ABSTRACT

Neil Cuddy
Wadham College

D.Phil
Trinity, 1987.

The King's Chambers : The Bedchamber of James I in administration and politics, 1603-1625.

The focus of this study is the Bedchamber of James I, a new institution formed in 1603 by the political pressures of a foreign king's accession. First to be discussed is the English court which existed at Elizabeth's death, followed by the institutional background of James's household in Scotland (and French influences on it). The household above stairs in James's reign is next described, with emphasis on the Privy Chamber. Then the structure of the Bedchamber — practice, personnel, the limitation of access — is fully analysed. The remaining three-quarters of the dissertation consists, on the one hand, of analysis of the Bedchamber's administrative functions, centring on its rôle, and that of the Bedchamber favourites Somerset and Buckingham, in the private governmental machine of the sign manual, coffers and privy purse; and on the other hand, of a narrative of the reign's politics from the perspective of the Bedchamber.

This political narrative demonstrates that at first the Bedchamber played a central rôle in the king's Union intitiative; that the Scots' Bedchamber monopoly and massive patronage gains— practical expressions of James's policy— triggered principled parliamentary opposition between 1604 and 1614; and finally that James in the second half of his reign withdrew from English politics to virtual internal exile, shielded by his Bedchamber and his favourites Somerset and Buckingham, thenceforth dealing with principled conflict by staying above it. In conclusion, continuities are investigated between parliamentary attacks, in 1604-14 on the Bedchamber Scots, in 1621 on Buckingham as Bedchamber favourite; and such continuities are linked with James's fears about what principles lay at the root of such attacks — fear of 'popular courses' indeed explains much if his later withdrawal and disillusion. In all, whether used positively as an instrument of policy or negatively as a last defence, the Bedchamber is revealed as a central directing force in Jacobean politics.

ABSTRACT II

The King's Chambers : The Bedchamber of James I in administration and politics, 1603-1625.

The basic methodology and subject matter of this study were first expressed in the doctoral dissertation of Dr. David Starkey on "The King's Privy Chamber, 1485-1547" : the present work is a contribution to the study of a subject first mapped by that path-finding research. Asking questions which supplied so dramatically fruitful a crop of answers for the political and administrative history of that earlier period has in turn provoked some new questions, and supplied a new crop of answers for the world of the early Stuarts. In this brief preliminary survey, the most important of these conclusions are surveyed, and an estimation of their relative importance and originality made.

1) *Institutional reconstruction.*

The first aim of this study was to arrive at a full and reliable reconstruction of how the Bedchamber operated under James, and of whom it consisted. To go beneath the surface generalisations previously offered by historians seemed both a practical and an important undertaking. After some preliminary digging, indeed, it seemed a relatively straightforward one; but when the seam of clear evidence soon began to give out, a certain amount of digging around and complexity of argument became necessary in reaching definite conclusions about these matters. In the first place, it rapidly became clear that there was on the one hand a great deal of institutional innovation in James I's household above stairs, especially in 1603, with regard to the Privy Chamber and Bedchamber; yet, on the other hand, there were virtually no surviving ordinances or regulations to indicate precisely what these innovations consisted of or meant. Only one (undateable) later copy of a set of Jacobean Privy Chamber Ordinances survived. For the Bedchamber, problems were compounded since only a set of Charles II's Bedchamber ordinances, claiming to be merely based on those of James I and Charles I, came down to us; still further problems emerged when it became clear that those very claims were largely rejected by a committee of the Privy Council near the end of Charles II's reign. In the second place, the abolition of fees paid to the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, and the fact that they were never paid to the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, made it very difficult to see how the membership of the departments was composed, since there was no contemporary reason to make lists of them inany record series which has been preserved. Only one list of James's Privy Chamber survives, by chance, relating to late 1614. For the Bedchamber, the early years of the reign are shrouded in obscurity; this begins to clear only when letter-writers begin to see the importance of the department after about 1605, and when changes begin to be made with some frequency to the initial membership in the years after 1607 (and especially after 1615). No lists at all survive, then, for the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber; membership had to be reconstructed from casual and incidental references.

The first chapters directly address these fundamental problems, and present the fullest possible reconstruction of these departments given the deficiencies of the sources. Together they offer a picture of these departments' daily routine; their membership; and their wider rôle, in limiting access to the king, and in guaranteeing the exclusiveness of those places in the Bedchamber which gained so massively from crown patronage. They also offer a full consideration and critique of the sources and the problems they cause. Only having established this basis was it possible to proceed to other questions relating the Bedchamber to the wider world of Jacobean politics and administration.

2) *The Scots and the first decade.*

Following directly from the discovery of the initial composition of the Bedchamber comes an appreciation of the department's rôle in the politics of the first decade of the reign. James kept his Bedchamber wholly staffed by Scotsmen to begin with; while the rest of the court was immediately split half and half between the nations; and the English council and great offices remained almost wholly in English hands. This left James with the Bedchamber as his chief means of political leverage in England. The Bedchamber, closest of all dynastic supporters, were thus rapidly made

greater landed magnates in England by massive grants of crown patronage. As preparations began to launch the king's great Union scheme in parliament, the leverage began to be applied, and the Scots monopoly relaxed; now the principle of "equal partition" began to be extended to the Bedchamber itself; the first new members of the department after the accession were paired, one English, one Scottish. As soon as the scheme was aired in parliament, however, it ran into opposition; and here James's even-handedness became stalled, waiting upon events. The opening of the Bedchamber to the English was postponed indefinitely. In 1607, in the aftermath of the total rout of the legislation to put limited Union into effect, James indeed put the policy of "equal partition" into reverse; only Scots were admitted to the Bedchamber for the next eight years, and the greatest of them, Dunbar, made secure by James advancement of his protégé Robert Carr to the rank of "favourite".

The Bedchamber's composition by nationality, therefore, offers a key to the king's purposes, and to his reaction to developments in parliament during these expansive early years. More than anything else, an understanding of the department opens up an understanding of the nationality question in the years after the accession, the importance of which has been consistently underrated by historians. The Scots have been seen as a somewhat peripheral phenomenon, an irritation to the English of no long-term consequence, whose importance was brief and confined to the once fashionable constitutional consideration of the Union debates. Understanding the rôle of the Bedchamber in the machinery of politics makes clear how much more central the question of the Bedchamber Scots was; and how far this centrality was the deliberate creation of James.

3). *Opposition to supply*

The Bedchamber played a rôle as the trigger of opposition in parliament. This is nowhere made clearer than by the Commons' manifest irritation at the visibly massive patronage gains of the Bedchamber, displayed whenever the voting of supply came to be considered. Revisionism has downplayed the importance of opposition in early Stuart parliamentary politics : opposition to the Union, too visible to be ignored, was written off as exceptional and atypical both by the most influentual of the revisionists, Professor Russell, and by the modern historian of the Union, Dr. Galloway. But viewed from the Bedchamber, the political continuities between the issues of Union and of supply immediately became apparent. Opposition to court extravagance and to the gains of favourites has been alluded to in a general and unsystematic way by historians seeking to explain the problems of the early Stuarts with their parliaments, but these factors were usually seen as peripheral, indefinite and likely to have been exaggerated in their importance by impressionable contemporaries. As soon as we begin systematically to understand the institution about which those contemporaries were complaining, however, the importance of this factor (and the political centrality of the Bedchamber) again becomes clear.

4). *By-passing the Exchequer*

Historians have long been aware of the serious financial problems of the early Stuarts, both cause and consequence of their inability to persuade parliaments sufficiently to supply them. But the question of what this financial stringency must have meant in practice has not been seriously broached. This study uses the very patchy evidence for the functioning of the Privy Purse, the formal cash resource administered in the Bedchamber by its keeper, to suggest that in these circumstances it was increasingly the Bedchamber that began to handle many of the large and important transactions in what liquid cash was available, which were thus preserved from disappearing into the growing sink of the Exchequer's deficit and debt. This was already visible early in the reign, as the Privy Purse's annual turnover in James's first two years increased fivefold on its Elizabethan level. The situation only grew more pronounced with the steeply rising debt and each successive parliamentary failure. The source problems in gauging the rôle of the Privy Purse are considered, and it seems likely that most of the evidence we have for the Privy Purse's rôle depends on accidental factors. Without formal accounts, what we know of for certain is even more likely to be the mere tip of the unseen iceberg of the practical financial history of this period.

5).Salisbury's fall and the rise of the Bedchamber "favourite"

The Bedchamber's general illumination of the politics of the first Jacobean decade sheds particular light on the failure of the Great Contract and the fall of Salisbury. Once again, the Bedchamber's patronage gains are seen triggering deep parliamentary suspicion of, and then opposition to supply; and the Bedchamber's rival access to the king is seen as confirming the rift between the king and Salisbury over the advisability of such bargaining, in effect confirming the

extinction of the Elizabethan great officer/bureaucrat. This points the way towards the emergence of the Bedchamber "favourite" as the minister of James's growing disillusion with English politics and the tractability of parliaments. The career of Somerset in the crisis years 1610-15 is fully analysed in the light of his membership of and *de facto* predominance over the Bedchamber; his personal search for a settlement with an outer court faction, which could resolve the problem of supply and engineer a successful meeting of parliament, parallels the king's still continuing attempts to compromise and co-operate with the forces which had in his eyes wrecked the 1604-10 parliament. The parallel between the two campaigns of action is explained by the fact that Somerset was acting as the king's political manager; and many of the contradictions in Somerset's behaviour (turning from one faction to the other, renouncing his former favourite Overbury) mirror James's about-faces and experiments in pursuit of positive results. The Addled parliament was an important event (though not necessarily a decisive one) in confirming James's certainty that compromise would yield no result, and that doing nothing was preferable to doing what was apparently necessary to achieve a successful parliament. The account of these years from the king's and favourite's perspective within the Bedchamber is thus in many respects new in emphasis.

6). The meaning of Buckingham as Bedchamber "favourite"

That James increasingly withdrew after 1615-16 from English politics is made clearer and more understandable both by the foregoing background of failure, and by considering the rôle and function of the new favourite he deliberately created to take from his shoulders the burden of direct political and patronage management. James retained his belief in balance, and constantly intervened to maintain it between the factions on his council, especially with regard to the day-to-day conduct of foreign affairs. But above all he ensured that Buckingham, like himself, remained detached and independent from the factions he was to manage. James and Buckingham worked together (though not without misunderstanding and upset) to manage conflict by staying above it. Buckingham himself, analysed as a political phenomenon from the perspective of the Bechamber's pre-history under James, emerges in this study as a comprehensible and practical politician, using Bedchamber office precisely to enforce his near-total dominance of the management of crown patronage, the promotion of crown servants, and of the performance of his own rôle as royal agent and political manager. Perhaps the most surprising result of this investigation is the emergence of Buckingham as bureaucrat; a minute day-to-day concern with the procurement of the royal Sign Manual is revealed. The Sign Manual under the direction of the Bedchamber (and of Buckingham in particular) in turn becomes the mainspring of the administrative machine. Buckingham's determination to make those others who procured the royal signature dependent upon him — the Masters of Requests and the now diminished Secretaries of State — makes even clearer the demise of the Elizabethan great officer, and the rise of the Bedchamber favourite as director of a régime based on control of the Bedchamber's "private" governmental machine : indeed, in Professor Elton's terms, something of a "Counter-revolution" in government.

7). *The meaning of Lionel Cranfield's career as a great officer*

An incidental sidelight on the intensively-studied career of Lionel Cranfield, Lord Treasurer from 1621-24, is reflected from this study of the practicalities of government under Buckingham. Cranfield has hitherto been treated as a great officer in the mould of an essentially Elizabethan politician like Salisbury; it is clear from this study that Cranfield's career was fashioned in the very different Buckingham-dominated world of the Bedchamber "favourite" at the late Jacobean court. Cranfield accordingly is revealed as a courtier in his own right, first as a Master of Requests, then, as Lord Treasurer, using his personal favour with the king to gain unprecedented access to procure the royal signature. He also used his knowledge of the realities of Bedchamber politics and administration in formulating his novel strategies as Lord Treasurer to control patronage; although with no formal rôle in the grants mechanism, he made constant and unprecedented efforts both formally and informally to limit the rôle of the Bedchamber in procuring the Sign Manual. The comparison with Salisbury is thus seen as difficult to sustain; and the changes between his largely Elizabethan world and Cranfield's Bedchamber dominated one revealed as less a decline into decay and corruption, more a logical consequence of the revival of the entourage's administrative importance once more under a male king in his majority.

8) *The Bedchamber alliance of Buckingham and the Prince of Wales*

The take-over between late 1623 and the king's death in 1625 of the direction of policy by the Prince of Wales, now in alliance with Buckingham, has long been obvious to historians. What has been less clear is the nature of the Prince's authority in effecting this take-over, and his precise relationship with Buckingham in terms of court offices; Buckingham's precise rôle has in turn been imperfectly understood. This study reveals Charles's and Buckingham's grip on the court and on the king as the consequence of their dominance of James's Bedchamber, of which they effectively became joint heads; Charles, far from setting up a reversionary court to wait on his own succession, took power at the heart of his father's court, in the Bedchamber, from which wider dominance could be effected in council. Buckingham's dominance and independent rôle in alliance with the Prince is traced to the Bedchamber settlement of 1622, after which he could rely on the dependence of half of the Gentlemen in the department, and all of the recently-appointed English Grooms. Buckingham himself is revealed as emerging from the journey to Madrid as *de facto* head of Prince Charles's Bedchamber, the pre-echo of his sole pre-eminence in Charles's Bedchamber as king after 1625. The practical power that this gave the pair in running counter to the king's expressed wishes is closely related to the political narrative, clearly showing that control of the Bedchamber, which had begun as James's supreme expression and guarantee of his freedom of action, now in the hands of others could be used to limit that freedom; indeed, that James's Bedchamber effectively became his prison.

The King's Chambers

The Bedchamber
of James I
in
Administration and Politics,
1603 - 1625

NEIL CUDDY

Contents

Introduction.
The Origin and Establishment of the Bedchamber 1

1. The Institutional Context 6
i) The Sixteenth-century background. 7
ii)The Scottish system 10
iii)French Influence on the Scottish Court 13
iv) The Physical Context : The Outer Chamber of James I. 15
v) The Physical Context : The Privy Chamber of James I. 18

2. Reconstructing the Jacobean Bedchamber 32
i) Did any Jacobean Bedchamber Ordinances exist? 32
ii)Daily Routine : Determining Bedchamber Practice. 46
a) Numbers and control. 46
b) Rights and Duties : Groom of the Stool and Gentlemen of the Bedchamber 48
c) Groom of the Robes 54
d) Grooms and Pages of the Bedchamber. 56
e) Limits on Access to the Bedchamber. 59
iii) Determining Membership. 66
iv) Defining the Personnel : Status of Bedchambermen. 70
v) An Exclusive Élite. 73

3. Privy Purse, Sign Manual; Lord Treasurer and Secretary
The erosion of the Elizabethan bureaucratic monopoly. 76
i) The End of the Elizabethan Régime. 81
ii) The Privy Purse under Dunbar, 1603-11. 84
iii) The Sign Manual under Robert Cecil as Secretary, 1603-1612. 91

4. The Practicalities of Opposition
Union and Finance, 1604-1610 : Salisbury destroyed, Parliament Addled. 97
i) The Obstruction of Union. 104
ii) 'Bottomless Coffers', 1606-1610 : The Scots Bedchamber and the Issue of Supply 113
iii) The Destruction of Salisbury :
Trust and Xenophobia in the failure of the Great Contract 117

5. The Career of Robert Carr : the rise of the Bedchamber favourite 124
i) Carr and Dunbar, 1603-11 125
ii) February 1611 - May 1612 : Patronage and Political Stalemate 131
iii) From Salisbury's death to the Addled Parliament : from royal arbiter to faction leader. 135
iv) July 1614 - Autumn 1615 : A Fall from the height of fortune. 146

6. Buckingham and Court Politics, 1615-1622 162
i) Independence Established, 1615-1617. 162
ii) Dependence Enforced, 1617-1618. 171
iii) The Magnanimous Victor : Balance, 1618-1621. 180
iv) 'Parliament proofe' : the foundations of power, 1621-1622. 188

7. Bedchamber Administration, 1611-1625 :
Privy Purse and Sign Manual under John Murray and Buckingham. **203**
i) The Keeper of the Privy Purse, 1611-1625. 203
ii) Buckingham and Bedchamber finance. 206
iii) Procuring the Sign Manual. 209
iv) Buckingham and the Masters of Requests. 218
v) Cranfield and attempts to control Bedchamber patronage. 221

8. 'The Prince becums a bed-chamber man' :
Charles, Buckingham and Politics, 1622-1625. **226**

Conclusion **253**

Bibliography **267**

Introduction

The origin and establishment of the Bedchamber

The establishment of the Bedchamber was among the first and most important acts of James I's reign in England. The Bedchamber was a central element in the accession settlement, indeed the major institutional innovation effected by it. Since later institutional changes to it, and the rest of the court, were minimal, the detail of the events in May and June 1603, when the settlement of the court was constructed, is clearly our starting point. The Bedchamber began as a product of political struggle; it was then set on a course, both institutional and political, that put it at the centre of things; the bastion of the prerogative, and supreme agent and guarantee of the king's freedom of action; the courtier's highest prize, and place of greatest rewards; the headquarters of two all-powerful favourites, and the instrument by which the Prince of Wales finally made a prisoner of his father. All of this stemmed from the sort of Bedchamber that was put together at the accession.

To many observers the most surprising thing about the peaceful accession of James I was that it went so smoothly; but apart from that near-miraculous fact, there were, on the surface, few upsets. The accession was of course a carefully (and secretly) planned political bargain, in the making since Essex's death two years before. Because of this planning, the broad adaptation of English factions and policy to the new king was quietly effected, with much of the political dealing agreed beforehand. Mutual political advantage guaranteed Cecil, and the Howard grouping with which he had worked, pre-eminence under James's new regime. James may have been able personally to intervene and widen

this settlement somewhat by restoring the lands and titles of Southampton, leader of what remained of the defeated Essex faction, and by bringing to court Northumberland, regarded as leader of the Catholics; on the other hand, some points of policy may have been foisted onto James, already agreed by the Privy Council late in Elizabeth's reign — in particular peace with Spain. James's sobriquet of "Peacemaker", he recalled later, had not been of his own devising.[1]

The key issue of James's nationality, however, which had more than anything else thrown a shadow over the succession, had still to emerge fully. When it did so, the actual organization of the new regime was at stake, rather than the broad politics. It was still evidently an open question at the eleventh hour, during the period between Elizabeth's death on 24 March and James's arrival at Theobalds (Cecil's house) formally to 'take possession' on 3 May. The question centred on the king's freedom to retain his trusted Scots advisers and courtiers after his move to England, and whether or not they should be granted English office. Cecil and Henry Howard had felt their way carefully on this issue, sending messengers and meeting the king personally at York. In the process, they destroyed the leaders of two late Elizabethan sub-factions, Sir Walter Ralegh and Sir John Fortescue, by portraying them to the king as advocating complete exclusion of the Scots. While there was probably some truth in their portrayal, there was also hypocrisy. Somerset and Percy, the first official messengers to reach James, were to confirm that no offices or places on the Council were to go to Scotsmen, which clearly shows the decidedly negative attitude of Cecil and his allies towards Scotsmen holding English office : their preferred outcome was that the existing regime should as far as possible continue with the simple substitution of one monarch for another.[2]

---

[1] S.Adams, "Spain or the Netherlands ? The Dilemmas of Early Stuart Foreign Policy", in H.Tomlinson (ed.)*Before the English Civil War* (1983)p.93 : G.Parry *The Golden Age Restor'd : The Culture of the Early Stuart Court 1603-1642* (Manchester, 1981)pp. 16, 21, quoting James's *Meditation upon the Lord's Prayer* (1616).

[2] R.C.Munden "The Defeat of Sir John Fortescue : Court *versus* Country at the Hustings?" *English Historical Review* 93 (1978) pp. 811-16, esp. p.814 n; P.R.O.31/3/35, Beaumont to Henri IV (1 April and 8 April 1603).

James naturally had different views. According to rumours at the time and his later actions, he wanted a half-and-half division with equal numbers of English and Scots holding both formal offices and the more informal court posts. If in part this looked to the past — to the king's long ties of trust and affection for his Scottish servants — it also looked to the future — to James's dream of a full and equal union between the two nations. This explains why he had been, and for the moment remained, willing unilaterally to begin equal partition and admit so many Englishmen to his Scots chamber, both in Edinburgh, and on the journey south.[3]

But these high hopes came up against hard reality at Theobalds on 3 and 4 May. Then a compromise on the division of both formal and informal offices was reached. On the formal side of government, five Scots were admitted members of the English Privy Council, and two of them given strategic English offices. Sir George Home, Lord Treasurer of Scotland (later to become earl of Dunbar) became Chancellor of the Exchequer, in place of Fortescue; and Edward Bruce, lord Kinloss, was made Master of the Rolls in Chancery. The Lords Treasurer and Chancellor were thus placed in tandem with Scottish subordinates, and so the key legal and financial departments subjected to James's "equal partition" principle.[4] Beyond this, James had similar designs for the secretariat and Privy Council : he had apparently intended to make his Scottish secretary of state an equal partner with Cecil, and to make his cousin Ludovick, duke of Lennox Lord President of the Council (perhaps to compensate for the failure to get more equal

---

[3] B.Galloway *The Union of England and Scotland 1603-1608* (Edinburgh, 1986)pp. 17-18; B.L.Additional MS 30,640 fo.97, Beaumont to Villeroy, 9 April 1604 (cited by Galloway as reporting James's later intention to make up his *Bedchamber* of seven from each nation) in fact refers only to dividing equally the Gentlemen of the *Privy* Chamber in quarter (12 in theory, 14 in this report) between the nations.Below, pp.19-20.

[4] B.L.Additional MS 11,402, fo. 88 : *APC*. XXXII (1601-04) 497. Ralegh and Fortescue's offices were given with savage irony to the very Scots whom they had tried to exclude — Ralegh's Captaincy of the Guard to Sir Thomas Erskine, Fortescue's Mastership of the Great Wardrobe, as well as the Chancellorship, to Sir George Home.

partition of that body). But neither rumoured intention came to anything.[5] Such was the settlement of the formal bureaucracy as it had come down from Elizabeth. For the rest the Elizabethans remained in office — a remarkable degree of continuity by comparison with other early modern successions to the English throne, especially when one considers that James's involved a change of dynasty. The application of equal Anglo/Scots partition of offices had been partial and limited; given James's appetite for personal control, the formal side of the bargain was disadvantageous.

Partly as a consequence of this, the informal part of the bargain represented a victory for the king : negative, perhaps, but with important future consequences. At Theobalds, the king took his place at the centre of the English court which had come there to meet him, for the moment retaining the entourage which had served him in Scotland and followed him south, including its recently-admitted complement of Englishmen. This interim "Bedchamber" fitted into place at the heart of the basically unchanged outer layers of the late Elizabethan court.

This was only a stop-gap arrangement. A committee of the Privy Council was set up to reach a final settlement, composed equally of English and Scots, and dominated by Home and Cecil. The settlement was effected at the Tower of London, about 11-13 May, where this "Bedchamber" was purged of a large number of now politically unimportant Scots and all the Englishmen who had obtained posts on their own initiative. The purged, together with new recruits who bought their places, were formed into a new Privy Chamber, half English, half Scots. Those remaining in the Bedchamber — the new Bedchamber, part of James's full establishment as King of England, and the object of this study — were all Scots of personal or political importance to James; agents whom he could trust, companions with whom he was familiar.[6]

---

[5]*CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 33 — cf. B.Galloway *The Union of England and Scotland* p.18; P.R.O.31/3/35, Beaumont to Villeroy, 7 May 1603 — Cecil was worried about James's proposal 'de luy donner un compagnon Écossois, ce qu'il porte fort impatiemment.'

[6]Below, pp.19-20, 66.

Having compromised over Scotsman in formal office, James won the battle over his Scots entourage without concessions. The politics of the succession produced a new English court where the royal presence was reserved as a matter of course to the custody of Scotsmen; no wonder Cecil was accused of having sold out the English to the Scots.[7] While the less important areas of the court — the Privy Chamber and beyond — were partitioned between the nations, the crucially important Bedchamber remained Scots to balance the fact that the major offices of state were overwhelmingly still in English hands. James, in working from this basis for his great scheme of comprehensive union between his kingdoms, would probably have found it very difficult to begin with anything less.

The focus of this study is the Bedchamber that came together in 1603. The first chapter begins by discussing its institutional antecedents, in England, France and Scotland, and its institutional accompaniments, the rest of the court at whose centre the new Bedchamber took its place; both are necessary to understand the Bedchamber's foundation, and how later, throughout the reign, it functioned. The second chapter builds on this background and deals with the Bedchamber practice and personnel during the reign, providing an overview and analysis of who did what. The remaining six chapters alternate political narrative with analysis of the Bedchamber's administrative functions, in order fully to investigate the later political rôle of the department which was born under such thoroughly political circumstances.

[7]P.R.O 31/3/35 Beaumont to Villeroy, 17 May 1603; *CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 33.

Chapter One

The Institutional Context

Few would disagree that James VI's thirty-six years in Scotland as a king must be well considered by anybody seeking to understand James I's twenty-two years in England; it is equally the case that to understand both the structure, and the politics of his court in England, one needs to be able to see the even deeper background of his earlier court in Scotland (and of the French court which so heavily influenced it), as well as the English court with which both traditions collided in 1603. Before setting out in the next chapter, therefore, to reconstruct the Jacobean Bedchamber, a basic context needs to be supplied in the present one. First the English, Scottish — and French — sixteenth-century background will be sketched out; then the development of the outer court of James I in England described — that is, the Great and Guard Chambers, the Presence Chamber, and finally, at rather more length, the Privy Chamber, those areas of the court beyond the private apartments of Withdrawing Chamber, Bedchamber and Privy Lodgings which form the main focus of this study.

i) The Sixteenth-Century English Background

The English court that James I inherited has been adequately sketched in outline by twentieth century scholars.[1] It consisted of two broad departments, one headed by the Lord Steward, the other by the Lord Chamberlain; these departments corresponded to the physical areas of the court described by the terms Hall and Chamber. The Household under the Lord Steward provided for the supply of necessaries, the preparation of food, fuel and some furnishings, saw to payment of fees and so on, and presented the overall accounts for the bulk of household expenditure to the Exchequer. The Chamber under the Lord Chamberlain generally saw to the consumption of what the Lord Steward's department provided; but more specifically, it ensured that the consumption was both conspicuous and decorous, both in the formal, ritual aspects of the monarch's public life, and in the more private and domestic aspects. The execution of the latter task gave rise to the most characteristic feature of the English court; the rigid hierarchy of state apartments, upon which depended the rigorous limitation of the entrée.[2]

This, in general terms, has long been well enough understood; but the work of Dr. Starkey on the reign of Henry VIII has within the last decade added a new dimension to the historian's knowledge of these matters. This has uncovered the evolution of a new department under the first two Tudors which permanently altered the functioning of the English court. To the fifteenth-century dual division between Hall and Chamber a third entity, the Privy Chamber, was added, which began to guarantee the monarch a private life within his own apartments ("Privy Lodgings" in contemporary terminology).

---

[1] E.K.Chambers *The Elizabethan Stage* (4 vols, Oxford 1923, I Chs 1,2); E.P.Cheyney *A History of England from the defeat of the Armada to the death of Elizabeth* (2 vols, New York, 1948) I, Ch 2. (both subject to correction on many points of detail). General descriptions of the early Stuart court can be found in G.E.Aylmer *The King's Servants : The Civil Service of Charles I, 1625-1642* (London, 1974) Ch 2, iii, and G.P.V.Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* (London, 1962) Ch. 3.

[2] G.E.Aylmer *The King's Servants*, p.29; the Treasurer of the Chamber was also responsible for some fees.

Under Henry VIII this Privy Chamber now acted as a central junction : a crucial frontier between two worlds lay quite literally at its door; on the one side lay the semi-public outer chambers; on the other, the Privy Chamber itself and the still more private world of the Privy Lodgings, centring on the royal Bedchamber.

But the Privy Chamber was not only a room in the palace; under Henry VIII it evolved its own staff, and an officer hierarchy, like the other palace rooms (the Great Chamber, the Presence); it also under Henry effectively became a separate department within the court under its head officer, the Groom of the Stool and First Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, who succeeded in gaining independence of the overall head of this area of the court, the Lord Chamberlain. The outer rooms of the chamber became, under the Lord Chamberlain, primarily concerned with ceremony — the audiences of ambassadors, state banquets, processions to chapel and so on. The Privy Chamber now took over the king's efficient, personal service which the officers of what were now called the Presence and Great Chambers (headed by the Gentlemen Ushers Daily Waiters) had once performed. Only the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber had ordinary access to the Privy Chamber itself, while, in theory at least, only the head of the department, the Groom of the Stool, gave attendance beyond it in the Privy Lodgings. No Henrician courtiers could expect closer access to the king than the Privy Chamber — apart of course from the Groom of the Stool himself, who had the entrée of the Privy Lodgings. In this fact lay the department's great importance.[3]

Under Elizabeth, things changed somewhat. Another room, the Withdrawing Chamber, was interposed in the sequence of chambers, between the Privy Chamber and the Privy Lodgings; at the same time (largely because of her sex) the queen's personal life became more private and withdrawn, in parallel to the added physical distance between it

[3]These two paragraphs are based on D.R.Starkey "The King's Privy Chamber, 1485-1547", Cambridge Ph.D Dissertation, 1973, *passim.* See also his "Representation through Intimacy" in I.M.Lewis (ed.) *Symbols and Sentiments* (London, 1977); "The Age of the Household" in S.Medcalf (ed.) *The Later Middle Ages* (London, 1981); and *The Reign of Henry VIII : Personalities and Politics* (London, 1985).

and the life of the rest of the court. She spent more time in the Privy Lodgings; while the Privy Chamber, to which access was nevertheless still jealously limited, took on a markedly more formal and official character. Her private servants, female of course, also changed in character. They played little part in politics; while the Ladies of the Bedchamber, who divided out the functions of the Groom of the Stool among themselves, enjoyed neither the status, departmental authority nor the administrative powers of the Henrician officer. In one sense the Elizabethan dispensation represented a weakening in the status and importance of the Privy Chamber's personnel; on the other hand, it actually strengthened its overall ethos as a department, which was the restriction of intimacy between monarch and subject. Elizabeth's Privy Chamber was the limit of the aspirations of the male courtier, and so the bureaucrat-minister, like Secretary Cecil, was not disadvantaged compared to the outer court officer, Masters of the Horse like Leicester and Essex for example; and neither could expect political trouble from the female Privy Chamber and Bedchamber staff proper. So, although the English court under both Henry and Elizabeth was designed for the precise regulation of distance between monarch and subject, Elizabeth, because of the greater domestic privacy she enjoyed, was perhaps better able to exploit this distance.[4] And when a courtier stepped over the mark, the results could be cataclysmic. In 1591, the earl of Essex told Elizabeth that 'the two windows of your Privy Chamber shall be the poles of my sphere'; but eight years later, ignoring this precept, he stormed her Bedchamber, and destroyed himself.[5] Bishop Goodman was thus right to observe that 'no King... in Christendom did observe such state and carried

[4]This discussion of the Elizabethan court is based on the work of Pamela Wright, whom I thank for discussion of these topics and for a sight of her forthcoming work. The Ladies of the Bedchamber were probably arranged in a definite hierarchy, rather than simply sharing out the duties; the tomb of Lady Katherine Knollys in the St. Edmund Chapel, Westminster Abbey, claims she was Elizabeth's 'Chiefe Lady of the Bedchamber'. See also below Ch. 3, section i), pp.81-4.

[5] J.E Neale *Queen Elizabeth I* (London, 1934) 328, 367.

such distance from the subjects as the Kings and Queens of England'; he was similarly correct in observing that 'there was no such state observed in Scotland'.[6]

ii) The Scottish System

The planning of the Scottish royal palaces alone can tell much of the story. There the sequence of rooms consisted of a Hall or Guard Hall, a Presence Chamber and a Bedchamber. Beyond lay a cabinet; then a door leading to the queen's Chamber.[7] The whole suite functioned as the royal lodging : James worked in his Cabinet; slept in his Chamber; and dined in his Presence, chatting informally as he did so with the waiters at his table and lookers-on alike. There was thus no separation, as in England, between the public ceremonial of the Tudors' outer chambers and the private world of the Privy Lodgings; and no frontier, like the Privy Chamber, to hold the two apart. Indeed there was very little privacy at all.

Even in the most private room, the Cabinet, two Gentlemen were assigned to keep the doors, and one or two had the routine duty of giving attendance. Similarly all the staff of the Chamber served directly in what was the king's actual bedroom — 24 Gentlemen in 1580, 16 in 1601, together with four Varlets and three Pages, all waiting in quarterly shifts.[8] By 1601 this had become too much even for James, and complaint was made of the 'confusit nowmer of personis of all rankis quha hes entr[é]es in His Majesteis bed chalmer'; access to it, and also the outer chambers, was therefore limited. What is striking above all to English eyes in this is the generosity of the limitations : even under the new dispensation the Presence, for example, was to be available to 'noblemen and

---

[6] G.Goodman *The Court of King James I* , ed. J.S.Brewer (2 vols, London, 1839) I, 29.
[7] See plans in H.Murray Baillie, "Etiquette and the Planning of the State Apartments in Baroque Palaces," *Archaeologia* CI (1967) 181.
[8] *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* III (1578-1585) 316, 322-3 : Scottish Record Office E34/47 (January 1596) : *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* VI (1599-1604) 207-8 (1601).

masters and the lords of his Privy Council' — which is rather as though the English Privy Chamber had been open to the entire peerage and their eldest sons.[9]

The lack of distinction between public and private was reflected in the managerial structure of the Scottish court. Instead of the English duality of the Lord Chamberlain and the Groom of the Stool, who, as head of the Chamber and Privy Chamber respectively, enjoyed separate and often jealously clashing jurisdictions, there was unity, with the one man being both Lord Great Chamberlain and First Gentleman of the Chamber. As the former he was in charge of the staff of the Presence — the Ushers, Cupbearers, Carvers and Sewers, who attended the king as he dined; as the latter he was himself the king's principal body servant. He had the general oversight of the Chamber's staff (and indeed the appointment of them when the king was still a minor); he enjoyed *ex officio* the right to lodge as close as possible to the king's Chamber, and the first option on sleeping there; and he was in charge of dressing and undressing the king.[10] In England, all these were the tasks and privileges of the Groom of the Stool; in Scotland, however, the Groom's eponymous functions — supervising the king's use of, keeping, and originally constructing the close-stool — enjoyed none of the prestige they did in England, and were discharged by a menial — a dichtar — of the Chamber.[11]

If indeed there was a rival to the pre-eminence of the Lord Great Chamberlain/First Gentleman at the Scottish court, it was the Captain of the Guard. The Captain was always a member of the Chamber; in outdoor procession he walked closest to the king; and he had important responsibilities outside the chamber itself, in the Hall, where the Guard (when one could be afforded) attended. He, like the Lord Great

---

[9] *Ibid., loc. cit.* (1601 orders). 'Masters' were heirs apparent to Scottish peerages below the rank of marquis.

[10] G.Donaldson (ed.) *The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1982) VIII (1581-84) 278-79, and the 1601 orders cited above. The Scottish Lord Great Chamberlain was the equivalent of the English Lord Chamberlain.

[11] 'Dichtars' (lit. "cleaners") were one rung below Pages. John Harknes, dichtar in 1590 and 1591, constructed and kept the king's close-stool : J.Craig (ed.) *Papers relating to the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1828) Appendices (separately paginated) pp. 19,24.

Chamberlain, thus enjoyed a combination of close access to the king and wider authority in the court. The rivalry was most marked early in James's Scottish reign, when a guard actually existed, and physical custody of the king was as important as influence over him. Struggles between rival favourites holding the two offices form a continuing theme in the politics of the 1580's. Thus James's first great favourite, Esmé 1st duke of Lennox, after initially taking the Captaincy for himself (in addition to being Lord Great Chamberlain/First Gentleman), was displaced by Arran, and then involved in a short (and in the short term successful) struggle for survival.[12] Later Bothwell (*de facto* First Gentleman after Lennox's banishment) contended with Huntly (Captain until his disgrace in 1589).[13] In the 1590's, on the one hand lesser men succeeded Arran and Huntly as Captain, while the Guard itself disappeared for reasons of economy; and on the other, the Lord Great Chamberlaincy became safely hereditary in Lennox, as had first been intended. But the Captaincy and Chamberlaincy continued to be the two vital offices in the Scots court until James's accession to the English throne; and as we shall see, they — both the

[12] *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* VI (1599-1604) 171; *CSPScotland* XIII (1597-1603) 736-7. *Cal. Scottish Papers* V (1574-81) 641, 656; VI (1581-3) 105-6, 220-1; the latter makes clear their near-equivalent status in a 1582 dispute over the custody of keys to the king's apartment, settled by giving Lennox the keys of the king's chamber itself, and Arran those of the rest of the court. *Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland* VIII (1581-84),120, for Lennox's Captaincy, March 1582.

[13] *Calendar of Scottish Papers* X (1589-93) 331, June 1590 — 'Bothwell being chief gentleman in the king's chamber before the entry of [Ludovick, 2nd] duke of Lennox [*c.*1589, by inheritance from his father], is not now admitted to any place in the chamber'. Ludovick was formally appointed on his father's death in 1583, aged nine; *Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland* VIII (1581-84) 278-9. Bothwell's loss of such a vital office probably explains much of his desperation in the late eighties and nineties. For a comparison of his actions with Essex's in England, cf. Jennifer M. Brown "Scottish Politics 1567-1625" in A.G.R.Smith (ed.) *The Reign of James VI and I* (London, 1973) p. 30 : but the facts that Bothwell once dressed James as First Gentleman, while formally at least Essex was never permitted Bedchamber access at any time, in fact throw doubt on such a comparison.

offices themselves and the men who filled them — were to continue to be important to James in England.[14]

iii) French Influence on the Scottish Court.

There were clearly important differences between the English and the Scottish courts. *Prima facie* it is tempting to attribute the latter's much more casual style to its poverty and smallness; in 1590 its full complement of 180 for both king and queen, above and below stairs, was about one third the size of the English household of an unmarried queen regnant.[15] But the differences cut far deeper and were in fact systemic : the English court was designed for the preservation and manipulation of distance, the Scots for the management of relatively free and open access. Or to put it differently : the English etiquette was English, while the Scottish was French. James's court was 'governed more in the French than in the English fashion,' the Englishman Sir Henry Wotton remarked on a visit there in 1601.[16] In terms of palace geography, the parallel is almost exact. The state apartments in the Louvre in 1585, for example, consisted of an *antichambre*, the *chambre royale* or Bedchamber, and a *cabinet* leading to the queen's chamber. The palaces of Falkland and Stirling were built by French masons, and it was probably the particularly close coming together of the 'auld alliance' under James V in the

---

[14] Sir John Carmichael succeeded Huntly as Captain, and when murdered in 1600 was replaced by Sir Thomas Erskine of Gogar. Wotton in 1601 observed there to be no guard 'either because [James] cannot afford one or because he relies on the love of his people' (L. Pearsall Smith (ed.) *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton* (2 vols, Oxford, 1966) I, 314-5. In the next year nevertheless it was reported that Erskine 'labours to have a guard' 'with...advertisements of his of the great danger that is'. (*Calendar of Scottish Papers* XIII (1597-1603) 1049, 22 September 1602). For the later importance of Erskine and Lennox in the English Bedchamber, see below,p.47.

[15] J.Craig (ed.) *Papers relating to the Marriage of James VI...* (Edinburgh, 1828) appendices pp. 23-29 : LC 2/4(4), supplemented by G.E.Aylmer *The King's Servants* (1974) pp.472-75.

[16] L.Pearsall Smith (ed.) *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton* (2 vols., Oxford, 1966) I, 314-15.

early sixteenth century that was mainly instrumental in bringing about the full transfer of the system.[17] The lack of Privy Lodgings, and consequent free access to the monarch, were also prime characteristics of the French court; just as the easy-going familiarity of the dinner ritual was equally characteristic. Wotton remarked that 'anyone may enter the King's Presence when he is at dinner, and as he eats he converses with those about him,' which struck him as particularly French. [18] The importance of the Captain of the Guard was again typically French, as was the basic nomenclature and structure of the main court departments; compare the Great Master of Household and his subordinate Masters with the French *Grand Maître*; the Great Master of the Esquierie with the *Grand Écuyer*; the Lord Great Chamberlain with the *Grand Chambellan*. The arrival in 1579 of Esmé Stuart, 1st duke of Lennox, James's cousin and favourite, from the court of Henri III explains even closer parallels. He personally first set up James's first full adult household in 1580, inventing for himself a uniquely Scottish combination of French offices — Lord Great Chamberlain and First Gentleman of the Chamber. That he regarded the keys to the royal chamber as a mark of this last office is perhaps a reflection of contemporary French court fashion. More certainly, he also gave James an enduring taste for courtly French manners to which, much later in England, Carr and Villiers had to conform.[19]

---

[17] L.Batiffol *Le Louvre sous Henri IV et Louis XIII* (Paris, 1930) p.21, plan pp. 24-5 ; J.Wormald *Court, Kirk and Community* (London, 1981)pp. 8, 9, 59.

[18] On French familiarity, see the reaction to Henri III's attempt to impose Viennese distance in 1584 in P.Champion *Henri III, Roi de Pologne* (Paris, 1951) pp.173-74; *CSPForeign* XIX (1584-85) 184-85.

[19] R.Doucet *Les Institutions de la France au XVIème siècle* (2 vols., Paris 1948) I, 122-26, corrected by R.J.Knecht *Francis I* (Cambridge 1982) pp.89-91 ; Scottish Record Office E 34/35 (May 1580) for Scottish structure — 4 Masters of Household, 4 Master Stablers. Of their superiors, no Lord Great Master of the Household seems to have been appointed under James. For Lennox's appointment as 'Great Master of the Esquierie and haill hors', see Scottish Record Office PS 1/63, fo. 22 (24 November 1591). On keys, above n 12, and C.Loyseau *Cinq Livres du Droit des Offices* (Paris, 1610) p.430. Below, pp.126, 237.

iv) The Physical Context : the Outer Chamber of James I

The king's nationality, and the background of French influence on the Scottish court, were to have considerable effects on James's Bedchamber in England, both in its foundation, overwhelmingly in terms of its personnel, and on its style and functioning. But the Bedchamber as it developed in England must also be set alongside those other aspects of the English court which changed less dramatically in response to the Scottish succession, remaining in place as the physical surroundings within which James's Bedchamber operated; that is to say, the outer chamber, under the control of the Lord Chamberlain. According to Robert Naunton, a future Secretary of State, the outer Chamber possessed little political significance. In 1605 he got his 'first sight... of the Presence Chamber', which he 'observed to be but a mere passage..., and little better to improve a man in matters of importance than the road between this and Royston'. At the end of the road to Royston lay James's hunting lodge; on the other side of the 'passage' of the Presence were the Privy Chamber and the Privy Lodgings. These were the goals of Naunton's 'men of any understanding', as they are the goals of this study; but they must first be placed in the proper context of the longer-established ceremonial parts of the court.[20]

The Lord Chamberlainship, greatly revived in prestige under the female rule of the later sixteenth century, in fact continued, for all the changes in the inner household closest to the king, to be the most visibly prestigious court office — particularly while the senior post of Lord Steward remained unfilled until 1616.[21] There was similar continuity with personnel. Elizabeth's stand-in Chamberlain, the earl of Suffolk, and his deputy, Sir John Stanhope, Cecil's nominee as Vice Chamberlain in 1601, held their offices

---

[20]H.M.C. *Cowper* I, 58 (Robert Naunton to John Coke, 29 October 1605).

[21] The earl of Nottingham was appointed temporarily in time of Parliament in 1597, 1601, 1604-10 and 1614, exercising no control over the household (*pace* G.P.V.Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* (London, 1962) p.26). *Commons Journals* I, 140; H.M.C.*Salisbury* XV, p.25. LS 13/168 fo. 176v ff shows Lennox's impact after appointment.

undisturbed until 1614 and 1616 respectively. Suffolk's successor as Lord Chamberlain, his son-in-law Robert Carr, earl of Somerset, represented more of a break with tradition. Not only was he a Scot, he was also *de facto* head of the Bedchamber. In bridging the public/private divide in the same way as did the Scottish office of Lord Great Chamberlain/First Gentleman, the resulting concentration broke the rule, fundamental to the English court, of the separation of powers of the heads of the inner and outer Chambers. In the event it was also the exception that proved the rule. The arrangement lasted only eighteen months and both the king and Prince of Wales recognised that it would set no precedent since Carr was 'a favourite'.[22]

Less remarkably a handful of other Scots were also appointed to key Chamber posts at the beginning of the reign, among the Gentlemen Ushers Daily Waiters, the immediate efficient subordinates of the head officers of the Chamber,[23] and among the Guard. James was obsessive about security; he also took a Scottish rather than an English view of the importance of the Captaincy of the Guard. The result was that the post was given to his great favourite, Sir Thomas Erskine, subsequently viscount Fenton and earl of Kellie, who (until 1617, when he relinquished the captaincy to Sir Henry Rich, later earl of Holland) combined it with the Groomship of the Stool. Thanks to so well placed a Captain the Guard did very well and increased in both numbers and pay. The commanders of the other guard, the Gentlemen Pensioners, remained English, but the Pensioners themselves were subject to the principle of equal partition between English and Scots. This change, however, was not effected at a blow, but gradually as death and resignation

---

[22]On Carr's Bedchamber supremacy, see below pp.132, 148. F.H. Mares (ed.) *The Memoirs of Robert Carey* (Oxford, 1972) pp.73-4; a second exception was made for Carey in the prince's household, but when Charles became king, the division of control was strictly maintained.

[23]LS 13/168 fo. 49, Sir James Maxwell and Sir John Drummond appointed at York in April 1603, pairing two English with two Scots. LC 2/6 fo. 39 shows three English serving with two Scots in 1625.

vacated posts.[24] And elsewhere among the teeming personnel of the Chamber not even this gesture was attempted : for the most part the Elizabethan incumbents remained securely in possession.[25]

James proved equally accomodating — even enthusiastic — about the ceremonial that was the main *raison d'être* of these outer layers of the English court. He continued the pompous epiphanies of the Tudor procession to the Chapel Royal, indeed eventually clarifying the rules of precedence and specifying, among much else, that 'both noblemen and others use great distance and respect to our person, as also civility one to another'.[26] He also revived the practice of dining in state in the Presence on special occasions. Different views were taken of this : the Venetian ambassador thought that the king was being 'corrupted' and that if left to himself would retain his 'French familiarity' and rough dining habits; others saw political calculation.[27] Beyond continuation and revival, James also innovated : the office of Master of Ceremonies was set up to oversee the increasingly elaborate and contentious etiquette that surrounded the reception of foreign ambassadors; while masques became a more prominent, and expensive, feature of court life. In both areas James was following the dictates of French fashion — to the occasional dismay of his English subjects. In 1607, reported Chamberlain,

> The King was very earnest to have [a masque] on Christmas night...
> but the lords told him it was not the fashion; which answer pleased him not

---

[24] S.Pegge *Curialia* (5 Parts, London, 1782-1806) Pt. III, 33. I owe my information on the Gentlemen Pensioners to Mr.William Tighe, who has studied the band under Elizabeth. By James's funeral, however, analysis of Pensioners names indicates that equality had not lasted; of 69 names, including 5 officers, only 13 are Scots. (LC 2/6 fo. 47.)

[25] For continuity of personnel among Gentlemen Ushers Quarter Waiters, Sewers of the Chamber, Gentlemen Waiters, Grooms and Pages, compare LC 2/4(4) (Elizabeth's funeral list) with the entries in LS 13/168 *passim*. Six out of nine Quarter Waiters were ex-Elizabethans; so were all nine Sewers of the Chamber; only one of four Gentlemen Waiters, but all 14 Grooms of the Chamber; and two of the four Pages.

[26] B.L.Additional MS 34,324 fo. 215 (1 January 1623), reported in N.E.McLure (ed.) *The Letters of John Chamberlain* (2 vols, Philadelphia, 1939) II, 470. These orders, including the clause quoted, were closely followed by Charles I in January 1631 (SP 16/182/31).

[27] *CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 46, 12 June 1603; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 251, 5 January 1608; E.K.Chambers *The Elizabethan Stage* (4 vols., Oxford, 1923) I, 15 for the revival.

> one whit, but said "what do you tell me of the fashion? I will make it a fashion".[28]

James might put his foot down over a masque, but on the substance of outer Chamber organisation his reign brought no more than fine-tuning. The ceremonial of the English outer court survived the accession of the Stuarts just as it had been passed down unscathed by the Tudors : such resistance to change, amounting to stagnation, was perhaps only to be expected in view of the outer Chamber's status as a political backwater.

v) The Physical Context : the Privy Chamber of James I.

