sent me a present I so much esteem as I know not how to find you sufficient thanks for itt, and can only acknowlodge itt to be the finest I ever saw of this kind.

To my worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXXIV, pp. 48-49.

DEAR MADAM,

I WAS long in much hope that you wold have held your purpos of coming to London this spring, wheare I have binne constrained to be almost all this tyme since your going hence; which has made me the greater looser by the change of your purpos, as I am much the sorrier for that losse, since your want of health hath binne the occasion to keep you both from hence and the More, the places in this kingdom you may justlie chalendge to be wellcom to while they are mine, and whear you should find yourself payd with most affection as in all others whearsoever I am to injoye your companie; which if I did not believe you wear confident of, itt wold be an extreame increase of misfortune to me, since you could not imagine any good to be in one that should requite with less so many real proofes of affection as I have reseaved from you, and for which I can make no requital but that of loveing you very hartely, and that I am sure I doe, and doubt not of your being so assured; after which no more is needfull to be sayd, since that includes all in my power. You have sent me the finest litle beaste that ever I saw, whos beauty may excuse many faults, if she have any. How well she will play I long to be at libertie to trie; and, howsoever she proove, she shall be much made of for the hands' sake she comes from. Thus I am ever reseaving kindnesses from you, for which I have no better retornes then thanks to make; of those, dear Cornewallis, reseave the affectionat one I send you, and when you can find any subject to exsercise your interest in me on, be not sparing to make such full trials from what a hart them comm. I know you have heard of the mariadge of your neise to Sir John Radcliffe's son, and how slightly my Lo. of Buckingham hath performed the protection promissed to him. For the first, I assure you, your newe nephew is as fine and towardly a youth as any I know; and for the other, my Lo. Hamilton, my Lo. Chamberlain, and my Lo. of Mongommery have donne ther best, and will do still, to keep off all the blows they can others' malice aymes at her; but what the successe will be I dare not promis, so strongly is the K. insensed and so bitter yett in the prosecution; but I will assure you, if ther wear no other ground but that of her blood, itt shall make me keepe warmest in my freinds desiers to save her from publick shame, and I beseech you, since your own vertue exempts you from all reproch in her, be so just to yourself as not to be afflicted with her danger. I can wright no longer, companie interrupting me; therefore, dear madam, farewell, and love still

Your most faithfull freind,  
L. BEDFORD.

Harington House, in hast, this present Tuesday (1620)

If you deliver not my affectionat salutacions to Mr Bacon and

your sonne Fred. itt shall be the ground of a greater quarel betwixt  
us then yett we ever had.

To my dear freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XLIX, pp. 72-74.

20

DEAR MADAM,

IF you will do me the favor to lett me have your companie hear while your busnes stayeth you in towne, your lodgings will be ready for you tomorrow night, (to) which I hope you beleeeve you shall be as wellcom as ever you wear to any place, and may as freely comand as when they wear your owne: so may you still, I assure you, esteem them, as long as they be in the possession of

Your trewly loveing freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Harington House, this Thursday morning (1620).

To my noble & worthy freind the La. Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter L., p. 75.

DEARE MADAM,

I THINKE itt long since I heard of you and yours, whos well beings and happines I most hartely desier, and send this bearer to inquier of, beseeching you to beleeeve that no absence nor lengthe of tyme can diminish that affection in me I have so many years professed and you so well deserved; for, whensoever you shall have occasion to make trial therof, you shall find all in my power in yours to comande for your servis to the uttermost it can be extended, and that I shall reckon itt a good fortune to me to be employed by you in any thing that may give you assurance how unfaindly I love you, whereof itt wear an extream contentment to me if we wear nearer neighbours, that I might often tell itt you, which I can doe no more. But itt is in this, as much more, my happe to have much of what I wishe not, and want what I desier. Yett I hope eare long sum good occasion will bring you to London, from whence, exsept it be somtymes for a day or two, I shall not sturre till after Easter terme; my neese, her father, and I haveing bargained, she with him for the present posession of her land, and I with her for her possibility in the lease of Combe, which to settle thoroughly, and provide to pay for, will coste me so long a stay heare. This donne, I intend to turn Combe wholly into money, bothe to make myself a free woman from debt, and with the rest of itt to rayse as good an estate for lyfe as I can, having now nonne but myselfe to provide for; those designes I had for my neese being crossed by her father's untowardnes, and her owne porcion being sufficient for any matche. Nor do I fear finding this any searious worke for her, having a thing so well known, as I have already many offerers for itt. So as, dear Madam, the favor you have so long binne pleased to doe me, I trust now very shortly to answer with a just account and payment of your owne, and will all my lyfe remember with dewe thankefullnes, and requite by the best means I can, having been donne me in such a fashion as I owne not the like to any other, which is unfaindly acknowledged by

Your greatly loveing faithfull freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Harington House, this 20th February (1620-1).

Sweet Madam, comende me affectionatly to Mr Bacon, and blesse your sonne Fred. in my name, as I beseech God to doe all yours.

The worthy Lady Cornewallis, my noble freind.

Private Correspondence, Letter LI, pp. 75-77.  
My date 20 Feb. 1621.