The department which, under the Tudors, had displaced the Chamber proper from the king's real, practical service was now, under James, itself relegated to an insignificance almost as complete as that of the outer Chamber. That department was the Privy Chamber. In 1638 the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber petitioned Charles I in a body, complaining that 'of all other places in your Majesty's service' theirs was 'most changed and fallen'. This 'change and fall' had in fact taken place in May 1603.[29]

The change was not unheralded, however. By Elizabeth's reign, the original 'institution' of the Henrician Privy Chamber had undergone modfication. There had arisen a clear division of its staff into those who were also 'of the Bedchamber' and those who were not; while life in the Privy Chamber itself had become markedly more formal.

But under James these internal subtleties were translated into hard, institutional distinctions. Bedchamber and Privy Chamber were separated, in staff and functions. The former took the whole of the king's intimate, informal service; the latter was left only

---

[28]Sir John Finet *Finetti Philoxenis...* (1656) for the evolution of precedent by an official (first assistant, then full Master of Ceremonies) from the raw material of court squabbles for precedence. Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* Ch. 6. G.Parry *The Golden Age Restor'd : The Culture of the Early Stuart Court* (Manchester, 1981) pp.40-42 : *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 250 (5 January 1608).

[29] SP16/380/78, January 1638.

with the formal and the ceremonial — and not even very much of that as we shall see. And with this change of character came a change of control as the Privy Chamber and its staff were now subject, without reservation, to the authority of the Lord Chamberlain.

The detail of how this happened can be quickly sketched. When James arrived at Theobalds, Cecil's house, on May 3, James's Scottish Chamber was simply placed in the centre of the unchanged outer layers of the English court, and effectively became an interim "Bedchamber".[30] This was plainly a compromise arrangement. About 11-13 May, when the king first arrived at one of his 'Standing Houses' as king of England (in fact the Tower of London), this "Bedchamber" was purged of 'at least 20 Scotch gentlemen' and an unknown number of Englishmen who had been hastily sworn in the weeks before and after the accession. Those who remained were to form the new Bedchamber, a distinct new institution. Those displaced, together with some new recruits, of both nations, were formed into a new Privy Chamber. This consisted of forty-eight Gentlemen, half English and half Scots, who waited in quarterly shifts of twelve.[31] At a stroke this both created the hard-and-fast Jacobean institutional distinction

---

[30] T.M., *The True Narration of the Entertainment of his Royall Majestie ..from Edinburgh [to] London* (1603), E (*rect.* F) 3; *Calendar of State Papers Venetian* X (1603-07) 25 (5/15 May 1603) — 'three days ago his Majesty began to live with English attendants in the English style at Theobalds. Up to that time he had followed his Scottish custom'. The Scots chamber was being referred to in an interim fashion as the "Bedchamber " before this : John Gibb, a 'varlet' of the Scots chamber in 1596 (Scottish Record Office E34/47) was 'one of the Bedchamber' by late April 1603; SP15/35/4.

[31] A Committee of the Privy Council was set up at the first full, official Council meeting at Theobalds on May 4 'to settle a course for order to be taken in the Kinges howse'. (B.L. Additional MS 11,402, fo. 88r). Although according to the record its activities seem to have been mainly concerned with the Household below stairs (P.R.O LS 13/168, fos 45v - 50), its involvement with the Bedchamber/Privy Chamber settlement may be inferred from the pattern of events. For events at the Tower; *The Letters of Philip Gawdy* ed.I.H.Jeayes (Roxburghe Club, 1906) pp.130-1 : *The Memoirs of Robert Carey* ed.F.H.Mares (Oxford, 1972) pp.65-6. For examples of Englishmen sworn in as members of the interim Scots chamber/"Bedchamber" between the accession and James's arrival : H.M.C. *Salisbury* XV (1603),p. 10 [Sir Edward Cecil]; *ibid.* p.28 [Sir William Eure]; *ibid.* p.19 [Sir Oliver Cromwell], all compared for corroboration with the names of those ejected and sworn into the new Privy Chamber in Jeayes (ed.) *op.cit.,loc. cit.* above; H.M.C *Portland* IX,p.129 (Sir John Holles). Cf. *The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham, 1593-1616* ed.H.S.Scott (Camden, Miscellany X,1902),p. 55 — 'manie...laboured there frends to go seek places of the king before he departed Scotland, especiallie to be of his privie chamber. These all had hopefull answares'.

between Bedchamber and Privy Chamber, and removed the Privy Chamber from any share in the king's real attendance and personal service.

In July 1610 the number of Gentlemen was cut to 32, more English than Scots being displaced to even up the numbers — this was the only subsequent change in the initial Privy Chamber establishment under James.[32] The Gentlemen received no fee or other allowance at any point in the reign. As Akrigg has noted, there has been considerable confusion among historians about the numerical establishment of James's court in general, and about that of the Privy Chamber in particular.[33] Much of the confusion rests on the uncritical use by historians of 'fee lists', contemporary compendia of court offices, some of which seem to have been produced commercially.[34] There are problems in using such materials. For example, after 1603, several lists incorrectly give the obsolete Tudor figure of 18 Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, each with a £50 fee[35] : but still others correctly give 48.[36] After 1610, however, I have found no list with the correct figure of 32.[37] The only way to resolve this muddle is to rely only upon official lists for guidance, despite their scarcity. Two firm indications indeed bear out Carleton's reference to a change in

---

[32]T.Birch *The Court and Times of James I* , ed R.F.Williams (2 vols., London, 1848) I, 130 (Sir Dudley Carleton to Sir Thomas Edmondes, 17 July 1610). As early as October 1603 Lord Treasurer Buckhurst had proposed to reduce those serving in each quarter from 12 to 8 : LS13/280, fo. 16v.

[33]*Jacobean Pageant* p.404, n1 to Ch.3 : cf. D.H.Willson *James VI and I* (London 1956) p.190, incorrectly giving 48 Gentlemen, fee £50 each.

[34] B.L.Harleian MS. 1857 contains a note on the last page relating to its presentation to Sir Christopher Hilliard (M.P. for Hedon, Yorks.) on 17 May 1610 by one Abraham Wallis in hope of favour. L.Stone *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965) p.467 and n2.

[35]*E.g.* Northamptonshire County Record Office Finch Hatton MS 39, (which I date to 1606-07) and B.L. Sloane MS 3479 at fo. 70 (Jacobean).

[36]*E.g.* B.L.Harleian MS 1857 , Additional MS 31,825 (both 1610).

[37]Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 824 XXII,1 (1614), and Ashmole 821,I (1615) give 48 : B.L.Egerton MS 3371 (1617) gives 24.

numbers in July 1610 : the 1610 reform was still clearly in force both in late1614[38], and in 1617.[39] Further confirmation comes from a copy of the Jacobean Privy Chamber Ordinances, dated by the copyist only to '161-', which divides the Gentlemen in quarter into two groups of four (implying a total of 32).[40] Nothing suggests any further alteration in the establishment before 1625 : thus the major changes had taken place in May 1603, with regard both to numbers (indeed Charles I shortly after his accession reverted to having 48 Gentlemen) and to fees — what an eighteenth century Gentleman referred to as 'that revolution of disfavour of the Gentleman of the Privy Chamber which proved fatal to their salaries'.[41]

The new arrangements were thus strikingly novel in the context of the English court, and it is clear that new regulations for the Privy Chamber were made to take account of these changes. Although the regulations do not themselves survive, their existence was explicitly recognised in July 1603, when supplementary orders were issued further to reinforce the new dispensation, particularly in limiting access. They stated that

> at o[u]r first coming to a standing house w[i]thin this ...Realme, Wee toke special care...to sett downe and establishe (w[i]th th[e] advice of o[u]r Privie Councell) certeine Orders for the p[rese]nte gou[erne]m[en]t of o[u]r Chambers, and especially of o[u]r Privie Chamber...and...accordinglie make choice of A certeine nomber of Officers and Gent[lemen] fitt for o[u]r attendaunce quarterlie

---

[38] SP15/40/28, the one surviving list of James's Privy Chamber found; headed "The Gentlemen of his Ma[jes]ties Privie Chamber in Quarter", it lists 31 Gentlemen in three groups of 8 and one of 7, each given a quarter beginning on the 20th of the months of May, August, November, and February. In another column, under the same heading, are listed four Cupbearers, four Carvers, four Sewers and four Esquires of the Body. (*Calendar of State Papers Domestic* XII (Additional, 1580-1625) 533, misdates and misleadingly describes it.) Its date must lie between George Villiers's appointment as Cupbearer (probably in November, certainly late 1614 — below, p.156) and 1 January 1615, when Sir Henry Vane, named in the list as Sewer, was replaced by Sir Henry Mildmay (LS 13/168, fo. 165r).

[39] SP 14/90/118 (February 1617), 8 Privy Chamber Gentlemen in quarter to accompany James to Scotland.

[40] B.L.Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v, §4 : see below, n 43.

[41] SP16/2/118, Charles's list of May 1625, giving 41 Gentlemen in quarters (groups of 9, 12, 10 and 10, with quarters beginning on the first of April, July, October and January), together with 5 Gentlemen in Ordinary but without specific quarter. N.Carlisle *An Inquiry into the Place and Quality of the Gentlemen of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Chamber* (London, 1829) p.89.

> in [tha]t place...,prohibiting all others not to p[re]sume to enter hereinto & w[i]thout warrant.

But that, nevertheless,

> manie men, and some of meane sorte, do...presumptuously presse into o[u]r... Privie Chamber, either of themselves or by the...connivance of...their friends there pr[i]vileged, as if no such establishm[en]t at all had byn made, and as though [tha]t place weare no more exempt then anie other....

Authority to enforce the regulations was therefore confirmed in the Lord Chamberlain, Vice Chamberlain, and below them the Gentlemen Ushers of the Privy Chamber, giving their control over the Privy Chamber an explicit clarity and lack of reservations which had been absent under Elizabeth.[42]

[42]SP14/2/35, 6 July 1603, draft order for the Privy Chamber, dated at Windsor. The specific occasion of this order was the disruption caused by the new Scots monopoly of the Bedchamber : access to the Privy Chamber had just become much reduced in value, yet strict controls were still being attemptedly imposed on the entrée to what was now virtually a second presence chamber. The Venetian ambassador reported immediately the change was made that the English lords 'are charged with having sold England to the Scots, for no Englishman, be his rank what it may, can enter the Presence Chamber without being summoned, whereas the Scottish lords have free entrée of the Privy Chamber, and more especially at the *toilette* ' (*CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 33, 12/22 May 1603). An anonymous 'loyal subject' also complained at this time that 'the Englishe finde themselves much disgraced. The meanest of that countrey may enter [th]e presence (& where not) w[i]th out controllment. But the English ... very unreasonably are put back' : SP 14/2/26, ?June 1603.

If the original orders are lost, however, a full copy of a later set of Jacobean Privy Chamber Ordinances does survive[43]; this shows clearly that, if their superiors were more firmly in control than had been the case under the Tudors, the Gentlemen themselves now had very little to do. The king's body service, the mainstay of the Henrician department, was lost; the last relic of it in these regulations merely provided that when the king 'shalbe pleased to Come into our Privie Chamber to pule one our bootes, then it shalbe lawfull for the Querrie of our stable to Come in' to help, and even here the equerry was forbidden the Privy Lodgings should the king choose to pull them on there.[44] James instead seems to have used the Privy Chamber for two main purposes : formal audiences with Secretaries of State and Masters of Requests, and the semi-public dining in the Scotto-French fashion which he so much enjoyed. The former offered the Gentlemen little opportunity of real contact with him; for this they had to rely on the king coming into the apartment to pass time more informally in his Privy Chamber. For this purpose the Gentlemen attended twelve, later eight to a quarter; those out of quarter, or appointed

---

[43] B.L Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v - 198r. A preamble states they were 'sett downe by our Comandemente and signed w[i]th our hand...as our statutes and ordynances for our privie Chamber. Ano Jacobi __ 161_[sic]'. Fourteen numbered clauses are followed by the word 'Finis'. The hand is consistent throughout, and appears on other material in the volume as a commentator. A.G.Watson *The Library of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* (London, 1966) 332 confirms that the hand is that of Ralph Starkey. From C.E.Wright *Fontes Harleianae* (London, 1972) *sub* 'Starkey', and K.Sharpe *Sir Robert Cotton, 1586-1631* (Oxford, 1979) 35, n.109, it appears that the copy must have been made before 1628, when D'Ewes acquired this and other volumes from Starkey's library, and was probably made in 1625, when Starkey lived in Cotton's house and had access to his papers. It is thus a very nearly contemporary copy, and likely to be reliable. There is no internal evidence to help in dating its substance more closely than the indication in the preamble of '161_', obviously giving a range of 1610-19. But it is possible that the issue of these ordinances not only reflected the change in numbers in July 1610 (which they certainly did, in §4 — see above, n40), but also coincided with it. A further possible indication that changes were in the air in 1610 is that Fenton's table, mentioned in these Ordinances (§ 4), was apparently acquired between March 1610 and March 1611. (Cf. LS 13/279 p.58, Book of Diet, March 1609-March 1610, no table for the Groom of the Stool, with B.L.Additional MS 6142 p. 1, Book of Diet, March 1610-11, which provides one). These orders became the foundation Ordinances for the Stuart Privy Chamber : in the Charles I Privy Chamber Ordinances, incorporated into the main collection of early 1638 (LC 5/180, pp. 21-24) only one Jacobean clause is missing, and only a quarter of the 1638 text is composed of new material.

[44] B.L.Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v, §8.

Gentlemen extraordinary — there were 81 ordinary and extraordinary Gentlemen at James's funeral in 1625 — were permitted to come into the Privy Chamber at 'fit times', but not at all times; the Gentlemen Ushers of the Privy Chamber were to regulate this, in order to avoid the chamber being 'unfit' when the king emerged into it from the Privy Lodgings beyond. When he did so, the Gentlemen generally had the duty of keeping him company while he remained in the Privy Chamber.[45] When the king moved on from there, the Gentlemen were permitted to accompany him closely; but if the king went out through the Privy Lodgings or Galleries, the Gentlemen were not allowed to follow, but were obliged to 'goe aboute' — that is, take the long route back through the state apartments — along with the rest of the court.[46]

Dining was little better. When the king dined in the Privy Chamber, four of the Gentlemen in waiting merely brought in the dishes, and stayed to perform any other services that might prove necessary. Certainly, after the 1610 reform, the four Carvers, Cupbearers and Sewers of the outer Chamber seem to have been regarded as Privy Chamber staff, and presumably therefore came in to perform these duties — though whether or not they had performed these duties in the Privy Chamber before 1610 is unclear. If 1610 did mark a change, it must have had the effect of even more severely limiting the practical duties of the Gentlemen proper in serving at dinner, as it would have

[45] LC 2/6, James's 1625 funeral list. B.L.Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v, §3 provides that the Gentlemen in quarter 'shall principally have the priveledge' of the chamber; those out of quarter 'shall Come in at Reasonable tymes but not to Contynewe ther the whole daye : whereupon the number beinge greate, the Chamber is made more unfit for us when we shalbe pleased to come unto it'.

[46] B.L.Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v, §6.

increased the importance of those who specialised in dinner service.[47] And certainly it was they who reaped the benefit of James's habit of conducting debates at this 'trial of wits' — Cupbearers like George Villiers (later favourite and duke of Buckingham), Carvers like Sir John Digby (later Vice Chamberlain and earl of Bristol) or Sewers like Sir Thomas Overbury (later the favourite's favourite) went on to make spectacularly successful court careers.[48]

The major consequence of this lack of real contact with the king was that the Gentlemen got comparatively little by way of either reward or promotion and were reduced, even for their own urgent suits, to snatching at the king's promises made 'instantly before his journey to Royston'.[49] An examination of the fortunes of the thirty-one Gentlemen listed in late 1614 emphasises the point.[50] The fifteen English gentlemen included the heads of eminent county families — Cromwell, Aston, Greville, Hungerford — and cadet relations of the nobility — Zouche, Fiennes (earl of Lincoln), and Gerrard. Nevertheless, only a handful seem to have benefited directly from crown patronage; Sir Oliver Cromwell's £250 of land in fee farm made him apparently the leading beneficiary. This did not prevent him, along with Sir Edward Greville, Sir Henry Goodere, Sir Henry Fiennes and Sir John Hungerford, from ending a court career in severe financial

---

[47] B.L.Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v specify that four of the eight Gentlemen in quarter are simply to carry in the dishes (§ 4). Such numbers imply that these Ordinances postdate the 1610 reform. Further, the inference from the official list dated to late 1614 (see n38 above) is that the 4 Cupbearers, Carvers, Sewers and Esquires of the Body were part of the Privy Chamber staff. The total of all categories on the list — 47 — suggests a possible rationale for the 1610 reform : it seems likely that the Gentlemen proper were reduced in number to allow the dinner servers of the outer Chamber to be incorporated without expanding the department. The situation before 1610 is unclear; no firm evidence has come to light as to whether the dinner servants of the outer chamber were allowed into the Privy Chamber to perform these duties before 1610. (Overbury's appointment as a Sewer in 1608 (n48 below), soon after his friend Carr's admission to the Bedchamber, might suggest that these posts were already important).

[48] J.Hacket *Scrinia Reserata...* (London, 1692) 38. For Villiers, below p.156 : Digby, B.L.Harleian MS 1857 ; Additional MS 31,825 as Carver in 1610; Overbury, B.L.Additional MS 15,476 fo. 92v (item 4).

[49] Sir Edward Greville was reduced to trying to use such a promise in a suit for cancelling his debts to the crown : H.M.C. *Salisbury* XIX (1607) 276 (11 October 1607).

[50] SP 15/40/28; see n38 above for a discussion of this document.

difficulties.[51] Evidently only those who also held some other office prospered — like Sir Robert Mansell and Sir John Trevor, for example, respectively Treasurer and Surveyor of the Navy. Others moved on from the Privy Chamber to more lucrative office elsewhere — Sir Edward Zouche to become Knight Marshal, Sir William Uvedale Treasurer of the Chamber, Sir Roger Dallison Master and Sir John Keyes Surveyor of the Ordnance. Alone among the Gentlemen listed, Sir Walter Aston moved on to a position of some

[51] Sir Oliver Cromwell gained £250 p.a. in land in 1606, proposed as his own reward (H.M.C.*Salisbury* XVIII (1606) pp. 190, 275, 331, 340). James's favour to Cromwell stemmed more from his hunting visits to his house than any Privy Chamber position; he apparently also enjoyed a £200 p.a. pension, resumed for £6,000 in 1608 (B.L.Additional MS 58,833, after fo. 20, *sub* year). His finances were nevertheless being constantly run down and ended in ruins — P.W.Hasler (ed.) *The History of Parliament : The House of Commons 1558-1603* (London, 1981) I, 681-2. Sir Edward Greville was also a foundation member (*Letters of Gawdy* ed.Jeayes, pp.130-1). Despite a series of significant grants — in 1606 some lands of Eynsham monastery (*CSPDom.* VIII (1603-10) 301), £500 in cash in 1607, £2,000 from assart lands in 1608 (B.L.Additional MS 58,833, cited as above), four recusants in 1611 (*CSPDom.* IX (1611-18) 45) — he finished the reign by selling up to his son-in-law Sir Arthur Ingram; Hasler (ed.) *History of Parliament* II, 219-20. Sir Henry Goodere's appointment to the Privy Chamber in May 1605 was apparently to soften the refusal of a suit (*D.N.B* ; SP 14/13/87). No crown grants to him appear in the Calendar, and later in the reign he was desperately in debt (see *CSPDom* X (1619-23) 147, 193). Sir Henry Fiennes, the 2nd earl of Lincoln's son received no grants from the regular sources; in 1623 he was fined by High Commission for contracting a future marriage before his present wife's death, one indication of his financial necessity (*CSPDom* X (1619-23) 585, XI (1623-25) 34). Sir John Hungerford, Gloucester representative of a once-powerful Wiltshire family, received apparently only a recusant (*CSPDom* VIII (1603-10) 384 (1607)), probably worth £160 (*ibid.* 580). Locally active, he obtained little central reward — see Hasler (ed.) *History of Parliament* II *s.n.* Sir Thomas Gerrard, head of a Lancashire Catholic family, a Baronet and probably a client of Northampton, appears to have received no direct crown patronage. In 1624 he was presented to the House of Lords as a recusant and took refuge at the Spanish ambassador's. Hasler (ed.) *op.cit.* II, 185-6; L.L.Peck *Northampton : Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I* (London, 1982) 54; R.E.Ruigh *The Parliament of 1624* (London, 1971), 260 n.4.

importance, as ambassador to Spain; but with a rental of £10,000 a year, he was among those few who could afford both Privy Chamber and ambassadorial service.[52]

Of the Scots, Sir Francis Stewart, brother to the earl of Moray, probably did best — in eleven years he had received over £900 in cash together with a pension of £400. Sir Patrick Murray (the earl of Tullibardine's son) got £1,700 in cash and a pension of £300.[53] Ten more of the sixteen Scots had pensions of between £100 and £300, while

---

[52] Sir Robert Mansell, with no direct crown grants, must have relied heavily on his office of Treasurer of the Navy, and the earl of Nottingham (P.W.Hasler (ed.) *The History of Parliament : The House of Commons 1558-1603* III, 11-12, omitting his Privy Chamber membership). Sir John Trevor relied similarly on his Surveyorship of the Navy, together with that of Clerk of Windsor Castle, both of which came from his patron Nottingham, to whom he was secretary (Hasler (ed.) *op.cit.* III 529, also erroneously naming him a Gentleman Usher of the Privy Chamber in 1603; he was merely a Gentleman (LS 13/168 fo. 57r, 22 July 1603). He too appears to have received no direct grants from the crown. Sir Edward Zouche suffered similarly, though he was involved with the glass monopoly — *A.P.C* XXXIII(1613-14) 162, 173, 192. In 1618 he became Knight Marshal, from where he made rapid strides in favour, and was in 1623 rumoured to be in line to become a 'lord of the bedchamber' (*CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 536; SP 14/153/111). Sir William Uvedale came to prominence in 1613, and in 1614 was his patron Somerset's 'chief favourite' (*Letters of Chamberlain* I, 484, 518). Accordingly in July 1615 he was given the appropriate reward (vacated by Overbury) of the reversion to the Treasurership of the Chamber, which fell in January 1618 (*CSPDom* IX (1611-18) 291, 513). He apparently got nothing else from Privy Chamber attendance. Sir Roger Dallison as Master of the Ordnance seems to have placed little or no reliance on his Privy Chamber place for grants; M.Prestwich *Cranfield* (Oxford, 1966)p. 218. Sir John Keyes, appointed Surveyor of the Ordnance in 1608 (*CSPDom* VIII (1603-10) 447) and provisional Lieutenant of the Tower in 1615 (*ibid.* IX (1611-18) 320-21) received no other grants. Sir Walter Aston's estimated rental comes from Gardiner's entry on him in *D.N.B.* The two other Gentlemen who made up the fifteen English were Henry Southwell and Sir John Lidcott (Overbury's brother-in-law) neither whose activities and gains call for more notice here.

[53] Sir Francis Stewart had a £400 pension, and a total of £620 in gifts of money on a list of "Grants to Scotsmen" dating from about 1608-10 (B.L. Additional MS 12,497 fo. 155). (This source has proved useful in arriving at figures for Scots Privy Chamber gains, but may exaggerate them by reason of its completeness and accessibility compared with the scattered nature of the evidence for the English Gentlemen. Accordingly in each case I have also indicated how the Scots compare on an analysis of the usual sources for grants in *Calendar of State Papers Domestic*, upon which the English data was largely based.) Stewart received a stream of crown grants during the reign — a £200 land grant in 1619 (*CSPDom* X (1619-23) 63) must suffice as an example. (See *ibid.* VIII (1603-10) 368, for his relationship to Moray). Stewart also received £100 in cash in 1607, and £200 in 1614 (B.L.Additional MS. 58,833, after fo. 20, *sub* years). Sir Patrick Murray had a £300 pension and amassed £1100 in grants of ready money (Add. 12,497). He also received two further grants of £300 in cash in 1603 and 1609 (B.L.Additional MS. 58,833, as cited above). He repeatedly figures as a recipient of crown grants. See G.E.C *Complete Peerage sub* Tullibardine, 3rd earl of — as Sir Patrick became in 1628 (*CSPDom* IX (1611-18) 194 for his family and his membership of the Privy Chamber — there were three Patrick Murrays in household service during this reign).

only one of the English Gentlemen had so benefited. The later careers of the Scots were also generally more impressive than the English; Sir William Balfour and Sir Francis Stewart as military commanders, Sir George Hay as Lord Chancellor of Scotland, Sir Archibald Napier as Treasurer-Depute and Justice Clerk, and Sir Robert Maxwell as an influential friend of Buckingham and earl of Nithsdale.[54]

This examination therefore shows that the Scots did a little better for themselves than the English from their Privy Chamber places, but that neither group did very well, especially by comparison with their colleagues in the Bedchamber. Those expelled from the latter to form the new Privy Chamber in May 1603 were more aware of this than most, and prone to rueful reflection on it. Robert Carey felt he had gone 'out of God's blessing into the warm sun', while Sir John Holles felt that the Bedchamber Scots 'not only...possess the royal presence, they be warm within, while the best of ours [i.e the

---

[54] Sir William Stewart had a £200 pension, £600 cash in 1605, £500 in 1613 and £1,500 in 1614 (B.L.Additional MSS 12,497, and 58,833). Sir John Graham, had a £200 pension (Add. MS 12,497) and many grants — £220 from casualties in 1611 (*CSPDom* IX (1611-18) 50), and £1,731 in cash in 1614 (B.L.Additional MS 58,833). Sir William Anstruther, besides his £200 pension (Add. MS 12,497), received leases and recusants (*CSPDom* VIII (1603-10) 98, 146, 346, 581, 621). Sir James Auchterlony had a £200 pension (Add.MS 12,497) and frequent casual grants; in 1609 a third share of £1500 (*CSPDom* VIII (1603-10) 491), in 1614 £200, 1615 £1,800, and 1616 £800 from bounty money (B.L.Additional MS 58,833) and in 1617 £700 (*CSPDom* IX (1611-18) 442). Thomas Lumsden had a lease commuted to a £300 pension (*ibid.* VIII (1603-10) 343, 624) and other grants (*ibid.* IX (1611-18) 549, X (1619-23) 562, XI (1623-25) 297). Sir Henry Balfour got a £100 pension in 1611; H.M.C *Salisbury* XXIV (Additional, 1605-68) p.62. Sir Robert Maxwell had a £100 pension (H.M.C *Salis* XXIV p.63) and several grants — *CSPDom* VIII (1603-10) 150, IX (1611-18) 103 : cf. R.Lockyer *Buckingham* p.200, for his later role. Sir Archibald Napier, besides his £100 pension (H.M.C *Salisbury* XXIV p.62), had a grant of recusants in 1607, a lease in 1608 (*CSPDom* VIII (1603-10) 356, 413), £200 in 1614 and in 1616 £2,400 cash (Additional MS 58,833). Sir George Hay received £1,662 in 1605 (Additional MS 58,833) and a yearly income of £240 in 1616 (*CSPDom* IX (1611-18) 416). Robert Anstruther went several times as ambassador to Denmark; in July of 1615 two of his fellow Privy Chamber Scots stood surety for his debts, and in July of that year his pension rose from £160 to £200 (*ibid.* IX (1611-18) 273, 292). The remaining four Scots who made up the 16 were Sir John Lindsay — only £100 in 1607 (Additional MS 58,833), for whom otherwise the evidence is of debts (*CSPDom* IX (1611-18) 265); Sir James Erskine got old debts (*CSPDom* VIII 497 (1609), IX (1611-18) 195 (1613), £1,014 in 1613 (Additional MS 58,833), fee farm land (*CSPDom* VIII (1603-10) 16, 1603), and Star Chamber fines totalling £15,000 (*ibid.* X (1619-23) 119); Walter Stewart; and Sir William Balfour, both with Scottish pensions, perhaps irregular London attendants (H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie* pp.94,106 (1621)).

English] starve [freeze] without'.[55] The key to this decline was the Privy Chamber's translation from the 'efficient' to the 'ornamental' side of the court. The burgeoning number of supernumeraries shows this : in 1625 there were some 50 Gentlemen Extraordinary, and by 1641 nearly 300.[56] The key office of the early Tudor court had become a useful (and cheap) mark of distinction for amenable country gentlemen.

Of the other members of the Privy Chamber staff, the Grooms fared even worse than the Gentlemen. Formally the menial servants of the department occupied with cleaning, making ready the Chamber and carrying messages, they continued to be granted livery and paid their Elizabethan fee of £20 per annum, but the Elizabethan incumbents were dismissed and replaced by men of markedly lower family status. While in the previous reign families such as the Knyvets, Careys, Killigrews and Stanhopes were represented, evidently under James the position was no longer sought by families of this standing.[57]

The Gentlemen Ushers, on the other hand, who remained responsible for the apartment's smooth running, did rather better than either group of their subordinates. This was largely because they retained a toe-hold in the Privy Lodgings; indeed the Ordinances described them as Gentlemen Ushers of the Privy Chamber 'and lodginges'.[58] Since the department was now isolated from the king himself, due to the strict embargo on further access beyond the Privy Chamber itself which the Ordinances prescribed for Privy

---

[55] See above, n31 for Holles's expulsion from the Privy Chamber; H.M.C *Portland* IX 113. F.H.Mares (ed.) *The Memoirs of Robert Carey* pp. 65-6. See below, pp.71-2, on Bedchamber gains.

[56] LC 2/6 fos 37-8, an undifferentiated list of 81 men headed "Gentlemen in Ordinary", clearly including those Extraordinary; LC 3/1, 1641 Establishment list.

[57] E 351/1796-1821 (£20 fee) : LC 5/50 (Great Wardrobe Livery). The Pages of the Presence later claimed to have made the beds and swept the Privy Chamber in James's time, so evidently Privy Chamber Grooms were in practice insulated from the purely menial; SP16/408/155, ?1638. One Scot served alongside five Englishmen for most of the reign, the absence of Scotsmen probably indicating the office's lack of potential.

[58] B.L Harleian MS 589, fo. 198r, § 10, 'wee... doe by thes ordayne fowre gentlemen officers w[i]thin our privie Chambere and lodginges'.

Chamber staff,[59] some link between the department and the king himself was necessary. This was provided, not by the Lord Chamberlain, but by the Gentlemen Ushers of the Privy Chamber, who were daily to

> come to knowe our pleasure for thinges concerning our service...because yf any nobleman or gentleman have occasyone to speake w[i]th us, the gentleman ushere...is the fytteste to be imployed to us, they being our ordinary offyceres to make our pleasure knowne in suche thinges.[60]

Accordingly, the Gentlemen Ushers' position was of rather more importance than the simple Gentlemen's. One indication of this was the appointment as Gentleman Usher of Sir James Sandelands, who had been a key officer in Scotland as James's Deputy First Gentleman of the Chamber/Lord Great Chamberlain.[61] Another was the trouble taken by successive Lords Chamberlain to have close allies appointed to this strategic position : Suffolk had Sir Thomas Monson, Sir William Twysden and Sir Robert Brett; Carr, Sir John Leedes; Pembroke, Sir Edward Stafford.[62] Equally striking was the

---

[59] 'No privie chamber man, nor any other allowed to come into our privie chamber, doe presume to come in to any of our privie lodgings, further then our privie chamber'. Under James, their former superior officer who had enjoyed further access, the Groom of the Stool, had now departed to the Bedchamber. B.L Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v, § 2.

[60] B.L Harleian MS 589 fo. 198r, § 11; and see below p.58, n 59.

[61] *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 76, Gentleman Usher, 11 February 1604; Scottish Record Office PS 1/71 fo. 269, 'depute and lieutene[n]t to [the] heighe chalmerlane and first gentleman of his hienes chalmer' (2 August 1600). Cf. B.L. Additional MS 12,497, where he is a leading beneficiary with £10,500 in cash.

[62] Monson does not figure on the Cofferer's account, but other sources indicate he was sworn in November 1604 (LS 13/168 fo 89r), and in office in 1610 (H.M.C.*Salisbury* XXI (1609-12) p.227). In fact he was filling the place of the fourth man on the 1610 account (E 351/ 1804), the Elizabethan Sir Drue Drury, who merely continued to receive his fee after 1603. (Cf. B.L.Additional MS 31,825, a 1610 fee list). Twysden; L.L.Peck *Northampton* (London 1982) pp.116, 172-4; his appointment on 5 January 1614 (E 351/ 1808) probably depended on the Howard Lord Chamberlain Suffolk. The same applies to Sir Robert Brett (not formally appointed on the account, exercising the office in 1607 — *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 370) — see Peck *op.cit.* p.45. Sir John Leedes gave up his place as Sewer in the Privy Chamber in April 1614 (LS 13/168 fo 164r), and was at Carr's fall in late1615 accused by his erstwhile colleague, John Hall the Cupbearer, of plotting with Carr and Monson (*CSPDom* IX (1611-18) 327, 329). Leedes was married to Monson's daughter; it is probable that when he resigned as Sewer he took over Monson's (fee-less) place as Gentleman Usher. In May 1617, Monson apparently managed also to have the fee transferred to Leedes, who displaced Drury at last from the account (E 351/ 1814). Stafford was appointed in July 1620 (SO 3/7 *sub* date, E351/1816). Pembroke's reliance on him is shown by the importance he attached to putting his cousin Sir William Herbert in his place (Stafford died in early 1624), against Buckingham's candidate. H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.188.

Ushers' ability to act in matters of patronage not simply on their own behalf, but also for others.[63] The result of all this was that the Ushers, who had, as mere ministerial officers under Henry VIII, once been the Gentlemen's inferiors, could now successfully claim the superiority.

Precisely this indignity formed one of the Gentlemen's many complaints in the petition of 1638. But, as they then recognised, their individual grievances were mere symptoms; the general cause about which they could do nothing, was that 'the Constitution of the Court is far changed' from 'the institution of the Privy Chamber in the reign of King Henry the Eighth'. Then, as they correctly asserted, 'the Gentlemen ... had nearest access to the king's person of all other'. But after the 'change and fall' of May 1603 that 'nearest access', which carried everything else, had been transferred to the Bedchamber.[64]

[63]Sir Thomas Kilpatrick undertook in 1605 to procure incorporation for the City of Westminster, price £136 13s 4d (LS 13/168 fo. 95v).
[64]SP16/380/78, January 1638.

Chapter Two

Reconstructing the Jacobean Bedchamber

The present chapter characterises the practice and the personnel of the Jacobean Bedchamber. It does so in five sections : first, the question of Bedchamber Ordinances is investigated; then, the routine practice of the Bedchamber, including limitations on access to it; a section on determining the department's membership, followed by one on their status; and finally, an overall characterisation of the Jacobean Bedchamber — as an exclusive élite.

i) - Did any Jacobean Bedchamber Ordinances exist ?

The Bedchamber which was established in 1603 was in every respect a new department, as we have seen. We have also seen that new orders for the king's chambers, especially the Privy Chamber, were set down at James's 'first coming to a standing house'. It seems reasonable then to expect that new regulations would also have been drawn up, setting out how the new Bedchamber was to function.[1]

If there were any Jacobean Bedchamber Ordinances, they appear to have been lost; neither an original nor any copies have been found in any archive. Since there appear to be no contemporary references to the existence of any such Ordinances, that would be the end of the story, surprising though this lack seems — but for an important, unique late

[1] See above, pp.19-21.

seventeenth century reference to such a document. In 1661 a set of Ordinances, described as 'the fundamentall Orders of the Bedchamber made at the time when the Gentlemen and Grooms of the Bedchamber were first established', 'made and signed by... King James with the advice of his Privy Councell, when the late Earl of Kelly was Groom of the Stole' allegedly both existed, and were used as the basis for Charles II's new Ordinances of that year. These Charles II Bedchamber Ordinances of 1661, embodying the claims to be based on Jacobean (and also Caroline) documents, have survived.[2]

It might seem that this apparent survival by transmission and adaptation conveniently restores the loss of the original Ordinances : but there are two further problems. First, the claim of the 1661 Book to be based on the James I (and Charles I) Ordinances is in fact the only evidence that such Ordinances ever existed; and in 1683, just over twenty years after it was made, that very claim was seriously called into question and largely overturned by a committee of the Privy Council, set up to resolve a dispute between the Lord Chamberlain and the Groom of the Stool. If the claim of the 1661 Ordinances to be based on Jacobean originals could be rejected then, so soon after it had been made, must we follow suit and reject it as bogus? Clearly, we must examine the case made by the Lord Chamberlain in 1683. Second, the 1661 document claims to be based not only on James's orders, but also on those 'made and signed by our Royall father [Charles I] when the late Earl of Carlisle was Groom of the Stole'. The question here — assuming that the earlier Jacobean and Caroline documents did in fact exist — is

---

[2] Nottingham University Library, Portland MS PwV 92, especially fos 1v - 2v [my foliation]. Later Stuart Ordinances have all survived : a copy of James II's Ordinances is Oxfordshire County Record Office MS Dil. xx/a/2; a copy of William III's is B.L.Stowe MS 563 : both closely follow Charles II's, with some significant variations. Copies and originals all carry the king's signature at the top, and the Groom of the Stool's at the bottom of each page; they thus follow the 1661 description of the alleged Jacobean orders, a book 'signed at the top of every leafe by Our Royall Grandfather [James I] and subsigned at the bottome by the late Earle of Kelly, the then Groome of the Stole'. (If this literally reflected the signatures on the page, and the Groom indeed signed as earl of Kellie, then the book must have originated between 1619 (Erskine's creation as earl) and 1625. But if these are Ordinances of 1603, as is also claimed, then Erskine must have been being referred to by the highest rank he later attained. Portland MS PwV 92 fo 2v).

how far later accretions might mask the original orders (including any modernisations made when the two 'auntient bookes' were allegedly fused into the new document in 1661). These two problems need to be resolved in order to determine how far the later version can substitute for the missing original as a description of the Jacobean Bedchamber; and the examination of the first problem will provide a useful means of access to the second.

In January 1683, a dispute between the Lord Chamberlain and the Groom of the Stool prompted a search for the original early Stuart Ordinances. At first the point at issue was the right of the Lord Chamberlain to enter the king's Bedchamber without asking leave. New orders in January 1683 (issued to coincide with Charles's move to a new set of lodgings at Whitehall) occasioned Lord Chamberlain Arlington's being faced with the locked doors of the Privy Lodgings when he tried to enter. The Lord Chamberlain's subsequent appeal against this was so comprehensive in asserting the Lord Chamberlain's primacy over the Groom of the Stool/First Gentleman (the earl of Bath) as to call into question the whole basis of the current Bedchamber Ordinances. Bath was forced to reply, and a full-scale official precedence dispute was underway.[3]

The Lord Chamberlain's case hinged on the Groom's inability to produce the original Jacobean and Caroline Ordinances when they were enquired after. Into this vacuum the Lord Chamberlain introduced, positively, his claim to enter the Bedchamber without asking leave; and negatively, his denial of four specific points of practice mentioned in the 1661 document, which he undertook to prove had been differently performed at various times before 1640, partly from his own departmental archives, partly

---

[3] *Hatton Correspondence Vol II* ed.E.M.Thompson (Camden, NS 23, 1878) pp. 21-22, Sir Charles Lyttleton to Charles, viscount Hatton, 30 January 1683. *CSPDomestic* January-June 1683, 90 (?March 1683), Arlington's account. Arlington's exclusion fits into the classic pattern of English court jurisdictional dispute between Groom and Chamberlain; it was also probably heavily influenced by the political manoeuvres of the Exclusion Crisis.

by producing veteran crown servants as witnesses.[4] The Groom was placed on the defensive; the original books could not be found, and the Groom's archives seem to have been virtually non-existent; and accordingly his case was reduced to unconvincing protestation against some of the detailed points of testimony adduced by Arlington, and repeated appeals to the king's simple authority to make Bedchamber Ordinances, whether or not they were based on those of his predecessors.[5]

Obviously sufficient to carry the day in June 1683, how persuasive in fact was the Lord Chamberlain's case? In general, Arlington's advantage over us in the twentieth-century lies in his access to contemporary witnesses; judging by the use Arlington made of it, the completeness of the Lord Chamberlain's archive seems not to have changed appreciably in the intervening centuries. But his obvious interest in the outcome of the investigation represents a major qualification to the evidence (particularly the personal testimonies) he brought to bear.

In the first place, Arlington's technical dismissal of the 1661 claims themselves is notably cavalier. These claims were made in three warrants copied onto the first leaves of the 1661 book, before the Ordinances proper began. The first warrant asserted that Charles II appointed a committee to compare the 1661 orders with the 'two former bookes made by our Royall Father [Charles I] and Grandfather [James I] when the late Earles of Carlisle and Kelly were Groomes of the Stole' : this the committee apparently did, reporting that the later version was 'very fitt for Our Signature and agreeable in all things to the said former Bookes excepting only the change of persons and times'. This, and the other two warrants, one a (Royal) confirmation of the Ordinances' basis in the early Stuart period, the other a record of the provenance, receipt, and present arrangements for

[4] I am grateful to Dr.David Starkey for a copy of a MS then in the possession of the late Hugh Murray-Baillie, entitled 'Points in dispute betweene the L[or]d Chamberlaine & the Groome of the Stole. May 1683'. Another version, adding an important conclusion, is SP29/424/70.

[5] *E.g.* SP29/423/68, 'The Rejoynder of [th]e Earl of Bathe Groom of [th]e Stole... to [th]e reply made in favor of [th]e Earle of Arlington, Lorde Chamberlain of his Ma[jes]t[i]es Houshold', 9 April 1683.

custody of the documents, were each countersigned by Charles II and Secretary Nicholas, and included in the beginning of the 1661 book.[6] Arlington's 1683 argument for the non-existence of these books had to get round these impressive affirmations; his effort to do so was one of the least convincing planks of his case. His argued that in 1661, Bath as Groom of the Stool had brought the book ready-written to the king; the king then signed the book, believing it to be a true transcript; then Secretary Nicholas countersigned it, seeing the king's signature on it. (These assertions were backed up by no firm evidence or testimony of any kind). If Nicholas had known of the warrant 'distinctly', Arlington continued, the warrant (affirming the Ordinances antiquity, included at the beginning of the book) would have been written by a hand from the signet office; but, Arlington triumphantly affirmed, the warrant, 'the whole hinge of the Groome of the Stole's plea', was written by the same scrivener at Charing Cross who wrote the rest of the book.[7] This did not begin to deal with the substantive claims made in the 1661 document.

First, Arlington ducked consideration of the alleged committee of the Privy Council, which had examined and approved all three sets of Ordinances. This consisted of the Lord Chancellor (Clarendon), the Lord Treasurer (Southampton), and the two Secretaries of State (Nicholas and Sir William Morice). Arlington's almost total silence about this in 1683 may be presumed to imply a recognition that to draw attention to the committee would damage his cause — for to have proven its non-existence would clearly have lent great weight to his version of events.[8]

---

[6]Portland MS PwV 92 fos 1v - 2v [my foliation].

[7]The fullest statement of this part of the Lord Chamberlain's case occurs in the Murray-Baillie MS alluded to above (n 4). Arlington also correctly asserted that the warrants included in the Book bore no date.

[8]Portland MS PwV 92, fo 1v. No other record of this committee's operation — or indeed membership — appears to be extant, but this is not necessarily grounds for suspecting the authenticity of the membership list. Arlington only once referred to it; he regarded item 23 of the 1661 Ordinances, providing that the Groom of the Stool inherit certain Bedchamber furniture and effects on the king's death (a Henrician provision), as 'soe Monstrous a clause, I can never beleive that those two noble lords the Earle of Clarendon Lord Chancellor, & Earle of Southampton Lord Treasurer, would have let [it] pass if they had read it, as is alleged in the first warrant'; SP29/424/69.

Furthermore, Arlington's narrowly technical argument (based as it was on the warrant's handwriting and a fair amount of supposition) failed to consider two other factors in favour of the existence of the Jacobean and Caroline Ordinances in 1661; the convincing provenance set out there for the original documents by the earl of Bath; and the politically dubious (apparently final) destination for those documents specified there — the custody of Charles II's Keeper of the Closet and general political factotum William Chiffinch.

A receipt for the two 'auntient books' of Jacobean and Caroline Ordinances was included at the beginning of the 1661 Orders. This recounts that at the Restoration the two books were in the custody of Lucy, Countess Dowager of Carlisle (widow of Charles I's Groom of the Stool James Hay, earl of Carlisle, who died in office in 1636). She evidently gave them to Bath in 1660-1 'upon his promise to redeliver them safely to her hands back againe'. The reason for the receipt's inclusion in the book was Charles's warrant allowing Bath to do this, but then commanding the Countess immediately to hand them back into the king's own hands, 'nothing being conteyned therein but what neerely concernes our service'; this the Countess apparently did. In order to accept Arlington's version of events, then, this entire provenance must be discounted as a fabrication. But in fact this provenence is in most respects very convincing — as a brief excursion into the world of the Caroline Bedchamber will make clear.

In February 1631 Carlisle became Groom of the Stool on the death of the previous incumbent, the untypically obscure Sir James Fullarton. The Venetian ambassador described the Groomship as not then 'adequate to [Carlisle's] rank'[9]; while Carlisle's appointment involved an increase in the standing of the office. The concomitant to this was the marked loss of status which the Groomship had undergone during

[9]*CSPVenetian* XXII (1629-32) 478-9 (11/21 February 1631), confirmed by mention of Cottington and Sir James Maxwell as candidates (*CSPDomestic* IV (1629-31) 487, Woodward to Windebanke, 13 January : 516, Ashburnham to Queen of Bohemia, 26 February 1631).

Fullarton's tenure. In institutional terms, Fullarton had been regarded as Groom of the Stool in the Privy Chamber;[10] and simply as 'one of the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber',[11] between 1625 and 1631. In other words, he evidently lacked the additional status of First Gentleman of the Bedchamber which the Jacobean Groom Kellie (1603-25) clearly enjoyed.[12] Instead, from 1625 until his death in 1628, the duke of Buckingham apparently enjoyed a primacy in the Bedchamber which eclipsed the rest of the department; although at no point was Buckingham sworn or appointed First Gentleman of the Bedchamber, he was apparently 'received therein', and given a golden key to signify as much.[13] The general situation outlined explains well enough the need for Carlisle to re-assert the Groomship's powers, which had lapsed so recently. Hay had been a member of the Jacobean Bedchamber from very soon after its foundation in 1603 until the king's death in 1625, and so was entirely familiar with the practice of the previous reign. It seems reasonable to suppose that Kellie's Ordinances should have been available to him, and that they would have been used as the basis for a re-enactment of a book of Ordinances describing the newly re-combined office of Groom of the Stool and First Gentleman of the Bedchamber.[14] The year from December 1630 to December 1631 was one of re-

---

[10] SP 16/154/76, a list of 'servantes in the Chamber and Privy Chamber 1629' : Fullarton as Groom of the Stool heads the Privy Chamber section.

[11] *CSPDomestic* I (1625-26) 56, 8 July 1625, warrant : *ibid* II (1627-28) 539, 1 February 1628, warrant simply as 'Gentleman of the Bedchamber'.

[12] See below, n31.

[13] *CSPVenetian* XIX (1625-26) 13 (18 April); corrected at p.21 (25 April 1625); H.M.C.*11th Report* Part I, p.3. For background in James's reign, and Buckingham's rôle in Prince Charles's Bedchamber, below p.237-8.

[14] There is some obscurity about who was First Gentleman 1625-31, after Buckingham was 'received' and given a golden key. G.E.C[ockayne] *The Complete Peerage sub* Carlisle (James Hay, earl of) states that Hay was First Gentleman from 1626 onwards, but I have been unable to corroborate this. Carlisle and Holland were appointed to Charles's Bedchamber in July 1626 in an attempt by Buckingham (and Charles) to buy allies; it may be that Hay was also given the title of First Gentleman to remove envy from Buckingham; cf. R.Lockyer *Buckingham* (1981),p. 333. Should this be correct, Hay's appointment would clearly have revitalised the Groomship; he would in 1631 have re-combined that office with that of First Gentleman of the Bedchamber, rather than being newly constituted in both offices.

structuring and re-definition for the household of Charles I, and it is likely that Carlisle's renewed Bedchamber Ordinances were part of that re-organization.[15]

This explains why Carlisle might have possessed Kellie's Jacobean Ordinances in the mid-1630's (and, incidentally, why there is no reference to any Fullarton Bedchamber Ordinances). But why should Carlisle's widow have been in possession of these two books in 1660? It best makes sense of this fact to assume that she took possession of her husband's books when he died in office, as Groom and First Gentleman, in April 1636. If that were so, one might assume that his successor would have had problems in getting access to these ordinances — inconvenient for a newly appointed officer, looking fully to safeguard his official rights. The Countess's possession of such essentially Royal documents might even suggest that she wished to make life difficult for her husband's successor in office.

Both this assumption and this suggestion can be supported by evidence. A court feud between Carlisle and his eventual successor Holland rumbled on from 1629 until Carlisle's death in 1636. Their respective Countesses were also involved; there were open unkindnesses between them during the contest for the now-vacant Admiralty in December 1629, for instance.[16] And from what we know of Holland's actions soon after taking office as Groom of the Stool in 1636-37, it appears that, indeed, he had at most only limited access to the Ordinances of his predecessors, and as a consequence was vulnerable to attack by the Groom's age-old antagonist, the Lord Chamberlain.

During the summer of 1637, Holland, almost certainly in response to an attack on his official rights by the Lord Chamberlain, claimed three rights of office; to swear in all Bedchamber men; to direct and command the subordinate Bedchamber staff (Grooms,

---

[15]SP16/182/31 Chapel and Masque Orders, 9 January 1631 (largely a re-enactment of the Chapel orders of January 1623, B.L. Additional MS 34,324, fo. 215); T.Birch *The Court and Times of Charles I,* ed. R.F.Williams (2 vols., London,1848) II, 91 (13 January 1631); SP 16/204/80 (Edmondes to Vane, 20 December 1631.)

[16] J.L.Beatty *Warwick and Holland...the lives of Robert and Henry Rich* (Denver, 1965),pp. 38 ff.

Pages); and to have sole authority in the Galleries, Withdrawing Chamber and the king's Bedchamber. All of this apparently clashed with the claims of Philip Herbert, earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, the Lord Chamberlain. His view was that the swearing in of all servants in the Household-above-stairs belonged to him; that his authority ran in the (privy) Galleries (evidently he did not dispute the Groom's rights in the Withdrawing Chamber and Bedchamber); and that he possessed responsibility in Withdrawing Chamber and Bedchamber to attend to the furnishings and decorations. The controversy ran on during 1637 until it was finally settled in early November by the king. His resolution gave Holland all his claims except that of swearing in the Bedchamber servants, which Pembroke was actually to do (as he had sworn Holland into office the previous year); nevertheless, the Lord Chamberlain was simply to swear in the Bedchambermen to be obedient to the Groom of the Stool. Pembroke obtained nothing else.[17]

Although he won most of what he demanded, in this dispute Holland was obviously limited in his ability to refer back to precedent. The best evidence for this comes from a document stating the Groom's case in a dispute with the Lord Chamberlain over

[17] W.Knowler (ed.) *The Earl of Straffordes Letters & Dispatches* (2 Vols, London, 1739) II, 130 (Rev. G.Garrard to Lord Deputy Strafford, 9 November 1637). Holland's swearing in; LC 5/134, p.121 (12 May 1636). G.E.Aylmer *The King's Servants* (1974 ed.), 70 confuses the matter of the dispute and its resolution. In the 1661 Ordinances the Lord Chamberlain swears in the staff of the Bedchamber to be obedient to the Groom; if this reflects Hay's book of Ordinances, Holland was attempting in 1637 to carry the struggle to the enemy in claiming for himself the sole right to swear.

issues very close to those about which we know for certain in 1637.[18] In this document, the Groom (almost certainly Holland) claimed that 'the orders...given for directing...the Attendance & service be-longing to the Bedchamber of the King...in former times...appear to be most exact and particular, even to the least parts of it' : but that now a renewal was necessary of that care, and the proposals attached were submitted for the king's consideration. The Lord Chamberlain, by total contrast, in his marginalia scribbled on top of Holland's proposals, was quite certain that 'His Maties last orders mention only the backstaires', and that, by implication no detailed Bedchamber Ordinances were in existence.[19]

The 1637 case thus offers a parallel with that of 1683 : the tactics employed by the Lord Chamberlain, and the claims made by Holland, in 1637 mirror the 1683 situation, where the Groom found himself without the original books to substantiate his claims : Pembroke relied on his archives, which showed little evidence for the Groom's status at all, while Holland relied on claims of precedent which he apparently knew in detail, could not produce, but which he believed (as he asserted in the passage quoted above) should be renewed and confirmed. In 1637, however, Holland won most of the

---

[18] SP 29/423/16, 16 I, a transcript of a paper of 'about the year 1640' in the State Paper office (which I have been unable to trace). Paradoxically, this undated and unsigned document (mentioning no names) was transcribed for Lord Chamberlain Arlington in 1683, who regarded it as the one 'invincible case' which proved his whole argument; this was because he glossed its date as 1641, and its form — an introduction and nine points of petition by a Groom of the Stool, with hostile marginalia by a Lord Chamberlain — as an attempt by the wily earl of Holland to enlarge the Groom's privileges, and so to steal a march over the then newly-appointed Lord Chamberlain Essex (SP29/423/42, 31 March 1683). Arlington's sole grounds for making these identifications were that they served his turn. But the Lord Chamberlain's claim, in a marginalium, to have sworn in the present Groom of the Stool rules out Essex as the Lord Chamberlain; and the similarities between the matters in this document and those in dispute in 1637 (together with an absence of any reference to such a dispute in 1640-41) make it almost certain that Arlington's document refers to a situation in 1637 precisely the reverse of what he claimed — with an established Lord Chamberlain trying to put one over on a newly-appointed Groom.

[19] His reference was to the main series of Household orders put together in 1638 (LC 5/180, p.27), which simply read : 'For Our Backstayres wee recomend the care and gouerment thereof to the Groome of Our Stoole'.

points at issue, probably because continuity of practice was sufficient to compensate for Holland's loss of access to the Ordinances.[20]

These aspects of the earlier history of the court and Bedchamber of Charles I, then, point to the claims of the 1661 document, regarding the provenance and custody of the earlier documents, as being substantially correct. The fate of the Bedchamber books after 1661, when their impressively documented provenance in private hands gives way to the custody of the king's Servants, completes the case for the documents' existence. The 1661 Ordinances record that, after the Countess of Carlisle gave them back to the king, they were in turn entrusted to the Keeper of Charles's closet, Thomas Chiffinch. Twenty-two years later, in March 1683, when Thomas's son and successor William was asked to produce the two books for the examination of the committee, they could not be found. William Chiffinch was the king's supremely personal secretary and political manager, 'a true secretary as well as a page...for he had a lodging at the back stairs, which might have been properly termed the spy-office...where the King spoke with particular persons, about intrigues of all kinds'. If, as seems overwhelmingly likely, the politics of the Exclusion Crisis were intimately connected with the 1683 Bedchamber dispute, Chiffinch was one of the minor courtiers most likely to be taking an active, intriguing rôle in affairs. From the Groom of the Stool's point of view, perhaps, few less suitable keepers of precedents could be imagined; few indeed could have possessed a greater variety of possible motives for misplacing them.[21]

We have several reasons, therefore, to doubt Arlington's assertion in 1683 that since the Groom of the Stool could not then produce the Jacobean and Caroline Ordinances, that they had therefore never existed. Perhaps understandably, therefore,

---

[20] If Holland had possessed the Kellie and Carlisle books, he might have been expected to brandish them in 1637; that he did not do so might suggest that he did not have full access to them, rather than that they did not exist at all as Arlington alleged (SP29/424/70).

[21] Portland MS PwV 92, fo. 1v-2v. David Allen "The Political Function of Charles II's Chiffinch" *Huntington Library Quarterly* 39 (1976), pp.277-290 (quotation from p. 277).

Arlington added a failsafe argument. Even admitting that the original Jacobean and Caroline documents *had* existed, the 1661 Ordinances could not be a true reflection of them. He undertook to prove this by isolating five points where the 1661 Ordinances make clear provisions which, he asserted, ran contrary to the basic concepts of English court practice generally, and particularly during the reigns of James I and Charles I. In thus shifting his ground, the Lord Chamberlain leads us on to our second problem, that of later accretions masking or distorting the alleged Jacobean content of the 1661 document.

Arlington's view was predictably the extreme one that the 1661 Ordinances bore no relation whatever to Early Stuart practice. He challenged the Groom to produce only one precedent in his favour on each of the four contested points 'either in King James or King Charles Reigne; which last tyme, was the most punctuall & Regular in all the makeing & due observance of Orders, and Government.'[22] The Groom of the Stool was apparently unable to produce any; and the investigating committee, in finding in favour of the Lord Chamberlain (insofar as they supported his complaint against being excluded from the Bedchamber) observed that 'the evidences produced by the Lord Chamberlain and proofes of [th]e practice in all former times as to the point of coming into the Bedchamber w[i]thout leave, are very materiall and strong in his favour even in the time of the King yo[u]r Royall Father', and that the 'Bookes of Orders made in 1661...do ...contain Severall Paragraphs ... Which wee do find to be unusuall & not agreeable to constant practice'.[23] Can the twentieth century improve on the Groom's performance, either on the main point of the Lord Chamberlain's right to come into the Bedchamber, or on the other four points advanced by Arlington?

The simple answer is that it can. The detailed correspondences between the 1661 provisions and Jacobean practice will be dealt with in the next section; here it is enough to

---

[22]SP 29/424/69. I have added the Lord Chamberlain's right to enter the Bedchamber without asking leave to the other four points isolated more explicitly by Arlington, to make five.

[23]"The Lords' Opinion in the difference between the Ld Chamberlayn & the Groom of the Stole. 15 June 1683", part of an MS belonging to the late Hugh Murray-Baillie.

note the by now characteristic weaknesses in the Lord Chamberlain's case. On the main point, the right to enter the Bedchamber without leave, Arlington brought five witnesses from Charles I's reign to testify that the earl of Pembroke 'did constantly goe into the Bedchamber without asking leave when the King was there', opening the door with his own treble gold key. Further, the Esquires of the Body came into Charles I's Bedchamber without asking leave to carry out the ceremony of 'All-Night' (which practice he indeed claimed had continued during 1660-73, even after the introduction of the new Ordinances).[24] If this evidence was enough to win the day for Arlington in 1683, it was in fact explicitly compromised by some of the other evidence Arlington himself had turned up (but omitted either to correctly identify or to produce in full)[25]; and from the perspective of James I's reign, Arlington's evidence, all of it from the reign of Charles I, was irrelevant.[26]

Of the four other points, two can quickly be dismissed, at any rate in so far as they apply to James's reign. Arlington read the 1661 Ordinances as claiming that the Groom of the Stole should furnish the Bedchamber; this he refuted by reference to the Great Wardrobe warrants in his departmental archive for Charles's reign; these, it was said, implied that the Groom was to send his warrant for the king's personal linen only. In fact, the 1661 Ordinances implied that the Groom would be mainly responsible for providing the king's linen (and for finding a way to 'serve us better and cheaper' with it),

---

[24]These statements were backed up by the oaths of William Killegrew, Charles Cotterell, William Boreman, Mr. Markham, and a Colonel Betridge. On the point of All-Night, Arlington produced the written testimonies of George Kirke, Arthur Berkeley, Mr. Browne (the later housekeeper of Somerset House), and Ferdinand Marsham (the latter printed in S. Pegge *Curialia* (5 Parts, London, 1782-1806), Part I in Vol I(1782),pp.19-23). On these matters, see the Murray-Baillie MS cited above. The right of the Esquires of the Body to enter without leave was explicitly recognised only by the Bedchamber Ordinances of James II; Oxfordshire County Record Office MS Dil. xx/a/2, p. 23.

[25] In the 1637 Petition, the Lord Chamberlain's comment stated that '[th]e L[or]d Ch[amberlain]... is presumed to have right to goe as farr as his treble key doth give him entrance, and his predecessors have practised it, altho' in modesty he forbear the Bedchamber' — far less peremptory than Arlington's view of the Chamberlain's rights. (SP29/423/16, Marginalium to §3).

[26] For access to James I's Bedchamber of Privy Councillors and the Lord Chamberlain, see below, Section ii) e), pp.59-65.

and the warrants for 'furniture & necessaries' might be presumed to be implied in the Groom's right to issue warrants on the Great Wardrobe at all. But certainly these more general warrants were issued in the reign of James I, even if Arlington could find none under Charles I.[27] His objections to the second point — that 'the Lord Chamberlaine is not to introduce Embassadors to their Audiences in the Bedchamber, but the Groome of the Stole is to doe it' — can also be quickly dismissed. Arlington claimed that the Master of Ceremonies could only obey the Lord Chamberlain, and that generally such a provision was 'against all Antient practice'. But a glance at the work of a Master of Ceremonies to James I and Charles I — Sir John Finet's *Philoxenis* — provides clear evidence that such things did happen in the earlier period, with the Groom introducing ambassadors and other messengers informally, and independently of the more rigid command structure of Lord Chamberlain and Master of Ceremonies. And a particular series of incidents, where the earl of Kellie admitted the Spanish ambassadors on a number of occasions against the wishes of both Buckingham and Prince Charles, illustrates the use to which such a right of office could be put.[28]

Arlington's further two points will be dealt with in the next section, where they more naturally arise. The existence of a set of Ordinances for James I's Bedchamber has been established beyond reasonable doubt, and we can now turn fully to the second question; how far the surviving Ordinances of 1661 reflect what those Jacobean Ordinances must have said.

---

[27] 1661 Ordinances (Portland MS PwV 92) §21 (fo. 8r). M.Prestwich *Cranfield : Politics and Profits under the Early Stuarts* (Oxford, 1966)p. 229 — under James, excessive Wardrobe payments were made on warrants from 'the Lord Chamberlain, the Master of the Horse and the Groom of the Stole for more things than His Majesty's service required', implying more than linen was involved. LC5/134 p. 125 details the regular annual allowances of the Groom of the Stool (coffers and close stools) from the Great Wardrobe on the Lord Chamberlain's warrant in 1636; but LC5/38 probably implies that this only began under Charles (cf. p.58-9 [1624-5] with p.78 [1625-6]).

[28] 1661 Ordinances §10 (fo 5v). Sir John Finet *Finetti Philoxenis...* (London, 1656) p.33, March 1616; only after the States ambassador 'had attended a while at the Lord Fenton's lodgings and was called up to his Majesty in the Privy Gallery' did Finet conduct him in officially to an audience; also p. 77. Below, pp.242-3, 244-6.

ii). Daily Routine : Determining Bedchamber Practice.

This section presents a critique of the 1661 document by recourse to such evidence as we have for Jacobean, and incidentally, for Caroline practice, in order to establish how far, and in what particular areas, the later document can be taken as a general guide for the practice of the earlier period. This will further buttress the case for the Ordinances' existence; and at the same time we shall implicitly be outlining the main features of Jacobean Bedchamber practice — a picture of the daily life of the department.

First, a word about the form and content of the 1661 Ordinances will make matters clearer. Charles II's 'Orders for the Government of Our Bedchamber and Privy Lodgings in the same forme as they were established in the Reignes of Our Royall Father and Grandfather' took the basic form of a description of the rights and duties of the Groom of the Stool and First Gentleman of the Bedchamber. From this basis five areas of description can be isolated, which will be dealt with here in turn; a) the numerical establishment and command structure of the Bedchamber; b) the detailed rights and duties of the Groom of the Stool, and, by extension, of the Gentleman of the Bedchamber; c) a description of the Gentleman of the Robes' office; d) the duties of the Grooms and Pages of the Bedchamber; and e) provisions for access to the apartment.

a) Numbers and Control.

The 1661 orders are explicit on the original numbers established in 1603. Four Gentlemen and six Grooms was probably the original, official complement. The pattern of offices was thus wholly English and followed closely the precedent of the Henrician

Privy Chamber; and numbers, save at the bottom end of the department, were also similar.[29]

The 1661 Ordinances description of the Bedchamber's structure of command seems at first sight to conflict with the Jacobean situation. Ludovic Stuart, duke of Lennox , the king's cousin (and heir before the birth of Prince Henry) was apparently honorific head of department; he was regarded as First Nobleman of the Bedchamber and was thus styled in his tomb inscription, 'cubiculariorum... principalium prim[us]'.[30] But, like the Henrician Noblemen of the Privy Chamber before him, there is no evidence that Lennox exercised any practical supervision over the department, and so the absence of a First Nobleman from the Ordinances seems to be of little significance. As efficient head of department, the Ordinances specified a revived Henrician officer — the Groom of the Stool and First Gentleman, now of the Bedchamber rather than the Privy Chamber. Sir Thomas Erskine (later viscount Fenton and earl of Kellie, Captain of the Guard in Scotland and also in England after 1603) was appointed to this position.[31] And not only the name, but the duties and privileges of the office were largely revived as well : indeed the new Bedchamber Ordinances were almost certainly written around a description of the Henrician Groomship.

---

[29] Portland MS PwV 92, §§ 11, 13. See below pp.66-9 on further problems. Four Grooms seem initially to have been appointed, and two more (making six) added in October 1604 — a possible indication of a date for the Jacobean Ordinances; by Spring 1605 there were eight Grooms (E351/1800).

[30] Henry VII Chapel, Westminster Abbey; transcribed in G.Crawfurd *The Lives... of the Officers of... State in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1726) p.333.

[31] The Groomship was on Cecil's list of offices to be filled in 1603 (H.M.C. *Salisbury* XV(1603), p.25). Fenton's warrant of appointment (dated 16 February 1605, but authorising payment from 25 March 1603 onwards — two and a half years at £33 6s 8d *p.a., i.e.* £83 6s 8d — E351/1798-9, SP38/8, appointed 'Groome of his Ma[jes]t[y]s Stole') does not name him also First Gentleman; but cf. G.Goodman *The Court of King James I* ed.J.S.Brewer (2 vols, London, 1839) I, 389 — 'Kelly was the prime gentleman of the bed-chamber'.

b)Rights and Duties :

Groom of the Stool and Gentlemen of the Bedchamber.

The office of Groom of the Stool formed the basic subject matter of the 1661 Ordinances. First, the Groom's sphere of influence was defined. This, in 1661, comprised the Bedchamber, two Withdrawing Chambers — the 'Great Withdrawing Room next our Bedchamber' and 'the lesser Withdrawing Room formerly called the Horne Room' — the Cabinet or Closet, the back Galleries and Backstairs, 'and ... all other roomes that doe or shall belong to our Bedchamber'. With the exception of the Withdrawing Chambers — of which there was only one at Whitehall under James, known as the Vane Room after the weather vane that sprang from one corner of it to the Palace rooftop — these details would have differed little from the Jacobean sphere of the Groom's control.[32]

Next, the Groom's authority over the members, as opposed to the territory, of the department was defined. The Groom was apparently to 'admit' the Gentlemen, Grooms and Pages 'to office'; but it was to be the Lord Chamberlain who actually swore them in. It was further particularised, however, that the Chamberlain was only to do so upon the signification to him of the king's pleasure by the Groom of the Stool, *and none other*. And in addition, the Lord Chamberlain was required to swear in the new members 'to be obedient in all things for our service, unto our Groom of the Stool, as their chief officer under us'. (This was one of the points which Arlington brought up as 'contrary to ancient practice' in 1683.) In fact, the Jacobean evidence (together with some indications from Charles I's reign) would indicate that the situation outlined in 1661 actually understated the Jacobean Groom's powers compared with the Jacobean Lord

[32]1661 Ords. §1; Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* 281-3; LC5/38 p. 54, payment for 'a staffe eleven foote longe to turne [th]e Vane in o[u]r w[i]thdrawinge chamber', 1624-5; for other rooms in the Privy Lodgings cf. B.L.Harleian MS 589 fo 197 v, 'the backe Romes where the drinke stands'; Kellie described Hamilton and lord Erskine spending 'two hours in the kinge's bake roome' in 1620 (H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.98). Sir J. Finet *Philoxenis* p.77 refers to a 'Chamber of private audiences'.

Chamberlain's on this matter. In 1615, for example, it was apparently Groom of the Stool Fenton who both admitted and swore in the newly-favoured George Villiers, in direct opposition to the wishes of the then Lord Chamberlain, Robert Carr earl of Somerset.[33] Once appointed, the 1661 document specified that the Gentlemen, Grooms and Pages were to obey the Groom, who could suspend or confine them for neglect of duty, crime or misdemeanour. There appears to be no Jacobean example of such discipline being applied in practice by the Groom, though Buckingham later exercised similar power *de facto*.[34] More positively, the Groom was allowed to dispose of the places of the Pages of the Bedchamber, the Laundresses, Sempstresses, Linen- and Lace-Drapers, Coffer-bearers and Porters of the Backstairs, and had the right to recommend the king's Barber. On the point of the other officers the evidence is not decisive, but in the case of the Pages of the Bedchamber, the 1661 orders seem consistently to represent some system other than the Jacobean; under James, the Groom seems to have had no voice in their appointment, and, as will appear below, the Pages' status and duties were also rather different.[35] To round off these provisions on the control of persons and places, it was provided that 'no suitor or Strangers be admitted to attend at the Backstairs, or in any of the Rooms belonging to our Bedchamber, without the knowledge & leave of our Groom of the Stool & without giving him an account of what their business is'; this the Pages particularly were to see fully observed.[36] Finally, such necessary officers as the Physician in ordinary, the Keeper of the Closet, and the Keeper of the Privy Purse were

---

[33] 1661 Ords. §§ 1, 25, 26. See n17 above on the 1637 petition's claim to swear in new members; but in any case the Lord Chamberlain was being told in January 1635 of the admission and swearing of a Groom of the Bedchamber as a *fait accompli* : LC5/134 p. 34. Below pp.159-60.

[34] 1661 Ords. §2; below p.202.

[35] 1661 Ords. §§ 7, 21; below pp.57-8.

[36] 1661 Ords. §16.

to be admitted only with the Groom's leave when not on their official business.[37] When the king gave the command 'to any strangers or others that are not immediate servants...to Attend us in our Bedchamber', it was the Groom of the Stool (or the Gentleman attending, in his absence) who ushered them in and out 'in the same manner as the Lord Chamberlain is to officiate in the other parts of the house'.[38]

Next came the Groom's (and Gentlemen's) efficient service in the Bedchamber. The Groom's right to his usual lodgings at Whitehall and all other 'Standing Houses' was asserted in 1661, and where this was not already established, care was to be taken that 'lodgings... be assigned him...as near as may be to our own Bedchamber... and the like regard...to be had in all places where we shall lodge when we travel'. Besides the Groom's pre-eminence, there was also a practical reason for this provision; for the Groom 'by virtue of his place may constantly lodge [in the King's Bedchamber]'. But whenever the Groom chose not to take up his first option, he was instead to depute one of the Gentlemen to sleep at the foot of the Royal bed on a pallet mattress; in fact it was provided that the Gentlemen perform this duty by turns, implying that they were expected to do it on most occasions.[39] This sharing-out of the Groom's duties among the other Gentlemen — a major difference between the Jacobean and the more solitary pre-eminence of the Henrician Groom — was continued in the most private and intimate provisions for the body service. As the Eltham Ordinances had provided in 1526, so did the Stuart Ordinances in 1661 : 'none of our Bedchamber [Privy Chamber under Henry VIII]

---

[37] 1661 Ords. §18. § 17 provided that Physicians, Surgeons, Apothecaries and Barbers were to wait in the Withdrawing Room to be called in, even apparently when on their official business. This fits with the Jacobean Privy Chamber Ordinance, Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v.

[38] 1661 Ords. §§16, 10. See above p.45.

[39] 1661 Ords. § 11. Cf. Lockyer *Buckingham*, p.22, an obvious reference to this right, both in Carr's refusal to sleep in the king's bedchamber, and Villiers's compliance in doing so. The location of the Groom's apartments in Whitehall is elusive, but after Buckingham's rise to *de facto* Bedchamber predominance, he built first floor lodgings onto the Privy Gallery range (in effect, standing on stilts in the Privy Garden); these extempore arrangements suggest sitting tenants unwilling to give up existing lodgings and rights. H.M.Colvin (ed.) *The History of the King's Works* (6 vols., London,1951-82) IV, Pt.2, 326.

whatsoever are to follow us into our Secret or Privy Room, when we go to ease ourself, but onely Our Groom of the Stool' : but in 1661, if the Groom were absent, then the Gentleman of the Bedchamber in waiting was to officiate. The Jacobean Groom Fenton clearly performed these eponymous lavatorial tasks. That is why he wrote to Salisbury in 1610 with the news that

> His Majesty has been a little loose since his coming to Royston, but not in the extremity, and he does not lose his meat, so I hope he is past the worst.

(Given the menial nature of these tasks in Scotland, Erskine's capacity to adapt to English practice can only be admired.) Less clear is the involvement of the other Gentlemen — although it may be assumed that during Fenton's periodic political eclipses and months of non-attendance, the Gentlemen would deputise here.[40] Similarly with the other element of intimate attendance outlined in the Ordinances, that of dressing the king : it was the Groom's privilege to put on the king's 'shirt we wear next our Body' (in effect the king's underwear, suitably pre-warmed before the fire by a Groom of the Bedchamber), and again a Gentleman was to deputise in this, evening and morning.[41]

The Groom was further given the task of acting as Cupbearer in the Bedchamber whenever the king needed these services, together with 'all other services and offices of Honour about [the King's] Person', again with the Gentleman in attendance as his deputy if need be. Detailed provisions were made for the king's dining privately in his Bedchamber; the Groom of the Stool was to act as Cupbearer, the Gentleman in waiting

---

[40] 1661 Ords. §17; H.M.C.*Salisbury* XXI (1609-12) p.255, 17 October 1610. See above p.11, below pp.148, 230.

[41] 1661 Ords. § 3. The Groom of the Bedchamber was to warm the shirt, holding it until the king was ready to don it, and then deliver it to the Groom or Gentleman. Positive evidence that the 1661 ritual for dressing was observed under James I is lacking.

as Carver, and a Groom of the Bedchamber as Sewer; the servers themselves were to dine on the residue of the king's dishes.[42]

In the world beyond the Bedchamber, or beyond the palace, the Groom's pre-eminence was also defined when he was attending the king. When dining in the queen's Bedchamber, for example, the king was to be attended by the Groom (or again a deputising Gentleman), one Groom and a Page. When moving about the Palace formally — in procession to Chapel or the reception of an ambassador — the Groom in 1661 was to follow immediately next after the king's person, duly followed by the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber 'as others of Our Nobility observe in goeing before us'.[43] When the king left the Palace altogether, it was the Groom's responsibility to inform the Master of the Horse whether he himself or his deputy would attend the king. The Groom again had a first option on accompanying the king in the coach, where he was always to have a place

> next unto the Master of the Horse, & no other of Our Nobility whatsoever, except the Princes of our blood, the Master of the Horse & Our Groom of the Stool... may presume to come into our coach, with us, if not first called by us.

These provisions are clearly reflected in Jacobean practice : this was why Fenton was 'in the cotche with his Majestie all alone,' for example, in 1620. In the barge, the Lord Chamberlain was to organize the attendance, guaranteeing places to the Groom of the Stool, the Master of the Horse, the Gentleman and Groom of the Bedchamber in waiting, and (if separately appointed from the Groom Of the Stool, who bore an *ex-officio* right to the office) the Keeper of the Privy Purse.[44]

---

[42] 1661 Ords. §6. The Pages were to bring in and deliver the food to the Grooms, and they to the officiating Groom of the Stool, Gentleman and Groom. But when the king dined in his Bedchamber in January 1623, three Gentlemen officiated, rather than this precise hierarchy; Hamilton was Sewer, Carlisle Carver and Montgomery Cupbearer; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 474. Since James dined more often in his Privy Chamber (above, pp.23-5); these provisions probably originated at the more private court of Charles I.

[43] 1661 Ords. §§ 6, 5.

[44] 1661 Ords §§ 4 (Coach), 14 (Barge). H.M.C.*Mar and Kellie Supplement* p.104 (23 October 1620).

Apart from his duties in running the department itself, the wider administrative side of the Groom's office was not extensive; in fact the explicit statement of the Groom's *ex-officio* right to the Keepership of the Privy Purse in the 1661 Ordinances must reflect a Tudor foundation document of some sort, since both James I and Charles I appointed specific Keepers apart from the Groom at all times during their reigns.[45] These Ordinances specify two other areas however; the Groom was to issue warrants on his own signature and authority to the Great Wardrobe for the king's linen, laces, '& all the furniture & necessaries of our Bedchamber & the rest of our Privy Lodgings' — unless he could buy supplies more cheaply elsewhere, in which case he would be supplied with the funds to do so, either from the Privy Purse or by Privy Seal. And the Groom's right was confirmed in 1661, on the monarch's death, to inherit whatever beds, hangings, furniture, chamber plate, utensils and goods in the custody of Barbers and Pages that remained in the Bedchambers and Privy Lodgings of the Royal palaces.[46]

Finally the Groom was confirmed specifically to have 'full power... to appoint any of the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber to be his Deputy'.[47] This involvement of the other Gentlemen in the duties of the Groom marked off the Jacobean Groom from his Henrician predecessor, whose duties otherwise closely resembled each other; it also meant that in Jacobean practice, there was no great difference in influence between the Groom, formal head of department, and the Gentlemen, his theoretical subordinates. It was probably as a recognition of this fact that the Golden Key in a blue ribbon, mentioned in 1661 as a badge of the Groom's office, evolved as a means of differentiating the Groom from his fellow Gentlemen. But it is evident that this evolution was Caroline rather than

---

[45] See below, Ch. 3, sect. ii); and D.R.Starkey "Court and Government" in C.Coleman and D.Starkey (eds.) *Revolution Reassessed : Revisions in the History of Tudor Government and Administration* (Oxford, 1986),pp. 38-40.

[46] 1661 Ords. §§ 21, 23. Above, pp.44-5 for Jacobean Great Wardrobe evidence. The inheritance clause ruled out any account, and excepted jewels, pictures and statues — the latter perhaps a Caroline provision. H.M.C. *Seventh Report* p. 594, 5 April 1625, list of Bedchamber plate given to Kellie; SP46/78/192, after 1631, plate given to Kellie — a silver cup, gilt goblet and spoons etc..

[47] 1661 Ords. § 16.

Jacobean — Charles I issued such keys to Buckingham, and later also to the Lords Chamberlain to king and queen.[48] Even then, there is no sure evidence that such a key was ever specifically linked with the Groomship as a badge of office or symbol of appointment under the Early Stuarts.[49] In this case, then, as in few others in the 1661 Ordinances, we can be fairly certain that the content of the document represents accretions from periods later than James I's reign.

c) Gentleman of the Robes — Rights and Duties.

The 1661 Ordinances include a brief description of the duties and privileges of the Gentleman of the Robes. The office existed under Elizabeth, distinct from the Mastership of the Great Wardrobe. James first appointed his most intimate confidant, Sir George Home (later earl of Dunbar), already a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, who had earlier been Master of the Gardrop (Wardrobe) in Scotland, and who had just replaced the Elizabethan incumbent as Master of the English Great Wardrobe. He was replaced as

---

[48] 1661 Ords. § 8 — 'a treble key of Our Bedchamber... to open every door... in all our Mansion houses'. Above, p.38; and below, pp.237-8. LC 5/134 p145, Orders for new locks, 21 January 1637, when the Groom was to have only a 'double key w[i]th the ordinary and accustomed trimming', while the king's, queen's, the housekeepers' and the two Lords Chamberlain's keys alone were to be 'treble & gilt'. This point was not missed by Arlington in 1683; it is the last of his four points to concern us. He noted the numerous Van Dycks showing Philip earl of Pembroke wearing the golden key as Lord Chamberlain (Murray-Baillie MS). Certainly the Lord Chamberlain's own books — cited above for 1637 — show him under Charles I to have been in full control of the making and issuing of keys on warrants to the Locksmith, contrary to the 1661 Ordinances' claim that the Locksmith was only to obey the Groom's directions on this matter(§ 9). This is Arlington's one clear victory, where the 1661 Ordinances are obviously at odds with Caroline practice — but there remains the possibility that the 1661 provision on Locksmiths' warrants refers back to Jacobean practice; there are no Lord Chamberlain's books to supply firm evidence on this point for James's reign.

[49] The 1661 Ordinances state that 'when we first constitute [the Groom of the Stool] in...office, it shall be by Our delivery to him of a Gold Key of our Bedchamber, which shall be sufficient warrant to our Lord Chamberlain or Lord Steward to swear him in the said place'. Only one early Stuart admission of a Groom of the Stool, that of Holland in 1636, is recorded; he 'was sworne Groome of the Stoole to his Ma[jes]tie by my L[or]d Chamberlaine at Devonshire House', making no mention of the prior bestowal of any key (LC 5/134 p.121). The admissions of none of Charles's Grooms used such a badge; but bestowal of the gold key on Buckingham in 1625 is suggestive, and is the main grounds for not fully accepting Arlington's 1683 claim that the 1661 orders do not here reflect early Stuart practice.

Gentleman in 1605 by another Gentleman of the Bedchamber, Sir James Hay (later earl of Carlisle), who from 1607 until 1618 was first joint and then (after Sir Roger Aston's death in 1612) sole Master of the Great Wardrobe. He in turn relinquished the office in 1617 to his brother Robert Hay, who by then had been a Groom of the Bedchamber for six years. Robert served out the reign.[50] It is clear then that there could have been no appreciable distinction between the Bedchamber and the Robes; the chief personnel of the latter office under James was in every case already securely established in the Bedchamber before appointment. This must be borne in mind when we consider the separation between the two institutions implied in the 1661 document. The Ordinances permit the Gentleman to enter the Bedchamber every morning — without asking leave — to put on the king's doublet (after the Bedchamber proper had dressed the king in his underwear and shirt).[51] He was permitted to stay until the king was fully dressed. At all other times, the Gentleman was permitted to come into the Privy Lodgings — except the Bedchamber itself — whenever he wished. But if the Gentleman's office apparently gave him some independent Bedchamber access, the execution of his office involved his explicit subordination to the Groom of the Stool. The Gentleman was to obey all orders and directions from the Groom concerning the king's clothing requirements, when the king did not give his orders direct to the Gentleman; and the entire Robes staff, highest to lowest, was to be sworn in to be obedient to the Groom of the Stool 'as their chief officer'.[52] The Robes was a semi-independent offshoot, then, but the coincidence in personnel under James between it and the Bedchamber must have made even this small autonomy practically negligible. Yet the Ordinances reflected English court theory — and if they are a true

---

[50] H.M.C.*Salisbury* XV (1603)p. 375; E 351/2807, James Hay's account as Gentleman beginning December 1605; LC5/50 pp 54, 96, and Northamptonshire C.R.O. Finch Hatton MS 39 *sub* Great Wardrobe (*c.*1607). *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 73, 514.

[51] 1661 Ords. §19; the Yeoman of the Robes brought the king's apparel to the Withdrawing Chamber every morning to be passed in to the Gentleman of the Robes; here also the Grooms of the Robes waited; and the Yeoman was not to stay longer than the job required without the leave of the Groom of the Stool.

[52] 1661 Ords. §§ 19, 22, 26.

reflection of the early Stuart originals, it is probable, since neither James nor Charles practised the formal division in personnel between Bedchamber and Robes implicit in these clauses, that they represent an earlier (probably Henrician) original.[53]

d) Rights and Duties : Grooms and Pages of the Bedchamber.

As we have already seen, the Grooms and Pages were involved in the more formal business of the king's body service, performed by the Groom of the Stool and the Gentleman. The Groom of the Bedchamber in waiting was to warm the king's linen body-shirt in front of the Bedchamber fire, before handing it to the Groom of the Stool or Gentleman who would put it on the king.[54] The Grooms also 'made him ready' — that is, helped him on with his underwear as a preliminary to this more formal dressing ritual performed by the Groom of the Stool and the Gentlemen. In this sense, the Grooms performed real services to the king, which gave them numerous opportunities for close access. But in addition, there was a more practical, almost menial side to the job. They were to make the king's bed; they were physically to have charge of the linen for the king's person and for the Bedchamber 'in such manner as the same hath been used in the time of our blessed father and grandfather [i.e. Charles I and James I]' , as the 1661 Ordinances said; and they were to keep the Groom of the Stool informed of the king's needs for new linen, so that he could issue his warrant to the Great Wardrobe. (If the Grooms proved negligent in these more mundane duties, the Groom of the Stool was permitted to assign them to the Pages of the Bedchamber.) At night, the Grooms were distanced from the king, leaving the closest attendance to the Groom of the Stool and Gentlemen; two of the Grooms were to sleep on a pallet bed in the Withdrawing

---

[53] D.R.Starkey "The King's Privy Chamber, 1485-1547" (Cambridge PhD, 1973) pp. 268-73.

[54] 1661 Ords. § 3. In 1661 the Grooms were divided to wait by quarters regulated by their superior, the Groom of the Stool (*ibid.* § 13).

Chamber.[55] But overall, the impression is that the Grooms had considerable opportunities of real access to the king; as we have seen, in the absence of sufficient Gentlemen, the Grooms were to take over the king's entire service as their deputies; and, in the ordinary course of things, the Grooms solid basis in performing necessary and functional tasks (like making the king's bed) probably made their attendance and their relationship with the king more necessary, continuous, and perhaps also more familiar. In 1623 Secretary Conway reminded the Chief Baron of the Exchequer to speed up a case involving the Groom James Maxwell 'because his attendans so neear unto his Ma[jes]t[i]e in his Bedchamber cannot well be spared for any long time'.[56]

The Pages of the Bedchamber performed more narrowly menial duties. Exceptionally in the Pages' case, the 1661 Ordinances apparently reflect a situation rather different than would have been the case in James's reign, and with this source of guidance for once suspect, we are forced in some cases to rely on scattered references to Jacobean practice. But some of the provisions are straightforward; the Pages made the pallet bed of the Gentleman who slept in the king's Chamber, made the fires, and swept and perfumed the rooms.[57] Under James, one of them was responsible for washing the king's sheets.[58] In 1661, they were to wait 'near to our Bedchamber door & may come [in]...when their service is requir'd' — a distance which fits in with what we know about the status of the Pages' office under James. But in 1661 they were also allowed to come into the Bedchamber 'to speak to Our Groom of the Stool, or any of the Gentlemen of our

---

[55] 1661 Ords. §12 (the explicit reference to Jacobean precedent). § 27 deals with sleeping arrangements. The correspondences between these 1661 provisions for the Grooms, and those set out in the 1637 petition (SP29/423/16) are particularly striking. This may suggest that Holland in 1636-37 relied on his subordinates for detailed information, and perhaps even for the phraseology of his petition. Possibly the Grooms had a copy of the provisions which applied to them, which Holland might have used as a basis for confirmation. (Certainly, these correspondences do not necessarily suggest that the provisions were entirely new, and were being put forward for the first time in 1637, as Arlington claimed in 1683). Cf. SP 29/423/16, §§ 2, 5, 9 with the 1661 Ordinances § 13, § 27.

[56] SP14/148/18, 3 July 1623.

[57] 1661 Ords. §§ 14, 15.

[58] *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 5.

Bedchamber when any other person without shall desire to speak with any of them'. Under James, it was the Gentleman Usher of the Privy Chamber who was expected to carry such messages in from outside, whether for the king or, presumably, for the Groom or Gentlemen : we know this from an explicit provision in James I's Privy Chamber Ordinances. It seems then that the 1661 provision reflects Caroline practice — one clear example of an accretion in the 1661 document.[59] Equally improbable in its applicability to James's reign is the 1661 provision which makes the appointment of the Pages practically a matter of the Groom of the Stool's private patronage.[60] With these important exceptions, then, we have a reasonably clear picture of the duties of the subordinate members of the department.

---

[59] 1661 Ords. §15 ; B.L. Harleian MS 589 fo. 197 v - 198 r (Privy Chamber Ordinances,161-) § 11. B.L. Stowe MS 561 fo. 8 r, rights of a Gentleman Usher Daily Waiter, post 1660, clarifies the Caroline position. The Gentlemen Ushers claimed they only obeyed their immediate superiors — the Lord Chamberlain and Vice Chamberlain — except in the case of 'a Message sent by a Page of the Bedchamber, they being imediate officers to the Lord Chamberlaine, Noe way subordinat to the Gentlemen Ushers of the Privy Chamber who have noe Comand without the precincts of the privy Chamber', thus explicitly contradicting the Jacobean provision. The subordination of the Pages of the Bedchamber to the Lord Chamberlain, and the confinement of the Gentlemen Ushers of the privy Chamber to that apartment were therefore arrangements specific to the court of Charles I; the Pages were listed under the Lord Chamberlain's department in 1629, after the Sewers of the Chamber and Gentlemen Waiters (SP 16/154/76); and the Privy Chamber orders of Charles I provide that 'if anie necessarie occasion shall fall out concerning Our service which requireth present order and may not be differed,...one of the...gent: Ushers [of the Privy Chamber] ...may by turne come to the Gallerie dore' — unlike the position under James, where he was allowed into the Bedchamber and straight in to see the king — 'and no further, and thence send by anie allowed to be there' — presumably this is where the Pages came in under Charles I — 'to the Lo: Chamberlaine or Vice chamberlaine, and by them know Our pleasure, And so soone as he hath received answere he shall presentlie returne into the privie chamber, which is the proper place of his attendance'. (LC 5/180 pp 21-22).

[60] 1661 Ords § 14.

e) Limits on Access to the Bedchamber.

Jealously preserving the limitations on access to the Bedchamber and Privy Lodgings traditional in the English court, the 1661 Ordinances make it quite clear that

> no person of what condition soever do at any time presume or be admitted to come to us into Our Bed-Chamber, but such as... are... sworn of it, without our special licence, except the Princes of our blood.[61]

This embargo on Bedchamber access was based closely on a similar clause in Henry VIII's Privy Chamber regulations. It continued to specify that such officers as Physicians, Surgeons, Apothecaries and Barbers should wait in the Withdrawing Chamber until called in to the Bedchamber; and that 'none of our Bedchamber whatsoever are to follow us into our Secret or Privy Room, when we go to ease ourself, but onely our Groom of the Stool' — which is very close to the Eltham Ordinances.[62] So there was nothing novel or controversial about this 1661 provision; it reflected a very basic fact of English court life. Other items in the 1661 Book also deal with the limits on Bedchamber access, particularly the Groom of the Stool's role in its regulation. The Groom was to ensure (in 1661 through the Pages' agency) that no suitor or strangers was allowed to attend at the 'Backstairs' or in the rooms 'belonging to our Bedchamber', the Privy Lodgings, without the Groom's authority : these provisions seem to be echoed by the Jacobean Privy Chamber regulations, which stray from their proper field of concern only once to warn 'let non of our bedchambere presume to take or Conferre w[i]th any, in any of our privie Romes that are not p[er]mytted to be ther'. The Groom was to ensure that the Keeper of the Privy Purse and the Keeper of the Cabinet or Closet (an office apparently created by Charles II) should only be permitted access as their Bedchamber service required; a similar clause allowed the Groom to hurry the Gentleman of the Robes out of the Bedchamber when his duties were done. But the second main provision of the 1661 Book on access was a corollary to the tight restrictions on the Bedchamber itself : it stated that

---

[61] 1661 Ords. § 17.

[62] *A Collection of Ordinances and Regulations for the Royal Household* (Society of Antiquaries, London, 1790), pp.154 (c.55), 156 (c.62), Eltham Ordinances.

> our principal Secretaries of State, our Master of Requests, & all others shall have their audiences in our Withdrawing Room, where the Lord Chamberlain & other Chief Officers of Our House & Our Privy Council may always attend us....[63]

Can these 1661 regulations be a reflection of either Jacobean theory or practice? The traditional answer to those questions would be doubly negative — James's most recent biographer, for example, categorically stated that access to James was extremely easy, especially compared with the court of his son : 'James thus subjected himself to constant irritation, and it is strange that a man who loved privacy as he did could not have handled matters better'.[64] It is of the first importance for our purposes to be clear about this question, since any estimate of the role and significance of the Bedchamber and its personnel must depend at root on the value of the department's access to the source of its power, the king; and the value of their access in turn depends on how generally open or constricted it was, or, in a word, how close theirs came to being a monopoly. Three questions arise here; was there indeed an explicit enactment of these traditional strictures under James; how closely did it resemble the 1661 provisions quoted above; and, most importantly, how rigidly were any such regulations enforced — how frequently did the king's 'special licence' open up the Bedchamber to others?

---

[63] B.L.Harleian MS 589 fo. 198r, §14; 1661 Ords. §§ 16 - 20, a series of provisions for access. The quotation here is from the last article cited.

[64] D.H.Willson *James VI and I* (1956) p.195. Willson generalises about the disorder and easy access at James's court, but actually produces evidence only about the pressure of persistent suitors on the king, rather a different matter.

On the first two questions, we have the evidence of the Jacobean Privy Chamber Ordinances, and other related documents. One of the latter makes it clear that, under James, certain classes of courtier were kept at an even greater distance than is implied by the 1661 document : the lesser formal officers (Masters of Requests, Signet Clerks, the Attorney and Solicitor General) had their audiences in the Privy Chamber, into which the king would emerge from his Bedchamber to see them.[65] The letter of the 1661 arrangements applied even more exactly to the greater officers' access under James. James's Privy Chamber orders specify that

> no privie chamber man nor any other allowed to com into our privie chamber, doe presume to come in... further then our privie chamber except onely the Councell, to whom wee are pleased to give leave to come into the nexte lytle [With]drawing Chamber to our privie chamber, wher they may both Conferre together, and attend our pleasure to be Caled in to our Inner lodginges when we shall Comaunde.[66]

So theoretically under James, as in 1661, the Withdrawing Chamber was the limit of access accorded to those not of the Bedchamber.

The Jacobean Privy Chamber Ordinances therefore excluded the greater and lesser officers of state and the Privy Council from that access to the king which the Bedchamber's own personnel exclusively and routinely enjoyed; there thus seems to be sufficient contemporary evidence that the provisions of the 1661 Ordinances on Bedchamber access are essentially the same as the Jacobean regulations, even if it could be proven that no specific Bedchamber Ordinances ever existed for James's reign.

This said, the third of our questions remains to be considered; were these regulations enforced and observed? We have tried to reconstruct the letter of the Bedchamber regulations : but if the king chose to see an individual frequently in his

---

[65] SP14/2/35 A, undated, probably an addendum to the new Privy Chamber provisions of July 1603, SP 14/2/35; it allows the two Masters of Requests in ordinary and the Attorney General to come into the Privy Chamber at convenient times to transact business. See Sir Thomas Lake's access to procure the royal signature, below, pp.91-2.

[66] B.L.Harleian MS 589 fo. 197v §2. L.Stone *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965), p.401, is mistaken in asserting that the 'peerage' under the early Stuarts had automatic access to 'Privy Chamber and antechamber'.

Bedchamber, whether an officer or a private individual, then of course he would. The realities of politics could trespass on the formalities of court usage. Examples will clarify the picture : thus by early May 1603, the French ambassador reported that Cecil 'begins to grow great with the King, staying alone with him shut up in the "cabinet" for three or four hours together.'[67] Nevertheless, court usage had a way of re-asserting itself, and by 1608, Salisbury's meetings with the king were formal audiences indeed.[68] In Jacobean practice, the Privy Councillors' right to wait in the Withdrawing Chamber was regarded as an important mark of status in its own right. On this we have the testimony of a lesser officer just promoted to the ranks of the greater; Sir Julius Caesar, a Master of Requests, was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer in April 1606; a Privy Councillor on 5 May 1607; and on 'May the thirteenth 1607 I was licensed to come into the Withdrawing Chamber, next to the Privy Chamber, where the Privy Counsellors stay, and there to stay likewise at my pleasure.'[69] And the testimony of longer established councillors of independent weight makes it clear that this was regarded as the normal state of affairs under James.[70] The arrangements for the access of deputations from the House of Commons imply that an ordinary Member would have had considerable difficulty in getting to see the king, even though James was prepared on occasion to go out of his way to make matters easier. After one such audience in May 1610, Sir Julius Caesar reported back to the house the details of their deputation's reception; they were given access 'in the drawing-chamber (a thing never seen in the Queen's time to have any multitude there)', and were later brought again into the 'drawing chamber, where his Majesty with 6 of his privy council sat

---

[67]P.R.O 31/3/35, Beaumont to Villeroy, 17 May 1603.

[68]For the frequency and formality of Salisbury's meetings with the king in 1608, see "Sir Julius Caesar's Journal of Salisbury's First Two Months and Twenty Days as Lord Treasurer : 1608" ed.L.M.Hill *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* XLV (1972)pp. 311-27.

[69]E.Lodge *The Life of Sir Julius Caesar...* (London, 1827) p.23.