DEAR MADAM,—I am extream sorry to hear you have binne so ill, but with as much gladnes thank God for your good recovery, whos health and happines is not more hartely wished by any freind you have in the world; nor indeed can any be more engaged to desier all good to you, since your constant affection to me challenges all the thankefull retornes an indebted freind sensible of such kindnes can make, which though I confes myselfe in expressing seremoniously, yet I will never be found guilty of neglecting any real proofes I may give therof when eyther you or my good fortune may calle me to do so. I have myselfe had an unhealthfull spring of this, which I hope will not end in a lame leg, and that of that too I shall not long have cause to complaine. The greatest nuse I can send from hence is, that this day my Lo. of Arundel is comitted to the Tower by the Upper House of Parlement for refusing to make a submission to the House, and give satisfaction according to the order of the House, for som reprochefull speaches he had ther used to my Lo. Spencer; in which, nor his refusal to make a fitting reparacion, he hath not played the part of so wise a man as for his noble Ladie's sake I wish he had. Sir Robert Chichester's scurvie dealing hath broken up the match betwixt his daughter and my Lo. of Arran, which drives me to play my game another way than I had layed my cards, and will hold me a Londoner till the ende of the next terme; before which you shall hear from me againe; and I am not unmindful of what any way I owe you, which is more than can be requited by your trewly loveing friend,

L. BEDFORD.

Doe me the favor to recomend me affectionatly to Mr Bacon, and thanke him for his kind remembering me. Sir Thomas Fraser, our ould fellow, is eyther dead, or cannot passe this night, of an imposthume, the fisicians conclude, in the mesentery.

Harington House, this 17th of May (1621).

To my worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter LII, pp. 77-79.



DEAR MADAM,

I THINKE myself infinitely beholding to you for your kindly sending this bearer; but indeed you doe me wrong to beleive I should have been gladder of any bodie's company in my jorney then of yours, and should sooner have invited any of my freinds to have donne me that honor. But till very lately I was not assured wheather I should have gotten leave to goe or no, and, when I did obtaine itt, itt was with this condicion, that I should not invite others to the like jorney, which I do so punctually observe as I take nonne eyther man or woeman with me but my owne servants; so as you see I have not binne left to my owne liberty in this, which if I had, be assured I should have intreated both you and Mr Bacon to have seen the Hage with me, as thos of whos willingnes to doe me all honnor I am most confident, and whos companies wold have binne of extream contentment to me. If Mr Bacon passe this way this sommer, I wish itt may be while I am ther, wheather, if God give me health, I intend to sett forward from hence on Tusday or Wensday comse'night, and to stay ther til towards the 20th of August, before the end of which month I must, if I live, of necessity be in England; from whence, though ther be litle ods between crossing the Theams and sea, I part not without so settling my estate as, whatsoever becom of me, every one shall be shewr of ther owne, and you not be prejudised by your kindnes to me, to whos days and comforts I beseech God Almighty to adde many, and to give me means to expresse how affectionatly I am

Your most faithfull and thankefull freind,

L. BEDFORD.

I will not faile to obey you to the Queen of Bohemia, nor to make such mencion of you as become my love and knowledge of you.

Harington House, this 12th of July (1616).

To my worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XXXI, pp. 41-43.

My date 12 July 1621.

DEAR MADAM,—I think itt very long since I heard of you, and therefore send this messenger to bring me word how you doe; from whom I should not have binne so many months without hearing, but that for this two last I have had so much ill health and paine as made me for a good part of the tyme unable to wright, and yett hath left me but a lame woeman. Better nuse I hope to reseave of you and yours, which I pray for, and shall wellcom with a great deale of gladnes; for this fatall yeare keepes me in continual fears for those I love, which if I did not you hartely, I wear more than unworthy to have a freind. Mr Bacon, I trust, hath by this tyme perfectly recovered his long sicknes, which, both for his owne sake and the comfort of your lyfe, I cannot but with much affection inquier after, and do so to know when you intend to bee att London; where or hear I hope wee shall meete this spring att the fardest, if the towne and these parts continue so cleane from the sicknes as, God be thanked, att the present they are; though all the markett townes about us, and many small villages, Richmondsworth exsepted, have all this summer continued infected, as well as the citie, which kept me from sending to those I hoped wear farder from danger for feare of convaighing any to them, though God of his great goodnes spared my owne familie, and hath yett reserved me, I hope, for his servis: if itt may be also to doe you any, I assure you I shall love my lyfe the better, and be much the more your contented, that am

Yr most affectionat servant and faithfull freind,  
L. BEDFORD.

More Lodge, this 16th of January (1622-3).

To my noble & worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis, att Broome.

Private Correspondence, Letter LV, pp. 82-83.

My date 16 Jan. 1623

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,—I am sorry Mr Bacon and you are so punctual observers of the comandement empties this towne, which itt is now too late, in regard of the state you are in, to tell you, that if I had thought that had binne any stay to your being a Londoner this winter, I wolde have donne you the servis to have gotten you a dispensation; whos companie I should have binne extream glad to have had hear, whear I shall be for the most part till the spring: and though in this I am a greate looser, yett itt trobles me more to hear how aprehensive you are of a danger itt hath pleased God to carry you so often safely through, and so I doubt not will againe, though you may do yourselfe and yours much harme, by those doubtings and ill companions for all persons, and worst for us splenetick creatures. Therfore, dear Cornewallis, lett not this melancholy prevale with you to the begetting or nourishing of those mistrusts will turne more to your hurt than that you feare, which I hope will passe with safety and end to your comfort, unto which if I could tell how hear or thear to advise any thing, I wold affectionatly endeavour att in absence, and readily undertake a longer jorney to you than itt is to Broome; for though I have long suffered under a condicion hath maimed me of all means in real effects to express itt, and hath almost made me hate fruitles professions, yett ther is no freind more sensible of what they owe to another, nor fuller of earnest desiers to deserve well of them, than my hart can wittnes I am towards you, to whom I am not in so much despayre of making itt appear as I have binne, nor, I hope, are you lesse confident that itt is an unfained truth, that I am,

Yor most affectionatly faithfull freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Harington House, this 28 of November (1623).