[70] One example, which could be multiplied almost infinitely, of Privy Councillors having to wait outside to be called in to see the king; Worcester's comment to Salisbury in July 1609, that 'the King, being with child to hear from you, sent for me to his bedchamber, demanding what news from you' (H.M.C *Salisbury* XXI (1609-12)p. 92).

and called us in, and caused all the doors to be shut on all sides' — in effect giving the Commons' delegation the temporary status of Privy Councillors. The reported conclusion to the meeting was that James said he found the Commons Petition (the subject of the meeting)

> more reasonable than 'twas reported to him, and since therefore never King gave his people more easy access to him than he doth, if we would be content some 10 or 12 of us at any time, not in the solemn form of Parliament but *homely* to come to him, he would willingly afford us access *in his gallery or drawing chamber*, where we might acquaint him with our intentions, and he us with his.[71]

Much of the preceding argument is encapsulated and exemplified in this passage; the king's recognition of the importance of open access in negotiation, a prominent feature of his Scottish kingship; his attempt to mitigate the English insistence on formality (of which the Commons were the most consistent advocates); but his recognition that any such attempt at direct, face-to-face dealing, as much as his claim to be a king who gave free access, had to be made precisely in the context of the existing court etiquette : and in short, all of the examples of the normal rules of access being relaxed are in fact — not surprisingly — themselves the exceptions that prove the continuing observance and enforcement of some of the most basic rules of the English court. James enforced the rules of his court and worked within them. In February 1621 it was reported that

> the l[ordes] that came to attend at the Parlament received a cheque of the K[ing] for coming into the w[i]thdrawing chamber & privie gallerie[;] he told them himselfe after his manner when he saw them in the w[i]thdrawing chamber, as he was going to my lo[rd] of Buck[ingham's] chambers,... that there was a presence and a priuie chamber for them, and an other tyme he let them knowe so much by my lo[rd] chamb[erlain], whereat they were not well pleased.[72]

---

[71] E.R.Foster *Proceedings in Parliament, 1610* (2 vols., New Haven, 1966) II, 114 - 116 (my italics). Cf. Bacon in 1606, describing 'the order of presenting the [Commons'] Grievances ...to his Majesty...[:] the Accesse was regular... others even of the Privie Chamber and Bed chamber, and the Nobility who were not of the Councell, excluded' — referring once again to a meeting in the Withdrawing Chamber, at 'Privy Councillor level' — *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer* ed.D.H.Willson (Minneapolis, 1931) p.165. James never liked the formality of these meetings; this is the context of his later acid request for 'stooles for the Ambassadors to sit downe' in receiving a Commons deputation (*Letters of Chamberlain* II,414,15 December 1621).

[72] SP14/119/99, Locke to Carleton, 16 February 1621.

The politics of the reign in general indeed confirms the Bedchamber's exclusiveness; one of the continuing issues of the reign was the frustrated hostility — either national and xenophobic, tied into the issue of union, or personal and factional — felt by those excluded from Bedchamber access or membership for those who possessed it. Only by assuming that access to James I meant something can sense be made of the reign's politics. The traditional view about access to the king in the court of James I must therefore be mistaken; the exclusiveness of the Bedchamber was the keystone of the Jacobean structure of politics.

This exclusiveness, firmly grounded in court etiquette, was further reinforced by two well-known personal traits of the king's. First was his love of hunting. In 1607 the Venetian ambassador reflected that his addiction to the sport was so great that 'he throws off all business' and 'is more inclined to live retired with eight or ten of his favourites than openly, as is the custom of the country.'[73] Over the whole reign, James must have spent about half his time either in hunting lodges thirty or forty miles from London — Royston and Newmarket were his favourites — or on progress. When hunting, between the end of the summer progress and Christmas, and then again between Christmas and Easter, he took with him a small household composed of one or two clerks, the Guard, the Privy Chamber and, above all, the Bedchamber.[74] The hunting lodges themselves were architecturally adapted to suit this rural intimacy. In 1605, the Lord Treasurer explicitly drew up the new requirement : not 'lodgings of state', but rather 'lodgings of necessity.' Building collapses at both Royston and Newmarket show what these lodgings consisted of. In 1607 a chimney fell down at Royston, revealing damage in the Bedchamber itself,

---

[73]*CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 510, 513; *Ambassades de Monsieur de la Boderie en Angleterre* (5 vols., Paris, 1750), V, 510, 9 December 1610; SP14/12/13 (January 1605), James's instructions to the Council for times when he was 'retired' at the hunt, from the outset envisaged as likely to be recurrent.

[74]LS 13/168 fo 124 : the party used 43 carts compared with as many as 250 for a summer progress.

and the obviously contiguous chambers of the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber : those of Lennox, Fenton, Montgomery and Ramsay are named. Over the next two years new lodgings were built with an extra room for the new Gentleman, Carr. New buildings in 1614 after a more serious collapse at Newmarket contained rooms over and under the usual sequence of state apartments, solely for 'Noblemen and gentlemen of the bedchamb[er]'.[75]

As well as places, James grew attached to people. As important to the Bedchamber's exclusiveness, therefore, as James's attachment to rural retreats remote from London was his loathness to admit new faces to his inner circle. But in order fully to investigate this, something must first be said about the problems involved in determining the Bedchamber's very personnel, and about defining the status of the members of the department.

[75] H.M.Colvin (ed.) *The History of the King's Works* (6 vols., London,1951-82) IV, Part 2, 32; E351/3369; H.M.Colvin (ed.) *op.cit.* IV, Pt.2, 237; 175.

iii). Determining Membership

Without any formal departmental records relating to the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber (who received no fee or livery with their place), establishing their identity during James's reign depends on inferring a pattern from scattered references. The only institutional lists which indicate, albeit silently, who the Gentlemen were are those of carts allowed for hunting journeys. There the Bedchamber appears, unlabelled, as a group. On their own, these lists are not a sufficient basis on which to construct an account of the Bedchamber's membership; the silent references need to be supplemented with other more concrete indications. But these lists occur infrequently in the record, and first appear late, in 1607. Some ingenuity is therefore required to reconstruct the membership in the confusing years immediately following the department's foundation.[76]

That four were initially appointed can be inferred from an explicit 1661 reference to precedent.[77] The four here assumed to be original appointees are those who had served before in Scotland; for whose appointment in England no reference exists; but who are in attendance when references to the department are more frequent after about 1605. Of the probable original four admitted in 1603, all had served in Scotland. Sir John Ramsay (a gentleman's second son) had played a major part three years before in the Gowrie conspiracy, allegedly by saving the king's life. Lennox's younger brother, Esmé Stuart, lord Aubigny, owed his position in the Bedchamber to his father's memory and his

---

[76] LS 13/168 fo 124 (1607) : fo 239v (July 1622), recognising the principle that newly-appointed Gentlemen will each be allocated one cart.

[77] 1661 Ords § 11. Northamptonshire C.R.O., Finch Hatton MS 39, *c.*1607, lists four Gentlemen (of whom one, lord Balfour of Burley, seems not to have been a member of the department), and probably reflects the department's formal size. I owe this reference to Mr. William Tighe. Above, pp. 3-5, 19-20 on the department's foundation.

brother's inability to produce heirs. These men were aged about twenty-five when appointed.[78]

The other two were in their early forties, men of political experience. Sir Roger Aston had been one of Cecil's most important correspondents in arranging the succession; the illegitimate son of a Cheshire gentry family, he had made his career in Scotland since at least 1580, and if the Scots at that time regarded him as English, twenty years later the English saw Aston as a Scot. In both kingdoms he was the king's Master Huntsman and invariable companion in the field. Sir George Home had been Master of the Gardrop, Lord Treasurer and a Gentleman of the Chamber in Scotland, and beyond these offices, 'the only man of all other most inward with the King,' as Aston told Cecil in 1600.[79]

In July 1603 the Gentlemen were increased to six. Sir James Hay, eldest son of a distinguished Scots gentry family, was in his early twenties and, like Ramsay and Aubigny, had recently polished his manners in France. Sir Philip Herbert, the earl of Pembroke's younger brother (made earl of Montgomery in 1605), was sworn in at the same time; he too was in his early twenties, though without any French education. Exceptionally, before 1615, Herbert was an Englishman. [80]

The dual appointment of Hay and Herbert in 1603 appears to have been the beginning of the application to the Bedchamber of the principle of 'equal partition' between

---

[78] *D.N.B* ; *CSPDomestic* XII (Additional 1580-1625) 442 (18 April 1604),the first reference to his membership of the Bedchamber. For Aubigny : LS 13/168 fo 312r (Pantry liveries, 1604-05, where he, along with Ramsay, is first mentioned explicitly as a Bedchamberman).

[79] For Aston : *D.N.B sub* Sir Thomas (1600-45), possibly Sir Roger's legitimate half-brother ; Scottish Record Office E 34/35 (22 May 1580) fo 8v, 'Roger Asston an Englishman' ; first reference as Gentleman of the Bedchamber, *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 65 (9 January 1604), an exceptional grant of livery; H.M.C.*Salisbury* XXI (1609-12) p.269 (15 December 1610) as Master Falconer and Master Hunter. For Home : *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 9 (17 May 1603), Keeper of the Privy Purse, the first reference as Gentleman. *Calendar of Scottish Papers* XIII, Part 2 (1597-1603) 723 (1 November 1600).

[80] F.H.Mares (ed.) *The Memoirs of Sir Robert Carey* (Oxford, 1972)p. 66, a dual appointment at the queen's suit : the sort of casual reference upon which the reconstruction of the Bedchamber's membership at the level of the Gentlemen is based. *D.N.B* on Herbert and foreign travel.

English and Scots. The application went unrepeated in the Bedchamber, mainly due to the failure to achieve full legislative and parliamentary union between 1604 and 1607. In that year the earl of Dunbar's young Scottish protégé and former page, Sir Robert Carr (later earl of Somerset) was promoted from Groom to Gentleman of the Bedchamber,[81] finally bringing the numbers of Scots to English among the Gentlemen to their highest proportion of eight to one. Specifically, in 1607-11 the Gentlemen (including the chief officers) were : Lennox, Dunbar, Montgomery, Fenton, Haddington, Hay, Aubigny, Carr and Aston. The deaths of Dunbar (January 1611) and Aston (May 1612) brought the proportion back to six Scots to one Englishman by 1615.

This situation was to change with the rise of George Villiers in 1615; by 1622 he had succeeded in bringing in three Englishmen as Gentlemen, and five more as Grooms of the Bedchamber. Villiers effectively replaced Carr in 1615, making five Scots to two English. The marquis of Hamilton's appointment in 1620 raised the number of Scots to six : then in 1621-22, the appointments of Fulke Greville (lord Brooke), the earl of Denbigh, and Sir Christopher Villiers (soon to be earl of Anglesey) — all English — together with the promotion of the Scot John Murray from Groom to Gentleman enlarged the department to twelve (eleven after Lennox's death in February 1624), split seven to five in favour of the Scots.[82]

Dertermining who the Gentlemen were becomes reasonably straightforward, then, with Carr's appointment in 1607. From then on, the news-letters of John Chamberlain alone would be sufficient to catalogue all the appointments of Gentlemen, and all of the more significant appointments to the office of Groom — an obvious indication of the centrality of the Bedchamber in the eyes of a skilful observer like Chamberlain.

For the identities of the Grooms of the Bedchamber, two basic series of accounts can be used as straightforward and reliable guides for most of the reign : the

---

[81]Below, p.112.

[82]*Letters of Chamberlain* II 297, 399, 442-3.

Cofferer's Accounts and the Great Wardrobe Livery warrants.[83] But between 1620 and 1622, these accounts dry up as useful sources for determining membership, because the various grants which occasioned their being kept — a £20 fee, £20 livery, £90 boardwage, and in all cases pensions of £200 on the Exchequer — were in most cases rationalised into one patent and increased to £500, paid from the Exchequer. But it is unnecessary to use the formal Exchequer records, since informal sources like Chamberlain appear to be particularly full and reliable by this late in the reign; and so the task of filling in the gaps after 1620-1 is relatively straightforward.[84] Numbers oscillated, over the years 1604-17, between seven (during 1609-11) and ten (in 1614-15) : until 1617, the department at Groom level was wholly staffed by Scots, whose names are easily established from the accounts described above. After 1617, the English additions were then joined to this core of Scotsmen. The six English Grooms appointed after 1617 were Christopher Villiers (1617, promoted to full Gentleman 1622), Edward Wray (1618, displaced 1622), Edward Clarke (1621? - 1625)[85], Richard Turpin (1622-25)[86], James Palmer (1622-25)[87], and Arthur Brett (1622, displaced 1623)[88]. By 1624-25, eight Scots served alongside three English.

Since determining the identities of the Pages of the Bedchamber is quite straightforward — the livery records in the Great Wardrobe are reliable — the investigation can proceed to consider the status of those who made up the Bedchamber.

---

[83] E 351/1796 - 1821 (Cofferer's Accounts 1603-25), LC 5/50 (Great Wardrobe Livery warrants, 1603-25).

[84] *CSPDomestic* XI (1623-25) 127, Conway to Middlesex, 11 December 1623.

[85] Only recorded on the funeral list, LC 2/6. He was probably appointed in early 1621, when the Cofferer's account (E351/1816) terminates payments to William Ramsey, without paying a replacement (probably Clarke, who evidently went straight onto the new system).

[86] Turpin replaced Christopher Villiers; *Letters of Chamberlain* II 434, 27 April 1622.

[87] The Cofferer recorded Palmer's appointment on 29 June 1622 (E 351/1817), and Chamberlain reported it (*Letters of Chamberlain* II 434, replacing Edward Wray); livery dated 2 July 1622 (LC 5/50, index *sub* "P").

[88] *Letters of Chamberlain* II 442, 22 June 1622, in place of John Murray.

iv).Defining the Personnel :
The Status of Bedchambermen.

First, we shall examine the status at birth of the fifteen gentlemen who served in James's Bedchamber at one time or another during the reign. All, save perhaps one, were from respectable gentry backgrounds. At the top of the pyramid stood Lennox and Hamilton, the eldest sons of a duke and a marquis; then Greville, Feilding and Hay, the eldest sons of a knight and two gentlemen respectively. The rest of the department's expectations at, or through birth were much more limited. Aubigny and Montgomery were the younger brothers of a duke and an earl, titleless until the king stepped in; this was even more emphatically the case with Erskine, the second son of a knight, Ramsay, the second son of a gentleman, Home, a gentleman's third son, Carr, a younger son of a gentleman by his second marriage, Villiers, a second son of a gentleman's second marriage, Christopher Villiers, the third son of the same, Murray, the youngest of a gentleman's seven sons, and Aston, a gentleman's illegitimate son.[89]

If only two of these men originally — and perhaps two more later in the reign, who were placed in line by events[90] — stood to inherit a peerage, by the reign's end all of them — with the sole exception of Aston, who never advanced further than his knighthood — were noblemen. Greville, who came late to the Bedchamber in 1621 aged sixty-seven, at last received a barony in the same year. Apart from him, all of the other Gentlemen achieved at least the rank of earl. The Bedchamber thus acted as a social accelerator of great speed; the celebrated rise of 'plain George Villiers' to an earldom in two years, and a dukedom in eight, is in this context not an extreme phenomenon; Villiers went a little further a little more quickly than his companions in the Bedchamber, but not by a great

---

[89] G.E.C[ockayne] *The Complete Peerage* ; *D.N.B.*

[90] When it became clear that both Pembroke and Lennox would be without heirs male, the successions of Montgomery and Aubigny to those titles were assured.

deal.[91] Appointment to the Bedchamber came to require the appointee's advancement to the appropriate rank; when John Murray was made a Gentleman, Chamberlain reported that he 'must be made somwhat, ... whether an earle or vicount of England, Scotland, or Ireland....'[92] And where rank was bestowed, so was the means to maintain it.

The Gentlemen of the Bedchamber gained massively as private individuals from direct crown patronage — quite how massively is revealed by the broad, comparative figures compiled by Professor Stone in 1965. These 'rough' calculations of the quantity and direction of crown patronage to the English peerage over the period 1558 - 1641 show that between the two terminal dates, 75 per cent of crown gifts (as defined by Stone) went to twenty-nine individuals, and that 45 per cent of the same total went to only *nine* peers.[93] Certainly, the 'extreme inequality of the share out' is impressive; but for our purposes, the most striking thing is simply the identity of the beneficiaries; of the top nine getters, no fewer than six were Gentlemen of James's Bedchamber; of the remaining twenty, only twelve were prominent at court during James's reign, and four of these were Bedchambermen — Home, Aubigny, Anglesey and Hamilton ranked alongside great officers like Salisbury and Northampton. Of the top twenty-nine, more than one third — ten — were Gentlemen of the Bedchamber.[94]

Three more Gentlemen fail to appear in Stone's figures because they never held an English peerage. Fenton seems to have done equally as well from the crown as

---

[91] Home and Montgomery went from knighthoods to earldoms in two years (1603-05); Carr took six to make the same journey; Erskine and Ramsey took sixteen. Murray went from Groom to Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and from plain esquire to viscount, in a day; two years later, he too was an earl.

[92] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 442.

[93] L.Stone *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965) pp. 470-76, 774-6. Stone's criteria are necessarily inexact, dependent on the fullness of the record series he used. But the chronological range of the figures makes them valuable here; they do 'give some idea of the scale of giving and the fluctuations of that scale', and 'make it possible to pick out the individuals who benifited most from the system'.

[94] The top six were Lennox, Hay, Ramsay, Carr, Villiers and Montgomery. Home received all his gains between 1603 and 1610.

colleagues such as Lennox, Ramsay and Hay.[95] Aston, in the nine years between his arrival in England and his death, did less well but still respectably.[96] And John Murray had already done sufficently well as a Groom to support the dignity of an earl — so Chamberlain thought — in any of the three kingdoms when he was promoted to full Gentleman in 1622.[97] These comparative figures show clearly the status of the Bedchamber relative to the rest of the peerage, as the king saw it; they show that the Bedchamber of James I was, as it was in many other ways, a special case; certainly, in a class of its own when it came to crown patronage.

The Grooms of the Bedchamber came from respectable, even eminent (and before 1617, always Scottish) gentry families; John Murray was a cousin of the earl of Tullibardine, and Barnard Lindsay a relative of lord Spynie. The powerful tried to get their younger relatives and followers a place there; first Dunbar (Carr was a Groom from 1604-07), then Carr himself (his nephew William was appointed in late 1614). Sir John Ramsay obtained a place for his brother, as did Hay and Villiers for theirs; Montgomery and Hamilton had followers appointed.

The Pages' status could be equivocal : on one hand, the earl of Montgomery managed to have his former barber, Adam Hill, appointed; on the other, Alexander Foster had the grant of some bailiwicks in Glamorganshire, and when the king and Council wrote to the local High Sherriff to ensure his support for the grant, they expressed their certainty that he would 'think this gentleman, being so near a servant to his Majesty, one of the Pages of the Bedchamber, as worthy to enjoy the benefit of his Majesty's favour...

---

[95] On Stone's criteria (*Crisis of the Aristocracy* pp.470-2), applied very conservatively, Fenton received a minimum endowment of £30,000, putting him in Stone's top 29. If Goodman's guess — not made with Stone's method in mind, but a practical near-contemporary assessment — that Fenton got about £140,000 from the crown were close to the truth, Fenton would join his fellow Bedchamber Scots in the top nine; Goodman *The Court of King James I* I, 203.

[96] Aston got about £20,000, omiting known grants to which precise values cannot be attached. Though outside the range of these figures, another of Stone's tables shows roughly that out of a group of 85 noble English beneficiaries 1603-25, only 24 received more than Aston : Stone *Crisis* p.776, Table E.

[97] *Letters of Chamberlain* II 442.

as any other.' But apart from a Page who was promoted Groom, and one who gained a Knighthood and the Clerkship of the Great Wardrobe, the position was not usually one which led to greater things. Scots like John Carse (or Kerse, ex-dichtar of the Scots chamber) had originally been menials; and some of the English pages seem to have been members of the 'gentlemanly profession of serving men' which was developing in this period.[98]

v). An Exclusive Elite.

The exclusiveness of the Bedchamber, shown by many marks of favour, was guaranteed by the difficulty of appointment to it. The king was remarkably faithful to his intimates. In 1603 he did his best for his Scots Chamber, while of all the Gentlemen appointed thereafter, Carr was the only one to lose his place. Similarly with the Grooms; despite Carr's fall, his nephew William continued in his place and was still in attendance in 1625. Only Buckingham in the last years of the reign managed to break this conservatism, effectively removing his kinsman Arthur Brett first from attendance and then from his place as Groom of the Bedchamber in 1622-23. (Brett was being hailed as the next favourite; Buckingham made certain that the rumours were exaggerated.) This loyalty left few places for newcomers; it also meant that James looked long and hard before committing himself. Never, in fact, did James appoint to a place which involved frequent access, however formal, without some previous personal knowledge of the applicant. Applied to the Bedchamber, the king's conservatism meant that such promotion to the department as occured usually followed a period of approval elsewhere at court, or in a lesser Bedchamber office. Carr's promotion to Gentleman in 1607 followed four years' service

[98]*Letters of Chamberlain* II, 79 (4 June 1617) ; *CSPDomestic* X (1619-23) 64 ; *APC* XXXVII(1619-21) 212 (30 May, 1620). Patrick Maull was promoted from Page (January 1604) to Groom of the Bedchamber (October 1604) ; *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 66, 162. On Bevis Thelwall's rise, see *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 535.

as a groom; Villiers served as a Cupbearer in the Privy Chamber for some months before being sworn a Gentleman. Chamberlain grasped the point in 1618 when he noted the 'gross error' of William Monson's backers (who were trying to foist him onto James as a new favourite), in having 'thrust him on so forward before they had procured him some ordinary place of attendance.'[99] Allied to this was a complicated domestic mechanism by which the queen's approval was required before Bedchamber appointments could be made. Archbishop Abbot remembered that

> King James had a fashion, that he would never admit any to nearness about himself, but such as the Queen should commend unto him...; that if the Queen afterwards... should complain of this Dear One, he might make the answer, It is long of yourself, for you were the party that commended him unto me.

Whether or not Abbot told the full story, between 1603 and the queen's death in 1619 there is positive evidence that three of the four Gentlemen appointed first had to gain her approval. There is also the rather negative evidence that Carr's nephew was appointed in 1614 'in a needless bravery of the Queen,' as the king said. Anne clearly had a voice in these appointments, but it could be overruled.[100]

Conservatism in allowing additions to the Bedchamber on the part of the king (and queen) limited markedly the scope for purging or packing the department as an instrument of factional strife. Even the Groom of the Stool, the formal head of the department, who actually swore in the new Gentlemen and Grooms, had little part to play in deciding on the appointments themselves. Still less did the great officers of state. Instead the Bedchamber was subject to the king's personal management as he took account of the political and personal pressures on him in furthering his own aims. Buckingham alone had the ability, from about 1619 onwards, and more especially after 1622, to

---

[99] *Letters of Chamberlain* II,151, 27 March 1618.

[100] J.Rushworth (ed.) *Historical Collections* (4 Parts in 7 vols, 1657) I, 456. On Hay and Montgomery, above n.80. There is no evidence her approval was involved in Carr's appointment, which may explain her hostility to him. G.P.V.Akrigg *The Letters of James VI and I* (London, 1984) p.336 (early 1615).

persuade the king to alter the department's membership in his favour, by both allowing him to admit his relatives and dependants, and to suspend and dismiss those who gave him trouble. To others the Bedchamber was a closed élite. The duke of Newcastle, decades later, recalled that 'William Earle off Pembroke[,] thatt most Exselente Person [did] labor as for his life all the Rayne off Kinge James ... to bee off the Bedchamber & Coulde never obtayne Itt — as also Thomas the Greate Earle of Arundell did labor'. The failure of two of the most powerful of the English nobility was shared by the rest of the political establishment of James's southern kingdom, until the rise of Buckingham rewrote the rules.[101] In treating the Bedchamber as he did — as we have seen, as an exclusive and highly-favoured elite — James plainly had his purposes. These purposes, perhaps one of the least understood and most readily discounted aspects of the reign's politics, were to be pre-eminently expressed, as we shall see, through the instrument of the Bedchamber which we have been reconstructing.

[101]'The Duke of Newcastle on Government' in S.A.Strong (ed.) *A Catalogue of Letters ... at Welbeck* (London,1903) 213.

Chapter Three

Privy Purse, Sign Manual; Lord Treasurer and Secretary

The erosion of the Elizabethan bureaucratic monopoly

The accession to the English throne of a male in his majority, after over fifty years (1547- 1603) of rule by a minor and two women, entailed changes in the way government was conducted, and in the monarch's rôle in that process. The intention of this chapter is to make clear the early manifestations of those changes, during the transitional period between 1603 and 1612, when Elizabethans (from 1608-12 one man, Robert Cecil earl of Salisbury) held what under Elizabeth had been the key official places of Principal Secretary of State and Lord Treasurer. In general, the change entailed an increase in the personal freedom of action of the monarch as against the "bureaucratic" agencies of the first minister, the Council and (in financial matters) the Exchequer : more specifically, this chapter examines two particular manifestations of the king's freedom of action, the "private" government machine composed of the Privy Purse and Sign Manual, as their relationship to their "bureaucratic" counterparts (Lord Treasurer and Secretary) changed from the Elizabethan to the more characteristically Jacobean pattern.

First, some well-known historical landmarks must perhaps be shifted around. The controversy in the mid-1960's over 'The Tudor Revolution in Government' has recently been re-opened in 'the belief that ...the *Past and Present* debate had been largely

an unproductive one', and revisions put forward to Elton's detailed conclusions on the mid-sixteenth century changes. The central contribution is Dr. Starkey's demonstration of the importance of the Sign Manual and Privy Purse as administered in the Privy Chamber under Henry VIII. With Elton's findings so conclusively adjusted for the mid-sixteenth century itself, by this and other recent research, the obvious next step is to question the longer-term assumptions behind Elton's theories, which have perhaps gained wider acceptance than his more specialised conclusions. The new challenge still leaves such points, once hotly disputed, now set as orthodoxies.[1] For the purposes of this chapter they must be disputed again.

Professor Elton summed up his final views on the long-term significance of his and Thomas Cromwell's work when the immediate controversy came to a halt in 1965; and since that view seems subsequently to have carried most weight, we need to examine it quite closely here. Briefly it held that English administration finally became fixed and bureaucratic, severely limiting the king's freedom of action, after the mid-sixteenth century. Elton conclusively divided English administrative history into three periods : that between William I and Thomas Cromwell, where 'government' was 'by the king'; second, that between Cromwell and William Pitt, where 'government' was 'under the king'; third, that between Pitt and the present, where 'government' was held to be 'without the king'. Further, during the first period, the king personally, with his household, provided the mainspring or initiative in the conduct of affairs, at intervals producing 'national' machinery which remained within the household, and/or moved out of court; but, Elton stated, during the second period, the *potential* for the household and the king himself to act in this way vanished, due to governmental reforms which he termed a 'revolution'. Elton

[1]C.Coleman and D.Starkey (eds.) *Revolution Reassessed : Revisions in the History of Tudor Government and Administration* (Oxford, 1986), esp. p. 6, and Ch. 2.

> saw necessary meaning in the fact that till about 1530-32 the King's government remained capable of employing household agencies even to the extent of nearly reducing the highly developed institutions of government to insignificance, and that thereafter it ceased to have this capacity. [2]

Elton's protagonists in this controversy disgreed forcefully with the substance of his analysis, and later revision has destroyed or radically adjusted much of it. But leaving aside such important details, for Elton, as he had put it earlier in the debate, 'the real question, surely, [was] whether its ["household government's"] potential survived.' Elton's answer then was of course negative; 'neither Elizabeth in 1558 nor Charles I after Buckingham's death showed the slightest sign of going back to the chamber or other private means of administration.'[3]

If this potential for a return to 'household' government were indeed the "real question", then all three of the main controversialists had been in agreement all along. From the first, Penry Williams had been sure that 'by the end of the [sixteenth] century, both the administration and its tasks had outgrown the possibility of... a household revival'; that 'the bureaucratic structure and the problems facing it were too complex for any return to household government [:] national government had come to stay'.[4] Harriss later admitted that he 'would agree that by the later sixteenth century the conditions which had made a revival of household government feasible were passing,' due to 'the escape from further civil wars and the long periods of stable bureaucracy'.[5] If the three disagreed

---

[2] G.R.Elton, "A Revolution in Tudor History", *Past and Present* 32, (1965),p. 106.

[3] G.R.Elton, "The Tudor Revolution : A Reply" *Past and Present* 29 (1964) p. 47. The apparent conduct by Charles I of such an experiment deep into the seventeenth century went unremarked on by Elton's opponents. Cf. Elton in *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (Cambridge, 1953), p.286.

[4] P.Williams, "The Tudor State" *Past & Present* 25 (1963) pp 52, 55-6.

[5] G.L.Harriss, "A Revolution in Tudor History?" *Past and Present* 31 (1965) p. 92.

over the reasons for and timing of the change, then, all were at least agreed that it had occurred by the end of the sixteenth century.[6]

The general picture resulting from this was reflected in G.E.Aylmer's survey of Charles I's seventeenth-century "Civil Service", which outlined a monarchy severely limited by bureaucracy — close to Elton's "government under the king". Thus, 'great as was his power, the King's personal freedom of action was very circumscribed'; and although 'as long as the king ruled the country, his household was bound to be of some importance in its government...', 'the nature and extent of this importance were changing. In the early seventeenth century the household played a lesser part in politics and administration than it had done before the mid-sixteenth century'. More precisely, 'by the 1620's eighty or ninety years had passed since the Chamber had last rivalled the Exchequer as a national treasury. And the administrative importance of the household no longer extended to other branches of the central government, more and more of which had at various dates from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries in Tout's famous phrase 'gone out of court' and become quite separate from it.' [7] By implication, for Aylmer, the "potential" for the king to use his 'household' in order to sidestep this bureaucratic rigour was by this point in time negligible. At that point the controversy has rested, with something like an orthodoxy established.[8]

The argument of this, and of a later chapter dealing with the period after 1611, will be that this potential for kings to use their households to by-pass the bureaucracy, far from forever disappearing in the mid-sixteenth century, was once more re-asserted when a

---

[6] For the influence of this consensus, see the widely-used text-book (especially influential in schools) by C.S.L.Davies, *Peace, Print, and Protestantism* (London, 1976) pp. 227-8. C.Coleman finds general 'reluctance' to endorse Elton's views on the 1530's and later, but does not deal with the longer term view examined here : Coleman and Starkey (eds.) *Revolution Reassessed*, p.5.

[7] G.E.Aylmer *The King's Servants : The Civil Service of Charles I 1625-42* (London, 2nd ed., 1974) pp.15, 26, 27, and Ch.7, section 1.

[8] L.L.Peck, in *Northampton : Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I* (London, 1982)p. 215, took issue with Elton without seriously questioning the main point regarding the monarch's freedom of action and the potential for a household revival.

king with energy and an active male entourage again came to the throne; that any disappearance of such potential had been more apparent than real, and stemmed wholly from the accident of the late Tudor succession of a minor and two women; and that it was the longevity and conservatism of Elizabeth which alone gave an air of bureaucratic fixity and permanence to what had been essentially *ad hoc* mid-Tudor governmental arrangements, thrown up by the lack of an adult male succession.[9] As we shall see, James's accession came as a shock to this system.

A generation before Professor Elton's "Tudor Revolution in Government" was formulated, a pioneering book about the Principal Secretary of State appeared. Far from seeing matters as settled by this time, it termed a large portion of the seventeenth century (the years from 1612 to 1642), insofar as the secretariat was concerned, as "The Age of Experiment"; and perceived during that period 'the insidious beginnings of Bedchamber government'.[10] It now appears that this pioneer had a surer sense of the terrain than the later settlers. As we shall see, the apparatus of the "Tudor revolution" was clearly being dismantled by the first of the Stuarts, in fact well before 1612, as developments which had been the result of the accidents of succession were now reversed simply by one more such contingency.

---

[9] Cf. the views of Dr. Starkey in G.R.Elton *Reform and Reformation* (London, 1977) p.220, n19.

[10] F.M.G.Evans *The Principal Secretary of State* (Manchester, 1923) Ch IV, pp 64, 69. Elton's account of the Secretary and the Seals in *The Tudor Constitution* (London, 2nd ed. 1982), pp.118-20, still cites Evans extensively.

i) The End of the Elizabethan régime

Elizabethan government had been unitary. Of the twin power centres of Henrician politics, one — the Privy Chamber — had gone into eclipse.[11] The result had been that 'under Elizabeth ministers had no need to place their creatures in the Royal Bedchamber... , Household officers had no special advantages of contact with the Queen, and... Council, Household and Monarch revolved within the same orbit'. In this universe the dominant body was the Council, whose powers towards the end were largely concentrated in the person of Robert Cecil, Secretary of State. He controlled both the formal apparatus of state and the more personal machinery of the sign manual and the queen's coffers.[12] Essex's increasingly desperate manoeuvres only reinforced Cecil's monopoly; James's accession, however, undercut its very foundations. Within weeks Cecil was writing : 'I wish I waited now in [Elizabeth's] Presence Chamber, with ease at my board, and rest in my bed. I am pushed from the shore of comfort, and know not where the winds and the waves of a court will bear me'. Five years later James himself pointed the contrast between the two styles of government when, temporarily absent from London, he mockingly wrote to Salisbury and the Council,

> Ye and your fellows there are so proud now, that you have got the guiding again of a feminine court in the old fashion [in fact Queen Anne's 'court' at Greenwich] that I know not how to deal with ye. [13]

---

[11] For a dual-centred sketch of Henrician politics see D.R.Starkey "From Feud to Faction", *History Today* p.32, November 1982; and *The Reign of Henry VIII : Personalities and Politics* (London, 1985) : G.R.Elton *Reform and Reformation* (London, 1977) incorporates this approach at many points.

[12] P.Williams "Court and Polity under Elizabeth I" *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 65 (1983), p.264 : W.T.MacCaffrey *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy* (Princeton, 1981)pp. 432, 437-8. Pamela Wright "1558-1603. A Change in Direction : the ramifications of a female household", unpublished paper, 1983, pp. 4, 5. Cf. Ch.1, sectn. i) above, pp.7-10.

[13] H.Harington (ed.) *Nugae Antiquae* (2 vols, London, 1804) I, 345; J.O.Halliwell (ed.)*Letters of the Kings of England* (2 vols, London, 1848) II, 113 (5 August 1608) — the Council often met at Anne's palace of Greenwich when the king was absent hunting.

It is important to be clear about the reasons for the change. The near-doubling in size of the Privy Council at the accession, from 14 to 26, presented in itself no threat to the late Elizabethan regime. The most significant additions, Henry and Thomas Howard (later earls of Northampton and Suffolk respectively), had already worked closely with Cecil in arranging James's accession; once on the Council, they simply became members of the existing 'inner ring'. The result was business as before. 'My lord', wrote Sir George Home to Cecil in 1604, 'since you are come to a good point with his Majesty, let a secret course be kept with him in his weightiest affairs by you four [i.e., Cecil, Suffolk, Northampton, Worcester] and let his general errands be done by his whole Council'. Salisbury took the same high Elizabethan line in his account of 'the State of a Secretary's place and the Peril'; as did Bishop Goodman in his later account of the regime of 1603-10 : Salisbury and Northampton, abetted by Suffolk, were in control, while the other main councillors 'did only manage their great offices and looked no further'. And Salisbury's correspondence bears out this verdict.[14]

What changed, then, was not how the Council was run, but how the chief Minister and Council related to the monarch. With the institution of the Bedchamber, even the inner Councillors no longer had an automatic claim to the nearest access to the monarch; and even if the entrée were granted, it was enjoyed in much greater measure by the Bedchamber's staff. And they — all practised operators in Scots politics and some James's companions since childhood — were well able to take advantage of the fact. Now, to paraphrase Dr. Williams, the Bedchamber did possess special advantages of contact with the king; Bedchamber and Council were now separate entities with, for the

---

[14] D.H.Willson *James VI and I* (London,1956) pp.175-6; J.R.Tanner *Constitutional Documents of the Reign of James I* (Cambridge, 1930) pp.124-6 : Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 51. Dorset worked through Cecil to the king — H.M.C.*Salisbury* XV (1603) p. 51 (April 1603). W.J.Jones "Ellesmere and Politics, 1603-17" in H.S.Reinmuth (ed.), *Early Stuart Studies : Essays in Honor of David Harris Willson* (Minneapolis, 1970)pp. 16-19, 60.

most part, separate membership; Council and minister now revolved in a different orbit from the king and Bedchamber.

Such a powerful and independent entity presented an unavoidable challenge to a would-be chief Councillor like Cecil. In order to maintain his authority he had either to control the Bedchamber; to place his own agents there; or at least to come to terms with it. James's attitude to his entourage ruled out the first approach, but in the second Cecil was to begin with remarkably successful. His greatest coup came in June 1603 when, exploiting his prestige as a successful stage-manager of the accession, he was able to get two of his men appointed Gentlemen of the Bedchamber. One, Sir James Hay, was a Scot. Formally he was recommended by the French ambassador, but was regarded by Cecil as 'an excellent good instrument to conserve his Majesty's good opinions'. The other was an Englishman, Sir Philip Herbert, soon made earl of Mongomery. He was Cecil's nephew; while his expertise with dogs and horses won him the king's particular esteem, and gave him the reputation of being the king's 'favourite'. If he made little personal or political capital from his position, he at least represented an asset to Cecil in keeping the king diverted.[15] Cecil's most active correspondent in the Bedchamber, however, was Sir Roger Aston : the two had been in contact before James's accession, while Cecil may have helped smooth Aston's successful transfer from the king's Scottish Chamber to his permanent Bedchamber establishment in England. At all events, Cecil's brother Burghley referred to him as 'an honest man to our house and worthy to be made of. He is not like some of our old mistresses' servants about her, that would say much and do little.'[16]

But that was all. In the long term James would no more tolerate the packing of his Bedchamber than he would have stood for a Cecilian purge. The rest of the

---

[15] Mares (ed.) *Memoirs of Carey* p.66; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 52 (8 February 1617, French ambassador's role); SP14/13/88 (?April 1605). Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* , ed. W.D.Macray (6 vols, Oxford 1888) I, 74 : Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 40.

[16] *Calendar of Scottish Papers* XII, XIII (1595-97, 1597-1603) *passim* (index *sub* Aston). H.M.C.*Salisbury* XV (1603), p.31 (4 April 1603).

Bedchamber depended on the king alone. Here Cecil could not command; but he could offer inducements, and this he did freely. Lennox, Fenton, Haddington, Aubigny and Dunbar gained massively by direct patronage from the crown's English income and land during Cecil's regime — both before 1606 - 07, the 'first three years that were as Christmas' — and after, under Salisbury as Lord Treasurer. Cecil also cultivated the Grooms of the Bedchamber : John Murray for one 'always held very great correspondency with the Secretary, and... got many a £1000 by his assignment.' Goodman justified Cecil's behaviour against Weldon's rabidly xenophobic denunciation in practical terms : 'men are to associate themselves with whom they have the greatest cause to converse, and of whom they have the greatest use'.[17]

It is clear that Cecil could not aspire to take the same high line with the royal entourage as an earlier generation of ministers like Wolsey and Cromwell. His ground was further weakened by administrative developments, as the revived Bedchamber trespassed on the Secretary's Elizabethan monopoly of the 'private' governmental machine of the royal coffers and the sign manual.

ii) The Privy Purse under Dunbar, 1603 - 1611

Control of the king's coffers and the Privy Purse slipped soon after the accession from the once firm grasp of the Secretary and the Lord Treasurer. Although the Jacobean Ordinances probably still regarded the Groom of the Stool/First Gentleman of the Bedchamber as *ex officio* Keeper of the Privy Purse when no specific Keeper was appointed, in fact such Keepers were appointed throughout James's reign.[18] Between 1603 and his death on 30 January 1611 the Keeper was Sir George Home, soon made earl of Dunbar, who was also Chancellor of the Exchequer until his resignation in 1606.

---

[17] See above pp. 71-2. Goodman *Court of James I* I, 31, 38, 52.
[18] 1661 Ordinances (Nottingham U.L., Portland MS PwV 92) §14.

Although his duties in Scotland and on the borders meant that he had eventually to appoint deputies in both these offices, his Keepership seems to have been an active one, and his deputy in that place a personal appointment — in fact the deputy Keeper Robert Jossie, Groom of the Robes and later Groom of the Bedchamber, was Dunbar's personal servant.[19]

Although formally there was some continuity between the Elizabethan and Jacobean Keeperships — the remaining funds of Elizabeth's Keeper were transferred into Home's hands[20] — the scale of the Privy Purse changed immediately at the accession, from a turnover of £2,500 a year under Elizabeth to one totalling nearly £23,000 over the first two years of James. Subordination to the Exchequer remained for the time being, however. The Keeper declared his account in the Exchequer; and the Exchequer also supplied most of his income by regular warrants. Probably the fact that the Keeper, Dunbar, was also Chancellor of the Exchequer had something to do with this; certainly his resignation from the Exchequer in 1606 coincided with a major change. In 1605 the Privy Purse ceased abruptly to render accounts in the Exchequer, and Exchequer funding also began to tail off : only £11,600 was paid between 1605 and 1611 and scarcely anything thereafter.[21] In the absence of accounts it is impossible to be sure of what revenue sources were used instead, but everything points to casual windfalls, like the

---

[19] *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 9, 17 May 1603, made Keeper in the week after James settled his Bedchamber at the Tower (above pp.19-20). Sir John Croke was 'appointed by Sir George Home' as Deputy Chancellor of the Exchequer, February 1604 (*CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 79). Jossie : *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 626, July 1610 first reference as deputy; *ibid* IX (1611-18) 157, Groom of the Bedchamber; SP14/57/83, 'servant to the... earl of Dunbar'.

[20] *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 64, 4 January 1604.

[21] G.E.Aylmer "Studies in the Institutions and Personnel of English Central Administration 1625 - 1642" (Oxford University D.Phil, 1954) p. 162 : E351/2792 (Privy Purse account, 1 May 1603 - 30 April 1605). Exchequer warrants to the Privy Purse in *CSPDomestic* broadly correspond to those detailed on the account : after 1605 see *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 356, 386, 399, 559, 580, 604, 626, 628, 652; IX (1611-18) 3, 12. After 1611, below pp.203-4.

£1,200 from the sale of an export licence noted in the 1603-5 account.[22] Partly this was a matter of mere necessity, since an increasingly bankrupt Exchequer was unable to supply even the king's own wants. But it may also point to the development of a two-tier 'system' of finance, as an Exchequer in chronic deficit was left to fend off the king's creditors as best it might; while many windfall revenues, from projects, sales of office and titles and the like, which became increasingly important after 1610, were fed directly into the king's coffers.[23] Certainly the expenditure side of the Privy Purse suggests some such change. Under Elizabeth it had been dominated by the queen's modest personal expenses on the one hand, and on the other by small fixed charges for such items as lute-strings and the seasonal decoration of the Privy Lodgings. In 1608 over £1,000 of such recurrent charges were hived off to the Treasurer of the Chamber — the usual paymaster of the Household-above-stairs.[24] Instead the account was dominated by new categories, like gifts and rewards to 'persons as well English and Scots as strangers', which had already totalled £18,000 in 1603-5.[25] James' Privy Purse, in short, was as new as the Bedchamber that administered it : from its Elizabethan position as a small, domestic spending department entirely subordinate to the Exchequer, the Privy Purse had become by 1610 a largely independent king's treasury, possibly with a significant role as revenue department,

---

[22] E351/2792; £1,200 from 'Mr. Ferne, Merchant of London' for a 'lycence... for transportac[i]on of yron ordennaunce'. £17,900 came from the Exchequer during the account period, thus : Easter 1603 £2,000; Michaelmas 1603-04 £2,800; Easter 1604 £3,400; Michaelmas 1604-05 £9,200; Easter 1605 £500. This sudden tailing-off at the end may be significant, since this is the only example of such an account to the Exchequer. £2,3[76 6s 0d] came from the Jewel House, cash New Year's gifts. The total was thus £21,476 6s (the account has £21,466 6s).

[23] D.Thomas, "Financial and Administrative Developments" in H.Tomlinson (ed.) *Before the English Civil War* (London,1983) p.105; on the Exchequer's plight in practice, E.Lodge *Life of Sir Julius Caesar* (1827)pp. 25-30.

[24] E351/543, mem 198r, v, Treasurer of the Chamber's account 1607-8, for transferred charges by Privy Seals dated 27 January and 22 July 1608; cf. Chambers *Elizabethan Stage* I,67-8. LC 5/115/18 for confirmation in 1614.

[25] E351/2792, £18,000 'disbursed and payde by commandem[en]t of the Kinges Ma[jes]tie to diverse & sondrie persons aswell Englishe and Scottes as Straungers,... as of his highness rewarde'. The total of £68,000 for *all* gifts in ready money, 1603-07 (F.Dietz *English Public Finance, 1558-1641* (London, 1964) p.105 n., apparently not including this £18,000) puts the Privy Purse's gifts, 1603-05, into perspective.

certainly disposing of large sums, not for lute strings, but for the king's 'important services and urgent affairs'.[26]

If such a 'system' was indeed in place by 1610, it had evolved largely to meet the specific circumstances of the Exchequer deficit and debt. The apparent transfer, in early 1611, of the revenues of the Court of Wards from the Exchequer direct to 'the king's hands', if broadly related to this question, probably depended more on political factors — the king's beliefs, the interplay of faction, the role of wardship in Salisbury's parliamentary failure over the Great Contract, and the fact that Salisbury himself was Master of the Wards. In April, the Venetian ambassador retrospectively reported that

> the Earl of Salisbury, ... , to meet the present difficulties, has resigned into the king's hands the wardship of minors, and to him, unless Lord Salisbury repents, will be paid all the revenues, which amount to a great sum. Lord Salisbury, however, retains the governorship....[27]

Such a step had been suggested in the Commons at the beginning of the fourth session in 1610, 'that the whole benefit might come to the king's purse, and not unto the committee's', and soon after Salisbury had generously offered compliance; but the putting into effect of that suggestion now was attributed by the ambassador to 'the instigation of the Earl of Northampton'.[28] In the event, new "Instructions given by his Majesty under the Great Seal to the Master and Counsell of the Court of Wards and Liveries" were issued on 9 January 1611; the earl of Pembroke saw them as 'a new printed book...of orders to the court of wards, which turns the whole commodity to the King, so grateful a sacrifice has the Lord Treasurer made of his own private'.[29]

---

[26] *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10), 628.

[27] *CSPVenetian* XII (1610-13) 135, 21 April 1611.

[28] S.R.Gardiner (ed.) *Parliamentary Debates in 1610* (Camden, 1st Ser. 81, 1861) p.11, 19 February 1610; *CSPVenetian* XI (1607-10), 447, 18 March 1610; *ibid* XII (1610-13) 135, 21 April 1611. Peck *Northampton* pp.198-205 clears Northampton of any move against Salisbury in 1610, but does not consider this.

[29] F.C.Dietz *English Public Finance, 1558-1641* (London 1964) pp. 142-3. T.Birch *The Court and Times of James I,* ed. R.F.Williams (2 vols., London, 1848) I, 132, 17 January 1611.

This must be seen as a decisive personal reverse for Salisbury; after long dispute in Parliament about who — king or Commons — should indemnify the officers should the Contract succeed and the Wards be abolished, he had effectively now given up the Mastership without any compensation at all.[30] This fact has been missed by generations of later historians.[31] Soon after his death his closest apologist, however, was fully aware of what Salisbury had been forced to relinquish. Sir Walter Cope helpfully reminded James that Salisbury, as Master of the Wards, seeing the financial straits of the crown and

> supposing this bounty at this more properly to appertain unto your Majesty than any others; hath in all humility and duty, laid down his patents at your Majesty's feet, and hath endeavoured to advance the whole benefit thereof unto your Majesty's best profit.

And later in his *Apology*, vindicating his patron from the charge of engrossing crown offices, Cope hinted that 'as [Salisbury] had lately passed away the Wards, and left himself only the Mastership in name; so meant he, with your Majesty's favour, to have freed himself also of the Secretaryship of state, if he had lived but three months longer'.[32]

1611 was an axial year for the Court of Wards. The net income of the court on the declared account, after a period of stagnation under Elizabeth and early James, exhibited 'massive growth' between 1611 and 1630.[33] The largest part of this revenue was composed of the sale of wardships and marriages : between 1603 and 1610 these were at their early Elizabethan level of about £5,000 p.a.; after 1610 the accounts show a striking rise, to about £14,000 in 1615.[34] One suggested cause of the increased revenue

---

[30] On 7 November he re-affirmed his undertaking of March, a last-ditch gesture to try to save the Contract; Foster *Proceedings* II, 317. L.Stone *Family and Fortune* (Oxford, 1973), p. 22, for Salisbury's likely real losses from what happened in 1611.

[31] Neither H.E.Bell *An Introduction to the History and Records of the Court of Wards & Liveries* (Cambridge, 1953), Joel Hurstfield *The Queen's Wards* (London, 1958) nor E.N.Lindquist "The Last Years of the First earl of Salisbury, 1610-1612" *Albion* 18 (1986) notice the change. S.R.Gardiner — of course — did, though in passing; *History of England...1603-42* (10 vols, London, 1883-4) II, 113.

[32] J.Gutch, ed., *Collectanea Curiosa* (2 vols, Oxford, 1781) I, 127-8. Cf. Lindquist and the Interregnum "secret historian" William Sanderson, both much more optimistic about Salisbury's last years; *Albion* 18 (1986), 35, n64.

[33] Bell *Court of Wards* 48.