I will write you no newse, for that I leave to Mr Bacon, who may hear in the towne very near as much as I know, since what is like a secret passeth underneath, and so sounds not so farre as this end of the towne; only I will give you my testimony that the Prince is the most improved man that ever I saw, and that my Lo. of Buckingham recovers much of what he had lost, so as you may see that the only Wyse, who brings light out of darknes, can favour us by ways we could not imagine could have produced such happy effects. The litle juel you sent me is a tresure, being the finest and best that I thinke was ever of her kind, for which since I cannot thanke you enuffe, I will use no words to thanke you for at all.

To my noble and worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter LVII, pp. 84-86.

DEARE CORNWALLIS,

IT is one of my misfortunes, and such a one as I assure you I am very sensible of, to be thus farre from you in a tyme whearin I perseave your love wold have made me that to you which I as affectionately desier to be as to have myselfe the comfort of a freind by me, when any opresion lies heavy on my hart, to whom I might trust my cares, and be shuer they should not only be safely lodged, but begett a desier to ease them as farre as wear possible, or at leaste advise how to make them lightest. I remember well what itt was you feared at your last being in towne, and I am sorrier then I can tell you, that ther is such a resemblance in our destines as makes you, like me, a trew professor to yourselfe of illls to comme, whearin I have seldom failed. But, for all that, you must not loose couradge, nor let your kind sensiblenes, which is the self-wordingest thing, make you so unkind to yourselfe and yours as to yeald up the strength of your resisting reason, and consent to sincke under that melancoly such heartofore unexpected distaste must needes breed in you, which I grieve hartely to heare hath already rought so ill effects upon your health, and so strong aprehencions in your minde, though I trust our good God will with a safe deliverance of a happy bearth restore you the one, and, if you be not wanting to yourselfe, so assist you as you shall to your contentment overcomme what causes the other; and which, when you have recovered strengthe of body againe, if you finde to continue, in my opinion you should do well to remoove heather, whear you will have better meanes to prevail, and shall have my servis, if you finde itt may be fitt for you to imploye me, or shall finde that of others of more power then my owne, by declaring that I have ingaged them to take care of you, may become of use to you in this ocacion, who I dare undertake shall do itt very willingly and readily, and perhaps itt wold not be to ill purpos if ther be cause. I am shuer you beleeve ther are not many for whom I durst ingadge my word to you so freely, and therefore will easily judge that I offer you the servis but of two; but if those two give you not a good account of what I promis in ther names, sett it on my score as a falsehoode. I should be glad you would resolve to bringe up your children and familie, because I thinke itt wold be best for them and you; but if on the sodain you cannot acomodate yourselfe with a convenient house for them all, if itt please you to lett me have your companie heare while you are provideing yourselfe with a convenient dwelling for your hole companie, you shall do me a very great pleasure, and, though my Lord should be in towne, no whitt straiten me, for I can well spare your wonted lodgings. Therefore, if you love me, be not scrupulous to make use of them. Itt is now high tyme that I acknowledge the reseit of both your letters by this bearer, and withall how I aprehend your kindnes so many ways expressed to me in them; but no words can do itt, and so I beseech you to believe, because itt is trew; and, besides that, I am farre from undervaluing, for misinterpret I cannot, the

liberality you therein have used towards me, which is much more then ever I was a debtor for to any that aught itt not unto me, or then I have a hart or will to accept, if I durst at this tyme say I wold refuse what you so presse, which your kindnes only and the knowledge of your disposicion takes off the shame I have so long detained, yett I will not keepe itt in my hands as you will have me; though I must still as your treasurer, not as a legacy, and that you will live to give me tyme when I shall leave the world, (and) be wittnes I am not behind hand with you in affection, and desier to live in your memory . . . . . be confident that ther is nonne of yours to whom I will be more wanting in any thing I may do for them then I wold have binn to my owne if God had continued me a mother; and whear as your request is in general, and extends to nothing but what I hope you believe not so ill of me as to thinke I wold not without itt have donne, and more, I beseech you, if you can thinke itt to any purpos, impose something more perticularly on me, for I will perform itt as I desier God should have mercie on me, joyfullie I confesse in your life, but as faithfully if I outlive you; which wheather I doe or not, they shall be no loosers by what you have donne for me, that have at the present but prayers to the Almighty to repaye you with, which shall be offered up with the best devocyon of

Your faithfully loving and thankfull freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Harington House, this 20th of Jenuary (1618-19).

I will, God willing, the next week send to inquier of your state, of which I hope to heare as I desier.

To my worthy and dear friend the La. Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XLII, pp. 59-62.  
My date 20 Jan. 1624.

DEARE MADAM,

I HAVE binne hindered from sending to you as I purposed, first for want of a footeman, and sinse by the sadde accident of my Lo. of Richmond's death, which tied me to give my tyme to the performance of the charitable offices I could to his La. Now I send with a great deale of earnest longing for the retorne of this bearer, because by your brother I hear you have binne ill since your being delivered; but I truste itt is no other then som indisposition incident to childe bed, and that I shall hear you have recovered better health, which I wish as hartely att the leaste as the continuance of my owne. Howsoever, since the very season of the yeare invites you to itt, lett mee perswade you as soone as you are able to comme to London, wheare the best meanes are for the recovery or confirmacion of your health. You know your olde lodgeings, which, or as convenient a one if I keepe you out of that, shall be ready for you, and I infinitely gladde of your companie and Mr Bacon's. I never so much longed to speake with you, and to have you out of that solitarie place, wheare I heare melancholie getts too much ground of you, which is so dangerous an enemy as I extreamlie desier to have you so neare me as I might offer you my best assistance and servis to overcome itt in yourself, and remove the causes if itt be possible. Therefore againe I pray you to resolve to chandge place for a while; som divertisments att the leaste you will finde heare, from whence I shall not, I thinke, remove till after Midsommer terme. Som account of what passeth hear, to entertaine you, I will make unto you. First, my La. of Richmond's losse, though it weare such a blow from Heaven as I must confesse I never knew given, will not kille her, of so strandege resisting stue are our hartes made. She was the happiest woman I thinke that lived, for by her owne confession she acknowledged, that if she should have sitte doune and studied what to aske of God for outward blessings and inwarde comforts of this world more then she enjoyed, she could find nothing to desier but a child; and it was true, for she had of glorie and greatnes as much as a subject was capable of, wealth of all kinds in abundance, health and extraordinary beautie even at this adge, and, above all, a noble husband, that was the love of her harte, and doted on her with the same pasion to the last ower of his lyfe that he did the first month of his being in love with her. Out of those loveing armes she rose not two owers before he died, and left him, as she thought, well, only troubled with a litle paine in his head, which made him desirous to sleep a litle longer; which and his death was so quiet, as his man sitting close to his bedside knew not when he departed, but fearing, because itt was the day appointed for the parliment, that he might wake too late, called in a gentleman of his chamber that used to wake him, who drawing the curtain found him starke dead. I lay by chaunce that night att the Cockepitte, whither instantly this nuse was brought me, and I presently went to the Duches, in whos lodgeings was to be seen all that an unexpected calamity could show of sorrow. I much feared the first violence might have distracted her, but her pasion

had so liberal vent as I thinke itt wrought the less inwardly. Her haire, in discharge of a vowe she had formerly made, she cutte off close by the rootes that afternoone, and told us of som other voves of retirednes she had made if she should be so miserable as to outlive him, which I hope she will as punctually performe. For my part, I confesse I incouradge her to itt, which, som say, hereafter she will love me nothing the better for; but itt is the counsel I should take to myselfe in her case, and therfore I cannot spare to give itt. She offers to deall very nobly with my Lo. of Lenox, yett I imagine ther will grow differences betwixt them out of his Lady's over greedines, for they already refuse to accept condisions they had subscribed to, though, if she have not very harsh and unusal measure offered her, itt is in her choise wheather to part with any thing to them or no. My Lo. of Buckingham hath made his declaracion to the parlement, who yett aplaude itt because itt tends to the final breach of the match with Spaine. The Houses have sitt so short a tyme as what they do is not yett to be judged, but I trust things will succeed well both for the Church and the Commonwealth. The Lord Marquis Hamilton is Lord Steward, so as that staffe hath had the good fortune to passe from a noble to a worthie hand, wheare I hope itt will long remaine. But I fear I do ill to wearie you with so many lines; therfore, deare Cornewallis, I will not for the present say more then that I love you as your owne meritt and the obligacions I owe you justlydeserves, and will never be wanting to you in any trial you may have cause to make of

Yr most affectionat and faithful freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Wee have much hope that the Prince will show himselfe of such a temper as will be his owne glorie and the good of these kingdoms.

My Lord Steward hath taken from me your olde servant Jeames Henly, and George Purser, whom he should not have had, if they had not binne such as but for his sake I should very unwillingly have parted with. Comende me, sweet Cornewallis, very kindly to Mr Bacon; and to my freind Fredericke, whom and the rest of yours I beseech God to blesse.

Harington House, this 28 of February (1623-4).

Private Correspondence, Letter LVIII, pp. 87-91.  
My date 28 Feb. 1624.

DEAR MADAM,

I SENT to Wight Halle presently after you went from hence on Friday, but my La. of Lenox was not returned from Littleton, so as I could not gett her second letter to the Keeper, but I hope I shall hear her first had the effect you desired. If more you wold have done by her on Tuesday, when the K. is gone from Grenwidge, I will find her out and bring you what you desier of her. Therfore lett me know how your busnes hath gonne, and what furdur servis may be donne you by your Laps loveing freind,

L. BEDFORD.

This is like to proove as busy a weeke with me, as, if I see you not hear, I doubt I shall not at that ende of the towne.

Harington House, this 23d of June (1624).

To my worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter LXV, p. 100.



DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

I KNOW that by this tyme I have deserved and undergonne much of your censuer, if I have not lost all your favor; which to redeem I do protest unto you that the only cause you have binne so long without hearing from me was, that I was ashamed to send till I could retorne you that part of your wealth you have so long binne pleased to trust me with; to whom alone I had binne beholding for a curtesy of this natur. Now, if you be so crewell as you cannot forgive me this fault, please yourselfe in imposeing any punishment on me you thinke my offence deserves, and I shall willingly undergoe itt, so itt may purchas my pardon, which I affectionatly beg, under promis never to be a trespasser in this kind againe. I hope to reseave itt signed, by this bearer, who can give you an account how I have spent my tyme this many months; att whos retorne to me if I might hear that you wold be shortly att London, itt wold bring an infinit deale of contentment to

Your most faithfully loveing freind,

L. BEDFORD.

Leister, this 12th of September (1620).

To my worthy and dear freind the La. Cornewallis.