[34] *Ibid.* p. 57.

was greater formality in the conduct of sales of wards, in particular in arriving at the bargain; while another was a growth in sales (at higher, more realistic prices) to wards' relatives, (who had been given a right to one month's pre-emption by the 1611 orders), rather than (as before) granting wardships at low cost to crown servants as patronage 'in kind'.[35] Both in turn apparently involved the Mastership becoming more directly ministerial a position; and so the status of its holders declined from the eminences of Burghley and Salisbury to the ranks of Carew, Cope, Knollys, Cranfield and Naunton.[36] And that change — widely remarked both by contemporaries and historians — may also in turn reflect the resumption of wardship revenues into the king's own hands from 1611 onwards. After Salisbury's death, Bacon, the official spokesman, used the new Master Carew's inaugural speech to make the message quite plain; 'now,' Carew was to affirm, '...his Ma[jes]ty meaneth to be as it were M[aste]r of the Wards himself, and those whom he useth to be but his substitutes, and moove wholy by his impulsion, and w[i]thin the circle of his owne motion'.[37]

Though the broad fact of this change is clear, what it actually meant in practice is less obvious. Bacon's "Directions for the Master of the Wards to observe for His Majesty's better Service", also apparently composed for Carew's inauguration in June 1612, provide some hints. As suggested above, the Master's presence at the beating of the bargain is now expected, he being 'a meaner person', so 'that he take not the business by report'. More interesting for our purposes is Bacon's advice about rendering accounts to that 'master of the wards himself', the king. Though formally required only annually, Bacon recommends an account to the king himself every six months : 'and when he [the

---

[35]*Ibid.* pp.58 - 65, 116; sales to wards' kin grew from a proportion to the total of 1 in 4 (1587-90) to one of nearly 1 in 2 (1611-14). For the convincing suggestion that this new practice formed the basis of the Court's greatly increased revenues from 1611 onwards, see E. Lindquist "The Failure of the Great Contract" *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985) p.629 (n 36).

[36]Bell, *Court of Wards* , p.20.

[37]SP 14/69/69; cf. J.Spedding ed., *The Letters and Life of Sir Francis Bacon* (7 vols, London, 1861-74) IV, 285.

Master] bringeth the bill of grants of [marriages of] the body for his Majesty's signature, he bring a schedule of the truth of the state of every one of them ... and acquaint his Majesty both with the rates and states'.[38]

So far as the court's administration was concerned, therefore, fairly frequent personal contact between the ministerial and the real Master was evidently envisaged. But on the financial side, the picture remains unclear. If the Master was to account twice a year direct to the king, the standard work on the court and its records deals only with the formal annual account of the Receiver General to the master, without mentioning the destination of any surplus, or how it was accounted for.[39] The initial reports of change in 1611 strongly imply that any surplus was paid directly to the king's hands : but only a set of accounts for the Privy Purse would enable us to say finally that the surplus Wards revenues were indeed paid directly into the king's coffers after the changes reported in January 1611. Unfortunately, no such accounts exist : but the fact that the Mastership of the Court never regained its lost Cecilian status between 1612 and 1625 perhaps points to the likelihood that those reported changes did initially take effect and were in fact permanent under James, despite their lack of formal reflection in the Exchequer declared accounts. The fact that on Cranfield's deprivation as Master in May 1624, the court's seal was immediately transferred to John Murray, then Keeper of the Privy Purse, may be an indication of the Wards' relationship to the king[40]; but overall the nature of the evidence precludes full certainty here.

---

[38]Spedding ed., *Life and Letters of Bacon* IV, 288.

[39] Bell *Court of Wards* App. II, pp. 190-2.

[40] SP14/165/10, Rudyerd to Conway, 21 May 1624, Rudyerd attempting to obtain the seal as provisional keeper; Cranfield had given it to his ally Annandale.

iii) The Sign Manual under Robert Cecil as Secretary 1603 - 1612

The bureaucratic technicalities evolved under Elizabeth, governing the place of the Sign Manual in the grants mechanism, continued in force under James. Continuity of personnel — Cecil as Secretary, Lake and other Elizabethans as Signet Clerks — helped ensure this.[41] This made it difficult for the Bedchamber to procure the royal signature directly, especially at first — it was to become easier as time went by. Instead, for now, they appropriated the deputy Cecil had appointed.

This deputy was eventually established to be Sir Thomas Lake, a clerk of the signet to whom James had taken a liking — even though, like the other formal officers, he had inherited him from Elizabeth. Early in the reign a strict rota was apparently being observed among the Signet Clerks , as the letter of the Elizabethan regulations prescribed; at first there was some uncertainty about which of the Clerks would predominate; but by about 1605 Lake was established as the king's preferred agent in these matters, especially whenever James moved off to Royston with his intimate hunting parties.[42] Lake never achieved full rights of Bedchamber access, but dispatched business in frequent, semi-formal audiences, especially on such trips.[43] Nevertheless, he could exhibit a sort of fellow-worker camaraderie with the Bedchamber proper, however exalted their rank. He

---

[41] G.R.Elton *The Tudor Constitution* (2nd ed., London, 1982) pp.118-20; "Tudor Government : The Points of Contact. III The Court" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th Series, 26 (1976), pp.216-7; Conyers Read *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth* (3 vols., Oxford, 1925) I, Appendix pp 423-43, esp. 437-8, Beale's practical guide to the Secretaryship; he envisaged only the Secretary and Masters of Requests procuring the sign manual. Below n51 for Jacobean recognition of these formal limitations.

[42] Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 175 - 76. Thomas Frankland *The Annals of King James and King Charles the First* (London, 1681),p. 26 says Cecil tried to preserve the rota when it was first overridden, but that James stuck to his guns. SO 3/4, SO 3/5 (Registers of King's Bills, 1608-14) show Lake procuring the bulk of warrants; earlier, SP 38/7 (Docquet Book, 1603-04) shows alternation between the signet clerks.

[43] *E.g.*, H.M.C.*Salisbury* XXI (1609-12) p. 216, 30 April 1610.

was referring to 'my brother of Dunbar' by 1607.[44] In 1609 Salisbury attempted to dilute his sole status as Bedchamber go-between by making Edmondes deputy for foreign affairs alongside Lake (who would continue with his domestic rôle); but Lake objected so strongly that the idea had to be dropped. By 1610 Salisbury would have liked very much to have got rid of him, but he was immoveable, 'being now in possession by the Scotsmen's intercession.'[45]

But if the Bedchamber was obliged to act at one remove over signing, in the serious business of patronage broking that preceded the issue of a formal sign manual warrant, they were from the first very active, both for themselves and others. 'Such as were beggars were left to the ordinary Masters of Requests', ruefully reflected Sir Roger Wilbraham, one of the latter; while 'suits of bounty or grace were preferred by most of his Chamber.'[46]

This sort of initiative in patronage went far beyond anything practised by the Elizabethan Privy Chamber, and was unwelcome to Cecil both politically and, more and more, financially. But a look back to Scotland — and in England to the reign of Henry VIII — would have told him what to expect from an active male entourage even before James arrived.[47] Soon after his arrival, measures were taken; from May 1603 a committee of six of the Privy Council was to meet weekly to examine all bills, petitions and suits (particularly those involving land and reversion to office), and only those they counter-signed were to be submitted to the king for his signature. Cecil could of course have stopped grants through his control of the Signet (and the Privy Seal before 1608). But he was too practised a politician to attempt to shut the stable door after each individual horse

---

[44] H.M.C.*Salisbury* XIX(1607) p.207, 5 August 1607.

[45] H.M.C. *Downshire* II, 184, 187, 190, 200; Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 176.

[46] *The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham, 1593-1616* ed.Scott (Camden, Miscellany X,1902) p. 57; the Masters were the formal route to the king, apart from the Secretary and Council (cf. Aylmer, *King's Servants* pp.13-14, 47).

[47] *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* VI (1599-1604) 317; J.Wormald "James VI and I — Two Kings or One?" *History* 68 (1983) p. 193. D.Starkey "Court and Government" in Coleman and Starkey (eds.) *Revolution Reassessed* pp.46-54.

had bolted, and instead looked to a bureaucratic solution.[48] In mid-1604 internal guidelines were drawn up, probably by one of the Masters of Requests, dividing suits into several caregories and specifying to which bodies or committees and subcommittees of the council they should be referred.[49] Further steps came with the financial gloom already starting to thicken in mid-1605, when the Privy Council's Expenditure committee wrote to the king that they were 'well content to be humble suitors...(althogh it be but a sowre office) to become the general disswaders of o[u]r Soveraignes bountie'; henceforth they wished to limit their hearings either to suitors for justice or redress in the courts, or to those offering projects of potential profit to the crown as well as themselves.[50] The machinery was further tightened up when, after becoming Lord Treasurer in 1608, Salisbury issued the 'Book of Bounty'.

The 'Book' laid down strict ground rules for grants, and once again was particularly stringent about alienations of crown land. The king (surprisingly, perhaps) was to decide which suits to refer to the committee; but the drafter prudently gave the Privy Coucil a share in this too. The actual referring was done 'by those ordinary ministers that attend o[u]r person abroad...the Masters of Requests and the Substitutes under o[u]r principall Secretary from whose hands all Bills are presented for our Signature'. The committee's conclusions were then sent to the Council or to those attending the king to

---

[48] H.M.C.*Salisbury* XV (1603)pp. 99-101 (22 May 1603); SP14/1/106 (May, 1603) fuller guidelines : six at least of the Council, including one of Egerton, Dorset, Nottingham, Cecil or Home, met weekly to 'examine all private sutes... whether they be reasonable or no'. That the Bedchamber handled suits was explicitly recognised; 'all such of o[u]r privie Councell, of o[u]r Chamber, Masters of Requests or any others, to whose hands any billes, writinges or peticons exhibited to us shall come...shall exhibit them to o[u]r Councell at the sayd dayes of sitting'.

[49] H.M.C. *Cowper* I, 47-50, 29 July 1604.

[50] B.L.Additional MS 11,402 fo 103, 16 July 1605; 'the proceedinges of private men do breed great distraction & scandall'; 'o[u]r sixe dayes labor serveth but to discharge a Suitors warrant...in a time when yo[u]r ma[jes]t[i]es iust creditors are put of[f] for want of treasure'.

procure his signature, to 'proceed or not on sight thereof'.[51] The necessity of adhering to these guidelines was emphasised to king, queen and prince — suitors were adept at playing them off against each other — and promises extracted.[52]

But while these new regulations may have made it generally more difficult for the courtier at large to acquire grants, apparently neither Salisbury nor the Council committee he created could risk consistently offending both the Bedchamber, so well placed to ask, and the king, in such cases even more than usually disposed to give. Thus in October 1608 James called on the Council to bear witness to his adherence to the 'Book of Bounty'; but one month later he granted a forfeiture on customs to Patrick Ramsay, brother of John, viscount Haddington, a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. The grant clearly fell within the restricted categories, yet Lake, when asked directly by James whether it were allowable, could only prevaricate. Haddington had told James that the grant had been cleared with Salisbury, and the minister seems to have capitulated. James apparently even emphasised to Haddington 'that he did him an extraordinary favour to pass it, [it] being of the things restrained.'[53] The 'Book' proclaimed that James would 'not suffer any... advantage to be taken by one man's nearness more than another'; cases like Haddington's, which could be multiplied, put such pieties into perspective; and we have already seen the Bedchamber's massive personal gains from crown patronage, much of it in these very years of attempted control.[54] It was not that the 'Book' was 'honoured only in the breach'; rather, by limiting patronage it heightened competition, and thereby put a yet higher premium on the Bedchamber's strategic position. This becomes clear if we examine what appear to be the records of the suits committee it set up; from these it is clear that its main business quickly

---

[51] SP14/37/72-76, drafts of the 1608 'Book of Bounty'; /72 is closest to the actual instrument. Note that the Elizabethan restrictions on who could procure the Sign Manual are formally recognized here.

[52] T.Birch *The Life of Henry Prince of Wales* (London, 1760) p. 134; SP14/13/16, 9 March 1605, Cranborne to Lake on problems with the queen's promises.

[53] SP14/37/23, Lake to Salisbury, 21 October 1608; SP14/37/91, Lake to Salisbury, 24 November 1608; SP 14/37/96, Lake to Salisbury, 27 November 1608.

[54] SP14/37/74, preamble to the 'Book'; above, pp.71-2.

became the evaluation of projects rather than the oversight of grants; to this extent the wishes of the 1605 expenditure commissioners seem to have been realised.[55]

After the failure of the 1604-10 parliament to put the new dynasty on a secure financial footing, Salisbury was forced to take an unprecedented step in January 1611 and have the 'Book of Bounty' printed and published. This step was seen by the French ambassador as an attack on the Bedchamber Scots (who in turn mounted a counter-attack, which possibly involved Salisbury's loss of the Wards, as suggested above) : while the Venetian ambassador saw it and other economy measures merely as a sop to re-assure those from whom a loan was about to be asked 'rather than to bring any real advantage to his majesty'.[56] In the end, Salisbury's attempts to control the entourage's initiative in patronage matters were neither successful, nor could they be indefinitely cloaked as simple good bureaucratic housekeeping; by 1610 these issues were making it difficult for Salisbury to conduct his formal offices with any assurance of support from the king and those around him, and as we shall see this was to have political consequences both wider, for the conduct of the crucial parliamentary sessions of these years, and narrower, for Salisbury's personal political survival.

Despite such changes in his standing, Cecil remained in effective control of the routine administration, in the general ordering of Privy Council business, and especially, through his position as Secretary, regarding foreign policy; control of the foreign dispatches was indeed the element of the Secretary's official power least trenched on by the Bedchamber while Salisbury lived; right up to his death, as Wilbraham remarked, he

---

[55] M.Prestwich *Cranfield : Politics and Profits under the Early Stuarts* (Oxford, 1966)pp. 32-33. B.L. Additional MS 10,038, fos. 4r - 5r, a 'Schedule of fit bounty' dated 24 September 1608 (fuller than SP14/37/74, or the book printed in 1611) : fos 13-22, examples of the committee's work in 1608-09 on projects, 105 in all (fos 19-22). The rest of the volume is largely composed of details of these schemes.

[56] The printed 'Book of Bounty' of early 1611 is summarised in W.Notestein, F.H.Relf and H.Simpson (eds.) *Commons Debates 1621* (7 vols, New Haven, 1935) VII 491 ff. PRO 31/3/41, Boderie's dispatch of 6 January 1611; *CSPVenetian* XII (1610-13) 122, 28 February/10 March 1611.

'solelie managed all foren affaires, especiallie Ireland.' Between 1603 and 1612, indeed, foreign affairs provoked little domestic tension. Peace with Spain, resolved in Council before the accession, was swiftly concluded after it, and Cecil thereafter steered England along a middle course of mediation between France and Spain. Day-to-day policy consisted of changes in emphasis in this centre position; and in effecting this, Cecil predominated until his death because, as the Spanish ambassador observed 'this King makes his decisions with Salisbury only, without his council'. The Bedchamber seems to have had some, mainly negative effect on Cecil's conduct of foreign policy, but made little difference to the understanding, on this point at least, between king and minister.[57] As we shall shortly see, the contrast between this, and Salisbury's fortunes as a counsellor on domestic issues could not have been more pronounced.

[57] S.Adams, "Spain or the Netherlands?" in Tomlinson *Before the English Civil War*, pp.93-5; A.J.Loomie, "Sir Robert Cecil and the Spanish Embassy", *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 42 (1969) pp.46, 53;*The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham, 1593-1616* ed.Scott (Camden, Miscellany X,1902) p.106. Below, p.136 on Carr's take-over of foreign business after Salisbury's death.

Chapter Four

The Practicalities of Opposition

Union and Finance, 1604 - 1610 : Salisbury destroyed, Parliament addled.

The years 1604-1610 were extraordinary ones in early modern domestic English politics. They were dominated by two great issues — the Union and finance — whose attempted settlement occasioned the constant presence, actual or potential, of a parliament unprecedented in length of sittings, overall duration and frequency of calling since that of 1529-36. If to contemporaries the 1604-10 Parliament was the original 'Long Parliament', it was so because of repeated attempts and repeated failures to settle the Stuart dynasty on these key issues : in 1604, stalemate on the Union, failed attempts to bargain away Wardship and Purveyance and a climb-down over asking for subsidies; in 1605-06 the enforced deferral of Union legislation and another failure to bargain Purveyance for supply (while with two subsidies agreed on, a third passed the house by only a single vote); in 1606-07 the complete collapse of Union legislation; in 1610, failure to secure supply by bargain or by more than one traditional subsidy, while even raising the issue of Union provoked 'interruption and whistling'.[1]

---

[1] J.E.Neale *The Elizabethan House of Commons* (1949) p. 368 ; E.R.Foster (ed.) *Proceedings in Parliament* I, xi ; C.Cross *The Puritan Earl : the life of Henry Hastings, Third Earl of Huntingdon* (London, 1966), 49; R.C.Munden "James I and 'the growth of mutual distrust' : King, Commons and Reform 1603-1604" in K.Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament* (Oxford, 1978) pp.69-70; W.Notestein *The House of Commons 1604-1610* (New Haven,1971), pp.180-1, 208, Ch. 3; Gardiner *History of England* II,82; Foster (ed.) *Proceedings in Parliament* II, 4-5; cf. *ibid.* II, 344, (Hoskins), and II, 402 (Lewkenor).

Central to the argument of this chapter is that, first, such repeated failure was caused by opposition in parliament. Not only was there a 'clear "government" line to oppose' : 'the ability to obstruct Conciliar legislation' was also especially significant in a period which saw the largest and most important official legislative intiative since the Reformation.[2] The opposition, moreover, was sustained and principled; it almost always commanded a majority in the Commons and latterly in the Lords as well; and it was focussed explicitly on *both* key issues of government policy : Union, which lay closest to the king's heart, and fiscal reform, which was his chief minister Salisbury's principal concern.[3] Second, the Bedchamber settlement played a crucial role in triggering and sustaining this opposition. The settlement itself, which consigned the Bedchamber wholly to the Scots, was James's initial riposte to the failure of the English political establishment to embrace Union wholeheartedly; and thereafter the king's exclusively Scottish entourage became a prime sticking-point in relations with Parliament, especially where supply was concerned.

The reputation of Henry Yelverton, MP for Northampton, in the first three sessions of parliament was that of a firebrand, a popular spokesman. In 1604 he opposed the change of name from England and Scotland to Britain; in 1605-06 he opposed the subsidy; in 1606-07 he opposed the Union. In late 1609, with a fourth session of Parliament clearly in the offing, Yelverton heard (according to his own account) 'by a general and constant report...that his Ma[jes]ty was much offended with me about my speeches and behaviour in parliament', and decided to make his peace in time for the coming session.

---

[2] Cf. Conrad Russell "Parliamentary History in Perspective, 1604-1629" *History* LXI (1976)pp. 1 - 27, esp. p.5.

[3] Russell, *art. cit.* p.5, and B.Galloway *The Union of England and Scotland 1603-1618* (Edinburgh, 1986) pp.23,167-9 minimise the significance of opposition to the Union, by regarding it as atypical and exceptional. The present chapter links opposition to Union with that to supply; cf. D.Hirst "The Place of Principle" *Past and Present* 92 (1981)pp. 86-7 on the Union's capacity to trigger opposition to other measures.

By his own account[4], at first Yelverton's approach was indirect : the Scottish Gentleman Usher of Lady Arbella's Chamber recommended an approach *via* Lady Arbella to Dunfermline, the Lord Chancellor of Scotland who was in London at the time. The latter took preliminary soundings, the result of which was favourable, and now Dunbar was to take control of the affair directly on his return from Scotland.[5] Yelverton henceforth dealt directly with Dunbar; and an audience, in his chamber at Whitehall, was quickly set up.

As Yelverton recounted it, Dunbar 'rising out of his chair met me in the midst of his chamber, in all low curtesy, and calling for a stool for me to sit by him at his table comanded all others forth'. Dunbar's view, it emerged, was that 'he that shall hate a whole Christian nation, as you are said to do the Scotch [and] that shall kick against all the just and wholesome actions of his Soveraigne... may not expect ...I [will] ever frame myself to befriend him'. Yelverton claimed that he had been misreported; that he 'never had purpose ...in the least thing to cross his Ma[jes]ty'; but that the king would wish that in Parliament 'we should all use liberty of speech', and that whatever had been spoken 'was only to discharge my conscience, not seeking by faction to win any'; in short he had been discharging the duties of his place as an M.P. Dunbar still thought it 'some frowardness in you, to beget you a name what power you had, to frustrate what his Majesty would have effected'; and that Yelverton 'need not take pride in it, though both on the borders, and in other nations, you be famous for spurning against his Majesty's desires, and cracking them in two.' [6]

But nevertheless Dunbar was now obviously prepared to be his patron; he recommended an interview with the king, promised now 'to further his proceedings what [he] may', and urged Yelverton to 'be no stranger with me, [and] I will command you shall have access at your own times'. Yelverton, in a follow-up letter, admitted to Dunbar

---

[4] J.Cumming (ed.), "Mr. Henry Yelverton... his Narrative of what passed on his being restored to the King's favour in 1609[-10]..." *Archaeologia* XV (1806) pp. 27-52.

[5] Dunfermline to Yelverton, 19 November 1609; *ibid* , p.32.

[6] Perhaps Yelverton was accurately reporting Dunbar's managerial flattery; he would have known well the gossip among Border society; *ibid,* p.37.

that 'I have learn'd much from you', and that now 'if any speech hath pass'd ... crossing ... his Ma[jes]ty's intention,...I will renounce it, and incline my strength to row in what vessel his Majesty shall assign me'.[7]

An interview with the king swiftly followed, on 6 January 1610. Dunbar 'about 5 o'clock in the afternoon...brought me into the king's presence, where his Ma[jes]ty sat alone in a chair in his Bedchamber'. Soon after Yelverton's entry 'there came in besides my Lord of Dunbar (who was there at first), my Lord Chamberlain, and my Lord of Worcester, and stood all behind me.' Kneeling, Yelverton beseeched the king's pardon; there followed a sequence of questions met by Yelverton's self-justifications.

James referred to the provocations to his honour of opposition in parliament to his Union scheme —

> proposing to myself many particulars wherein might have been seen my respect for the weale of both kingdomes, which I myself did excogitate, and my counsellors admit as wholesome; when I with them sought to have them ripened and admitted in parliament, then by your subtile carriage as *enemy to all my intentions*...were they without civility or reverence rejected.[8]

It was not that Yelverton was forbidden to dissent : 'it was [not] any cause of my mislike of you that you spake your conscience, and used that liberty of opposition I deny to none'[9] James still thought, however, that

> it had...been manners in you and others,... when the judgement and wisdom of your king was proposed in any bill nor ever to watch your time to give it a butcher's blow, but in a duty and respect to me either to have pray'd conference, or else not to have made your reasons so binding and conclusive as presently to shut up your speech as if the game were yours, with this "let us go to the question"[10].

James had four points to put to Yelverton. They centred on the key issues of Union and finance. First, Yelverton had regarded the fact that lord Kinloss was half English as being in his favour when his bill for naturalization came before the house in

---

[7] *Ibid*, p. 38; Yelverton's letter of 27 December 1609, pp 40-1.

[8] *Ibid*, pp 42-3 (my punctuation and italics).

[9] 'If a king should force to bind all to his opinion...it were the part of a fool or a tyrant' (*ibid* , p.43).

[10] *Ibid*, p 44; the last phrase must have reached James by report, and obviously still rankled with him over two years later.

1607. Second, he accused Yelverton in 1606 of having been 'my adversary in the subsidy'. Thirdly, 'in all propositions you were enemy to the union', specifically in having opposed legislation on naturalization, free trade and the repeal of hostile laws. Yelverton's role had been doubly undutiful; 'we may presume if you had not trailed backward, company enough had follow'd you that are thought so popular'; James earlier said Yelverton had 'eluded the rest of your house'. Fourthly, less importantly, Yelverton had backed Hare's comparison (in the 1605-06 session) of James's reign, as iron, with the times before, as golden.[11]

For all this, James 'never held up my finger against you...; only favour and love and preferment you could not expect at my hands.' But now he could only 'comend your disposition and desire, to be at league with your king'.[12] Yelverton's justifications apparently followed; his excuses were that he had been misreported, that he had been responding to the pressures of debate or of his constituents, and in the Hare case that he was only obeying orders — from the House itself. James, plainly as anxious as Dunbar to take Yelverton into his service, enquired no more closely about any of this. Dunbar asked James's permission on Yelverton's behalf to kiss hands; Yelverton did so; and henceforth he was working with the king, not against him.[13]

Yelverton ended his narrative with an interview with Lord Treasurer Salisbury some days later. It is an informative postscript. Salisbury, after all, was the man theoretically entrusted with preparations for the coming session of parliament. Perhaps it surprises us that he came last on the list of Yelverton's visits in securing his return to favour. It did not, however, evidently surprise Salisbury. In Yelverton's business, Salisbury modestly claimed only to have been 'a carefull adiuvant, and was sorry I could not be the efficient —

---

[11] *Ibid,* p. 44-6.

[12] *Ibid,* p. 46. James apparently took pains to emphasise to Yelverton 'that I have not enforc'd you to seek this submission'.

[13] *Ibid,* pp 47-49; 50.

> but it fareth not with me now as it did in the Queen's time, ...for then I could have done as great a matter as this without other help then myself. She heard but few, and of them I may say myself the chief; the king heareth many, yea, of all kinds. Now as in hearing too few, there may be a danger, so in hearing so many cannot but be confusion.

This was why James had heard so much against Yelverton — reports which Salisbury had supposedly rebutted so robustly that James remarked that 'Yelverton is your kinsman, and others that are averse to me depend upon you, and that I [Salisbury] might draw you [Yelverton] and them in if I list' — though now it was James and Dunbar themselves who were 'drawing them in'. Salisbury's excuse was the familiar attribution of independence to leaders in the commons — that Yelverton 'stands so even upon his own grounds,...as he is liker to draw me than I remove him'.[14] After reporting more such flattery along these lines, the account ends with Salisbury's blessing for Yelverton's coming to terms through the very Scots he had attacked in parliament. Salisbury indeed had given 'all the encouragement I could to my lord of Dunbar to bring you to his grace'; 'for as the Scotsmen layd heavy loads upon you, so I assure you, you could not by the English side have had such easy passage, if any passage at all'. Yelverton left this audience with a handshake and the Treasurer's (perhaps rather indefinite) promise 'to do you my best'.[15]

If Salisbury had come to such a pass by early 1610 — the eve of his most ambitious attempt to use parliament radically to reform the king's finances — by the end of that year's fresh round of parliamentary failures, his position was even weaker. What of Yelverton's reconciliation with the crown? Was it sincere? His conversion was both genuine and a total failure. Carleton reported the famous debate on impositions at the end of the fourth session in July 1610, where

---

[14] Cf. Conrad Russell "The Parliamentary Career of John Pym, 1621-29" in P.Clark, A.G.R.Smith, N.R.N.Tyacke (eds.), *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640 : Essays in Politics and Society presented to Joel Hurstfield* (Leicester, 1979)pp. 150-1.

[15] Cumming (ed.) *Archaeologia* XV, pp 50-2; the start of a long association for Yelverton with the Bedchamber Scots; below, pp.172, 183.

> this Henry the Hardy had the honour to do absolutely the worst, and for tyrannical positions that he was bold to bluster out, was so well canvassed by all that followed him, that he hath scarce shewed his head ever since.[16]

James had been wrong; when Yelverton turned about, he was no longer 'thought so popular'; on the contrary, his followers deserted *en masse*. His appointment in 1613 as Solicitor General was alleged to be for 'good service ...in the parlement, and for the disgrace he seemed to sustain thereby'.[17] The upshot was that James's views on Parliamentary management — after this direct experience of it with the aid of his trusted Dunbar, together with the accumulated failures of 1604-10 resulting from Salisbury's own attempts — became extremely jaundiced. As we shall see, this was already visible towards the end of the fifth session of parliament in 1610; it was also beginning to be reflected in the pronouncements of officers like Lord Chancellor Ellesmere and Sir Julius Caesar, perhaps following the royal cue.[18] And it was to have long-term effect on the royal view and the reflection of this among his advisers. Just before Parliament met in 1614, with rumours current of similar attempts to manage parliament by winning over erstwhile opponents (now termed "undertaking"), the earl of Northampton drew the obvious conclusion from the Yelverton experiment :

> it is strange to me, that men will so undertake to carry a parliament, before they shall knowe whoe shalbe elected into the house, or whether their propositions shall be acceptable unto them, yea or no. Though I confesse considering the factiousness of the tyme, *it maie be in their power to do hurt in speaking against the king, but not in their abilities to do good for the king;* by example of the king's Solicitor [Yelverton] in the last parliament [1604-10]. [19]

---

[16] Notestein *The House of Commons 1604-1610* (New Haven, 1971)p. 560, n4; cf. p.247 (supporting Sandys "perfect Union"); p. 267 (supporting Salisbury).

[17] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 479, 14 October 1613.

[18] SP14/58/32, Lake to Salisbury, 24 November 1610; W.J.Jones "Ellesmere and Politics, 1603-1617" in H.S.Reinmuth (ed.), *Early Stuart Studies : Essays in Honour of D.H.Willson* (Minneapolis, 1970) pp.32, 36-8; Foster *Proceedings in Parliament in 1610* I, 276-83; B.L.Additional MS 34,324 fo.61, Caesar's advice to James to dissolve parliament, 29 December 1610, already confident of what 'late experience hath taught us' — that nothing could come of continuing.

[19] B.L.Cotton MS Titus FIV fos 351-352v, (*c.* March 1614), quoted in D.H.Willson *The Privy Councillors in the House of Commons* (New York,1971)p. 33, n.17 (my italics).

In other words, there was more to the opposition than individuals and personalities : real principles and interests were at stake. The undertaking rumoured in 1614 was never taken up by the king; Northampton's advice more or less reflected the royal line. The experience of 1610 had been enough to convince James.

Yelverton's story shows the reality of opposition both to Union, and to requests for supply (and James's awareness of that reality); it shows Salisbury in disarray, even before the decisive failures of 1610; and it points clearly to the Bedchamber's central rôle in bringing both things about. We shall be able more precisely to gauge this rôle first by examining more fully the two issues themselves, and then by turning to Salisbury's effective eclipse over the Great Contract.

i) The obstruction of Union, 1604 - 1608

Parliamentary legislation was from the very first the keystone of James's plans for Union; but as an outsider, James's opportunities to advance the project were necessarily limited by the accession settlement of Bedchamber, Great Offices and Privy Council[20]; accordingly, in preparing to put the various parts of his Union scheme to parliament, James concentrated his efforts where he could exercise most personal influence. One example of such a sphere of control were the Borders, where James's personal authority in both countries gave him literally unique powers; they were to serve as a model in microcosm of Anglo-Scottish co-operation and its benefits.[21] The second such example was James's court, which was similarly used as a model to encourage the programme in parliament. If, despite James's wishes for equal partition, the major offices of state and

[20] Above, pp 3-5, 19-20; and cf. the following account with B.Galloway *The Union of England and Scotland 1603-1608* pp.17-18.

[21] S.J. and Susan J. Watts *From Border to Middle Shire : Northumberland 1586-1625* (Leicester, 1975) pp.133-4, 148-9, 151-2; B.Galloway *The Union of England and Scotland* pp.15-16, 84-6.

virtually the whole Privy Council were in English hands, James's Bedchamber was initially wholly Scottish. But James was intent on encouraging real Union, and the equal division of Privy Chamber and outer court between the two nations was a symbol of this. The re-admission of the Englishman Philip Herbert (later made earl of Montgomery) to the Bedchamber in June 1603 now began to redress the evidently deliberate imbalance there. His re-admission was accompanied by that of a Scot, Sir James Hay. James probably had an eye to the coming parliament with this symbolic even-handedness.[22] But this first appointment to the Bedchamber of an Englishman went unrepeated until April 1615. Given James's belief in equality of treatment for the two nations, this twelve years' exclusion of the English must be seen as deliberate policy on the king's part. From later events, it will be seen that the most likely explanation for it was that the first concession to the English failed in its desired effect; the problems began virtually from the moment James presented concrete plans for Union to his first English parliament.

In 1604, apart from a general expression of commitment to the idea of Union, all that was required was the change of name of the the two kingdoms to Britain, and the nomination of English commissioners who, it was planned, would put detailed proposals for legislation to the next session.[23] Yet these modest proposals met with no enthusiasm; the name change was rejected, and there was even foot-dragging on the nomination of Commissioners.

If the historian finds this difficult to explain, James found it quite incredible : the delays broke his patience, and he expressed his frustration with the 'few giddy heads' who had transported the Commons as a whole unnaturally to prefer division to union, war to peace and so on. The king had staked his all on the Union; now he protested to the Commons,

---

[22] Above, pp.67, 83; below p.137 for Northampton's view that Montgomery was in fact Welsh.

[23] B.Galloway *The Union of England and Scotland* p.20.

> I am not ashamed of my project[;] neither have I deferred it...out of a liking of the Judges reasons, or yours...I have remitted the name till after the thing be done, lest quirks in the law might take other hold than is meant [24]

— in other words, James saw stubborn and offensive opposition. Historians, while generally sympathising more fully with English prejudices, have in the main gone along with that verdict. Dr. Munden attributes opposition to the scheme to 'prejudice', 'fear, hatred, and a national pride that verged on racial intolerance.' 'Such objections, together [in 1604] with a natural, conservative attachment to the old name, provided the basis of a campaign that was altogether more emotional than rational'. Other historians, most notably Willson, have taken these prejudices as their bench-mark and so written off James's scheme as impossibly high-minded and impractical.[25]

These prejudices were real enough and no doubt widespread among the Commons, but they were backbench views which could only have formed the background to any practical political action. Leadership was required to reject the king's official proposals — but was the leadership in 1604 as spontaneous as James initially thought?

There are indications that faction was the key to this early opposition to Union. Dr Munden pointed out two pieces of isolated evidence; the Venetian ambassador thought that the Union was as opposed in the Lords as in the Commons, whereas 'though they [the Lords] do not openly display their sentiments they privately urge the Commons to stand firm, and furnish them with arguments'; while Sir John Holles complained that though both Houses' attitudes to the proposals had been the same, the Lords had voiced theirs 'like statesmen, more covertly', and that though the upshot had been the same for both Houses — adjournment to another session — 'they clad angel-like were received into

---

[24] W.Notestein *House of Commons 1604-1610* pp.79-85 (quotation from p. 85). *Commons Journals,* I, 193 for James's complaints being relayed by Aston and Lake, both M.P's.

[25] Munden, *art.cit.* pp.62-3; J.Wormald, "James VI and I — Two Kings or One?" *History* 68 (1983) pp. 206-7; D.H.Willson "King James I and Anglo-Scottish Unity" in W.A.Aiken and B.D.Henning (eds.), *Conflict in Stuart England : Essays in Honour of Wallace Notestein* (London, 1960).

Abraham's bosom while we fried in the furnace of the king's displeasure'.[26] These two isolated comments can in fact be tied more closely into the politics of the accession and the king's policy towards his Bedchamber.

Sir Edwin Sandys was the inspiration behind opposition to the Union in 1604. At the outset Sandys had recognised that even changing the name of England and Scotland to Britain was 'the weightiest possible cause', and that it was necessary to 'proceed with a leaden foot'. Throughout April 1604 he refuted the official line put forward by Bacon. The Commons were reluctant even to nominate English members of a Commission to prepare measures for the next session — Sandys distracted debate by calling for guarantees that only Englishmen would hold office under the English crown — while the change of name was deferred until those deliberations had been completed.[27]

Sandys's prominence in 1604 as the most forceful Commons spokesman in opposition to Union should give us pause for thought when we recall those allegations of factional conspiracy between Lords and Commons. A clue to the likely identity of Sandys's main collaborator in the Lords is simply his clear participation a little later in the reign in a by then well-established political double-act. The political collaboration of Sandys and the earl of Southampton was evident to all observers by 1614; but there are signs that Sandys, in forcefully opposing the Union in 1604 (and also in 1607, as we shall see) was also collaborating in the earlier part of the reign with Southampton, the man (twelve years his junior) he later claimed to have converted from youthful Catholicism.[28]

---

[26] Munden *art.cit.* p.71, citing *CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 151; H.M.C.*Portland* IX pp.11-13.

[27] See Notestein *House of Commons 1604-1610* pp.79-85, especially (on Sandys)pp. 79, 81, 82 — Commission legislation was first mooted in late April but only passed in early June — but cf. Galloway *Union* pp.20, 22; B.P.Levack "The Proposed Union of English and Scottish Law in the Seventeenth Century" *Juridical Review* (1975) p.100; Munden in Sharpe (ed.) *Faction and Parliament* pp.62-5.

[28] T.K.Rabb "Sir Edwin Sandys and the Parliament of 1604" *American Historical Review* 69 (1964) sheds no light. Notestein *The House of Commons 1604-1610* (New Haven, 1971) sees Sandys's power in the Commons as a mystery (p. 7), and fails to mention Southampton once in its 500 pages. L.Stone *Family and Fortune* (Oxford, 1972)pp. 214-5 on *c.* 1605 as a possible date for his conversion; respective entries in *D.N.B* on their common early involvement with Virginia; below, pp. 110-11, n39 on 1607 evidence.

If Sandys was indeed collaborating with Southampton in orchestrating the opposition to the very general idea of union — support for which was all that was at issue in 1604, together with the name change — it is clear that such opposition was not simply ranged against ideas pure and simple. As Dr. Munden suggested, the attack on James's scheme for a name change in 1604 'was little more than a thinly veiled attack on the general [Union] scheme.' And opposition to the scheme was in turn unlikely to be founded simply on vague, general anti-Scottish fears and prejudices — but rather on real, political fears and prejudices against actual Scots — in fact, the Bedchamber.[29] But since kings had always been notoriously sensitive about attacks on those closest to them, opposition to the Union served the more politically sophisticated as a means of "coded" attack on the king's entourage, and his policy of reserving it for his trusted Scots.

The strongest early indication that such was the case came soon after the end of the first session in July 1604. In a scarcely noticed move, the earl of Southampton was arrested on Sunday 24 June by order of the king and council, together with lord Danvers (a fellow former Essex conspirator); but they were released next day after 'several examinations'. The Venetian ambassador later gave the reason for the arrest — Southampton had 'been rumoured by his enemies to be plotting to slay several Scots much about the person of the king'.[30] Lionel Sharpe, once chaplain to Essex and now to the king, was sufficiently concerned, not least to distance himself from his former patrons, that he organized impromptu measures for the king's defence on the 26th — after Southampton's release — and was then himself examined.[31] That such slanders were

---

[29] Munden, *art.cit.* p.64.

[30] *CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 165, 168 (26 June/6 July, 4/14 July 1604); H.M.C. *Gawdy* pp.92-3, dated 7 (?*rectior* 27) June 1604.

[31] Sharpe organised well-affected gentlemen about London to band together to protect the king's person; they were to give their names to Sir Thomas Erskine, Groom of the Stool and Captain of the Guard, allegedly in the interests of Anglo-Scottish brotherhood; *CSPDomestic* XII (Additional 1580-1625) 482-6; H.M.C.*Salisbury* XVI (1604)p. 157, 30 June 1604, Sharpe to Cecil.

apparently believed about Southampton says much about what his views on the Scots were perceived to be.

If Southampton, the leader of the rump of the Essex faction, was dissatisfied with the accession settlement, it was no surprise. While James's accession had restored Southampton's liberty, lands and titles, the most significant office he gained was the Mastership of Queen Anne's Game.[32] His appointment to the Privy Council (which he may have expected at the accession, and which was strongly rumoured in 1611) did not occur until 1619. Clearly, then, although James made overtures at the accession to the defeated Essex faction, and in fact sweetened some of them with some considerable grants of patronage,[33] he did not thereafter see fit to give them either office or influence.

Thus Southampton's treatment at court is the simplest explanation for the suspicions entertained of him as an oppositionist both in July 1604 and (as we shall see) later. Southampton was given residence at court during the first few years of the reign; he was sporadically allowed to attend the king on his hunting journeys; and James visited him at Beaulieu in the summers of 1606, 1607 and 1609. Nevertheless there seems to be no doubt that Southampton was personally distrusted by the king, throughout the reign.[34]

---

[32] B.L. Additional MS 38,139, fo. 104v, Officers of Queen Anne's Council, December 1603; fo. 186v gives his fee, £10 p.a.

[33] L.Stone *Family and Fortune* (Oxford, 1972)pp. 219-22; *idem*, *Crisis of the Aristocracy* , p.475 — both Southampton and Sheffield made the top 29 (above, pp.71-2) probably due to their prominence in the old Essex faction and their financial need — wealthier Essexians like Rutland received nothing. H.R.Trevor-Roper *The Gentry* (Economic History Review Supplement No. 1, London, 1953) p.35, exaggerates how far former Essexians were taken on board at James's accession by the "Cecilians" and the "Scots", allegedly abandoning their followers. The parliamentary evidence indicates that the leaders continued politically to be 'outs' after the accession.

[34] LS 13/168 fos. 77r - 79r (mid-1604, fo.102r, 1605 carts for progress; they imply residence at court — a new practice under James to grant this to certain nobles who held neither office nor a place on the Council. *CSPVenetian* XI (1607-10) 206 (26 December 1608) confirms this. Instances of attending on the king : Hatfield MSS 278/3 [B.L microfilm] (Levinus Munck's Court Journal), *sub* 14 February 1604; SP14/13/8 (4 March 1605); H.M.C. *Salisbury* XVIII (1606)p. 270, 1 September 1606. Visits on progress : E 351/543 memb 174v, Beaulieu, 8 July 1607 (and H.M.C. *Salisbury* XIX (1607) p.208, 5 August 1607; E 351/543 memb. 210r (Prince Henry) and memb. 211v (the king), and H.M.C.*Salisbury* XXI (1609-12) p.114-5, August 1609. S.R.Gardiner, *History of England* III,pp. 68-9.

Further and even more decisive evidence of the connection between opposition to the Union and attacks on the entourage appeared when the scheme was next aired in parliament. Since delay followed delay, because of the sensitivity of the issue[35], the recommendations of the Union Commission were not put to parliament until its third session, when it re-assembled after the Christmas recess in February 1607. We have already witnessed Henry Yelverton answering for his attacks on the Union and Dunbar in 1607. The outburst of Sir Christopher Piggott at the session's beginning, at the height of the naturalisation debate, was far less restrained. On 13 February, he denounced Scots in general and Scottish courtiers in particular as proud, beggarly, quarrelsome and untrustworthy. This was going too far. Three days later the House itself sent Piggott to the Tower; while on the day following that (the 17th) Bacon made the official reply to his slanders. Apart from 'some persons of quality about His Majesty's person here at court', Bacon claimed, the number of Scots families resident in England was 'extremely small'. It was a characteristically subtle performance; but it in no way answered the real charge that these 'some persons' enjoyed a wholly disproportionate share of both political power and Royal patronage.[36] Only at such moments of crisis, therefore, was the parliamentary code broken, and resentment at the all-Scots Bedchamber clearly made identifiable with more abstract opposition to the Union.

If Piggott's mysterious outburst had gone too far, Sir Edwin Sandys' opposition to the scheme was both more indirect and more successful. In competition to the compromise proposals for Union which James was sponsoring in 1607, Sandys (together with Alford and others) proposed a "perfect union", totally subjugating Scots to English law. This, it seems probable, was a strategem to kill the king's moderate proposals by replacing them with something more extreme, which it was known the Scots would

---

[35] Notestein *House of Commons 1604-1610* pp. 180-1; Galloway *Union of England and Scotland* pp.79-81, 94-6.

[36] J.Spedding (ed.) *The Letters and Life of Sir Francis Bacon* (7 vols, London, 1861-74) III, 306-7, 311; above, pp. 71-2. Galloway *Union of England and Scotland* pp.104-5.

reject.[37] He was abetted in the scheme by Southampton's other great Commons collaborator Sir Henry Neville.[38] But if Sandys's attack was more subtle, his target was the same as Piggott's. James saw this : if in 1604 he had been disposed to blame the giddy heads of the Commons, by 1607 he saw things differently. Sandys may have led the Commons into rejecting almost the entire Union scheme as presented to them, but by now James thought he sensed faction at work, preying on Commons' xenophobia for its own ends. In May, just before the re-start of the session after a recess, James, departing for Royston, took leave of a group of nobles in his Bedchamber. He took this occasion to confront certain of these members of the Lords with their ingratitude; despite all their gains from the crown, they above all had been responsible for directly opposing his wishes. Significantly, the reproaches began with Southampton (and ended with Pembroke) — reproaches which none of them, on their knees in James's Bedchamber, were able to deny in front of their fellow peers who, as Councillors, had informed on them. Again, Southampton as prime suspect in the Lords and Sandys as prime mover in the Commons suggests that the exclusion of the old Essex faction from meaningful influence at court — at the hands largely of the Scots Bedchamber and the hated Cecilians — was triggering opposition in parliament to the more abstract Union measures.[39]

---

[37] B.P.Levack "Towards a more Perfect Union : England, Scotland and the Constitution" in B.C.Malament (ed.), *After the Reformation : Essays in Honour of J.H.Hexter* (Manchester, 1980), pp.66, 68. Notestein *House of Commons 1604-1610* pp.231-5; Galloway *Union of England and Scotland* pp.112-13.

[38] Galloway *Union of England and Scotland* p.113.

[39] *Ambassades de Monsieur de la Boderie en Angleterre, 1606-1611* (5 vols., Paris 1750) II, 199-200 (de la Boderie to de Puisieux, 2 May 1607) — 'le jour qu'il partit...ayant trouvé la plupart des seigneurs de cette cour qui s'étoient rendus en sa chambre pour lui dire adieu, il fit envers cinq ou six de la maison haute dudit parlement ce qui'il avoit été conseillé d'excuser envers ceux de la basse. Il commença par le Comte de Southampton, puis alla de suite au Baron de Burghley, et aux Comtes de Monteagle, d'Arundel [probably lord Arundel of Wardour] et de Pembroock, et leur reprocha leur ingratitude, de ce que n'y ayant pas un d'eux qui n'eût reçu quelque signalée marque de sa clémence et liberalité, il sçavoit néanmoins qu'il n'y avoit personne dans son parlement qui s'opposât plus formellement à ce qui était de ses volontés.' Galloway *Union of England and Scotland* p.105.

James's policy toward his Bedchamber in reaction to the fiasco of the 1606-07 Union session provides further evidence of the Bedchamber's central importance. Failure to secure parliamentary endorsement of James's plans for the borders led to Dunbar — the very Bedchamber Scot denounced by Yelverton in parliament — being given a new commission on the Borders, with powers of life and death over Englishmen. By August, however, the atmosphere at court was reportedly too tense to allow Dunbar to depart — the French ambassador indeed suggested that he dared not leave the king's side.[40] The king's solution to this became apparent by the end of the year. Dunbar's protégé and fellow Scot Robert Carr was appointed Gentleman of the Bedchamber in December 1607 — after publicly coming to favour in March of that year, soon after the attacks on the Scots in the commons — supplanting the Englishman Montgomery as king's "favourite", protecting Dunbar's flank at court while he attended to the Borders, and by actually bolstering the Scottish domination of the Bedchamber, giving the Commons an unambiguous signal of the king's attitude to their obstruction of his union measures.[41] The delay in promoting Carr to Gentleman of the Bedchamber may reflect James's wish to keep open the option of further union legislation (plans for a future parliamentary session of which were still actively pursued until December 1607).[42]

If the Union disappeared from the scene from 1608 onwards, the Bedchamber nevertheless continued to bulk large as a parliamentary issue, now in connection with finance. The personal and intermediary gains of the department in patronage matters had been a key element in the distrust caused by the Bedchamber over the more abstract Union measures; sometimes the connection is quite clear, as in late 1606 and early 1607 when a grant of £44,000 to pay off the debts of Hay, Haddington — and Montgomery — was in

---

[40] Galloway *Union of England and Scotland* pp.142-3; *Ambassades de la Boderie en Angleterre* II, 351 (de la Boderie to Villeroy, 2 August 1607).

[41] Below, pp. 126-7: Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* ed. W.D.Macray (6 vols., Oxford, 1888) I, 74.

[42] H.M.C.*Salisbury* XIX (1607)pp. 275, 355, 363, 369, 440-1; B.P.Levack "The Proposed Union of English Law and Scots Law" *Juridical Review* (1975) pp. 108-9; Galloway *Union of England and Scotland* p.150.

progress, and was widely known only a week before Piggott's outburst in the Commons.[43] If these gestures on the king's part provoked dramatic reaction when the Union was under discussion, the pattern was to be repeated, with similar reactions and still more dramatic effects, when the issue — the other major issue of the decade — was supply.

ii) "Bottomless Coffers", 1606 - 1610 : the Scots Bedchamber and the Issue of Supply

Apart from the indecisive blunders about whether or not to seek a subsidy in 1604, the first real problems over supply came in parliament's second session; they began in earnest in March 1606, when after two subsidies and fifteenths had been granted for 'love', further supply was being debated. Mr. Gawyn, M.P. for Wiltshire, spoke to the effect that

> whereas it is moved we should fill the King's coffers, it would be likewise understood whether they will be filled for if the bottomes be out then can they not be filled.

John Hoskins could not accept that 'subjects ought not to examine how [supply] is spent', since 'a supply may easily be spent, so may a re-supply,... and whatsoever we give, we cannot give that [which] may suffice.' In the event, the motion for further supply passed the House by a single vote. Salisbury was pleased with the result, and was apparently 'popular' in parliament that summer; but the forebodings of the Commons were apparently being fulfilled. In the same breath as he retailed Salisbury's felicity, a news-letter writer

---

[43] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 238 (11 November 1606), 241 (6 February 1607).

observed the grants of land and viscountcies to Ramsay and Erskine of the Bedchamber; 'the King's land, inclosed to all other, is only open to them.'[44]

People might name names in a news-letter; in parliament, however, they had spoken in code. But the code would be broken, as we have seen in the next session of 1607 on the issue of Union; and it was again, with still more dramatic effect, in the fourth and fifth sessions of the Parliament in 1610. At the beginning of the fourth session in February when Salisbury first outlined the crown's need for massive supply and regular support, Thomas Wentworth asked 'to what purpose to draw a silver stream into the royal cistern if it shall daily run out thence by private cocks'; against this and other, similar doubts about royal extravagance, James reportedly complained to the Commons that

> certain members had too freely accused him of extravagance and prodigality in gifts. He lied outright who said that large sums of money were sent to Scotland.[45]

The immediate, tacit connection which James drew between accusations of extravagance and his gifts to the Scots was to become a pattern. In the fifth session, Sir Nathaniel Bacon observed that 'the wants of the King and the Kingdom are two distinct things', and Samuel Lewkenor, who had voted for additional supply in 1606, had now instead come to approve of the example of the Emperor Antonius, who remedied his wants 'by discharging an unnecessary train of such as lived idle at his court'.[46] This was coming close to home. At the end of November John Hoskins came closer. 'The Royal cistern,' he proclaimed, 'had a leak, which till it were stopped, all our consultation to bring money into it were of little use.' He had said as much in 1606; now he came within a hair's breadth of belling the cat. 'This fault could not be personal but national', he explained. And having acquitted the Irish, Dutch, and English from blame, he left his

---

[44] *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer* ed.D.H.Willson (Minneapolis, 1931) pp.77-8 (12 March 1606); E.Sawyer (ed.) *Memorials of Affairs of State...from the Original Papers of Sir Ralph Winwood* (3 vols, London,1725) II, 226.

[45] S.R.Gardiner (ed.) *Parliamentary Debates in 1610* (Camden, 1st Ser. 81,1862) p. 11; *CSPVenetian* XI (1607-10) 451 (1 April 1610).

[46] Foster (ed.) *Proceedings in Parliament, 1610* II, 336, 403 (16 November 1610) ; compare Notestein *Commons 1604-10* p.185 on Lewkenor in 1606.

listeners to their own verdict about the Scots. One week later, a news-letter reported the current rumour that the Commons would give subsidies freely if they did not believe that the king's largesse *to his Scots* would cause a 'continual and remediless leak'.[47]

The king's immediate reaction to Hoskins's speech, and fear of rumours of worse to come, indicates the sensitivity and importance of the issue.[48] Two days after Hoskins's speech, the king was reported as viewing it, and others, as 'so scandalous... that some of them reach very near to the point of treason' ; he spoke of 'taunts and disgraces as have been uttered of him and *those that appertain to him* ' [my italics]. A week later James still 'discoursed long to show in what degree of treason they were that should seek to remove servants from a Prince.' Three days later, James, still indignant, addressed the issue directly :

> if whenever the tenor of bounty is touched, the Scots must ever be tacitly understood, I will be forced to disabuse the world in that point, and publish the truth that the English have tasted as much and more of my liberality than [sic] the Scots have done.[49]

James's reply in 1610 was as disingenuous as Bacon's in 1607 and equally failed to quell doubts.[50] The most explicit statement of these was also prepared for the 1610 parliament. It took the form of a 'grievance', to be presented to parliament by Sir John Holles, a former Gentleman of James's Privy Chamber.[51] In 1607, Holles had already

---

[47] Foster (ed.) *Proceedings in Parliament 1610* II, 344 (23 November 1610) : Sawyer (ed.) *Winwood Memorials* III, 326 (John More to Winwood, 1 December 1610). On these spokesmen as 'radical medievalists', cf. G.L.Harriss, "Medieval Doctrines in the Debates on Supply, 1603-29" in Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament*, especially p 85.

[48] On the importance of royal extravagance as an issue, cf. the account here with E.Lindquist "The Failure of the Great Contract" *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985),p. 643.

[49] SP14/58/35, Lake to Salisbury, 25 November 1610; H.M.C.*Salisbury* XXI (1609-12)p. 263, Lake to Salisbury, 3 December 1610; *ibid.*, p.265, James to Salisbury, 6 December 1610.

[50] Cf. above, pp. 71-2; and the punitive Bedchamber cash grants directly following the 1610 failure (£8,000 each to Fenton, Haddington, Hay — and Montgomery, £2,000 to Aston), *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 5, 1 January 1611; exaggerated to total £40,000 in H.M.C.*Downshire* III, 20.

[51] Printed in H.M.C.*Portland* IX, 113.

opposed James's Union measures.[52] Now, to the king's need for supply, the 'grievance' proposed a dual response : 'from our purse' and 'from our counsel', to remove the cause which has put the king in need; here Holles echoed the earlier and later imagery of men seeking to fill a leaky cistern.[53] Holles's value lies in his unequivocal identification of the problem : 'the Court is the cause of all', and especially because, surrounding James

> the Scottish monopolise his princely person, standing like mountains betwixt the beams of his grace and us; and, though it becomes us not to appoint particulars about him, yet we most humbly beseech his Majesty his Bedchamber may be shared as well to those of our nation as to them, that this seven years' brand of jealousy [and] mistrust may at last be removed... and that the same chamber may have the same brotherly partition which all the other inferior forms of the court, the Presence and Privy Chamber have.

He continued to identify a 'twofold unequal distribution of benefits' stemming from this monopoly. The Bedchamber themselves got the richest patronage pickings, ordinary and extraordinary, including fines and escheats. Second,

> by the grace of their place all favours and honours directly or indirectly pass through their hands; for not only do they possess the Royal presence, they be warm within, while the best of ours starve without.

Holles concluded that national equality in the Bedchamber —'that they should not seem to be the children of the family and we the servants' — would both promote Anglo-Scottish unity, and remove the cause of financial necessity. If these thoughts were ever put to the Commons committee for grievances, they went no further.[54] Silence on the issue prevailed, and the events which followed when the silence was broken indicate powerful reasons for its having been kept.

---

[52] *Ibid.* 110-12, 121-3.

[53] The image became epidemic. Northampton on 1 March (Foster, *Proceedings in Parliament in 1610* I, 22), Salisbury on 18 July 1610 (Lindquist "The Failure of the Great Contract", *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985) p.634) and Ellesmere in 1614-15 (L.Knafla *Law and Politics in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, 1977) p.95) all adopted it.

[54] Foster (ed.) *Proceedings in Parliament 1610* II 359; on 21 February 1610, the Commons committee for grievances 'allowed any man to put in any grievance... to the House.' Only a few were selected; possibly Holles's was one of those rejected.

iii) The Destruction of Salisbury : Trust and Xenophobia in the failure of the Great Contract

By early 1610 all this conspired to put a question mark over the continuance of Salisbury's ministry. He had failed to deliver results on either finance or, more importantly, the Union in Parliament — not least because of the problems caused by the Bedchamber; at the same time the Bedchamber, now substantially beyond his control, offered both an alternative (and more effective) route to the king, and possibly even the power-base of a new sort of regime. Salisbury, in short, could be saved only by a conspicuous Parliamentary success, to reconcile on the one hand the king, and on the other the rampant xenophobia of the Commons, and to regain the trust of both sides in him as chief minister. Hence the Great Contract, which aimed to heal, once and for all, the running sore of James's finances by bargaining away the royal rights to wardship and purveyance in return for a fixed annual income from Parliament.[55]

Traditional accounts of the abortive Contract have focussed on opposition in parliament; in fact, Salisbury had at least as much of a problem with the king.[56] To

---

[55] A.G.R.Smith, "Crown, Parliament and Finance : The Great Contract of 1610" in P.Clark, A.G.R.Smith, N.R.N.Tyacke (eds.), *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640 : Essays in Politics and Society presented to Joel Hurstfield* (Leicester, 1979) pp 111-27; esp.p.111 on bargaining. Cf. E.Lindquist "The Failure of the Great Contract", *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985) arguing that Salisbury did not intend a contract, hoping for a repeat on an even grander scale of the subsidies granted 'for love' in 1606. But there is little evidence (cf. *art.cit.* pp.625-6) that Salisbury believed the Commons 'purely' obliged to make grants 'for love' — merely that Northampton and the king expressed such views (Peck *Northampton* pp.198-205). Ellesmere shared such views but suspected that Salisbury did *not* (W.J.Jones in Reinmuth (ed.) *Early Stuart Studies* (1970)pp. 36-7; L.Knafla *Law and Politics* pp.88-9: cf. Harriss in Sharpe (ed.) *Faction and Parliament* pp.87-9 on the distinction between the two approaches). Once the king had granted permission to treat about Wardship, Salisbury proceeded to bargain with alacrity (Lindquist *art.cit.* pp.629, 631).

[56] A.G.R.Smith, *art.cit.,* pp.124-6. Lindquist blames the Commons for the proposal's failure (*Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985) p. 650); below n.66 for James's recognition that *he* had rejected the scheme.

overcome it, he relied extensively on his allies in the Bedchamber, the earl of Montgomery and Sir Roger Aston. Aston was particularly active. A week after the deal was formalised in late July he wrote an enthusiastic account : 'the little beagle [Salisbury] hath run a true and perfect scent, which brought the rest of the great hounds to a perfect tune which was before by their voice much divided.' Four councillors — Salisbury, Northampton, Suffolk and Worcester — had eventually combined to put the figure of £200,000 to the king, to which he finally agreed; they returned, put the figure to the Commons, and upon their agreement, Aston, who was also a member of the House, 'presently went to his Majesty to let him understand [it] was done'.[57]

But Aston's was not, of course, the only voice about the king. Six weeks earlier, on 10 June, an observer wrote that the king could, if he wished, settle the difficulties surrounding the Contract,

> yet is he so distracted with variety of opinion, from a number about him, especially Scots, that though he would, he cannot resolve that he desires, which is the cause that, as often as he can, he absents himself the town. [58]

Most powerful of the Scottish voices was probably that of Sir George Home, earl of Dunbar. Historians have consistently neglected Dunbar[59]; his contemporaries could not afford to. In Scotland in 1600 he had been in Sir Roger Aston's eyes 'the only man of all other most inward with the king'; not surprisingly, therefore, Goodman heard that in 1603 Cecil found 'that Sir George Home was the great man in the king's favour, ...did address himself...only to him, and presented him with an [£]1,000....' Guy Fawkes thought the king 'ruled by' Home in 1603-04. Just after Gunpowder Plot he was described as James's 'very breath and spirit', one whom 'the king cannot live without'. In

---

[57] SP14/56/42 (Aston to unidentified, 24 July 1610). See below, p.121 for Montgomery's and Aston's later importance.

[58] H.M.C.*Downshire* II, 490 (Samuel Calvert to William Trumbull, 10 June 1610).

[59] Cf. Notestein *The House of Commons 1604-10* p.211; but Dunbar is largely absent from that narrative. E.Lindquist regards him as an *ally* of Salisbury's, though he produces no evidence; nor does Dunbar appear in his narrative; "The Last Years of the First earl of Salisbury" *Albion* 18 (1986), p.39, n85.

1607 the Venetian Ambassador saw Home as 'the chief cause why Salisbury is maintained in his present place of reputation and power'; in April 1608 as 'the most intimate of the king among his Scottish subjects', a month later as 'a prime favourite'. In early 1611 he summed up; Dunbar had been 'brought up with his Majesty and possessed his entire confidence, and was alone the partner of his most intimate secrets'.[60]

Goodman makes Dunbar the bearer of a message to the king from a 'great peer of the realm, lying upon his deathbed'. The burden of the advice was that James should have nothing to do with the Contract : first, because it involved the diminution of the prerogative, for which (and for wardship in particular) the subject obeyed the king more than for any other laws; and second, because in any case the subject was bound to supply the king without contract or bargain. In fact, since Dunbar was the only great peer near to death in late 1610, he was probably the author of the advice as well as the messenger.[61]

And it was from Dunbar's stable too that came the weightiest written argument against the Contract. This was written by Sir Julius Caesar, Home's successor as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1606; his connexion with Dunbar is suggested by this smooth and amicable changeover, by the magnitude of Caesar's efforts to ingratiate himself with the new Lord Treasurer Salisbury in 1608, and by the rumours then that Salisbury would replace Caesar with Cope, his own man, as his subordinate.[62] Central

---

[60] *Calendar of State Papers Scottish* XIII (1597-1603) 723, 1 November 1600; Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 27; A.J.Loomie "Guy Fawkes in Spain..." *University of London Institute of Historical Research Special Supplement No. 9* (London, 1971),p. 61; *CSPVenetian* X (1603-07)303, 515; XI (1607-10)125,131; XII (1610-13) 115.

[61] Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 40-1 : cf. J.Hurstfield *The Queen's Wards* (1958)p. 322, neither confirming nor denying the story. G.E.C[ockayne] *The Complete Peerage* (13 vols in 14, 1910-1940) *passim*, for peers dying in late 1610-early 1611. Dunbar held the English barony of Hume of Berwick, and so might qualify for description as 'a great peer of this realm'.

[62] Cf. A.G.R.Smith *art. cit.*, n74 to p. 124. "Sir Julius Caesar's Journal of Salisbury's First Two Months and Twenty Days as Lord Treasurer" ed.L.M.Hill *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* XLV (1972) pp. 311-27, full of rather nauseating flattery; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 259, 7 July 1608; cf. *ibid.* I,379. This line differs from L.M.Hill's view in "The Public Career of Sir Julius Caesar, 1584-1614" (University of London Ph.D, 1968) — followed by Lindquist "Failure of the Great Contract" *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985) p. 639 and n86.

to Caesar's argument is the injury which the Contract would do to the 'imperial prerogatives and flowers of [the] Crown', which chimes not only with Dunbar's mysterious message but also with the earl's known general stance : 'no man', it was observed, 'was so tender of the King's prerogative'.[63] Indeed, Dunbar's movement between Scotland and the court may be the chief key to James's shift from grudging acquiescence in the Contract (while Dunbar was absent) to outright rejection (when he returned).[64]

Against such powerful and well placed opponents Salisbury was forced, perhaps, to call on some strange allies. In the last stages of the Contract debate in July 1610, the French and Venetian ambassadors, as well as Carleton, had all reported attacks on the Scots; now, just before the summer recess, a rumour was current that the supply element of the Contract would be appropriated by parliamentary treasurers to ensure that it went to pay off the debt, and not into the 'bottomless pockets' of the Scots courtiers. The source of the rumour was probably Salisbury himself. In the sessions of 1606-10 a group of oppositionist M.P.s had formed. They were 'patriots' in their resistance to union; 'commonwealth-men' in their rejection of supply, unless 'your Majesty's expense groweth by Commonwealth'. A key member of the group was Sir Henry Neville, spokesman and friend of the earl of Southampton. In late July 1610 Neville and his associates had a meeting with Salisbury in Hyde Park. The ostensible subject was impositions; but there are signs that Salisbury also gave them broad hints that the destination of any new funds to be raised by the Contract would also be closely watched.

---

[63] Gardiner (ed.) *Parliamentary Debates in 1610* (Camden, 1862), Appendix D, p.167. Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 21.

[64] M.Lee *Government by Pen : Scotland under James VI and I* (Illinois, 1980) p.99; Dunbar effected the Parliamentary restoration of bishops in Scotland that summer. His departure coincided with the "diversity of opinion... especially Scots" around James (above, p.118); then James reluctantly agreed to terms in July. Dunbar returned in mid-September (SP14/57/60, Dunbar to Sir Robert Carr, 19 September 1610, at Alnwick). By mid-October, the king was clearly uneasy; A.G.R.Smith, *art.cit.*, p. 123.

Certainly, Salisbury's promises in a speech to the Lords at about this time were designed to put any such fears to rest; he affirmed that the permanent

> sum which is given must be tied unto the crown, for the maintenance of the navy and other things. And if the king do spend out of magnificence anything more than he hath, he must look to have it out of other means.[65]

But if Salisbury could strike a deal with the 'patriots', so could Dunbar and the Bedchamber, working from a much more secure position with the king. James had never been happy with the scheme; in the summer recess he turned against it decisively. But to confirm Salisbury's defeat, his total failure with Parliament had to be ensured; and the Dunbar circle's known proximity to the king helped bring this about in two ways. First, when Salisbury persisted in trying to save something from the wreckage his lines to the king were sabotaged within the Bedchamber. After the apparent failure of the Great Contract itself, he advanced a plan to bargain Wardship alone simply for traditional subsidies. The king, by now a profound sceptic, made it clear that some form of permanent support would be necessary for real bargaining to start again (but he at least welcomed the chance to 'remove from ...[the House] a suspicion ...that *his unwillingness for the contract* was for that he would make use of their children [as wards] to further the union and to advance the Scots').[66] Instead of supporting his minister, the king physically removed his presence from Whitehall just as he politically distanced himself, in parliamentary matters at least, from Salisbury, who was now forced to work through his Bedchamber agents at Royston. Montgomery and Aston, however, were unable to outweigh the arguments of others around the king and arrange for a meeting of the Privy Council, which Salisbury desperately wanted. [67]

---

[65] Foster (ed.) *Proceedings in Parliament 1610* II, 295, n3; C.Roberts and O.Duncan, "The Parliamentary Undertaking of 1614," *English Historical Review* 93 (1978)p. 484; Foster (ed.) *Proceedings* II, 278, 14 July 1610, (French ambassador on appropriation); I, 158, Salisbury's speech, 21 July.

[66] SP 14/58/26, 21 November 1610, my italics; evidence that James was at least under the impression he had put an end to the Contract; cf. A.G.R.Smith *art.cit.* p.125.

[67] SP14/58/35, 25 November 1610; James thought such a meeting 'bootelesse'.

Secondly, having lost the king to the Bedchamber, Salisbury was forced to ensure that Parliament 'end quietly, and [the king] and his subjects part with fairest show'[68] — yet even here, Salisbury was apparently the victim of his Bedchamber opponents. Dunbar, late in 1610 during his final illness, used his protégé Robert Carr as his most active assistant; Carr's route to the Parliamentary 'patriots' (such as Neville) was his own personal favourite, Overbury. Dunbar thus had no need to arrange clandestine meetings with prominent MP's; his contacts were already in place.[69] And they were used, to exploit and stir up the anti-Scottish feeling which we have seen outrage the king, and which was to cause the parliament's dissolution. Lake told James that Salisbury had hastened this for fear that 'some seditious spirits had purposed ...a petition ...to remove or to send home those Scots that so much consumed their supplies, and that they should be the more willing to give when they saw it should rest in His Majesty's own purse'. James anxiously examined Lake both about the source of the rumour, and about who exactly was to be sent home — whether all Scots or some, and whether Scots alone. Lake mentioned that he had recently talked to Neville, but told James that Salisbury had told him of the rumour — which led Salisbury to suspect Lake. When Lake told Dunbar about the rumours, his reaction was significant : Lake said he 'shakes his head on it, and seems to me not to like His Majesty's eagerness in it'.[70] Dunbar might well shake his head at the king's investigation; as Lake shortly announced to Salisbury, 'all this heat expressed...is moved by Sir Robert Carr; ...your Lordship has been very maliciously dealt with by some of the Lower House, he being the instrument'. Lake also warned that 'if my Lord of Dunbar do not say any such thing or if he do, I beseech you take no notice of it, for if you do it must needs be known to come from me, and then I shall never know more'.[71] In the

---

[68] SP14/58/32, 24 November 1610.

[69] Fenton later wrote of 'Lower House men that heretofore [have] been drawn to follow [Carr] by the means of Overbury' (H.M.C. *Mar and Kellie Supplement* p.52 (c June 1613 or earlier).

[70] H.M.C. *Salisbury* XXI (1609-12) p.263 (3 December 1610).

[71] H.M.C.*Salisbury* XXI (1609-12) p.264 (4 December 1610).

Bedchamber, Salisbury's agents had accordingly been keeping their business secret from Dunbar.[72]

Salisbury's flirtation with the 'patriots' was thus used to blacken him in the king's eyes, and the rumoured Commons petition to send home the Scots cast as the inevitable result of his offending the king's prejudices in dealing with such men. James eventually remarked that he could not understand the parliamentary leaders' actions 'except any had a design to lay the foundations of a popular state'. None were better placed to predict James's reaction to these rumours than Dunbar and Carr.[73] From their later actions, it also seems that the 'patriots', particularly Neville and Southampton, had abandoned Salisbury, and transferred both their present co-operation, and future hopes for a successful parliamentary settlement, to men better placed with the king — that is, Dunbar, and later Carr, in the Bedchamber.[74]

At the beginning of 1610 Salisbury had worried about the alternative voices who might drown out his own by their greater proximity to the king. In 1610 he had caught the king's attention with his plans, only to lose it again through their ignominious failure. As they failed, so did he; and as he fell, so a new political structure emerged.

---

[72] SP14/58/33, Lake to Salisbury, 24 November 1610.

[73] SP14/58/26, 21 November 1610; above, p.115 for James's outraged reaction.

[74] C.Roberts & O.Duncan *art. cit.* pp.483-4 for Neville's dealings *via* Overbury with Carr in 1611.

Chapter Five

The Career of Robert Carr :

The Rise of the Bedchamber Favourite

A new alignment of power at court emerged at the beginning of 1611 following Salisbury's parliamentary failure. Dunbar, architect of the attack on Salisbury, and the man upon whose counsel James had come chiefly to rely, had become a rival to Salisbury through his successful handling of Scots politics, the borders, and of Bedchamber intrigue; and by this time he was taking a rôle in English domestic affairs beyond the informal business of parliamentary management. To enlist aid against the agitation for abolition of March law in the four English counties bordering Wales, for example, the Lord President of the Council of the Marches wrote both to Salisbury and Dunbar — but more fully to the latter — in late 1610.[1]

Whether Dunbar would now have stepped forward to real power in English affairs is an unanswerable question; he died at the hour of his triumph, in January 1611. But it is an indication of a probable affirmative to that question that his sometime protégé and recent collaborator Robert Carr stepped in to fill the vacuum. Carr emerged as Dunbar's political heir. The logic of Carr's rise, in particular its roots in the relationship between him and Dunbar, has eluded historians, who for the most part have attributed it simply to James's homosexuality. In order to appreciate Robert Carr's significance as the

[1] SP 14/58/56, 3 December 1610, lord Eure to Dunbar, two pages, referring to his 'knowne wisdome and approved fidelitie, w[hi]ch hath worthely merrited for you w[i]th the world the opinion of a great statesman, and w[i]th his Ma[jes]tie the place of an inward Counsellor'; /61, 5 December, the same to Salisbury, one page, without flattery.

residual victor over Salisbury in the post-parliamentary world of 1611, we need first to sketch that background. From there the narrative can proceed to examine the stalemate at court, and the role in it of Carr (created in March 1611 viscount Rochester) and the rest of the Bedchamber, between Salisbury's failure in December 1610 and his death in May 1612; to the full emergence between 1612 and the meeting of the 1614 parliament of Rochester (created in November 1613 earl of Somerset) as informal Bedchamber *primum mobile* and personal Secretary to the king; and finally to examine the at first confused consequences of another parliamentary failure, culminating in Carr's fall in the autumn of 1615.

i) Carr and Dunbar, 1603-11

Carr's importance in January 1611 depended almost wholly on that of his patron Dunbar; the root of Dunbar's power lay in his uniquely trusted relationship with the king, of long standing, based on his place in the Bedchamber. This continued and apparently unshakeable trust and intimacy between his patron and the king were Carr's starting-point.[2]

Carr had begun his court career in Scotland as Dunbar's personal servant, in fact his page.[3] From there, Dunbar did what all officers aspired to do, and transferred him to the royal service (and payroll). Probably this happened in Scotland — James later recalled Carr as a 'young man whom...I brought with me [to England] and brought up as a child'.[4] But the first firm evidence that the transfer had happened occurs after James's move south — it appears that he was serving as a Groom of the Bedchamber, at the age of sixteen, as early as October 1603.[5] Carr was properly appointed with the due formalities of wage and

---

[2] Above, pp.118-19.
[3] B.L. Additional MS 15,476, fo 92v, notes made by Overbury's father in the 1630's.
[4] H.M.C *Salisbury* XX (1608) p. 269, James to Salisbury, 23 November 1608.
[5] *CSPDomestic* XII (Additional, 1580-1625) 431, [24] October 1603, note by Home of his winter livery.

livery in October 1604[6]; it is overwhelmingly likely that this was Home's doing. In June 1605, when lord Say and Sele asked Home for his help in securing a grant of fines levied on recusants, Home significantly advised Say 'to seek help of Mr. Robert Carr.'[7] During the year from October 1604 to October 1605 Carr was active; the City of Chester used him to try to obtain renewal of an export licence, and paid him £300; he also moved the king for a personal grant of such a license, and James referred the question to Salisbury and (perhaps significantly) Home.[8] So early in the reign, Dunbar had his former page appointed as a Bedchamber agent and used him to attend to matters for which he was too busy himself.

Carr disappears from view at court between late 1605 and the Accession Day tilt of 24 March 1607. This may be when Carr's suggested visit to France — to gain the necessary French manners which James required of a courtier — took place. After two years service in the Bedchamber in England, Carr must have been well-known to James; possibly Dunbar sensed that the king liked his protégé, and took steps to apply the final polish which would help him fully to win the king's favour.

Carr's theatrical rise to favour after the tilt in March 1607 has already been related to James's need to make a visible gesture of favour to the Scots (amid vocal parliamentary attacks on them), and to Dunbar's need for an agent in the Bedchamber to protect his

---

[6] *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 147, livery, 30 August; 162, annual livery, 31 October; 163, wage from the Cofferer, 31 October 1604. Carr's first account payment (1604-05, E351/1798-9) is £60 for one and a half years — back pay to the beginning of the reign. The tradition that Carr was discharged and sent to France in 1603 is thus unfounded; Beatrice White *A Cast of Ravens : the Strange Case of Sir Thomas Overbury* (London, 1965),p.10; Gardiner *History of England* II, 42-3. Weldon's account (in W.Scott (ed.), *The Secret History of the Court of James I* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1811) I, 374-5), read properly, is correct.

[7] H.M.C.*Salisbury* XVII (1605) p.290, lord Say & Sele to Cecil, June 1605; Say was assured by Home 'of his own aid *gratis*'. *Ibid* p.451, Say to Cecil, 10 October 1605, complains of the expense — Carr 'has had 20*l*, and must have 60*l* more' to make a grant of eight recusants into one of ten.

[8] H.M.C.*Salisbury* XVI (1604) p.158, City of Chester petition, ?late 1604-early 1605 : H.M.C.*Salisbury* XVII (1605)p. 21, 20 January 1605, James to Cecil and Home — though Home as Chancellor of the Exchequer could expect such grants to be referred to him.

interests when absent.[9] This background suggests that the theatricality of Carr's sudden coming to public notice — a special room in Whitehall was prepared for the sick Bedchamber Groom where the king, and the whole court, could visit him[10] — was the outward expression of an inwardly well-established fact; that Carr's rise was no sudden whim, but the result of intelligible political reasoning by the king and Dunbar.

At first Carr simply resumed his position as Groom of the Bedchamber (if indeed he had ever left it to travel); he was granted arrears of Crown rent in December 1607, for example.[11] But promotion came swiftly; on 23 December 1607 he was knighted, and — probably at the same time, like Villiers a few years later — he was made a Gentleman of the Bedchamber : Chamberlain reported the latter event on 30 December. Carr's promotion was thus a public affirmation of James's trust in Dunbar — on the 17th the Venetian ambassador had reported that 'the king places the greatest reliance on [Dunbar's] advice in all matters' — and of his intention to continue to favour the Scots, despite the volume of English protests.[12]

Carr's career during the three years between his promotion and his patron Dunbar's death was a visible and continuing affirmation to the court of these ideas. It is clear from Salisbury's reaction to the newly-appointed gentleman that he had no part in Carr's promotion; indeed he was responding to the wishes of James and Dunbar in heaping favours on him, rather than proposing such treatment himself. Salisbury's good offices arrived late. If in February 1608 Salisbury took care to point out to Lake that an unspecified 'Irish suit' was for 'Mr. Carr of the Bedchamber', it was April 1608 before Aston, as we have seen Salisbury's main Bedchamber agent, apparently first began to

---

[9] Above, p.112.

[10] E 351/543, memb. 174r (Treasurer of the Chamber's Account), expenses for 'makeinge ready certen lodginges at Whitehall for his Ma[jes]tie to see Master Carre whoe lay sicke there by the space of twoe dayes, Mense Aprilis 1607'. Cf. White *A Cast of Ravens* p.19; the above makes certain her date (24 March) for the tilt.

[11] *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 385, 6 December 1607. He stayed on the account as Groom until Christmas 1608; E 351/1798-1803.

[12] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 249; *CSPVenetian* XI (1607-10) 76, 17/27 December 1607.

give Carr some of Salisbury's letters for presentation to the king.[13] Almost a year after Carr's promotion, Salisbury saw the opportunity to make a spectacular gesture towards the new favourite; in November 1608, Raleigh's Sherbourne estate came onto the patronage market as a tempting endowment for the new Bedchamber Gentleman. Salisbury was apparently the first to propose the grant, and James thanked him for his 'remembrance of Robert Carre for [the] manor of Sherburne'. But in the next breath he made it quite clear that Carr was his own joint protégé with Dunbar, 'the only young man, whom as I brought with me and brought up as a child, ...was now left unprovided for...according to the rank whereunto I have promoted him' — Gentleman of the Bedchamber — and assuring Salisbury that 'Dunbar [can] answer to you for the honesty of his nature'. As in the case of others who had come south with James, Salisbury had little option but to accept such assurances and see that Carr was provided for; the grant went through in January 1609.[14]

During 1608 and 1609, Carr's fortunes reflected those of his patron Dunbar. If in August 1607, just before Carr's promotion, Dunbar had been unable to move for fear of his enemies, in May 1608 he received the Garter, during June to September 1608 he was able to go once again to Scotland for a General Assembly (at which both he and his chaplain Abbot performed with great skill) and in the autumn he returned in triumph with 'a legion of Scots worse than the former.'[15] If Dunbar's security was assured by Carr, some of Dunbar's prestige was clearly rubbing off onto the new favourite. By October 1609 Carr was sufficiently prominent for a body of dispossessed ministers to use him as

---

[13] H.M.C.*Salisbury* XX (1608) p.133, 10 April 1608, Aston to Salisbury; the first example of Carr's use by Salisbury as Bedchamber intermediary. *Ibid.*, p.150, ?April 1608, Carr's thanks for the favour.

[14] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 280, 10 January 1609 on Raleigh's conveyance; H.M.C.*Salisbury* XX (1608) p.269, James to Salisbury, 23 November 1608. In 1610 the grant was converted to £20,000 in cash.

[15] M.Lee *Government by Pen : Scotland Under James VI and I* (Illinois, 1980) p.91; *Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, 1603-1624* ed.M.Lee (New Brunswick, 1972) pp.105-6, 20 September 1608.

their route to the king.[16] And Carr began to move into Lake's territory in procuring the king's signature to signet warrants : Lake informed Salisbury in December 1609 that 'the byll... concerning S[i]r Thomas Overbury was sett from me as being to[o] cold in it, and I heare is procured to be signed after some contestation th[e]r[ei]n w[i]th importunity of S[i]r Ro[bert] Carre.'[17]

Sir Thomas Overbury in turn was probably the centre of Dunbar and Carr's network of parliamentary influence during the 1610 parliament. Although six years older than Carr (who was only twenty in 1607), Overbury had begun his friendship with him before 1603. The friendship paid off handsomely and quickly; with Carr's appointment to the much sought after sanctum of the Bedchamber, Overbury without office attained a prominence at court which caught the eye of observers, and of the King of Denmark himself during his visit in 1606.[18] After Carr's promotion, office followed for Overbury. He was knighted in June 1608, and probably appointed Sewer at the same time.[19] Although he went abroad in early 1609 — perhaps significantly, in view of his political connections with Southampton and the "patriots", to the Low Countries — later in the year Overbury seems to have been a central figure in Dunbar's search for a way to manage parliament. Carr, after 1607, made direct overtures to the English by cultivating his own following among them, of which Overbury was the chief and most intimate member. Goodman remembered that Carr affected to 'utterly dislike the bold carriage and importunity of the Scots'.[20] But Carr could only partially succeed in the general view of

---

16 H.M.C.*Salisbury* XXI (1609-12) p.145.

17 SP 14/50/13, Lake to Salisbury, 3 December 1609; Carr never did much of this; even when acting Secretary, he left most procurements to Lake (below, pp.136, 147, and cf. Villiers, Ch. 7, sectn. iii)., pp. 209-214).

18 White *Cast of Ravens* p.18, July 1606.

19 *D.N.B.* s.n.; B.L. Additional MS 15,476, fo 92v.

20 Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 215; and Weldon in Scott (ed.), *Secret History* I,376. Holles recalled that Carr 'disclaimed from their blood, as descended from our english family of that name; conversed more inwardly with ours, ...[was] attended altogether by others...[and] setled himself for land, and allyance whollie amongst us' : P.R.Seddon (ed.), "The Letters of John Holles 1587-1637, Vol. I" *Thoroton Society Record Series* XXXI (1975)p. 73, 15 July 1615.

the court in distancing himself from the Scots — his own thick accent and the continuing Scots Bedchamber monopoly saw to that[21] — and in any case, Overbury had ready-made connections among the English which were probably of more immediate importance. After the failure of 1610, Fenton referred to 'sume of the Lower Houss men that heirtofore hes bein drawin to follow [Carr, by then viscount] ... Ro[chester] by the maines of Overberrye'. Overbury's links with Sir Henry Neville, Southampton's close associate, in October 1611, make it probable that it was among the "patriots" and "commonwealthmen" that Overbury's influence had run a few months earlier. Given Southampton's views about the Scots, an English intermediary like Overbury was probably a necessity.[22] And the tradition that Henry Yelverton's relationship to Overbury originally brought him into Carr's service, and thence to the king's favour, carries the connection between the Dunbar/Carr axis and the Commons spokesmen (through Overbury) as far back as late 1609, when, as we have seen, Yelverton decided mysteriously — prompted by Overbury? — to make his peace with the king (and Dunbar).[23]

We have seen the effects of the Carr/Dunbar Bedchamber dominance on Salisbury's conduct of business in the 1610 sessions. By late 1610 Carr was a vital member of a partnership which securely possessed the king's trust and which was widely enough connected in English political circles to wreck (or, they hoped, to direct) a parliament. It was a partnership in which Carr, originally the protégé and deputy of another great favourite, Dunbar, had won the king's favour in his own right, and, to judge from Lake's allegations in December 1610[24], begun to take some political initiatives

---

[21] H.Harington (ed.), *Nugae Antiquae* (London, 1804)pp. 390-7 (esp. 395), dated and identified (but wrongly cited) by Peck, *Northampton* p 30 and n.32, to before March 1611, Suffolk's son lord Thomas Howard to Sir John Harington. Also below, p. 132.

[22] H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.52 (*c.* June 1613 according to the editor; an earlier date, in March or April before Overbury's arrest makes more sense); H.M.C.*Buccleuch* I, pp.101-2, John More to Winwood, 29 October 1611. For Southampton and the Scots, above pp 108-9.

[23] David Lloyd *The Statesmen and Favourites of England since the Reformation* (London, 1665) p. 573; despite Lloyd's reputation for inaccuracy, it is unlikely that he simply invented the connection with Overbury.

[24] Above, p.122.

of his own. What was to be his role after January 1611, when he lost the anchor of the weight which Dunbar's advice carried with the king?

ii) February 1611 - May 1612 : Patronage and Political Stalemate

Dunbar died unexpectedly on 30 January 1611. James 'bewailed him tenderly, and spent the whole day of his death in bed'. A rumour that Dunbar 'did take order before his death that his heart should be put into a cup of gold and presented to the king's majesty in sign of his loyal service' gave symbolic expression to the deep personal bond. Even Weldon could later find nothing to sneer about; he then saw Dunbar as 'a kind of favourite,... that for his wisdom and gravity had been in some secret counsels with his master'.[25]

Accordingly, Dunbar's influence continued from beyond the grave. The rumoured gift of his heart had allegedly been 'in sign of his loyal service in recompense whereof he desired nothing but His Majesty would upon his suit prefer Mr. Abbot to the see of Canterbury'. Abbot, formerly Dunbar's chaplain who had ridden north with him several times in establishing bishops in Scotland, was indeed appointed, much to the surprise of the Council (and also apparently of Salisbury and Lake). At 9 p.m. on 25 February, Lake recounted to Salisbury the evening's occurrences.

> Before his ma[jes]t[i]es going to Supper it pleased him to calle [me] in to his drawing chamber alone, and then told me his resolution was now taken for the Archbishoprick of Canterbury, and that I should make a congé d'eslire redy w[i]th a blank [for the appointee's name] and attend him against he rise from supper. The bill being made redy when I came to his Ma[jes]t[i]e, he caused me to fill the blank with the name of my lo[rd Bishop] of London [Abbot], and commanded me to signifie to your lo[rdship] the causes of his choice.

---

[25] *CSPVenetian* XII (1610-13) 116, 1/11 February 1611; Westminster Cathedral Archives Series A, Vol. 11, pp. 87-88 (Archpriest Berkett to More, 10 March 1611; my thanks to Ken Fincham for this reference); Scott, *Secret History* I, 320.

First among these causes was the 'deare remembrance [of] the service of my lo[rd] of Dunbar who did first recommend [Abbot],...as that though he were not now living,...the world might say he guided his ma[jes]t[i]e yet.'[26] But the Venetian ambassador was perhaps more realistic in reporting that, for all the dearness of Dunbar's memory, Abbot's appointment had been ensured by the present efforts of another Dunbar protégé, Sir Robert Carr : Carr's sudden admission to Dunbar's vacant place as a Garter knight in April 1611 was a loud signal to the court that he was 'at the height of favour', although this had long been obvious to close observers, since 'the translation of the Bishop of London to the Archbishopric of Canterbury took place at his request and contrary to the wishes of the whole Council....'[27]

But Carr — created viscount Rochester on Accession Day 1611, with a seat in the English house of Lords — stepped into more than Dunbar's vacant Garter stall : with his former patron gone, he dominated a Bedchamber which, as we have seen, was by now becoming the clearing-house of crown patronage. 'It would seem that he is to dispose of everything', the Venetian ambassador wrote in April, which 'is displeasing to the English; all the same everybody is endeavouring to secure his favour and goodwill'. By May it was quite clear to one observer that more suitors were following Rochester than Salisbury.[28] It is in this context that Salisbury's "going public" with his efforts to limit the flow of patronage (by publishing the 'Book of Bounty' in early 1611) should be set; the French ambassador saw this as an attack on the Scots — in other words, the Bedchamber. The holding of Salisbury to his promise to give up the Wards into the king's hands may have been part of the Scots counter-attack which the ambassador also observed.[29]

Rochester dominated Bedchamber patronage from early 1611 onwards; but if James thought it thus necessary to make visible the eclipse in Salisbury's fortunes,

---

[26] SP14/61/107, Lake to Salisbury, 25 February 1611.
[27] *CSPVenetian* XII (1610-13) 142, 4 May 1611.
[28] *Ibid.*, 135; L.L.Peck *Northampton : Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I* (1982) 30.
[29] Above, p.95.

Rochester's initial political rôle was not to act as a power in his own right, but rather as the king's broker between the two main English political groupings that were beginning to fight for a chance to try where Salisbury had apparently failed. One of these was the Howards, led by the earls of Northampton and Suffolk, who were gradually detaching themselves from Salisbury, particularly (in the case of the former) over the issue of bargaining for supply; their view was that Salisbury's tactics of 1610 had been doomed from the start. The other group was the ex-Essexians, who now looked to the earl of Southampton. Prominent, as we have seen, in opposing Union and supply measures, their attitude now was that they could 'undertake to deal with the Lower House, and then (so as my Lord Treasurer would not entermeddle) there was no doubt but that better effects would come of the next session...than did come of the former'.[30]

At the moment the main practical issue between the two (apart from personalities) was finance : Northampton hoped, by expenditure control (through reform commissions), and by devising projects, to put off hazarding another failure in parliament; the experience of the Southampton group, on the other hand, committed them to a Parliamentary solution. Each group had its route to the favourite : Northampton dealt directly and officially with Carr as a Councillor, cultivating him from at least June 1611 (and probably as far back as 1608, over the Sherborne grant)[31]; whereas Southampton, distrusted by James both personally and politically, had to operate instead at two removes, using his own favourite and 'dear Damon', Sir Henry Neville, to negotiate with Rochester's 'bedfellow, minion and inward councillor', Sir Thomas Overbury.[32] As we have seen, Overbury had provided Carr with a 'following' in the Commons in the fifth session in 1610, almost certainly in alliance with Southampton's men, including Neville.

---

30 H.M.C.*Buccleuch* I, 101-2, John More to Winwood, 29 October 1611; S.Adams "Spain or the Netherlands? The Dilemmas of Early Stuart Foreign Policy" in H.Tomlinson (ed.,) *Before the English Civil War* (London, 1983) pp.92, 95.

31 H.M.C.*Salisbury* XX (1608) p.269, 23 November 1608. Peck *Northampton* p.30, and n.34.

32 On Neville, Peck *Northampton* p.31; on Overbury, *The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham* ed.H.S.Scott (Camden, Miscellany X,1902) p.116.

This background made Rochester incline personally towards the Southampton group; since they were so far excluded from influence, his favour to them was highly visible, and his consultations with Neville in 1611 were reported with interest by one of Salisbury's clerks.[33] But in fact Rochester seems swiftly and adequately to have changed from being the Bedchamber agent of one courtier (Dunbar), concentrating his attention on one English political group (Southampton), into being an entirely royal agent, above factions, balancing them, and distancing them from the king.

The factional divide was only obvious to observers after Salisbury's death : before then, all sides were sounding out the possibilities. For the present, no issue made necessary a decision on which counsel to follow; and the continuance of even a diminished Salisbury in office, still in control of foreign policy, the despatches, the signet and the empty Exchequer, prevented any open breach in his rivals' ranks.

Salisbury, indeed, was down but not yet out. The recent fate of Essex and Raleigh was a vivid lesson to Salisbury's rivals of the danger of allowing themselves to be divided; and he was still capable of making trouble for his opponents. In June 1611 Overbury was banished from court for offending the queen; Salisbury may have made sure that her anger was turned into action. And when his own Bedchamber agents, and those outside who had depended on him, began at least to explore alternative arrangements, Salisbury played a clever hand in keeping them loyal. Pembroke had already been linked politically with Southampton. By mid-1611, he was on close terms with Rochester, and significantly, with Overbury; he, with Rochester, ostentatiously visited Overbury in his disgrace — perhaps a sign that Pembroke was actually drifting into Southampton's camp.[34] If so, Salisbury parted the two by getting Pembroke appointed to the Privy

---

[33] Above, n22. More's informant about Neville and Overbury was Levinus Munck, one of Salisbury's secretaries.

[34] Above pp.111. H.M.C.*Downshire* I, 314; III 139, 180; below p.142 for Pembroke's later connection with Southampton.

Council in September 1611; Southampton, seven years Pembroke's senior, left the court to sulk at being passed over, and the political stalemate continued unresolved.[35]

If it was still not clear to observers, Salisbury himself had certainly come to see the court's division into camps before his death; he warned Carleton that "Rochester's side" — by which he plainly meant Rochester's connection via Overbury to Southampton — were hostile to him. If Chamberlain disagreed, it was not with the factional analysis; he simply thought that Sir Henry Neville and 'that side' were Carleton's 'surest card'.[36] With Salisbury's death, the split became obvious to all.

iii) From Salisbury's death to the Addled Parliament : from royal arbiter to faction leader.

Salisbury died on 24 May 1612. When James heard, his journey to Eltham was merely 'deferred...till after dinner'. Now began the pressure for choice between the two groupings. A third group of bereaved ex-Cecilians was also created, headed by Pembroke and his brother Montgomery, Salisbury's sometime agent in the Bedchamber. The event would show that this "centre" group possessed sufficent weight to hold the balance between the other two; Pembroke in particular, using his brother as informant, shifted from one "side" to the other over the next three and a half years in a finally successful pursuit of major office. [37]

James's response to Salisbury's death was simultaneously to secure a breathing-space; to increase the prestige and field of action of his favourite; and indeed to become again, as latterly he had achieved in Scotland, his own first minister. Neither of

---

[35] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 352; 'upon... Pembroke's preferment..., ...Southampton retired himself into the countrie, but his spirit hath walked very busilie about the court since'.

[36] *Letters of Chamberlain* I 358, 17 June 1612.

[37] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 351. Cf. E.Lindquist on James and Salisbury's death; "The Last Years of the First earl of Salisbury", *Albion* 18 (1986)p. 36. SP14/69/56, Northampton to Rochester, 26 May 1612; Pembroke, Hay and Cope were the only ones sorry to lose Salisbury, 'who indeed have iuste cause to be sory'.

Salisbury's great offices was filled : instead the Treasury was put into commission, while the Secretaryship was resumed by the king, who reportedly thought he was 'prettelie skilled in the craft himselfe'.[38] In theory James was his own Secretary; in practice most of the office's duties devolved on to Rochester, by this time a Privy Councillor, whose nationality was still a sensitive enough issue to rule out formal appointment. He therefore remained simply a Gentleman of the Bedchamber as he took over the important parts of the Sectretaryship. At the end of July 1612 he received the custody of the signets, kept temporarily by Lake; and at about this time, ambassadors' correspondence began to be addressed to him.[39] He also acted as personal secretary in writing the king's overseas correspondence; Lake in July referred to a letter 'dictated by his ma[jes]t[i]e and written by my lo[rd] of Rochester but delivered to me to convey'. Later he apparently used the help of Overbury; Naunton, by September 1612, implied Overbury had as big a share in secretarial business as Lake.[40] Rochester did not, however, possess the whole of the Secretary's powers. Sir Thomas Lake kept the job of presenting bills for the king's signature, as he had done under Salisbury [41]; while much of the domestic side of the Secretaryship seems to have devolved onto the earl of Northampton, Lord Privy Seal, who took over the ordering of Privy Council business. Northampton also assumed the direction of the Treasury Commission, set up in the absence of a Lord Treasurer.

This *ad hoc* arrangement proved both durable and practical. Indeed, until early 1614, Rochester and Northampton worked as an administrative partnership, as Dr. Peck

---

[38] J.Wormald *Court, Kirk and Community : Scotland 1470-1625* (London, 1981)pp. 155-6; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 355, 11 June 1612.

[39] H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.90-1, mid-June 1612, Lake temporarily keeping the signet; B.L.Stowe MS 173 fo.24 (Whyte to Edmondes, 30 July 1612) — 'Rochester keapes all the Signet seales...and most dispatches are addressed unto hym from all partes'; SP14/70/20 (?July 1612), lord Sheffield to Rochester; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 372 (23 July 1612). P.R.Seddon "Robert Carr, earl of Somerset" *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 14 (1970) p. 56.

[40] B.L.Stowe MS 173 fo. 20 (Lake to Edmondes, 23 July 1612). H.M.C.*Buccleuch* I,113, 15 September 1612 : after Overbury's removal, Fenton's thought 'his Majesty will let the world see that ...Rochester can make his Majesty's dispatches without the help of Overbury' — H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* 51 (20 May 1613).

[41] S.O 3/5; Seddon *art.cit.* p.59.

has recently documented.[42] From Northampton's point of view, it became a securer basis for action than any arrangement which Salisbury had constructed with the Bedchamber, simply because Rochester was more powerful there than any of Salisbury's agents had been. Northampton revelled in the comparison :

> wear I so happy as ... to meete with my lo[rd] of Rochester upon theas hilles [Greenwich] I should hold my self more happy then the litell lord [Salisbury] that was so desirouse as he said at Bathe to spende his whole life without seperation from yo[u]r welche Earle... [Montgomery].[43]

But if circumstances forced Rochester into a close working relationship with the Howards, his personal ties with the Southampton group remained closer. Within days of Salisbury's death Southampton and his associate lord Sheffield were meeting in Rochester's chamber to discuss their admission to the Privy Council and Neville's appointment as Secretary. Until late in 1612 this seems to have been Rochester's (and Overbury's) favoured solution; then subsequently, when Neville's previous oppositionist record had clearly ruled him out, they transferred their backing to Southampton's other candidate, Ralph Winwood. But to begin with Winwood fared no better than Neville, for James had set his face firmly against the Southampton group; he was reported as saying that he would 'not have a secretarie imposed upon him by parlement'.[44]

Besides their apparent power to wreck parliaments, one reason for the prominence at this point of the Southampton group — largely 'outs' from the point of view of James's court — was probably Prince Henry's support for them. After the creation of his full — indeed lavish — household in early 1610, the prince established what looks rather like the reversionary courts of the Hanoverian Princes of Wales, embodying principles of bellicose protestantism very different from those summed up in James's persona as "peacemaker". In combination with his existing rights of Bedchamber access

---

[42] Peck *Northampton* (1982), especially pp.84 - 89.