Private Correspondence, Letter XLVIII, pp. 71-72.  
My date 12 Sept. 1624

DEARE CORNEWALLIS,

THE good nuse of Mr Bacon's amendement was exceeding wellcome to me, that have a lively sence of all that concerns you, in whos discomforts I shall ever have a share, and so have now of gladnes for the good signes of his recoverie, which lett not your affection make you so distrustfull of, when himselfe, others, and you, too, find a betteringe of his health and strength; for, when nature winnes upon the disease, itt is an argument that the worst is past, though lingering sicknesses are not shaken off att an instant, but commonly weare away by degrees as they camme. Therefore have pacience, and afflict not yourselfe; while God, I hope, intends you your hart's desier, not to take from you yett that you hold so deare, who have already learnt so well to submit your will to His, as so sharpe a precept needes not to teach you obedience. But, howsoever the only wise God shall please to deale with you, you shall have my infirme prayers that He will never leave to speake peace unto your soule, nor to give you joyefull assurances of His favor, whearof, if it be His will, I beseech Him now, as an earnest, to hear what you aske for your husband; to whom I praye you comende me very affectionatly, and tell him, as I did you, that if itt please him to make trial of chandge of ayr, or that remedy which hear grows daylie more and more in request through the general good successe itt hath, I desier, exsept you will be in London to have him that ministers that, the oftener with him, that he will choose More Park to be the place he will remoove unto, which I hope you both take for one of your homes. But if you had rather be in towne under this roofe, you may commande all I calle mine, which is not farre neither from my cosin Kellway's house, who I dare undertake will be carefull to doe you and Mr Bacon all the servis he can. I give you many thankses for the reseit, which with your last I reseaved. For all your kindnesses I can but love you, which I doe and ever shall hartely while ther is breath in

Your most affectionat and faithfull freind,

L. BEDFORD

Harington House, in haste, this Saterday morning (1624).

Since your goeing my Lo. of Kensington is comme out of France, who brings word that they are so desirous of that mache as I believe itt will presently be both concluded, and she hear, eare long, upon less ill condicions then Spaine insisted on for matter of religion. I intend, God willing, within ten or twelve days at fardest, to be fixed at More Park, from whence I will send to you. My Lo. of Kensington retornes instantly againe into France.

To my noble and worthy freind the Lady Cornewallis, att Broome.

Private Correspondence, Letter LXXXI, pp. 121-123.

Sr.

I SEE your freinds had need be moderat in ther requests to you, that have so liberal a hand in the satisfieinge them; for my part, I must give you the discouragement to say you have gotten nothing by your care so plentifully to furnishe me with what I desired, but a bare acknowledgement of my thankfullness; since my desier to deserve well of you, and sence of the obligations I ought you, wear att that height before, as they can reseave no increase: yett this do we the right to believe, that though this must stand at a stay, my endeavors shall not do so, if ever they may find such employment as may witnesse me to be in deed as well as in words, Sir, the thankefullest and most assured of your freinds,

L. BEDFORD.

Bedford House, in haste, this 6th of November (1624).

When you come next to town we shall be able to shew you some good new pienes of painting at Harington House.

To my much esteemed freind Mr Bacon, att Broome.

Private Correspondence, Letter LXXV, pp. 111-112.

DEARE MADAM,

I ACKNOWLEDGE that I feele so to the quicke this last affliction God hath pleased to lay upon me as no worldly comfort will ever be able to prevaile against itt, for I have lost the best and worthiest freind that ever breathed, whom I could not love enoffe for what he was to me, nor sufficiently admire for what he was in himselfe and to all the world; nor can I ever by any sorrow satisfie my owne hart that itt is such as I ought to have for such a heaveie crosse, which yett I trust will be a means to fitt me the sooner for heaven, because I am sure nothing on earth will ever be able to recover much hold on me; not that God hath not yett in mercie leaft me freinds I love better then ever I did myselfe, but this hath made me see that I must have the best freinds in the world but to loose them I know not how soone, for he that was so sodainly taken from me, both for his years, strength, health and temper, was like to have lived to much greater adge than any I have left, and so I think would, had not his noble hart binne too great for thes tymes and his fortunes in them. But he is, I doubt not, now wheare nothing of felicity is grudged him, and hath left behind him more trewly sorowfull harts of both nacions then any man's death now living can make againe, and many of us yett know not how to indure one another's sight, being deprived of his; for myselfe I must trewly say I am a maimed body and worse, and so is my Lo. Chamberlain, the last person left of power that I can relie on for the worth of his affection and friendship to me; and, to speake freely to you, the only honest harted man imployed that I know now left to God and his countrie, in which I believe you will hear of a great change before this letter comme to your hands; for I heard this morning from Tibauls that the King was this morning in so weake estate, as there was no hope of his lyfe, though till his 3 last fitts there was no (more) doubt of his safety then of every man's that hath an ordinarie tercian ague, so fatal a yeare is this to great persons as well as meaner. The Lo. therefore give us all grace not to delay preparing to be ready whensoever He shall please to call us, and then the sooner He takes us out of this misserable world the more cause we shall have to magnifie his compacion. Deare Madam, retorn my thankes and affectionat salutations to your husband, and believe that, though itt will be with a sadder hart, I shall ever continue to love you as your kindnes hath from tyme to tyme given me cause, which is all so unfortunat a woman as I am can deserve itt by; but of that you shall never want any real prooffe can be given by

Yor most affectionat and thankefull freind,

L. BEDFORD.

I know I need not tell you that I take your kinde sending as kindly as is posible, and that I thanke you more for itt then I can sett downe.

More Lodge, this 23 of March 1624-5.

Private Correspondence, Letter LXXX, pp. 118-120.  
My date 23 Mar. 1625.