[43] SP 14/70/21 (Northampton to Rochester, 1 August 1612).

[44] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 352 (27 May 1612), 358-9 (17 June 1612); despite James's forcefully expressed opposition, Rochester and Overbury persisted for months with Neville as candidate for Secretary.

— even though he was often not on the best of terms with his father — his admission to the Privy Council in October 1611 greatly increased his present influence. His death in November 1612 of course put an end to both present and future hopes, and forced Southampton and company to rely wholly on their contacts through Rochester to the king. Henry's death may have increased Rochester's personal prospects and freedom of action — he had not been popular with the prince. But it also removed from the Southampton group the comforting prospect of influence in reversion, which must have increased the pressure on Rochester from that side to deliver results.[45] Just as this was happening, observers began seriously to question what Rochester's rôle was now to be.

The division between king and favourite over the secretaryship was leading to a disturbing erosion of Rochester's standing. At the turn of the year 1612, his rôle was still limited to patronage broking and factional arbitration. It now appeared that if he wanted wider influence, he would have to go into partnership with one of the court groups outside the Bechamber. Rochester's inability to get the office of Master of the Horse for himself late in the year was a clear sign of this. Added to his indoor pre-eminence in the Bedchamber, the Mastership and its rights to outdoor attendance would have given him a theoretical stranglehold on access to the king. James apparently wanted the place to go to 'one who did continually attend his p[er]son', in contrast to Worcester, the incumbent inherited from Elizabeth. Rochester was unable to seal the bargain, however, probably because Pembroke had been promised the next major office to fall vacant. Rochester simply did not yet possess the independent weight of Pembroke — who of course had his brother to represent him in the Bedchamber.[46] Thus in early 1613 Chamberlain remarked that 'the world is of opinion that the Lord of Rochester is slowe every way as well as for

---

[45] J.W.Williamson *The Myth of the Conqueror; Prince Henry Stuart* (New York, 1976) pp.59-60, 126-9; S.Adams "Spain or the Netherlands..." in Tomlinson (ed.,) *Before the English Civil War* (London, 1983) p.91; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.41, 11 June 1612. On the prince's rights in the Bedchamber, above p.59.

[46] SP14/71/6, Rochester to Northampton, 8 October 1612. Pembroke and Rochester were past speaking between August and their reconciliation in November 1612 over this — Birch *Court and Times of James I* I, 191, 210. On the Master of the Horse, above p.52.

himself as for his frends, els wold he ere this have compassed and concluded for the maine place he shoots at'; while others thought, as Fenton noted, that Rochester 'has been so long in settling himself to one of the parties that now he cannot do it without some peril to himself'.[47]

Fenton disagreed with that view because he had an insider's knowledge of an imminent solution to James's (and Rochester's) problem; this, which became apparent during 1613, was to cut Rochester off from Southampton and then cement an alliance between Rochester and the Howards. Since the obstacle to both was Overbury, James arranged for his removal. In late April 1613 he was offered an embassy which it was known he would refuse and then imprisoned in the Tower for contempt. Five months later in September 1613 he was murdered. With his candidate Neville 'deprived of [his] best instrument', Southampton spent the summer abroad; when the king decided to visit him at Beaulieu in August, he had to return in a hurry to England, but he wrote to Winwood that 'till Things be otherwise settled, I could be as well pleased to be anywhere else'.[48] The Howards pressed home their advantage by clearing the way for Rochester's marriage to Suffolk's daughter Frances Howard. Overbury's murder was one step towards this, removing from Rochester's side a troublesome confidant who was 'truly very insolent, and...did much abuse the family of the Howards'.[49] Frances's divorce from the earl of Essex (heir to the leadership of the Southampton group) was the other. Both accomplished, the marriage was settled by October 1613.[50]

Much of the manoeuvring seems to have been aimed at getting Rochester to act as James wanted him to; personally, James had by all accounts a 'rooted hatred' of

---

[47] *Letters of Chamberlain* I,401, 7 January 1613; H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.52 (before June 1613 — n 22 above).

[48] Birch *Court and Times of James I* I, 248 (Lorkin to Puckering, 24 June 1613); 253 (30 June 1613). A.L.Rowse *Shakespeare's Southampton* (London,1965) p.216; Southampton summered in the Low Countries. *Winwood Memorials* III, 478, 6 August 1613.

[49] Goodman, *Court of King James I* I, 215.

[50] B.White *A Cast of Ravens* (London,1965); Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* Ch. XVI.

Overbury[51]; more generally, his experiences with parliament meant that of the 'tuo factions', it was 'the Howards', and all they stood for, '...to quhom his Majestie inclynes moste'.[52] Fenton from his unrivalled vantage-point saw Overbury's committal as a 'matter...meerlye from His Majesteis himselfe'; unable to find out from Rochester the reasons for the action, Fenton went to 'sume uthers' in the Bedchamber whom the king was using.[53] Rochester may even have been an innocent — if embarrassed — bystander in the business, but while implying this, Fenton thought that he would be a co-operative one — that he would be 'abill to forgett Overberrye before he offend the king'.[54] By October Fenton saw the results of the king's actions on two fronts; projects were multiplying under Northampton's direction, since it was newly apparent that 'it stiks in his stomake, this last Parlement', while Rochester had bent to the king's will and was 'more [in] a Howards courss then heirtofore he hes bein.'[55]

One reward for his so thorough compliance with James's wishes was his creation as earl of Somerset in November 1613. And if Somerset had run the king's way in allying with the Howards, the king now began to provide him with an independent power base similar to that of his old patron Dunbar, which might in time free him of dependence on either court faction. For some time James had been building up Somerset's position on the borders, particularly in the Durham region, where he seems to have been stepping into the shoes of the extinct Neville earls of Westmorland. In December 1613 he was also made

---

51 *Winwood Memorials* III, 478, Southampton to Winwood 6 August 1613. James indicated to Lake that he had 'long be[en] of mynd to have him out of coort'; SP14/72/146, Lake to Carleton, 19 May 1613.

52 H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.52 (before June 1613 — above, n 22).

53 H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.51, 20 May 1613; Fenton may have meant Pembroke's agents, Montgomery and Hay, or Haddington, Suffolk's man — or both groups.

54 H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.52 (as cited n22 above). On Overbury's arrest Rochester's secretary Packer told Winwood that Rochester 'knew nothing till all was done and gone, which...did much perplex him'; Pembroke and Neville advised him that evening how to carry himself; White *A Cast of Ravens* pp.49, 52. At his trial, Somerset was forced to admit contriving the scheme to get Overbury imprisoned, but this is by no means conclusive; Gardiner *History of England* II, 355.

55 H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.55, 27 October 1613.

Lord Treasurer of Scotland, Dunbar's old office.[56] He now seemed to Fenton, who should have known, to be at the peak of his influence; indeed Fenton thought total victory for that side virtually assured; Northampton would be made Lord Treasurer at Christmas 'for certain'.[57]

The king and — not entirely willingly perhaps — the favourite had seemingly come down on the side of one of the factions so clearly at odds in late 1612-early 1613. This should have fixed the Somerset/Howard axis as the dominant power at court : instead of stalemate, as before, Somerset, Northampton and Suffolk dominated Bedchamber, administration, the wider court and the day-to-day proceedings of the Council, while the Southampton group proper enjoyed little influence in the latter two, and virtually none in the former. Just as this happened in late 1613, however, circumstances conspired temporarily to loosen this stranglehold. The serious contemplation of a parliament in late 1613, and then the actual summons of one in early 1614 inevitably shifted the focus from the all-important Somerset and the Bedchamber, whom the Howards had recently made such an effort to win over, towards the Privy Council in arranging a programme. In these circumstances the day-to-day alignment of power at court was disrupted as a Scottish king, Bedchamber and favourite distanced themselves from the deliberations of the English Council on how to conduct an English parliament.

These manoeuvres resulted in an apparent split in the Howard group in pursuit of moderation and some realistic chance of a successful parliament. After the rejection of one extreme, with Overbury's removal and the latest exit from the stage of Southampton, it was Northampton, representing appropriately enough the other extreme with a polar opposite view of the king's problems, who was the main obstacle to factional peace. This perhaps explains why he never obtained the Lord Treasurership, rumoured to be his

---

56 Mervyn James *Family, Lineage and Civil Society : A Study of Society, Politics and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 1974) pp. 67-8; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 480-1, 14, 27 October 1613.

57 H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.56 (19 November 1613).

throughout 1612 and 1613; as long as any hope of a successful parliament remained, James avoided such an appointment.[58]

The settlement between Somerset and Suffolk was an essentially moderate one which comprehended other groups at court. In the beginning, it had been Ellesmere and Pembroke who formally offered Overbury the embassy he refused.[59] In June 1613 Ellesmere's co-operation was rewarded by his appointment to the Treasury Commission, which by his precedence as Lord Chancellor he headed until its dissolution in July 1614.[60] Pembroke was still in pursuit of a promised major office, to which appointments were still frozen; and so, in pursuit of this ambition, when Overbury's fall and Southampton's exit blocked one route to influence in mid-1613, he moved towards the centre : he and Suffolk were able to co-operate with Neville later in the year in bringing his proposals for a successful parliament to the Privy Council.[61] On a more personal level, Suffolk continued to cultivate his connections with the Cecilians. His sons lord Walden and Sir Thomas Howard, the latter of whom was about to marry Lady Burghley's daughter, were on very cordial terms with the still-loyal Cecilian Bedchamberman lord Hay in March 1614; Suffolk gave Hay's confidant Sir Henry Rich his 'warrant and letters' for the seat at Norwich for the coming parliament. Hay himself was rumouredly in line for a councillorship and an earldom in late 1613.[62]

By contrast, Northampton saw Hay — for personal reasons but also because of the views he represented — as a man whom 'my harte can never love nor my tongue

---

[58] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 358, 17 June 1612. Fenton thought his appointment likely in July 1612 because of Carr's support. (H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.42, 14 July 1612).

[59] SP14/72/146, Lake to Carleton, 19 May 1613.

[60] W.J. Jones, "Ellesmere and Politics, 1603-17", in H.S.Reinmuth (ed.), *Early Stuart Studies : Essays in Honour of D.H.Willson* (Minneapolis, 1970)p. 41.

[61] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.51, 20 May 1613; T.L.Moir *The Addled Parliament of 1614* (Oxford, 1958)pp. 67-8; P.R.Seddon "Robert Carr, earl of Somerset", *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 14 (1970) pp. 61-2.

[62] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 516, 518 (3 March, 17 March, 1614). Suffolk's intervention failed — J.K.Gruenfelder *Influence in Early Stuart Elections 1604-1640* (Columbus, Ohio, 1981)pp. 137-8. *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 488.

entertain...without torture'. He was also inflexible in his aversion to policies; he never seems to have considered compromise with Neville and those who claimed to be able to 'undertake' to manage parliament in return for office and concessions, and upbraided Suffolk for co-operating too much with them on the Privy Council. In short, Somerset and Suffolk came together in 1613 and regarded as essential broad consultations with as many shades of opinion as possible in order to find a solution to the same problem — finance — which had dogged and destroyed Salisbury. Northampton was left out in the cold by this both personally and in his views on policy.[63]

The decision to call a Parliament early in 1614 therefore represented a defeat for Northampton. In July and August 1613 he had been able to get the matter shelved, advising James that 'he should in no case call together and join his enemies...for such were those of the parlement, that would doe nothing which hee desired, as he had seen by experience'.[64] Financial necessity made this high line untenable. Projects had failed to fill the financial gap; Northampton had to admit that the threats made in 1610, by Salisbury as well as himself, of extracting increased revenue by pressing the prerogative had 'all turned to smoke and nothing'.[65]

In this extremity, Neville's ideas probably encouraged James to try again.[66] The Council in debating preparations for parliament seems to have taken Neville's suggestions as a basis. But in practice, James sought a compromise by combining the

---

[63] B.L. Cotton MS Titus CVI, fo 123 r, and Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 52. Northampton had other feuds, with Lisle (Titus CVI, fo. 83v [lt.1612-early 1613?]) and Pembroke (fo. 91v, n.d.). Peck *Northampton* pp.35-6, 62, on his attitude to them and Southampton. Moir *Addled Parliament* p.68.

[64] Quoted in Moir *Addled Parliament* p.26, from Digby's report of an intercepted dispatch of Sarmiento's from London to Madrid.

[65] D.H.Willson "Summoning and Dissolving Parliament, 1603-25", *American Historical Review* 45 (1940), p.287 (n 25).

[66] SP14/76/22, Council to James, 16 February 1614; Willson, *art.cit.* p.288.

high line of Northampton with something of the '*quid pro quo*' recommended by Southampton and Neville.[67]

In the event, if a relatively broad "centrist" Somerset/Suffolk coalition had come to dominate the court, the spokesmen of the two extremes were still able to wreck the parliament. Looking back, Bacon attributed the failure to the 'distraction [which] had entered into the King's house and Council and amongst his great men'.[68] This 'distraction', both before the summons and during this Parliament's brief existence, centered on the very issues which had dogged the 1604-10 Parliament, and which had since made the very summoning of Parliament into a contentious issue. Three broad groups emerged, broadly corresponding to those at court. Southampton was now clearly collaborating with Sandys in the Commons, and seems to have orchestrated a 'commonwealth' attack on impositions. Pembroke, with his brother in the Bedchamber, occupied a centre position; after having previously flirted with Southampton, and Neville, he abandoned that side when it came to divisions in the Lords and instead voted with Suffolk and the centrist Privy Councillors. Northampton and other conservative councillors were unconvinced that a parliament, after the accumulated failures of 1604-10, could now be managed to produce a financial settlement acceptable to the king, and now Northampton's wrecking tactics were to make this prophesy apparently self-fulfilling.[69]

The very success of those tactics indicates the continuing importance of certain key issues; for the 1614 Parliament was finally killed off by the same issue which had also brought the previous parliament to an abrupt end : English resentment at James's exclusively Scottish Bedchamber. John Hoskins had joined in the earlier attack; this time he went far further : he insisted that King James's Scots should undergo the same fate as

---

[67] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 525, 14 April 1614; C.Roberts and O.Duncan "The Parliamentary Undertaking of 1614" *English Historical Review* 93 (1978) p.490.

[68] Spedding (ed.) *Letters and Life of Bacon* V, 182 (Advice on calling another Parliament, 1615).

[69] T.L.Moir *The Addled Parliament of 1614* (Oxford, 1958) pp.110, 118-9, 121; K.Sharpe *Sir Robert Cotton 1586-1631* (Oxford, 1979)p.161; above pp.103-4.

King Canute's Danes when that other foreigner became king of England, and be sent home; otherwise he invoked the threat of a Sicilian Vespers.[70]

The speech, there is little doubt, was deliberately planted, most likely by Northampton through his client Cornwallis. But the electrifying effectiveness of the plant depended on the real sensitivity and importance of the issue. As against the 'revisionist' position, Dr. Hirst has argued for the continuity of principled opposition to impositions from 1610 to 1614. The same, it is now clear, goes for the Scots Bedchamber.[71] Indeed contemporaries paired the two issues and were uncertain which should have priority : when Sir Roger Wilbraham came to account for the Commons' refusal to grant subsidies in 1610, he put 'the facility for favourites to spend the King's treasure' before 'the impositions on merchandise, which [are] unlimited'; while in 1614 Cornwallis 'heard continually in London and out of the country what dissonant voices and distracted conceits were of grievances intended to be preferred as well concerning impositions, as the great number of Scots that are said to reside in this kingdom'. Chamberlain referred to three issues in this parliament as 'dangerous points', namely 'taking away impositions, restoring silenced ministers, and removing the Scotts'.[72]

Once more James, having been seduced by hope, came back to reality and a post-parliamentary world of failure more serious than in 1610. This time his reaction was less sure; from July 1614 until late 1615 there followed a period of vacillation on James's part which began to be resolved only when at last he '[knew] his mind better' in April 1615 — though even then Fenton thought he would 'not forgive himself for some errors'.[73]

---

[70] Moir *op.cit.*, 138.

[71] Peck *Northampton* pp.205-10 fails to displace Northampton as prime suspect as instigator of the plant. Note that *ibid.* p 209, Cornwallis's demand that the Englishmen in the '*Privy* Chamber' should be increased, should read 'Bedchamber' — SP14/77/43. D.Hirst "The Place of Principle" *Past and Present* 92 (1981) especially pp.83, 86-7, 89 : *idem* "Parliament, Law and War in the 1620's" *Historical Journal* 23 (1980)pp. 457-8.

[72] *Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham* ed.Scott (Camden, 1902) p.105; SP14/77/43; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 540 (30 June 1614).

[73] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.60, 19 April 1615.

iv) July 1614 - Autumn 1615 : A Fall from the Height of Fortune.

With parliament dissolved, politics became once more court politics. On the one hand James apparently abandoned the 'wait and see' tactics which he had followed since Salisbury's death and settled his offices on the centre group dominated by Somerset and Suffolk, despite the parliamentary failure of their approach. On the other hand, he still recognised the need to make contact with the 'parliament mutineers'. Such indecision between apparently contradictory courses of action was to continue for over a year.

The Secretaryship had at last been formally settled a week before parliament met. Here Somerset was still personally bound to the Southampton group, to Neville and Winwood in particular, in the matter of pure patronage of the office, although by now the formal 'undertaking' to manage Parliament — the original rationale for their candidacy — was a dead letter. Suffolk offered to support Neville just before Winwood's appointment was made; this is comprehensible in the light of his dabbling with Pembroke and Neville in the "undertaking", but it caused tension with Somerset, his influence at last bearing fruit, who was anxious that last-minute interventions should not delay matters.[74] Winwood was eventually something of a compromise candidate : at once personally obliged to Somerset, previously known to James as a Master of Requests[75], and now apparently detached from the powerless Southampton, unsullied by parliamentary experience, and not directly tainted by the now abandoned 'undertaking'.

His appointment made little difference to Somerset's exercise of the office. By November 1613 Fenton thought that 'there shalbe one or two Secreterryes; but Summersett

---

[74] On Suffolk and Neville, Seddon "Robert Carr" *Renaiss. and Mod. Studies* 14 (1970) pp.62-3.

[75] Somerset procured his warrant : SO 3/6, April 1614. On Winwood's mastership, see *D.N.B.*

will keepe all forraine besines in his owin hands'.[76] And the office was indeed filled in name only; although sworn 'Principal Secretary of State', in fact, as his patent of appointment said, Winwood was to be mere assistant to Somerset, 'as Secretary Herbert to Robert Cecil'. This was no more than a ticket to enter the fierce competition for a share in the now considerably devolved secretarial duties.[77] Chamberlain accurately reported that 'yt be publikely bruited that he hath the place upon bare conditions, as not to have seales, nor to open packets' . Two weeks after appointment Winwood in fact obtained Secondary Herbert's court lodging, after some contestation with him, Lake and Sir Julius Caesar.[78] So while Lake retained most of the procuring of the sign manual to bills, Somerset, still simply as a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, kept both the signet and the foreign correspondence.[79]

Salisbury's greater spoils, and Northampton's offices (vacated by his death in June 1614) of Lord Privy Seal and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports were now without further dispute bestowed; on 10 July Suffolk was appointed Treasurer, while Somerset took over his Lord Chamberlainship as well as the exercise of the Keepership of the Privy Seal and the Lord Wardenship. Since he was already a Gentleman of the Bedchamber and held the lion's share of the Secretaryship with the custody of the signet, the favourite

---

[76] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.56, 19 November 1613. Cf. *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 473, 9 September 1613 when it was thought that Carr would himself keep the office 'and commit the managing of ordinary matters to underlings and substitutes.'

[77] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 521, 31 March 1614; Seddon, *art.cit.* 64, quoting Winwood's patent. Chamberlain had thought in June 1613 that secretarial 'businesses are now parted among divers that were wont wholly to relie upon one, and they are loth to lose that hold of valuinge themselves in the kings favor and having accesse to his eare' — *Letters* I, 455.

[78] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 532, 7 April; I, 526, 14 April; I, 554, 4 August 1614, still in conflict with Lake.

[79] Below, p.166 for Winwood's gaining the signet. By July 1614 Winwood was making some impression on procurements, but he was until late 1615 a junior partner to Lake (before January 1616 merely Latin Secretary and Signet Clerk, though made a councillor in April 1614); SO 3/6, April 1614 - December 1615. Carr warned off Winwood in July 1614 from sending instructions to ambassadors; Carr 'could do whatsoever was requisite therein himself' (Birch, *Court and Times of James I* I, 336, Lorkin to Puckering, 21 July 1614).

became, for eighteen months, Lord High Everything Else — as James himself was to observe in his comprehensive survey of Somerset's regime :

> do not all court graces and place come through your office as Chamberlain, and rewards through your father-in-law's that is Treasurer ? Do not you two, as it were, hedge in all the court with a manner of necessity to depend upon you ? And have you not besides your own infinite privacy with me, together with the main offices you possess [i.e Secretary, Lord Privy Seal, Lord Warden] , your nephew [William Carr, a groom] in my Bedchamber, besides another far more active than he in court practices ? [probably Henry Gibb, also a Groom] . And have you not one of your nearest kinsmen [Sir Robert Carr of Ancrum] who loves not to be idle in my son's Bedchamber ? [80]

How did this régime function? Somerset's power stemmed from his personal dominance of the Bedchamber; indeed, it is striking how highly Bedchamber appointments figure in the king's scale of priorities, as they certainly did in his favourite's. Somerset acted to consolidate this dominance. James's conservatism apparently ruled out the appointment of new Gentlemen, but Somerset (and Suffolk) managed to co-operate with at least one existing power, John Ramsay viscount Haddington, whose brother William, Groom of the Bedchamber, must also be reckoned an associate.[81] For the rest, Hay and Montgomery could not be relied upon after July 1614 and the exclusion of Pembroke from office, but ignoring them must have seemed feasible enough given Somerset's treatment of the department's superior officers. Fenton, the Groom of the Stool, was an infrequent attender, perhaps ill; he was absent from court in October 1613, absent and 'ignorant of things' in September 1614, had been 'in great extremity' (probably political rather than medical) during that summer, and had only 'become an attendant again' by late February 1615. Lennox, royal duke and First Nobleman, had been reduced to an unseemly scramble for precedence with the favourite late in 1613.[82] In addition, from 1613 onwards, Carr had begun to emulate Dunbar in placing his

---

80 G.P.V.Akrigg (ed.) *Letters of King James VI and I* (London, 1984) p.340. Cf. *The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham* ed.Scott (Camden, Misc. X, London, 1902) p. 115.

81 For the best evidence of these connections, see their reactions to Carr's fall, below p.169.

82 H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.55, 56, 59, 60. *Ibid.* p. 53 on Lennox, appointed earl of Richmond in the English peerage to compensate for Carr's English earldom of Somerset.

dependents as Grooms of the Bedchamber. Henry Gibb's appointment in July 1613 is the first such example (a symptom of Carr's new power after having renounced Overbury), his nephew William Carr's in November 1614 the only other.[83] The formation of Prince Charles's household in July 1613 also came opportunely for the exercise of Carr's new influence; he had his kinsman and namesake Sir Robert Carr (of Ancrum) appointed an important third Gentleman of the prince's Bedchamber, alongside the predictably re-appointed long-serving attendants Sir Robert Carey and Sir James Fullarton; he also appointed one of the six Grooms of Charles's Bedchamber.[84]

In the régime's control of the outer court, the co-operation between Somerset and Suffolk is pre-eminently visible over the Lord Chamberlaincy. Suffolk as Chamberlain ensured that key appointments (such as those of Gentlemen Usher of the Privy Chamber) went to his men. In 1613, after Carr had come off the fence, he then seems to have helped him with Privy Chamber appointments and patronage. William Uvedale, Carr's 'chief favourite', was knighted, appointed Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, and finally secured the reversion to the Treasurership of the Chamber vacated by Overbury. Overbury's brother-in-law Sir John Lidcott was also appointed Gentleman. The appointment of Richard Calverley as Privy Chamber Groom in November 1613 was probably also significant.[85] When Somerset took over the Chamberlaincy, similar concern with outer court appointments continued. Jerome Hawley was appointed a Privy Chamber

---

[83] E351/1809; Henry was son to John Gibb, Groom of the Bedchamber since 1603; the father was paid until 1618, but his son probably replaced him soon after appointment. Henry was later a staunch Carr supporter; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 609, 625-6. On William Carr, below, p.156.

[84] T.Birch *The Court and Times of James I* I, 256-7, Lorkin to Puckering, 15 July 1613; above, p.16 on Carey's appointment. SP 14/72/111, final list of Charles's household including Carr of Ancrum and the Groom Andrew Pitcairn; earlier drafts omitted both (SP 14/72/107-109).

[85] See above p.27 n 52. Calverley was appointed on 6 November 1613 (E 351/1809). It was later complained that Mr Calverley had only been made 'a deputie lieutenant in [Northumberland] under his L[ordshi]p' because he was 'a fitt instrument to serve [Somerset's faction's] turne'; SP14/83/26, Henry Sanderson to Winwood, 12 November 1615.

Groom in December 1614, the warrant procured by Somerset; he was arrested at Somerset's fall.[86]

But if the potential to dispose of such official patronage was useful enough, the Lord Chamberlaincy was probably not as positive an asset to Somerset's hold on the court as the Mastership of the Horse might have been. The outer chamber's comparative insignificance has already been discussed, and Somerset's power still rested in his hold on the king; here the Chamberlaincy was of little value. One observer thought that Somerset took the office merely because Suffolk could not afford to move up to the Treasurership 'without leaving a friend in his room, [lest] he might peradventure take cold at his back'; while James himself probably had his own purposes in appointing his first Scotsman to a major English office so soon after the renewed attacks on the Scots in the Addled Parliament.[87] There were even problems with Somerset's execution of his duties : after six months in office, in January 1615, it was still obvious that Suffolk was the dominant partner; the new Lord Chamberlain caused a major dispute between the Venetian and Spanish ambassadors which had to be sorted out by Suffolk, while on the same occasion the Florentine agent was placed in his seat to view a masque jointly 'by the Lord Chamberlaine and the Lord Treasurer there present'.[88] On such occasions Suffolk was effectively exercising both offices. The combination of Somerset's comparative inexperience and his nationality cannot have helped.

Somerset's use of his exercise of the Keepership of the Privy Seal and Lord Wardenship of the Cinque Ports seems to have been similarly unenterprising, his tenure of the offices provisional and negative. Hardly any evidence of his activities as Lord Warden appears to survive.[89] The Privy Seal (in combination with the Signet which he still kept)

---

[86] E 351/1810; SO 3/6 December 1614; *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 332.

[87] L.Pearsall Smith (ed.), *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton* (2 vols., Oxford, 1966) II, 41; Birch *Court and Times of James I* I, 336.

[88] Sir John Finet *Finetti Philoxenis...* (London, 1656)pp.19-24. Finet also noted other blunders. On the wider significance of Somerset's Chamberlaincy, above p.16.

[89] For his appointment to both offices, Birch, *Court and Times of James I* I, 337, 21 July 1614.

theoretically gave him near-total dominance over the grants mechanism, especially in his power to stop grants. Northampton had pushed this stopping power to its extreme[90], but even then, such activity was of limited significance; Northampton seems to have concentrated his attention on personal *bêtes noires* — the Ordnance office, grants to Nottingham (both personal and for the Navy), and in early 1614 Suffolk's warrants as Lord Chamberlain (an indication of the split in the family before the Addled parliament). Somerset relaxed the Seal's grip on such grants; Nottingham wrote to him in July 1614 asking him now to pass a grant previously stayed by Northampton; Somerset apparently let it through.[91] Despite the apparent intention to abolish the seal in mid-1614, Somerset certainly carried it with him and applied it. Edward Reynolds, a Privy Seal Clerk, implied as much when he wrote in September 1615 that the profits of the Privy Seal Office were much greater when it was settled in London.[92] But the Seal was more a dignity carrying precedence and some profit than a means of political control; Somerset was merely holding on to the office only until he could get his nominee appointed to it (which in 1615 he failed to do).

Thus, for all his apparently spectacular personal combination of offices, Somerset relied heavily on his partner Suffolk; indeed, between mid-1614 and late 1615 the two formed the familiar pattern of Bedchamber agent and conciliar bureaucrat working in tandem. Wilbraham remarked at this time that Suffolk was at his highest pitch, notably in 'making councellors & bering chief sway at Councell table and in court'.[93] In contrast to Salisbury and Northampton's dealings with the Bedchamber, hardly any of the

---

[90] L.Peck *Northampton* p.152; at his busiest he stayed 26 grants between May 1613 and June 1614.

[91] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 261, 15 July 1608. Peck *op. cit.* p.152 argues that Northampton was acting in the interests of reform; it is difficult to see how holding up Lord Chamberlain Suffolk's grants to falconers and musicians (*loc. cit.* n29), or to Nottingham's Sir John Trevor for pipes at Windsor (*loc. cit.* n30), helped this. SP14/77/73, Nottingham to Somerset, ?July 1614.

[92] Birch *Court and Times of James I* I, 337, Lorkin to Puckering 21 July 1614. SP 14/81/121, Edward Reynolds to Francis Mills, 30 September 1615.

[93] *Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham* ed. Scott (Camden, Misc. X,1902) p. 115.

Somerset/Suffolk correspondence survives. From scraps of evidence it seems that Suffolk was taking an active rôle in organising Privy Council business, certainly collaborating with Ellesmere[94]; while it is clear from attendance lists that Somerset almost never came to Council meetings (in contrast to Fenton, at this time powerless in the Bedchamber, who often did).[95] But Suffolk's dominance of the Council was probably retrospectively exaggerated by Wilbraham for effect; in fact it was incomplete, and depended both on the co-operation of men like Ellesmere and Pembroke, and the forebearance of as important a figure as Abbot who had been since mid-1613 (over the Essex divorce) 'exceiding pa[r]tiall against the Chamberlaine [Suffolk]'. Although Suffolk had Greville appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his son-in-law lord Knollys Master of the Wards in October 1614, he and his faction were still heavily outnumbered on the Council.[96] Even though James had given it office, the Somerset/Suffolk partnership was apparently incapable of offering any constructive solution to the problems left unsolved by the most recent parliamentary fiasco.

The key to these limits on Somerset and Suffolk's actions seems to be James's scepticism about the possibility of solving his financial problems, which by now was verging on total negativism and disillusion. In contrast to their earlier optimism in dealing with Neville, by mid-1615 Somerset and Suffolk had come to regard parliament as a danger to be avoided. Several days of Council debate in September 1615 indicated that a majority of Councillors, vocally including Lake, thought a successful session still possible with suitable preparations; Suffolk however disagreed, and Somerset was not even present. After another long look in November 1615, James abandoned the

---

[94] N.L.S. Denmilne MSS 33.1.14 Vol. 31 No. 23, Suffolk to John Murray, which I date to 1 February 1615; Suffolk refers to ensuring full attendance of Councillors, without mentioning Abbot; he was conferring mostly with Ellesmere on 'the king's business in hand'.

[95] *A.P.C.* XXXIII(1613-14), XXXIV(1614-15), *passim.*

[96] Wilbraham exaggerated Suffolk's dominance to heighten the effect of Carr's fall at the height of fortune. H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.53, 15 August 1613.

parliamentary option.[97] Thus on the home front, Somerset and Suffolk were given the task of holding the fort, which, in terms of practical finance, meant more projects and more expenditure control; a negative arrangement to manage the consequences of cumulative failure.[98]

On foreign policy, there was perhaps a little more room for manoeuvre. After Winwood's appointment, Somerset took measures to tighten his own secretarial grip; on appointment as Lord Chamberlain, Somerset had apparently told the Keeper of the State Papers on the king's authority that he should 'lett noe man see any thing in the office of [the king's] papers, unless [he] had first a warrant from [the king] or himself'.[99] What Somerset did with his secretarial power, where much foreign business was carried '*in scrinio pectoris* between the King and...Somerset'[100] was however heavily conditioned by domestic reality. One solution to the financial impasse suggested itself as Prince Charles reached his fourteenth, presently marriageable, year; a Spanish match bringing a large dowry. In January 1614 Somerset made secret overtures to Sarmiento about this.[101] They produced no concrete result, however, and the thread was evidently resumed only a year later, when Somerset had acquired the services of Northampton's former secretary Sir Robert Cotton. He chiefly handled the matter between January and August 1615; a draft treaty was formulated, and French negotiations broken off in September. Cotton

---

[97] D.H.Willson "Summoning and Dissolving Parliament 1603-25", *American Historical Review* 45 (1940) pp.290-2; J.Spedding (ed.,) *The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon* (7 vols, London 1861-74) V, 194-207.

[98] On Suffolk and projects — particularly Cockayne — see Prestwich *Cranfield* pp.162-70. On the Privy Purse in finance during the period covered by this chapter, below Ch. 7, sectn. i)., pp. 203-6.

[99] Above, n 79; SP14/86/3 (*CSPDomestic* XI (1623-25), [Addenda, James I] 548), 4 January 1616; Keeper Sir Thomas Wilson then asked if Pembroke, the current Lord Chamberlain, should have similar control of the papers; the answer was that for secret matters the king's warrant — 'eyther fro[m] his Ma[jes]tyes own mouth or by my Lord Haye' was necessary. In June 1616 Wilson sent Hay abstracts of marriage treaties (SP14/92/70); Carr was earlier therefore securing such precedents for the prince's match — see below, n103.

[100] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 503, 3 February 1614.

[101] Seddon *Ren. and Mod. Studies* 14 (1970) p.61 (citing Gardiner *History* II, 223-6).

apparently told Sarmiento in April that Somerset was 'trying to take the negotiation out of [Digby's] hands..., that he himself will obtain authority if it passes through his own hands, and that he will thereby preserve the favour of the king, of which he has suspicions'. By June he was claiming that Somerset had 'set his rest upon [the negotiation], and had gained over the Duke of Lennox' in persuading the king to a Spanish rather than French match.[102] Then Somerset's fall brought the ignominious official repudiation of his negotiations with Sarmiento, and Cotton's imprisonment.[103] It is difficult to say how far Somerset's men in the prince's Bedchamber aided him in these secret dabblings in Charles's marriage. But no more than dabblings they remained; in the end merely a desperate attempt to keep hold of the king's favour.

No doubt this was partly because, as Sarmiento thought in early 1614, the time for serious negotiation was not yet right; perhaps also partly because Somerset's fall stopped the line of negotiation prematurely; but over all hangs a general air of indecision, of being 'slow for himself and all his friends' which pervades much of Somerset's dealings. In all his ability to control the Bedchamber, and place his dependants there, was extremely limited and came very late in his career. He never began to use his place in the Bedchamber to control the Sign Manual, as Buckingham later did so obsessively : instead he left the business in Lake's hands. His custody of the seals seems in this sense rather empty; after 1614, the great officers who had based much of their power on them, Salisbury and Northampton, were dead, and were not replaced. In collecting the signet and Privy Seal for himself, Somerset may have been looking to the past for his yardstick of their importance. In fact the seals had become relatively empty badges of office, perquisites to be squabbled for (as Winwood's behaviour would shortly demonstrate)

---

[102] S.R.Gardiner "On Certain Letters of Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar", *Archaeologia* XLI (1867)pp. 158, 163-4. Lennox headed the commission treating for the French match.

[103] K.Sharpe *Sir Robert Cotton, 1586-1631* (Oxford, 1979)pp. 130-33. Carr asked Thomas Wilson for notes on the treaty of marriage between Arthur and Catherine of Aragon, in an undated letter probably written after mid-1614.

rather than instruments of power. His use of his personal position in the Bedchamber to counsel the king and take a rôle in the Spanish negotiations was also limited, and came even later than his other inititaives; it was again negative and defensive, a panic reaction; and like the rest of his schemes, it was to end shortly in defeat.

That defeat had little accidental about it. It stemmed largely from James's determination, even while apparently heaping offices onto Somerset and Suffolk, to keep open his contacts with other counsels. The Somerset/Suffolk monopoly aroused an opposition that was as vociferous as it was self-interested. If before the parliament father and son-in-law had consulted widely with Pembroke, Neville and company, after its failure and their accession to office their consultations narrowed again. Most ominous of all was that Pembroke, through the appointment of Somerset and Suffolk, had been disappointed once more of his promised major office. The pair tried to get Pembroke the Mastership of the Horse, with the incumbent Worcester moving to Lord Privy Seal; but Worcester remained uncooperative, and Pembroke unplacated.[104] Others had their own grievances, the variety of which was anatomised by Sir John Holles with *ex parte* disdain : apart from Pembroke, there was Southampton, disappointed since 1611 of a Councillorship; Lake, of an office to lend weight to his access to the king and place on the Council; Fenton, of a suit to license wool; Arundel, of Northampton's legacy; and Winwood, once Somerset's candidate, now hostile through being denied 'the seals, the badge of a principall secretary'. The post-Addled parliament régime was too narrowly based to offer any hope of resolving all of these frustrations. There seemed one answer : the promotion of a new favourite.[105]

But such external forces needed help from within to storm the citadel, and in this sense two simple factors account for Somerset's fall; James's willingness to look at

---

[104]SP14/71/6, 8 October 1612; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 542 (30 June 1614); Birch *Court and Times of James I* I, 336 (21 July 1614).

[105] P.R.Seddon (ed.) "The Letters of John Holles, Vol. I", *Thoroton Society* XXXI(1975) p.74 (18 July 1615); he thought Fenton, Arundel and Lake mainly opposed to Suffolk.

alternative counsels even as he bestowed all the major vacant offices on Somerset and Suffolk; and Somerset's incompetent handling of James's continuing open-mindedness, amounting to paranoia. From this situation eventually flowed the public implication of Somerset in Overbury's murder. (The fact that Suffolk, against whom the evidence was probably equally telling, escaped the latter fate and survived for another three years in office points to the importance of Somerset's personal failure in handling the king.)

Only eight weeks after the collapse of the Addled parliament, in August 1614, James noticed George Villiers at court. James was so interested in Villiers that his backers almost succeeded in getting him straight away appointed — with sensational speed — a Groom of the Bedchamber.[106] It was thus all Somerset could do to block Villiers's immediate appointment to the Bedchamber by having his own nephew William Carr appointed in November 1614. Instead Villiers was sworn a Cupbearer — a Privy Chamber position — probably also in November 1614, despite Somerset, as Lord Chamberlain, technically being able to stop even that appointment. Villiers's backers are traditionally supposed to have been Pembroke and Lake; Montgomery probably pressed home the suit.[107]

For all the panoply of offices that he enjoyed, Somerset was obviously desperately unsure of the king at this point, only four months after his apparent victory. Time only raised fresh spectres of suspicion and doubt. A month after these events, Fenton sensed the change; he reported that 'great emulations growes' and that 'matters is not like to stand as they are';

---

[106] He would have been the first Englishman so appointed, and only the second (after Montgomery) in the whole department.

[107] *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* ed.J.O.Halliwell (2 vols., London, 1845) I, 86, Pembroke (cf. *ibid.* I, 147; at Cambridge in 1618-20, D'Ewes knew the son of Southampton, also one of Villiers's most important backers). For Lake, D.Lloyd *The Statesmen and Favourites of England since the Reformation* (London,1665) pp. 552, 614 (cf. *D.N.B* on the author; the unique naming of Lake in his account of Villiers's rise is probably more than mere invention, despite his reputation for inaccuracy.) *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 559 (24 November 1614) for Carr's blocking of Villiers — probably when Villiers was appointed a Cupbearer.

> His Majesty...will make joyse [choice] of new servants, not to the overthrow of his owld, but that thaye maye bothe conteste weill anewche, and as I think not to the prejudice of onye of them if thaye shall not seem repugnant or cross to his will[108]

Fenton the king-watcher saw this clearly; Somerset, however, was disturbed at the turn of events and now, by his angry protests, indeed crossed James's will. In January 1615, James wrote a well-known letter upbraiding Somerset for his behaviour. Somerset had apparently gone so far as to threaten James with physical violence. James — quite disingenuously, given Fenton's clarity about his purposes a month earlier — insisted that Somerset's fears were groundless;

> I never knew, nor could find...anie appearance of anie such court faction as ye have apprehended;...so farre was I ever from overseeing or directly feeding of it (if I had apprehended it), as I...would have runne upon it with my feete, as upone fire, to have extinguished it, if I could have seen anie sparkle of it.[109]

But even James's re-assurances went some way to suggest that, as Fenton had earlier observed, 'where there is mutche smoke there must be sume fire' [110];

> ...having delivered my mind as fully to Maye as ye could have wished[;]...having quyte turned my countenance from Grahme, the lyk whairof I never did to any man without a knowin offense[;]...having receaved your nephew in my bedde chamber...,I did surelie exspect that the ydle talk would weare out lyk the Pope's cursing (especiallie seeing my owne hairt knew it to be without a grownde).[111]

If James was honest in protesting that there was nothing to Somerset's fears, then those fears must have become self-fulfilling. Humphrey May, a Groom of the Privy Chamber, had since mid-1611 had regular access to the king through managing the despatch of Irish business. In 1615 he was prominent as a Villiers promoter; his rise was to be a consequence of Somerset's fall, and by November it was said that he could 'make any honest suit or suitor disliked by the king'.[112] Sir John Graham, a Gentleman of the

---

[108] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.58, 23 December 1614.

[109] G.P.V.Akrigg *The Letters of James VI and I* (London, 1984)pp. 340 ff.

[110] H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.57, 6 November 1614.

[111] Akrigg *Letters of James VI and I* pp.340 ff.

[112] SO 3/5, 8 August 1611; cf. SP14/72/18, 28 January 1613, May complaining to Lake of the trials of Signet clerkship and attendance on the king — he had apparently been substituting briefly for Lake. Weldon said May acted as intermediary between Carr and Villiers in August 1615, when, instead of accepting reconciliation, Carr threatened to break Villiers's neck if he could; Scott *Secret History* I, 406-7.

Privy Chamber, was at first the most important advisor and promoter of George Villiers.[113] James was plainly feeling guilty; his taking action over May and Graham, and his special pleading about the admission of Somerset's nephew to the Bedchamber (in Somerset's view only necessary because of Villiers), shows this.

On the other hand, Somerset's behaviour gave James plenty of ammunition. He complained of Somerset's distrust, his 'fiery boutardes', his 'doggit sullaine behaviour', together with Somerset's 'long creeping back and withdrawing yourself from lying in my chamber, notwithstanding my many hundred tymes earnest soliciting you to the contrary' — part of Somerset's duties, of course, as Gentleman of the Bedchamber. And above all James was annoyed that Somerset suspected that he no longer trusted him;

> I am farre from thinking of anie possibilitie of anie man ever to come within many degrees of your trust with me, as I must ingenuously confesse ye have deserved more trust and confidence of me than ever anie man did, –in secrecie above all fleshe... ; ...and in these points I confesse I never saw anie come towards your merite; I meane in the points of ane inwardlie trustie freind and servant.

James was recognising something that those close to him had long been aware of — that Somerset's power with the king was unprecedented. Fenton was best placed of all to observe this. In June 1612 Fenton thought Rochester 'greater [with James] then onye that ever I did see'; in November that 'his power is greater than onye that ever I have seen in his place'; a year later 'more absolute then ever onye that I have ather hard of or did see my selfe'.[114]

But if unprecedented, Somerset's power was limited and confined — apart from the desperate attempt in 1615 to intervene in the Spanish negotiations — mainly to patronage matters. And if James had been willing to help his old favourite in blocking Villiers (which indeed was how he saw it), he was less convinced as 1615 wore on about Somerset's other schemes. The most important of these centred on the office of Lord Privy Seal. After Worcester stubbornly refused to take it in exchange for his Mastership of the

---

[113] Sir Henry Wotton, "A Short View of the Life and Death of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham" in T.Park, ed., *Harleian Miscellany* (10 vols, London 1808-13) VIII, 614.
[114] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.41, 46, 56.

Horse, Somerset instead campaigned to have his own candidate, Thomas Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, appointed to the Council as Lord Privy Seal. By the time the campaign had clearly failed in mid-September 1615, the new factional system that Fenton had seen at the turn of 1614 was established; Chamberlain saw that Bilson's consolatory appointment to the Council 'beeing carried at last (after so many difficulties and delays, and so much contestation) showes that the balance holdes reasonablie without inclining over much either way' between the two sides.[115]

On one side of that balance stood Somerset and Suffolk; on the other, George Villiers's backers, who had struck their decisive blow on 23 April 1615 by at last getting him appointed to the Bedchamber. This was apparently the result of a carefully-planned strategy, master-minded (according to his own account) by George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury. Queen Anne was won over[116], and it was arranged that she should beg of the king first to knight the young man and then appoint him a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. The *dénouement* came in the queen's Bedchamber, with Villiers carefully positioned in an adjoining room. Etiquette, however, excluded both Villiers's backers and Somerset himself as Lord Chamberlain. Instead, in accordance with the strict letter of the regulations, James was attended only by Fenton, Groom of the Stool. Somerset still tried to hold things up; as Abbot recounted it, after James's having knighted Villiers with the prince's sword, 'when the king gave order to swear him of the Bedchamber, Somerset, who was near, importuned the king with a message, that he might be onely sworn a Groom; but myself and others that were at the door, sent to her Majesty, that she should perfect her work, and cause him to be sworn a Gentleman'. Clearly, these messages were sent in from the Privy Gallery, where Villiers rushed to thank Abbot as

---

[115] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 614, 15 September 1615.

[116] Fenton noted on 2 March that James and Anne were 'never in better tearmes and lyking' than now, and on the 27th that 'she is the causs that some men eates there meate in better ordoure then utherwayes thaye wold doe'; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.59.

soon as he had 'got loose' from the ceremonies.[117] Fenton, back in regular attendance after his absence the previous year, to whom James's order to swear in Villiers must have been addressed, was perhaps the key figure in the plot. Four days in advance he forecast the outcome to his cousin : 'I think it may so fall out that ere it be long your Lordship [will] hear that I shall accompany one a fellow servant in the Bedchamber more than now we have'.[118] Not only did Fenton command the technical instruments of access to the king and the right to swear in new members of the department, he also had both an unparalleled knowledge of James and a resolute determination to remain his man : that March, he had noted, Somerset and Suffolk were displeased with him, but, he protested, they had no reason 'except that I will be subject to none but to his Majesty and only run his way'.[119]

James's decision to look at wider counsels had been all-important. But without the co-operation of those like Fenton, Montgomery, Hay[120], Lake, May, and Graham in the Bedchamber and Privy Chamber, the mechanics of conspiracy would have been impossible for the powers of the outer court like Pembroke and Arundel who wished Somerset destroyed. Arguably, if Somerset's dominance had been complete enough to exclude such conspiracy, James would also have been reduced to powerlessness; in the event, as so often before the Bedchamber once again functioned as the expression of the king's will, and the guarantee of his freedom of action; even if, during these puzzlingly negative years of failure, the king was perhaps less sure of his objectives than at any other point in the reign. With the rise of George Villiers as new Bedchamber favourite and

---

117 Rushworth *Historical Collections* I 456-7 (Abbot's account).The exclusion of the rest of the court from the Bedchamber is implicit in the Privy Chamber and Bedchamber regulations; the exclusion of the rest of the Bedchamber (in particular Somerset) must have rested on the exercise by Fenton of his first option solely to attend the king (cf. Portland MS PwV 92, article 6, dining in the queen's Bedchamber, for the Groom's rights on the queen's side : above, p. 52 n 43).

118 H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.59 (2 March 1615), 60 (19 April 1615). *O.E.D* sub "Accompany", I,1 — "make a member of a company".

119 H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.59 (27 March 1615).

120 Hay's role in Carr's fall is obscure; Chamberlain later thought Hay a cunning man who had been 'one of the first to fall away' from Carr; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 17.

neutral faction manager, the king's self-confidence — if not his political optimism — began to be restored.

Chapter Six

Buckingham and Court Politics 1615 - 1622

i) Independence Established, 1615-1617

What was the meaning of the advancement of George Villiers in 1615? There can be little doubt that James was in love with the young man when his promotion was at issue in late 1614 and early 1615. The cynical — both contemporary and modern — have been inclined to see that promotion, and Somerset's fall, basically as the replacement of one homosexual lover/favourite by another. Sir John Holles thought there was nothing essential at stake, and wrote to his brother to 'demonstrate how far you or I or the commonwealth are interested in their quarrels'.[1] Sir John Lenthall wrote to a friend in 1616 simply that 'as one falleth, so another riseth, according to nature's course. Somerset being down, Villiers is now up'.[2] Goodman, looking back, thought the main reason for Somerset's fall was that 'the King was weary of an old favourite'.[3] There was an element of truth in this simple view; James's personal relationship with Somerset indeed came under great strain in this period. But chronologically James's problems with Somerset — reflected in the favourite's 'fiery boutardes' and increasingly 'doggit, sullen behaviour' —

---

[1] Seddon (ed.) "Letters of Holles, Vol I", *Thoroton Society* (1975),pp. 74-5, 18 July 1615 to Sir George Holles.