DEAR CORNWALLEIS,

I HAVE written as effectually as I could to my Lo. Chamberlain, who I thinke, if it be in his power, will do what you desier. What the King's resolucion is yett for his owne and his father's servants, he hath not declared farder then the whight staves, which are to remaine as they wear; but for the greene cloth, and other inferior officers both of the household and chamber, itt is thought he will imploye his owne and dismisse his father's, because he hath caused the latter to be all removed to Denmarke House to attend the body, and lodged the former about himselfe att Whitehalle: and, for aught any body yett can discover, he makes his owne determinacions, and is very stiff in them; having already changed the whole face of the court very near to the same forme itt had in Queene Elizabeth's tyme, suffering nonne but the counsell and his bedchamber to come further than the privie chamber, whear he continually abides; nor the counsell to go farder than the privie gallerie, and causes itt to be strictly kept likewise. Into the presence no more are admitted than his owne servants and gentlement of quality. Of his bedchamber he hath sworn nonne more than he had before but the Duke of Buckingham, whom he uses very well; but, it is hoped, will be governed by no man, nor will he admitt any of the rest as is thought. After the funerall itt is expected that he will make som alteracions among the great officers, and, the comon voice is, change my Lord Chamberlain's staffe into that I shall never but with sorrow see in other hand than that that held itt last, and bestow his upon his brother. Yett so far he hath not yett declared himself; but, if this be, I have taken order that, if any power remaine in the Chamberlaine for the gentlemen ushers' places, whethersoever of them hold that staffe, itt shall be alike for your request; and this I did because I think the chamber will not be settled till the principal officer be so. The King is pleased to use my Lord Chamberlain that is as graciously as any man; which gives many much confidence, seeing the King so well inclined to favour honest men, which he is known to be, and one that will never abuse his trust. Besides, (which, indeed, is the chiefe,) he manifests much care of God's servise, and never failes, morning and evening, coming to prayers to the little closett, nor being an attentive hearer att sermons; so as ther is all good signs that God hath set him over this kingdom for a blessing. This, I know, you will be glad to hear from one you believe would wright no untruth to you, and that hath made me (though I am not much disposed to wright newse) sett down this much. To which I will adde, that our destined Queene is with all possible speede expected hear, for whos coming the coronacion will be stayed, that that, and her mariadge and entrie, may be all but one charge: but the first mariadge in France will be instantly, the King having sent his procsey to the King of France, that either his brother or the Duke of Chevreux (which is Prince Joinville that was here) may dispatch that, so as the next month she is expected; all else being fully concluded, and they in France hastening the

espousals. I am very glad to hear Mr Bacon hath recovered so good health, whos welcom shall ever be such whear I am as I owe to his meritt and you; whos labor I do not pittie so much but that I wish you would beare him companie to this solitarie place, whear I do not desier to see many now living, but yourselfe very much. I writt to my Lord Chamberlaine to lett John Fenne know his answer, because he came not back hither; and, had I binne sure when I should have seene him, I would rather have spoken than writt, though I know in effect it will be all one, for he knows by my lines as well as he could have done by speech that I as earnestly affect the successe of my recomendacion as I can doe any thing in his power to doe; and I was so loth Mr Glover should have any thing to impute to my least delay, as I writt so late the last night to my Lord Chamberlain, and dispatched John Fenne, as I could not send this from hence with him, who went earlier than I was awake this morning, but make haste itt may overtake him att London. The lying Papists cannot be content to want my Lord Stuartt in the beadrole of those they wold have thought for their glorie; but whosoever knew him living, I hope, will reseave no such false opinion now he is dead, who, eaven after he was speechless, gave evident demonstracion (being asked by his chaplain) that he believed to be saved by the meritts of Christ: yett, by the follie or villeinie of a ficisian wayted on him (who was Popish), have they got some colour to invent this slander, which I trust will be cleared to all the world, as it is clear in itselفة to those friends from whom he had not a reserved thought, and that knew how far both in sound judgment as well as practise he was from approving any point of their doctrine disagreeing with the creed we profess. I pray God they knew him not so well to be the boldest opposer of their ends as they used means for the shortening of his noble dayes, which that they wear unnaturally cutte off ther are strong suspicions in the most; because being att first, by the testimonie of all the surgeons phisicians and his owne servants, as fayer a corse as ever their eyes beheld, in the space of three owres his hoole body, head, and every part swelled so strangely and gangrened so generally as it astonished them all; though the phisicians affirme to have seene the like in pestilential fevers, when the spots break not out afore death, and impute part of the cause to the expedient of chafing his body, att least for the space of an hour before he departed, with hotte cloths, and keeping itt to ciose in the bed after. God only knows the truth, who, if he had any wrong, I trust will in his justice declare it. It is true that, when he was opened in his stomach and head, there appeared nothing to confirm this jealosie, which makes the phisicians confident it could be no poison they are in these parts acquainted with; yett both myselfe and many other of his friends rest not clear of doubt, though, but upon some farder evidence, it is not to be stirred in; but if ever the least light can be gotten, the feare of all mortal men should not hinder our just prosecucion of so abominable a fact: which yett, if it wear so, hastened our losse but a little; for all his vital parts wear so decayed, as, by the judgment of the doctors, he could hardly have lived out a year, which nobody that looked on him could have suspected; yett

he himselfe told me this last winter that he found such an inward decaye in himselfe as he knew he should live but awhile; but, God knows, I conceived it to be but a melancholy aprehension, seeing his health better to my thinking than it had beene a year or two before, for his spleene seemed to trouble him lesse. But now I have many reasons to assure myself he expected not to live out this year, though he was sparingest to utter that to those he knew loved him best for grieving them; yett now I call to mind many speeches of his I heeded not when they wear spoken, might have made me take more hold what his opinion was of his short continuance on earth, where he hath not left such another; nor any creature so great a loser as I in the death of a friend, whom, if it had pleased God to have longer spared us, would at this tyme both to the publick and his private friends have binne that wee must not look to see any other. But God saw us not worthy of such a blessing, whos will, as itt is ever best, whatsoever itt appear to oure sense, so must wee submitt ourselves to itt in all things, though it is thehardliest practised lesson of all we learne in religion. My thoughts are, and ever will be, full of his memorie, which makes me tedious when any thing draws me into discourse of him; yett will I not excuse this temper, because it is a duty I owe him in this detracting tyme, when those that durst not have breathed amis on his leaste action while he lived will now ventur as much as in them lies to slubber his fame, when they shall thinke themselves out of the hearing of those would make them keepe in their venom, or make them smart for uttering it at the least. And now I have donne this, it is tyme I ende, whos love and respect to you shall be endless, in which, to my sorrow, you cannot have so much advantage as I have satisfaction to know myselfe for your most affectionate and faithful, though most unfortunate friend,

L. BEDFORDE.

P.S. Dear Madam, comende me affectionately to Mr Bacon, whom if you will bring hither this springe, I hope you would both find good by our ayr, which hitherto hath held free from infection; and should be glad to see any of yours, too, with you.

More Lodge, this 12th of April (1625).

Private Correspondence, Letter LXXXIII, pp. 125-131.



DEARE MADAM,

I TAKE extreme kindly your sending to visit mee, which I should not have delayed an ower thanking you for, but that itt is so busy a tyme heare, both about what consernes the publicke and my owne privat, as I have, against my will, binne hindered from dispatching your man according to my desier and purpos; but the assurance he carries of my present health I know will make you excuse the length of his staye. My feare of relapsing makes me content to punish myselfe this spring by following a course of phisicke Sir Theodor Mayerne hath putt mee into, though I am very incredulous that itt can prevent my having more fitts of the goute; howsoever, when I am trobled with any, they are accompanied with such accidents of sicknes as shows they proseed from such humors as phisicke uses to correct, against which I have too rebellious a spleene I doubt to be brought into such obedience as not faster to power out the souernes therof into my stomache, and distill itt into other parts, then all the poticarie's drugs will be able to correct. What I do, therefore, is rather because itt shall not be layd to my charge that I neglect the meanes of health, then out of any great hope of cure by itt, which weather I have or no, God, I trust, will give mee thankfulnes to Him and patience till His apointed tyme of releasing mee from all misserie; of which wee are yett like to have in generall more and more, if this Parlement and the King part not upon better termes then yett they stand, the King having declared himselfe stiffe one way, and they growing stronger and stronger in their resolucions another. They have had som way given them, which is understood by them as a good signe of the King's relenting, who may, if he please, have of them what none of his predecessors ever had of their people, so they may with all have their bargaine, without which they thinke all their liberality would be no better then cast away: what the event will be, a fewe dayes more will show. In the mean tyme my Lo. Marshall remains att the Tower, though my Lo. Chamberlain is laboring to gett his prison changed to his owne house at Highgate. I wishe another tyme had binne taken for that hasty busynes, in regard of the want of so able a man at this tyme in the upper house, wheather ther is no probability he will be suffered to com this seccion though he wear enlarged. All other kind of nuse for the present lies dead hear, exsept itt have some relacion to the Parlement, and my ower of persecucion is com; therefore, deare Lady, farewell. Lett your love to me, and confidence in myne to you, continue alike; for, truste me, the one is highly valued, and to lessen the other you shall never have just cause given you by

Your most affectionat, faithfull freind and servant,

L. BEDFORD.

Believe mee, your son Fred. hath my prayers that he may be so blessed from heaven as that your comfort in him may daylie increase. With many thanks to Sr Nathaniel Bacon, do mee the favor to retorne my best salutacions, to whom I was extreme sorry I could not, at his

being heare; do those litle servises I ought to your husband, and my respect of himselfe; but itt was so late before I knew att all of his being in the list of the Knights of the Bath, after which I inquired not, and so lived in ignorance till his owne coming to me, as on that alone I can charge my ill hap.

Sr Jeames's Streete, this last of March (1626).

I cannot close my letter without being a begger to you to helpe me, if you can, to another good and fine tumbler, being a comodity not to be gotten in thes parts. Thus, you see, I cannot leave my custum of robbing you.

To my noble and deare freind the Lady Bacon, att Broome.

Private Correspondence, Letter XCIV, pp. 145-148.

May it please your Majesty,—You have so many servants here at the present, who, I know, take care to give you an account of all parliamentary businesses worth the writing, as that I, who have but by second report the passages of both houses, should deserve rather blame than thanks of your majesty, to follow, with my imperfect relation, what you at the first hand receive from them, who are actors themselves in the great affairs now on the stage of this our world,—where none plays his part with so due applause as your excellent brother, who wins daily more and more upon the hearts of all good men; and hath begotten, by his princely and wise proceedings, such an opinion of his reality, judgment, and worthy intentions for the public good, that I think never prince was more powerful in the parliament-house than he. And there doth he express himself substantially so well, that he is often called up to speak, and he doth it with that satisfaction to both houses as is much admired. And he behaves himself with as much reverence to the houses, when either himself takes occasion to speak, or is chosen by them to do so unto the Lower House, as any other man who sits amongst them. And he will patiently bear contradictions, and calmly forego his own opinions, if he have been mistaken, which yet hath so seldom happened, as not above twice in all this time he hath had cause to approve of any other than his own. All which are so remarkable excellencies in a prince so young, so lately come to be himself, as I am sure the world hath not another to parallel with him. He is besides most diligent and indefatigable in businesses—a patient hearer, judicious in distinguishing counsels, moderate in his actions, steady in his resolutions; so even as variableness is a thing neither in deed nor in appearance in him. And so civil and accomplished withal every way, both in mind and body, that, consider him even not as a prince (which yet adds much lustre to him), and there is nobody who must not acknowledge him to be a gentleman very full of perfections. And, without flattery, I know none to be compared with him; for his virtues and parts are eminent, without any mixture of vanity or vice.

I presume your majesty will not be displeased that I fill so much paper with this subject, upon which, when I fall, it is so much all our joys, and so great a part of your happiness to have such a brother, as I can never satisfy myself to have said enough. And, madam, give me leave to wish that you would in one letter, at least, take notice of what you hear of him from them who will neither flatter him nor dissemble with you; since there is nobody who doth well but is glad to hear thereof. And it is both a part of their recompense, and encouragement to them to persevere and strive for more and more glory, that such notice is taken of deserving praise, as may assure them they are greater gainers by that they do, than they are for how much soever blood or titles may enrich them with, above other men. It cannot fall so well from any pen as yours, who being in all respects so near him, may best, without fearing to make his modesty blush, or suspect, press

his due upon him; in which I pray he may find the joy he gives to others, and of which, though I am furthest removed from any hope of particular advantage, I have, for the general, so large a share as makes me, who am otherwise weary of life, glad that I have lived to see this proof of him; and to know beforehand, that if it please the Almighty God to continue to us this rare pledge of his Divine Majesty's not being yet weary of doing us good, your majesty shall have the blessing to be restored to what you have been by such an arm, as that it will be an honour equal to the benefit itself, if you may receive that good by him.

I am, Madam, &c. &c.

LUCY BEDFORD.

J.H. Wiffen, Historical Memoirs of the House of Russell (London: Longman, 1833), II, 112-114.

Sir,—These enclosed letters will witness that I have not been unmindful to inquire what my Lord Strange's friends intended concerning the marriage spoken of for him in France; which I find to be so far advanced, as if Madlle. de Tremouille's friends be not overstrict in exacting conditions we are not accustomed to hear, it is as good as done. Mr. Matthias (who I think you know travelled with Lord Strange), if he have found a safe passage to the Hague, is now there, with as ample a commission to conclude all things as may be; and besides, my Lady of Derby hath absolutely given her sons, with a particular of the present state and possibilities of the house of Derby, to the Queen of Bohemia, to dispose of both in this match as she pleases, who extremely affects the good success thereof; and so, Sir Robert Carr tells me, doth our young queen, which hath drawn the king to wish it too,—so as I hope we shall shortly have those worthy ladies here. For if Mr. Matthias return with such an answer as is expected, the young lord will presently go over and solemnize the marriage there, who had been his own messenger, and was extreme earnest to have been so, but that his mother thought it fitter all other circumstances should first be determined on, lest, Madame de la Tremouille not liking our English way, nor those offers that can be made out of my Lord of Derby's estate, he might, and she too, have parted upon terms of some disadvantage.

I hear that my Lady of Derby's offers (to whom her lord wholly leaves both his children and affairs) are, that the portion Madlle. de la Tremouille brings, shall be, if so her friends desire, laid out in lands to be settled upon her and her children; or, for want of such, on her heirs, so as that the rent will be (neither) to my Lord Strange nor his house, if he have no children by her. For jointure, they propound the like that either of the two Countesses of Derby has, which, so much already being out in jointure, is a large proportion; and she is sure to be well provided, that shall have such an interest to boot in what she brings. For their present maintenance, I know not—for I forgot to ask—what my Lady of Derby offers; but am sure she will not be strait-handed in that, dealing so frankly in the rest; and having what this young lady brings, they will not want means to live like children of the houses they come of, till they be in possession of the earldom, the revenue whereof will daily better, being of unracked land, and no younger brothers' nor daughters' portions to be taken out of it, but two great jointures to come in, and no debt at all to trouble them. I doubt not but Madame de la Tremouille, being so wise a lady, will see the advantages of thus bestowing her daughter; and I think she cannot have a better counsel given her than to meet my Lady of Derby half way in forwardness, that it may not depend. For if, because we on this side are so free, she—as is the disposition of some—should be the more reserved, and insist too curiously on over-large demands, she will mar what she would make, which I conceive is not her intention, being come so far on the occasion.

I send you Sir Robert Carr's letter to me, in confirmation of

part of mine: when you have read it, I pray you throw it in the fire. I shall, within a day or two, write to the Queen of Bohemia some reasons why it will be best she set a full and speedy end to this, wherein she is so much trusted and so great respect is shewed to her; and you shall, I think, do your country people a very good office to quicken them, that they use no unnecessary delay, lest something come betwixt to cross what is like to prove so well for all parties.

This treaty hath brought into my thoughts another I should willingly enter into, and whereof I have had some speech with Sir Theodore Mayerne, which I have entreated him to impart unto you more particularly; yet I will myself add, that considering the present condition of the House of Rohan, and the future danger of the whole party of the religion in France, I think it might be a happiness to Madlle. de Rohan, and of great use to her friends, if she were lodged in so noble a family, and where, I dare undertake, she would be honoured according to her merit. If her portion be such as a part of it may go to the clearing a debt which lies on that estate, whatsoever she hath more will not be required, but left to her own free disposing. If this will be hearkened unto, my Lord Chamberlain and I have such an interest in the father, as whatsoever we should undertake, he will make good, though himself were not acquainted with it; notwithstanding which, if any from Madame de Rohan had commission to deal in it, we would presently send for him, who is all nobleness, discretion, and goodness.

If you taste this, I should be glad, as soon as you can, to have conference with you about it; for many points touching it that are not to be discoursed by letter, your judgment, I doubt not, will easily take hold of. Many I forbear here to mention; one only I will not omit, and that is, to recommend unto you secrecy in this, whether it die in the birth or be proceeded in; for that is necessary, for more reasons than one. I confess I so heartily wish (if it appear likely to prove well for both parties) the good success of this, that I know not a second employment I should so gladly apply myself unto, loving as a brother the father of the one, and reverencing those excellent virtues that are so much admired both in the mother and daughter. I have enjoined my father Mayerne not to break the seal I have set on his lips, except it be to open them to my Lord Chamberlain, with whom yet I have had no speech of this; for it is but a night old with myself. The same liberty I consent to your taking, whom I earnestly entreat to take me for

Your very affectionate friend,

L. BEDFORD.

Your wife was well yesterday morning.

More Lodge, in haste this 2d of October.

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