[2] Quoted from Huntington Library MS STT 1323 by P. Collinson in the *Times Literary Supplement,* 1 June 1984.

[3] Goodman *Court Of King James I* I, 224.

were not initially the cause of his decision to advance Villiers; they were the consequence of that decision. Policy had come before passion with the king. There are three reasons for supposing this.

First, whatever the attractions of young George Villiers, the king had been similarly smitten before and was to be so again with no such repercussions as in 1614-15; the affairs of James's heart had no necessary political consequences. Weldon recalled that the Countess of Suffolk had been busily promoting 'choyse young men, whom she dayly curled, and perfumed their breaths' just when Carr's rise made such efforts futile.[4] In July 1615 two men thought to be potential favourites under Somerset's aegis were rumoured to be sent to travel, probably through the influence of Villiers's backers.[5] Now Villiers's success inspired a rush of other gold-diggers. Some Villiers had to defeat; others he put forward himself to keep the king happy. There were at least two candidates in late 1616, in 1617 one Thomas Coney 'by Buckingham's procurement', the Howards' William Monson and at least three others in 1618, one Ventris in 1619 'by Buckingham's appointment', and Arthur Brett in 1622, again through Buckingham's means, who briefly became a serious threat. The spring Newmarket journey of 1623 was apparently the first for years with no talk of a new favourite.[6] Of course none became significant political figures; indeed any brief importance Monson and Brett possessed was due to a passing coincidence once again between James's personal and political preferences. There was thus no exact precedent for the Villiers phenomenon either in England or Scotland, and no real sequels. The significance of Villiers's rise lies in its uniqueness, not, as some

---

[4] Sir W.Scott (ed.), *The Secret History of the Court of King James I* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1811) I, 374-7.

[5] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 609, 20 July 1615, probably referring to William Ramsey and Sir Francis Stewart.

[6] 1616 — *Letters of Chamberlain* II 41, 7 December 1616, a 'comet of the Lord of Montgomerie's lighting'; SP14/89/68 (Sherburne to Carleton, 7 December) identifies Montgomery's former barber Adam Hill, now Page of the Bedchamber, and Abbot's former ward lord Mordaunt as possible new favourites; Coney — *Chamberlain* II, 79, SP14/94/15; 1618, below, sectn. ii); Ventris, *Chamberlain* II 260, 23 August 1619; Brett, below p.202; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.151.

historians have asserted, in its being characteristic of a recurrent 'failing' in James — that of allegedly subordinating political reason to physical passion.[7]

Secondly, the promotion of Villiers was not meant to displace Somerset — as James's attempts to reassure the latter indicate. Others saw this in late 1614. Fenton speculated on the advantages of two favourites, and thought the effect of Villiers would 'be rather to kindill a new fire then to extinguish the owld one', philosophising that

> if all the coles a man hes be laide to one fyre, it wilbe the greater and consequentlye the more hate [heat], but if thaye be two, men wilbe the less brunt and more find them selves trewlye warmed.[8]

The French ambassador also heard some such story — he recalled that James had argued that he would protect Somerset from anti-Scottish feeling by putting Villiers forward now as a "showpiece English favourite". Somerset himself seems to have claimed that he suggested such a plan to James.[9] Certainly, the recent end to the Addled parliament, amidst threats of a Sicilian Vespers against the Scots, provided a rationale for such a suggestion — however much the practical co-existence of the two men in the same Bedchamber was wishful thinking on James's part.[10]

Thirdly and above all, there were less elevated, but still good practical reasons for Villiers's promotion : his connections with Pembroke and Southampton would counter-balance Somerset's now exclusive ties with the Howards, and provide a point of contact with those powerful and otherwise excluded parliamentary patrons. Fenton grasped this point too when he observed (with relief) that with Villiers's rise 'there is not now onye monopolyzing of [the king's] favore'. By late 1614 the financial consequences

---

[7] D.H.Willson *James VI and I* (London, 1956) 174, etc.; Carr's rise was a great deal more gradual than Villiers's.

[8] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.58, 18 December 1614.

[9] Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.16-17, citing M.C.Hippeau (ed.), *Mémoires Inédits du Comte Leveneur de Tillières* (Paris, 1863), 14; S.R.Gardiner *History of England* II, 318 citing Madrid Palace Library; the date given cannot be correct.

[10] Above, pp.144-5; Lockyer *op. cit.* pp.21-2 on problems of co-existence in 1615.

of the addling of parliament were obvious, and as we have seen, James was still willing to look at a new summons.[11]

For it is clear from the first that Villiers was intended to be, not merely a personal toy, but a favourite like Somerset. He would be a royal patronage broker and a personal secretarial *aide*; entirely dependent on the king, he would be above faction, which he would both balance, and distance from the king. The point was quickly made, with all the force of processional symbolism, in the arrangements for the creation of Fenton and lord Knollys as Knights of the Garter in May 1615. Each became the head of their respective factions for the day's procession from London to Windsor. Knollys, Suffolk's son-in-law, was followed by the Howards and Somerset; Fenton, by the opposing group, Villiers's backers; he had 'all the bed-chamber, all the Prince's servants and followers', a dozen of Archbishop Abbot's men, and Winwood and Lake in person, all of whom 'did him the honor to weare his feathers, which were black and white, as the others were ash coulor and yellow'. But Villiers himself was not among them; instead he watched the procession with the king from Somerset House as an observer, not a participant. James intended him to stand above the 'siding' and 'open opposition' that had elevated him, in order that he might be able to manage it.[12]

On the other hand, Villiers had been put forward by a faction and his rise was soon followed by Somerset's fall. Somerset's position had been slipping since Villiers's admission to the Bedchamber. In May 1615 Holles was sceptical about rumours that lord Zouche, one of the anti-Somerset coalition, would 'bestride' the Cinq Ports, 'nor Secretary Winwood the Seals'. But in July Zouche duly took the Lord Wardenship from Somerset's temporary custody, and although Winwood had to wait for the delivery of the Signet, in July both Carleton in Venice and Edmondes in Paris were told to send their

---

[11] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.60; above, pp.152-3.

[12] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 597, 599, 20, 25 May 1615. Holles, in Seddon (ed.) "Letters of Holles, Vol I", *Thoroton Society* (1975) 68, noted Henry Gibb and William Ramsey, Somerset's Bedchamber followers, in the Howard camp.

dispatches to him rather than to Somerset. (Somerset's desperate manoeuvres in the Spanish negotiation should be set against this background.) Indeed, in collecting the information implicating Somerset in Overbury's murder during the summer, Winwood must have been helped both by his own, and by his protégé Villiers's new importance.[13]

From Somerset's destruction in October 1615 — at the hands of an investigating commission headed by his great Bedchamber rival Lennox, acting on Winwood's information[14] — there followed a further distribution of his extraordinary concentration of offices. In December Pembroke, the coalition's weightiest member, at last took major office as Lord Chamberlain. (Allied to this was Lennox's appointment in January 1616 as Lord Steward, the first since Elizabeth's Leicester).[15] Winwood's share of the spoils was the substance, as well as the name, of the Secretary's office : in addition to the overseas correspondence came, in October, custody of the signet itself, which Carr had held since Salisbury's death. With the signet, 'the badge of a principall secretary', and from October 1615 with a larger share in procurements than Lake, Winwood emerged as a full-blown Secretary of State; though he remained heavily dependant on Villiers's personal influence with the king both for his rise and for his continuing influence; by September 1616, for example, a 'greate breach' between Winwood and Villiers was reported as likely to 'cast all at least [of th]e gaynfull employment uppon S[i]r Thomas Lakes', the other Secretary.[16]

---

[13]Seddon (ed.) "Letters of Holles, Vol. I" *Thoroton Society* (1975) 71, 15 July 1615; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 605 (13 July 1615); above, pp.153-4.

[14] Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* Ch. XVI. Fenton acted as the king's formal mouthpiece to Lennox and the other commissioners — Egerton, Zouche and Coke; see *e.g.* SP14/82/69, Fenton to Egerton, 19 October 1615.

[15] Above p.15, n 21; the Treasurer of the Household— Knollys in 1615— with the Comptroller had been *de facto* Lord Steward; now they became ministerial; for examples of their patronage below stairs, B.L. Additional MS 10,038 fo. 352; Lennox later opposed their claims — SP14/133/62, 62I. Lennox now outranked Pembroke at court, taking some of the shine off the latter's appointment.

[16] Winwood was waiting for the seals in August (*Letters of Chamberlain* I, 611). They were removed from Somerset in late October (*CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 316). SO 3/6, March 1614 - November 1617; SP 14/88/77, Thomas Carew to Carleton, 11 September 1616.

Lake, by contrast, used his promotion to Secretary in January 1616, a reward for turning against his erstwhile Howard allies, cautiously to affirm his personal bond with the king, forged over twelve years of cajoling him through the signing ritual. When sworn, Lake 'refused the oath as Principal Secretary of State taken by Sir Ralph Winwood, for the old form which was Principal Secretary to the King's Majesty', both emphasising the personal bond and recognizing subordination to Winwood; the office was merely a titular recognition of his existing share in the secretarial duties (particularly procurements). Not until Winwood's death did he increase his share of the official duties and emoluments.[17]

The Privy Seal, similarly held by Somerset since Northampton's death, was first given temporarily to John Murray, Groom of the Bedchamber and Keeper of the Privy Purse, and then bestowed formally on the earl of Worcester in January 1616. Worcester was practically a sinecurist, and it is probable that many of the Seal's surviving administrative functions were later discharged by one of its clerks, John Packer, who was Villiers's secretary.[18]

Indeed, Worcester's appointment as Lord Privy Seal was a mere *quid pro quo* for the earl's agreeing to surrender his existing office of Master of the Horse to the new favourite. James had long been dissatisfied with Worcester, but as so often, Rochester had proven unable to clinch the deal. Villiers, in sharp contrast, did. Partly this was because Pembroke, now with a major office, had no rival claim. But above all, James had plainly made a conscious decision to create George Villiers a Bedchamber favourite : this favour was one stage in that process. The result was a unique control of access : as favourite Villiers ruled the Privy Lodgings; as Master of the Horse he was in immediate

---

[17] H.M.C. *Cowper* I, 91, 18 January 1616, Samuel Hopton to John Coke; Evans *Principal Secretary of State* pp.71-3 pre-dates the evolution of joint, equal secretaries; it is doubtful how far this text-book picture was ever the case under James; below, pp 174-5, 186; pp.173-4 on Lake's inheritance of diet and lodging, but no seals, from Winwood.

[18] SP14/83/13 (9 November 1615), SP14/84/26 (?12 December 1615). Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.25-6; G.E.Aylmer *The King's Servants* (1974 ed.) p.15.

attendance on the king wherever he went outside the palace : in his coach, in his barge, or in the hunt.[19]

Thus securely planted in both favour and office Villiers could translate his rôle of arbiter, already prefigured in the 1615 Garter procession, from pageant to reality. He could do so because James swiftly gave him the means to begin building a personal power base. Beyond his sensational *coup* in securing — after little more than a year at court — the Mastership of the Horse, Villiers took an early and active interest in appointing his candidates to offices which involved frequent access to the king. Three new Masters of Requests were appointed by his means in 1616-1617 — Sir Sidney Montagu, Sir Robert Naunton, and Sir Lionel Cranfield — the beginning of his total dominance of appointment of those places.[20] Villiers, like none before him, understood the importance of access to the king, both for himself, and in controlling others who had it. In July 1616 his brother John was appointed Gentleman of the Robes in Prince Charles's Bedchamber; and in February 1617, he achieved another, more immediately significant coup by having the first English Groom of James's Bedchamber appointed. Conveniently for Buckingham this man was another Villiers, his younger brother Christopher.[21] As early as June 1616, it had already been remarked that Villiers had 'nobly obliged more persons in few monethes, then some otheres of like condition could be drawne to doe in many yeares' : after less than two years in the Bedchamber, Buckingham had indeed achieved what Carr only partially attained in six.[22]

Where Somerset had been forced to ally with an outer court faction, Villiers was from this position instead able to distance himself in 1616 from his erstwhile backers, in the interests of impartiality. Late that year there were problems between him and both Hay

---

19 Above p.138. Portland MS PwV 92 (1661 Ordinances) articles 4, 14. Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.25-6 on Villiers's achievements in horse-breeding.

20 Below Ch. 7, section iv)., pp. 218-20.

21 SP14/90/55, Brent to Carleton, 8 February 1617.

22 S.R.Gardiner (ed.) *The Fortescue Papers...collected by John Packer* (Camden, NS I, 1871) p. 15.

and Montgomery, from whom there were reportedly 'big wordes and lookes...towards the present favorit'; and already in August Fenton, who for more than a year had referred to him as his 'son', reported that he had 'lost much affection of his particular friends and generally of all men'.[23]

This cooling-off was linked with Villiers's (and James's) moderation of the attack on Somerset and the Howards. The attack, orchestrated by Sir Edward Coke as Chief Justice, had broadened from the principals; between October 1615 and April 1616, at least thirteen appointees and followers of Somerset in the Bedchamber, Privy Chamber and prince's Household were arrested and questioned, and some suspended. For example, Sir Thomas Howard (Charles's Master of the Horse) was to be examined in early November 1615 about an 'unmannerly message' to the king 'tending...to sedition and mutiny' — his response to Somerset's fall; also to be interrogated were Sir Francis Stewart, of the Privy Chamber, and William Ramsay, Groom of the Bedchamber, who conveyed the message to viscount Haddington; the latter repeated Howard's threats 'to the king's owne face', and was also to be questioned.[24] Apart from these thirteen, Sir Robert Cotton seems to have been the only immediate casualty of Somerset's fall not connected with the king's or prince's Households.[25] Coke was both investigator and prosecutor, the moving spirit of the attempted purge; it was on Coke's direct recommendation that John Lepton, Groom of the Privy Chamber and Somerset collaborator, was suspended from office in February 1616, as not 'fit to continue in a place so near about [the king's] sacred

---

[23] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 41, 7 December 1616; H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.65, 12 August 1616. Above, n 6; and p.166, on Villiers's breach with Winwood.

[24] SP14/82/112, James to Abbot ordering the investigation, 26 October; H.M.C. *DeLisle & Dudley* V, 340-1, 8 November 1615. The others were : Henry Gibb, Groom of the Bedchamber; Sir Thomas Monson (actually prosecuted) and Sir John Leedes, Gentlemen Ushers of the Privy Chamber; Thomas Lumsden, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber; Henry Vane, Sewer; Jerome Hawley and John Lepton, Grooms of the Privy Chamber; Sir Robert Carr of Ancrum, Gentleman of the Bedchamber to Prince Charles; Sir Thomas Vavasour, Knight Marshal (Suffolk's appointee as Lord Chamberlain) : *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 322-32; *ibid.* 363-4 and *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 625, 30 April 1616, on Gibb and Carr of Ancrum.

[25] K.Sharpe *Sir Robert Cotton 1586-1631* (Oxford 1979) pp.133-6; he was Carr's personal secretary.

person'.[26] But now the purge was halted and in June Coke deprived of office; Hay later incurred Villiers's particular displeasure for offering Coke a means of access to the king after his removal.[27]

But if the Suffolk clan was threatened by Somerset's fall, it was in fact preserved. Despite an appearance in June 1616 that serious Exchequer reform was imminent, by the end of the month Chamberlain reported Suffolk 'growne as great and as far in grace as ever he was', which seemed to him a 'sodain mutation without any *intermedium*'. His sons, and son-in-law Knollys, continued in office.[28]

More positive steps were also taken to preserve the balance. There had been an ideological element in the plot against Somerset; Winwood, Abbot, Pembroke and Southampton believed in a definitely Protestant foreign policy, and that parliaments could be made to work; Somerset's dabbling with the Spanish match, and his opposition to a parliament in 1615, gilded with principle their other, more material objections to his eminence. Now the earl of Arundel, head of the house of Howard, was made a Privy Councillor and, from 1617 onwards, lodged at court. Although associated in 1615 with the anti-Somerset alliance, and on bad terms with most of his relations, his approach to most issues parliamentary and foreign was similar to James's, and at variance with the dominant beliefs of the Pembroke/Abbot coalition.[29] Also in 1616 Sir John Digby, since 1611 the chief negotiator for a Spanish match, was appointed to the Council as Vice

---

[26] SP14/86/31, /49, 2 and 8 February 1616 — the origin of Lepton's attempt to ruin Coke in the 1621 Parliament (Conrad Russell *Parliaments and English Politics* pp.127-9).

[27] All but three of those called in question (Lepton and Hawley, replaced by Buckingham men in 1618, Vavasour replaced 1618) survived the reign in office : Gibb, Stewart and Carr of Ancrum became trusted Buckingham clients. *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 14 (6 July 1616); Birch, *Court and Times of James I* I, 447 (12 December 1616).

[28] SP14/87/43, James to Suffolk, 6 June 1616; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 11, 22 June 1616; lord Walden continued as Captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners, Sir Thomas Howard as Master of the Horse to the prince, both until 1625, Knollys as Master of the Wards until December 1618.

[29] K.Sharpe "The Earl of Arundel, His Circle and the Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-28" in Sharpe (ed.) *Faction and Parliament* pp.211-12. Lodging at court; LS 13/168 fo. 196v (June 1617), 227v (February 1621).

Chamberlain and deputy to Pembroke, the Lord Chamberlain and chief opponent of the Spanish connection.[30]

ii) Dependence Enforced, 1617-1618

James's Olympian even-handedness was made easier by his increasing withdrawal from active initiative in English politics. There was a human aspect to this, expressed in relatively mundane escapism. Sir Edward Zouche, who as Knight Marshal was involved in organizing court entertainments, later reflected to Goodman that the time of 'sports and merriments' had begun when James was melancholy with the 'many breaches with the parliament'.[31] There was also a more serious political side to it, expressed in James's overriding concern with Scotland. If the English hatred for the Scots had not diminished — in 1616 they gave a dog a funeral to compete with that of Sir John Graham in London — neither had the king's concern and support for his countrymen and his country[32]. The king had on several occasions either proposed, or threatened to visit Scotland[33]; now at last, in March 1617, he did so.

There was considerable opposition to the trip; but only Buckingham (made an earl in January, a Privy Councillor in February and no doubt emboldened by this and his

---

[30] Digby's appointment puzzled the court; it came directly from the king; *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 619-20, 6 April 1616. Stone *Crisis of the Aristocracy* p.475 : Digby (earl of Bristol) was one of the few outside James's Bedchamber to make Stone's top twenty-nine (above, pp.71-2). For his views, S.R.Gardiner "On Certain Letters of...Gondomar..." *Archaeologia* XLI (1867) p. 156.

[31] The loss of the Palatinate later made James even worse. Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 256; and cf. Weldon's chilling sketch of these entertainments in Scott *Secret History* I, 398-401.

[32] SP 14/86/132, Sherburn to Carleton, 9 April 1616; cf. J.Wormald "James VI & I : Two Kings or One?" *History* 68 (1983) 207-8.

[33] *CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 300, November 1605; *Ambassades de la Boderie* II, 201, 15 May 1607; M.Lee *Government by Pen* p.65, a planned 1608 visit. The 1617 visit was planned at least two years in advance to ensure acceptance of ecclesiastical reforms which became the 5 Articles of Perth; *ibid* pp.159-61, 165, 170-1.

brother Christopher's promotion to be a Groom of the Bedchamber) dared suggest it be put off 'at [th]e instance of som of [th]e great Lords...[;] but [th]e motion so displeased his Ma[jes]tie [tha]t he was glad to run away and leave him alone.'[34] On the face of it, indeed, Buckingham — and the other English courtiers — had some grounds for unease. In theory, at the moment the party crossed the Scots border, the English officers would surrender their offices and attendance to their Scots counterparts, probably for several months. This indeed happened; on 12 May Lake reported that 'my Lord Chamberlain and our officers doe this evening surrender their authorityes and leave themselfes to be disposed by others'.[35] Two years before, this would have been an unmixed blessing for a Bedchamber which was a continuation of the Scots Chamber, and which, as in the case of Lennox, could look forward to even greater influence on home ground. Now, however, there was Buckingham, with no established status in Scotland, to be considered. But in his case an important exception was made; unlike Pembroke and the other Englishmen, he did not surrender his office. When James re-entered Edinburgh on 16 May,

> the order [of procession] was [:] many of the king's servants that came out of England, as [Gentlemen] Pensioners & others, went first, then the nobility of Scotland, whereof the chiefes...were...[Treasurer Mar, Chancellor Dunfermline and] the Duke of Lennox Lo[rd] Ch[a]mb[e]rlaine[;] the Marques Hamelton bare the sword; after his Ma[jes]tie followed the E[arl] of Buckingham who keepes his place of M[aste]r of the Horse, the Lo[rd] Fenton C[a]pt[ain] of the Guard, then the English nobility in their Order...[36]

Thus, in the event, the Scottish trip confirmed Villiers's pre-eminence with James, rather as, six years later, the more forward-looking trip to Madrid was to confirm his favour with Charles. 1617 had been a triumphant year for him. In March he had made his client, Bacon, Lord Keeper; and although Lennox and Murray in the Bedchamber arranged for Yelverton to succeed as Attorney-General, the latter was forced to acknowledge Buckingham when he found that the only way to get his warrant of appointment signed was to give it to him.[37] In March too Buckingham had reconciled Hay

---

[34] SP14/90/55, Brent to Carleton, 8 February 1617.
[35] SP 14/92/20, Lake to Winwood.
[36] SP14/92/47, Anon. newsletter, 26 May 1617.
[37] Below, Ch. 7, sectn iii)., pp. 209-14, 217.

to himself by arranging for his admission to the Privy Council[38]; in August he won a new ally by procuring the same honour for the marquis of Hamilton. James 'rejoiced at the conquest...in drawing this man to wayte [on him]' (who had joined the court in Scotland, and come south as a noble-in-residence). There was even talk in November of Buckingham tightening their alliance by resigning his Mastership of the Horse to Hamilton, to become himself Lord Admiral. Just as Chamberlain would have advised him, however, Buckingham thought better of the exchange.[39]

Further evidence of Villiers's power came after the return to England. Coke was in the process of being reconciled by marrying his daughter into Villiers's kindred; Bacon, his ancient rival, misjudged the matter badly and, while the court was in Scotland, acted to baulk Coke in his efforts to make his daughter toe the line. By the time the court reached Nantwich, Yelverton informed Bacon that Coke was 'as close to Buckingham as his shirt'. On his return, Buckingham made his creature turn somersaults; then in January 1618, forgave him and got him appointed full Lord Chancellor. Such high-handedness so soon in his career makes it doubtful that he had ever really needed Bacon's solemn advice, penned to him the year before, on what it meant to be 'not only a courtier, but a bed-chamber man'.[40]

With Winwood's death in late October 1617, Buckingham's field of action continued to expand. While Lake got Winwood's papers, lodging and diet, and in November the Intelligence money, the king declared that 'he was never so well served as when he was his own secretarie, and...delivered the seales ...to the custodie of the earle of

---

[38] SP14/90/135, 20 March 1617.

[39] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie* p.84, 16 May 1618; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.80, 18 September 1617 — Fenton noted Hamilton had first been made much of by both the king and Buckingham. LS 13/168 fo. 196v, June 1617, lodging. *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 118, 15 November 1617, advising against the swap 'for manie reasons'.

[40] Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* pp.291-4; Spedding (ed.), *Life and Letters of Bacon* VI, 27.

Buckinghame', who, it was reported, also 'keepes the ...forrayne packets'; indeed it was said 'Buckingham will hould [the place] in the same nature that ...Sumersett did'.[41]

But unlike the earlier case, this arrangement did not last long. Competition for the vacant office was brisk, and a half dozen candidates appeared in the newsletters. Sir Robert Naunton, the Master of Requests, was soon appointed, perhaps as much to stop the competition as to fill the office, in January 1618. He was Buckingham's nominee, described two years earlier as 'of kinred to the new favourit, and so inward with his mother that he is termed her chancellor'. At that time Chamberlain had marvelled at his ambition in his old age, when his sight and hearing were clearly deteriorating; but this decrepitude was probably his attraction for Buckingham, who himself retained many of the secretarial duties after the appointment; by August 1618 Fenton thought James imparted matters of importance 'to noe bodye but to [the] Marquiss of Bukkinghame'.[42]

If Naunton's own advent in itself had little effect — Chamberlain observed by May that he heard no more news of him 'then yf there were no such man...which is a straunge kind of obscuritie for a man of his place' — Lake's departure from office in July made obvious his ineffectuality. As soon as Lake was suspended in July 1618, Fenton could see obvious problems; 'thoe Secreterrye Nenton is a verrye honest man..., yet he can not yet be of soe quick dispatch as [Lake]', he observed at first with charity; but three months later Fenton was sure the problem was lack of not experience but aptitude, and affirmed he 'did never in all my lyfe see his Majestie soe mutche trubled with besines'.[43]

---

[41] *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 494, 6 November 1618, intelligence money; Naunton gained his share in April 1618 (SP14/97/15). *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 113, 8 November; *CSPVenetian* XV (1617-19) 46, 7/17 November 1617; SP14/94/23, Sir John Peyton to Carleton, /24, Sir Horace Vere to same, both November 1618.

[42] Lake's subordination is shown by his being regarded as a competitor for Winwood's office; SP14/93/159, Abraham Williams to Carleton, 31 October 1617. *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 30, 26 October 1616; 124, 3 January 1618. The speed of Naunton's appointment may reflect Buckingham's worries about Lake benefiting, as under Carr, from any delay in filling the office. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.86, 22 August 1618.

[43] *Letters of Chamberlain* II,161, 5 May 1618; H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.85, 1 July; 88, 14 October 1618.

Lake's fall was ostensibly linked to a scandalous Star Chamber suit, brought by his wife, which failed; but others had survived far worse public humiliation. There seems little doubt that Buckingham wanted rid of Lake. Partly this may have been because Lake was beginning to collaborate with Buckingham's enemies, after being disappointed on Winwood's death (again at the hands of a Bedchamber favourite) of the real secretarial power which he had pursued since 1612. If at some point Lake was allowed to acquire seals (between Winwood's death and February 1619 when he was deprived of them), nevertheless Buckingham never fully trusted him; here Lake's chief offence in Buckingham's eyes was that he was an independent sitting tenant with ties to the king and friends among the Scots Bedchamber (as Salisbury had found to his cost), who had at times monopolized, but who at all times had possessed a massive share in the crucial procurement of the royal Sign Manual. Buckingham was determined that those with access to the king should be trustworthy; as we shall see, he was if anything even more obsessive about controlling the Sign Manual. By June 1618 Lake found that 'no security can be found' for his continued loyalty 'sufficient for the Marquis [of Buckingham], who has refused the offer of 60,000 crowns'.[44]

Thus Buckingham retained his hold on the secretarial business, even if, as is possible, the two secretaries gained the Signets on Naunton's appointment in January 1618. Naunton never took a large share in procuring the royal signature, and as we shall see 1618 was the decisive year when Buckingham took an unprecedented personal grip on this work; from January 1618 Buckingham had all four Masterships of Requests in his pocket; and from the middle of the year until February 1619, when Calvert succeeded Lake, there was realistically, in Naunton, only half a secretary in operation. Buckingham

[44] Above, pp.91-2,122. Below Ch. 7, section iii)., pp. 209-14; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.37, at n.28, citing the Florence archives.

could afford to let the signets fall into the hands of the now dependent Secretaries; he had a ferocious grip instead on the all-important Sign Manual.[45]

This tightening stranglehold may have been decisive in early 1618 in persuading Suffolk that co-existence with Buckingham was no longer possible. Equally worrying may also have been the activities of another of Buckingham's Masters of Requests, Lionel Cranfield. He had been using his official access to impress the king; Goodman remembered hearing how much the king enjoyed these semi-formal sessions (which in context must have taken place during 1617), usually spent not on routine business but 'about crossing Lord Treasurer Suffolk'.[46] Indeed, Cranfield would allegedly have become Chancellor of the Exchequer in late 1616 if Suffolk 'had not firmly opposed, and...told the King he would resolutely resign his staffe and all the honours he had, rather than be matcht and yoked to a prentice of London'.[47] What Cranfield represented, under Buckingham's patronage, was a decisive reforming attack on waste and corruption — in effect a more energetic version of Northampton's earlier expenditure-cutting activities, with what were to prove far more deadly political results. The searchlight had already been turned on the Navy, Household and Ordnance[48]; now in early 1618 there were rumours (faintly pre-echoed, as we have seen, in mid-1616) about Suffolk and the Exchequer. The report as early as 24 March 1618 of 'some kinde of questioninge of my Lo[rd] Thresorer', to the extent that 'some say he is turned out'[49], did not come out of the blue; the ground was already well prepared. Whatever it was that sparked off the Howard assault on Buckingham in early 1618, it is clear that the attack cannot be seen simply as an

---

[45] The fate of the Signets after James gave them to Buckingham in November 1617 is a mystery. Below, Ch. 7 on procurements, and other secretarial developments in 1618; Buckingham's behaviour here is in sharp contrast to Somerset's.

[46] Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 306-7.

[47] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 39, 23 November 1616.

[48] Prestwich *Cranfield* pp.206-219 on Cranfield and the Household, Navy, and Ordnance, 1617-18, qualified by M.Young "Illusions of Grandeur and Reform at the Jacobean court" *Historical Journal* 22 (1979), esp. p. 63. Cf. Peck *Northampton* pp.148-9, 152-6.

[49] SP14/96/74, Sir Edward Harwood to Carleton.

unprovoked assault on an unsuspecting and even-handed favourite, 'fully prepared to come to terms' with the Howards, who, since 'the Howards were not interested in co-existence[,]...therefore had no choice but to defend himself'.[50] As we have seen, in late 1617 Buckingham's terms can have looked promising to neither the Howards' material prosperity, nor their political security.

The Howard onslaught accordingly came in early 1618, just after Buckingham was created marquis, in the shape of William Monson, nephew of the Sir Thomas prosecuted over Overbury's murder. He was promoted as a new favourite, 'the same course... and the like plotting that was heretofore for others'. At first he was not apparenly alone, but he soon proved the greatest threat — perhaps because the king genuinely found him interesting, probably because of those whom he represented.[51] In late 1617, Buckingham had been moving closer to the men who had originally put him forward; now he used their help to ensure his own triumph was not repeated against him. By late February, Buckingham's old backer Pembroke, as Lord Chamberlain,

> told young Mounson that the king did not like of his forwardnes, and presenting himself continually about him : that his father and uncle were not long since called in question for matters of no small moment [: and] that his own education had ben in such places and with such persons, as was not to be allowed of, wherefore his Majestie willed him from henceforth to forbeare his presence, and yf he wold follow his [Pembroke's] advise he shold likewise forbeare the court. This was a shrewde reprimande and crosse-blow to some who (they say) made account to raise and recover their fortunes by setting up this new idoll, and tooke great paines in tricking and prancking him up, besides washing his face every day with posset-curd.[52]

But the Howards persisted. Monson was soon confirmed in the Anglican church, interestingly by Abbot, who seems to have been working against Buckingham by now. Three weeks later, Monson was still 'not so quite discarded but that he takes all opportunities to present himself'; but without any place of attendance to fall back on as an

---

[50] Lockyer *Buckingham* p.36.

[51] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 151; 127, 10 January mentioning two others — Sir Henry Mildmay, just become Master of the Jewels, and William Brooke. Brent later reported a second potential favourite to Monson named Bell; SP14/96/24, 21 February 1618.

[52] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 144, 28 February. Pembroke's ability as Lord Chamberlain to do this for Buckingham contrasts with Carr's earlier inability as Lord Chamberlain to banish Villiers on his own behalf.

excuse to be at court, 'which might have ben more easily don at first (before the drift was perceved)', Monson's immediate prospects were limited.[53] Yet by mid-April he was still in the race, having received Easter communion at the Archbishop of Canterbury's; Chamberlain reported the sensational rumour that

> when the king was lately moved to give him leave to travayle, for that he could live with no contentment here being debarred his presence, the king would not graunt his licence and saide yt was more then he knew that he was forbidden his presence.

This encouraged Chamberlain to think that there was reality in Monson's candidature, and that he was likely in time to become important. Fenton was sceptical but quite definite that the king would have the first and last word on any such developments — and that the words would be rational and collected;

> For our Master (God bless him)...is just and rycht, he will doe noe wrong to onye of his servands, and...in a matter of that nature...wilbe weil advysed what he dois. Thoe he will in onye indifferent matter yield to his affectiones, yet I can not see but in matters of that wecht he trusts to himselfe and to nobodye els.[54]

Nevertheless, all this forced the original Villiers connection back together into a show of solidarity. At a footman race in April the rivalry was clear; Pembroke, Montgomery, Hamilton and the queen's confidante the Countess of Bedford backed Buckingham's runner — Buckingham himself bet £1,000 — while the Howard connection stood firm behind Sir Thomas Howard's man. If Buckingham's won, and was taken into the king's service, the king was still trying to keep the balance, and the Howard runner was taken on by the prince. But this was in many respects a crisis like the 'open siding' which attended Villiers's first promotion in 1615.[55]

In early May the crisis was symbolically resolved — not in the 'welter at court' that Chamberlain had predicted, but in the re-affirmation of Buckingham's power. Buckingham preferred his 'innermost friend', Edward Wray from Esquire of the Body (in the Privy Chamber) to Groom of the Bedchamber. No more effective answer to Monson

---

[53] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 147, 7 March; 151, 27 March 1618.
[54] *Ibid.* II, 156, 10 April; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.83, 3 April 1618.
[55] SP14/97/10, Sir Gerard Herbert to Carleton, 9 April 1618; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.36.

and his backers could have been devised.[56] To confirm the message, three of the Somerset/Suffolk Privy Chamber Grooms were evicted between March and July, and replaced by new men, two of whom were certainly Buckingham candidates.[57]

In July the decisive blows fell on Suffolk; he was accused not of plotting, treason, or murder, but rather of the new political catch-all offence, corruption; he was destroyed by administrative reform. Pembroke headed an investigative commission appointed on 10 July; by the 30th the Treasury itself was in commission and Suffolk had fallen. The threat of Cranfield on a reform commission was indeed sufficiently worrying that Hay (who should have been safe as an anti-Howard) resigned his Mastership of the Great Wardrobe (to Cranfield) before attention was turned on him.[58] The Howard collapse started at the centre, and was completed with astonishing speed; with Suffolk gone in a few weeks, the satellites were then picked off; his son-in-law Knollys (by now viscount Wallingford), Master of the Wards, was destroyed in December, his office also going to Cranfield; while Lake's ruin had taken on ominous finality when in October he was obliged to deposit his papers for the past 'six or seven years' with the State Paper office.[59]

---

[56] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 161, 5 May 1618; the appointment had been rumoured in June 1617 (Nichols *Progresses* III, 347, Wray to replace John Murray). SP15/40/28, Wray as Esquire of the Body, late 1614. E 351/1815 warrant dated 13 July.

[57] Henry Mitton replaced Jerome Hawley, livery 23 March; Buckingham procured that warrant, and also in September Mitton's grant as Customer of Wexford in place of his dead father (SO 3/6); William Price replaced Richard Calverley, livery 13 April; Robert Maull (by now heavily involved with Christopher Villiers as a Patentee) moved from Page of the Bedchamber (*CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 110) to replace John Lepton, 13 July 1618 — E351/1815, LC 5/50. On the connections of those removed with Somerset and Suffolk, above pp.149-50.

[58] *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 552, 560; Birch *Court and Times of James I* II, 80, 14 July (Suffolk commission), 83, 28 July 1618 (Hay resigns); *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 162, 8 August; 168, 20 August 1618. Prestwich *Cranfield* pp.227-9; P.R.Seddon "Household Reforms in the Reign of James I" *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 53 (1980) 51 shows why Hay was worried; accountancy was not his strong suit. His backing of Raleigh (executed in November) probably made him more vulnerable at this time.

[59] Prestwich *Cranfield* pp.232-9; SP14/103/16, Wilson to James, 4 October 1618.

iii) The Magnanimous Victor : Balance, 1618 - 1621

Although Buckingham had won a great victory, the position at court soon began to return to balance. With the favourite's position with the king secure, a coalition of Pembroke, the Scots Bedchamber and Buckingham's clientèle, given financial discipline by Cranfield, had inherited everything from the Somerset/Suffolk régime of the middle of the decade.

In late 1618 and early 1619 there was a loose unity within this dominant court grouping. Southampton was present at court once again, prominent at a 'rural feast' held at Newmarket in November 1618; in May of the next year Buckingham arranged for his admission, after years of effort, to the Council 'when he seemed least to looke for yt'.[60] When the king nearly died in April 1619, a month after his wife's death, the men whom he particularly recommended to Charles on what he thought was his deathbed were a cross-section of this broad-based coalition, with heavy emphasis on his Bedchamber; Lennox, Pembroke, Arundel, Fenton, Haddington and 'specially the Marquis[es] Buckingham and Hamilton' were singled out. Chamberlain was surprised at the omission from reports — 'whether... forgotten or *de industria*' — of Hay, now viscount Doncaster; but he was reportedly on cordial terms with Buckingham as he set off on his major European embassy in the summer of that year.[61] The rest of the partnership were on close terms; in the summer of 1619 Pembroke and others, apparently in fulfilment of a promise made in 1617, went to Scotland with Lennox and Hamilton. (The 1617 visit had evidently created a vogue for Scottish tourism).[62] Arundel was also at this stage intimately associated with the

---

[60] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 187, 234.

[61] *Ibid.* II, 227, 10 April 1619; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.67, on Hay.

[62] Arundel and Buckingham had also promised to go. *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 251, 257, July/August 1619. John Taylor the Water Poet made a trip in 1618 ; P.Hume Brown *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891) 107-30.

Buckingham connection — he was reported to be plying Buckingham and his mother in high hopes of the Lord Treasurership in November 1619.[63]

Indeed, with the Howards destroyed, once again James acted quickly to prevent the balance from tilting too far : Buckingham followed in the king's wake. Arundel and Digby, originally promoted as representatives of a moderately pro-Spanish approach, were not harmed by Suffolk's fall; James acted rather to fortify them. James's central, directing rôle — for all his withdrawal — had never been clearer. Buckingham was to be given great security as favourite and political manager, but not, in practice, unlimited latitude. With Lake destroyed, the competition started for his place as Secretary; Sir John Digby apparently hoped to buy it, but the king's decision first to delay, then to appoint Calvert, a man of similar views to Lake, and wholly the king's candidate, was almost as good an outcome for Digby. This was perhaps a signal to Buckingham to widen his patronage to others besides committed Protestants like Naunton and his own secretary John Packer, who had been expected to get the office.[64]

Indeed, events abroad — the increasingly serious Palatinate crisis — were beginning to make the Spanish line the promising one in foreign policy. As in 1616, Buckingham seems to have begun once again to put distance between himself and his backers as soon as the immediate Howard threat was gone; the Howards were in turn the natural favourers of the Spanish policy. The Howards proper accordingly returned to the stage with surprising speed. In early 1619 Coke's wife Lady Hatton arranged a banquet to patch things up between Buckingham and them; Suffolk was treated leniently at his trial in October, and his fine reduced; neither he nor Wallingford had lost their places on the

---

[63] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 272.

[64] Birch *Court and Times of James I* II, 79, 30 June 1618, Lorkin to Puckering; Carleton was Buckingham's other serious candidate, neither of whom appealed to James; Packer nevertheless gained some compensatory share in procurements from early 1619 onwards; below pp.213-14.

Council, and by the end of the year he was released from the Tower by Buckingham's means (on condition that his sons, Walden and Sir Thomas, relinquish their offices).[65]

During 1620 the balance was to be still further redressed. Buckingham shifted his decisive weight a little by allowing a dispute to develop with Pembroke in September and November 1619, over the Groom Portership. Technically Pembroke had the right of appointment as Lord Chamberlain, but Buckingham claimed it was Crown patronage, and as Bedchamber favourite looked on all such offices as potentially his to bestow.[66] Adding weight more positively to the other side of the scales were the encouraging events for the Howards of early 1620. First, it was correctly rumoured that lord Walden and Sir Thomas Howard would be allowed to retain their posts[67]; then Suffolk himself, (acknowledging Buckingham) was restored to favour in March; by July Sir Thomas Monson was rumouredly to be once again Master of the Hawks, and Suffolk had his fine remitted to his ally Haddington; in May Lake had kissed hands and hoped to be restored to the Council at least, by means of what was seen as Spanish influence — though here everything points to Fenton and Haddington.[68]

But such steps no more than righted the balance, and Buckingham's distancing himself had not yet created any serious strains in the coalition of 1618-19. Hamilton may in March 1620 have become only the third new Gentleman of the Bedchamber since 1607 'without the privitie...of the Lord of Buckingham'; but after that initial surprise, his main effect was to be on Scots politics as they were conducted in the Bedchamber, and indeed

---

[65] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 199-200, 9 January 1619; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.64; *Chamberlain* II, 278, 1 January 1620 on conditions of release

[66] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 263, 11 September, 275, 20 November 1619.

[67] Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.64-5 — Sir Thomas Howard was at first suspended from the prince's service on Suffolk's release for 'pressing neere the king' at supper — *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 278, 281, 1 & 8 January 1620; but in March 1623 (by which time he was viscount Andover) he was still Master of Charles's Horse — SP14/139/128I. *D.N.B* on Walden has his suspension as Captain of the Pensioners lasting from January 1619 to January 1620.

[68] *Letters of Chamberlain* 313, 27 July; 303-4, 20 and 27 May 1620. Fenton was Lake's advocate as late as October 1618 — H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.88. SP14/115/50, Woodward to Windebank, 22 May 1620.

James now had in his two marquises the dual English and Scottish favourites he had briefly imagined possible in 1615.[69] And as for Pembroke, by September 1620 there were 'great shows of love' between him and Buckingham.[70] Such shows apart, most important of all for Buckingham was his continued ability to appoint his men, force others to acknowledge him, and break his opponents. He had beaten Pembroke and got his man appointed Groom Porter. In the next year Sir Henry Montagu agreed to pay £20,000 to be Lord Treasurer; he was closely linked to Buckingham through his brother Sir Sidney, and the negotiations were conducted through Buckingham and his brothers.[71] In mid-1619 Cranfield had been forced to marry into the Villiers clan, so that his independent favour with the king might continue to grow unimpeded.[72] And in mid-1620 Buckingham was able to remove Henry Yelverton from the Attorney Generalship. The position had been one which Salisbury had thought it essential to have occupied by a friend he could trust should trouble arise over secretarial responsibility.[73] Yelverton's reliance on two men in the Bedchamber with whom Buckingham co-existed, but whom he regarded as potential rivals — John Murray, Keeper of the Privy Purse and Lennox, First Nobleman — had already made his appointment in 1617 anything but smooth. In April he was reported as having lost Buckingham's favour; by the middle of the year he had been fined in Star Chamber; and by November he was dismissed. Chamberlain remarked that although Yelverton had been 'well frended in the bedchamber', Murray was not 'so potent as he was esteemed seeing he cannot protect the Atturny who relied wholly on him'.[74]

---

[69] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 297, 20 March 1620 (about two weeks after the appointment). He immediately gained a Bedchamber Groom as agent, James Maxwell, appointed March 1620; livery dated 21 January — LC 5/50, p.151.

[70] Lockyer *Buckingham* p.66.

[71] Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.67-8.

[72] SP14/109/59, Brent to Carleton, 29 May 1619; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.71. On Cranfield's independent favour, above p.176, below pp. 221-25.

[73] Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 42.

[74] N.L.S. Denmilne MSS. 33.1.7 Vol. 22, Nos. 42, 46, Yelverton to Murray, 25, 24 April 1620. *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 324 (28 October), 328 (9 November 1620). Technically he fell due to a mistake in a new Charter issued to the City of London, involving Murray as Keeper of the Privy Purse; below, p.204.

Thus there was balance; but that balance was dynamic rather than static. Before 1615 no political figure of importance had fallen since those implicated in the mysterious 'plots' of 1603-05, Raleigh and Northumberland. After 1615, however, snakes and ladders became a fact of official life. By 1619, Chamberlain remarked wryly that it was possible to hold a Council meeting in the Tower, since so many great officers had been sent there; by 1620 he 'observed that in lesse than five yeares most of our principall officers have been displaced or disgraced', listing a Lord Chancellor, Treasurer, Chamberlain, Admiral, Master of the Horse, Secretary, Master of the Wards, a Lord Chief Justice and an Attorney General; by 1624, he was able to list 'four Lord Treasurers living at once, four Lord Chamberlains, four Secretaries, three Masters of the Wards, two Keepers or Chancellors', and so on. Buckingham stood alone at the stable axis of this rolling planet.[75]

Yet what difference did these hectic struggles make to policy? The range of opinion and factional allegiance contained within the Council and outer court during these years was astonishingly wide. A king and favourite above faction were able to deal with all factions. And all factions were willing to deal with them because James's political style changed. In the early years his commitment and energy had broadcast his views to all and sundry. But time and disappointment had worn James down into negativism and listlessness. This meant that though his views — on finance, prerogative, foreign policy — remained as fixed, if not more fixed than ever, the fact could easily be overlooked. A man who wishes to do nothing can easily seem like a man who will do anything. So every shade of opinion fought, and bid accordingly for its place in the sun.[76]

Thus on the domestic front, the victory of Villiers's backers made little difference to James's aversion to parliaments. The Cockayne project ran on until late 1616 despite

---

[75] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 274, 325, 592, 20 November 1619, 4 November 1620, 18 December 1624.

[76] Cf. Conrad Russell "Parliamentary History in Perspective 1604-1629" *History* 61 (1976) pp.19-20; *idem, Parliaments and English Politics* pp. 8-25.

Winwood's attempts to overthrow it (dating from mid-1615 onwards), and even then, after the Merchant Adventurers had paid handsomely for the restoration of their Charter (they hedged their bets between youth and experience and pensioned Fenton and Villiers equally at £2,200 in 1616-17),[77] Suffolk still presided over a great extension of patents and monopolies for over a year more. A Treasury Commission failed to make much difference : great financial stringency in 1619-20 resulted in rumours of a parliament; but immediate needs were met instead by the pawning of jewels, selling of plate and in late 1620 the effective sale of the Lord Treasurership to Montagu.[78] In addition to this was the sale first of baronies at £10,000 each from 1615 onwards, and after 1618 also of earldoms; together with the effective putting of the Baronetage up for bargain after that date, when the funds seem to have started to by-pass the Exchequer.[79] If the Pembroke/Abbot/Southampton group which had backed Villiers believed in the centrality of parliament in the king's finances, their apparent victory (especially clear by 1618) still left the king determined to try anything rather than issue the writs.

Such was equally the case over foreign policy. Despite the participation in the defeat of Somerset and the Howards of the likes of Hay and Lennox, chief advocates of a French match, and the implacable hostlity to Spain of other participants in the share-out — notably Winwood, Abbot, and more moderately Pembroke — James held firm to his decision to treat seriously for a Spanish match, and effectively split his administration when the issue aroused too much hostility to allow co-operation between the rival camps. In March 1617 James had named Bacon, Suffolk, Worcester, Lennox, Lancelot Andrewes, Digby, Greville and Lake to the Commission to treat for the match; Abbot, Winwood and

---

[77] Prestwich *Cranfield* pp.173-7; H.M.C.*Various Collections* VIII, 13, Accounts of the Merchant Adventurers. Lake and Winwood received £550 each, Suffolk £3,850.

[78] *E.g. Letters of Chamberlain* II, 249, 26 June; SP14/109/35,/82,/101, Locke to Carleton, May, June; SP14/110/101, Same to Same, 5 October; SP14/109/112, Brent to Carleton, 26 June on parliament; *CSPDomestic* X (1619-23) 88, selling jewels, 26 October; SP14/111/8, Same to Same, 6 November 1619, plate; *CSPDom.* X (1619-23), 140, 27 April 1620, selling plate.

[79] Prestwich *Cranfield* pp.242-51; Stone *Crisis of the Aristocracy* pp.92-7, 103-15, and below Ch. 7 section i)., pp.203-6.

their associate Edmondes (recently appointed Comptroller, later Treasurer of the Household) were left off as 'openly opposed'.[80] After the protestant Naunton's appointment as secretary in early 1618 (one of whose backers, apart from Buckingham, was Hay), and Lake's fall, James's overall directing rôle was emphasised by his appointment of Calvert in early 1619. For a time, this balanced the joint secretaries, who then seem to have divided the routine work of keeping in touch with English ambassadors and agents along ideological lines : Naunton took the mainly anti-Hapsburg and protestant business with the United Provinces, Germany, Venice and France; Calvert the Catholic and Hapsburg, with Spain and the Empire.[81]

But beyond these formalities, James kept the real business of negotiation between himself, his favourite, and whichever foreign ambassador was involved. Between 1613 and 1615 Somerset and Sarmiento (Count of Gondomar after 1617) filled the rôles; thereafter, Buckingham stepped into a position of far greater trust. James's habit of conducting his foreign policy through his favourite, mainly in the Bedchamber, already obvious over the early Spanish match negotiations, was merely confirmed and strengthened by the Palatinate crisis. In May 1618 the Bohemians renounced allegiance to their Catholic king; in June Gondomar left England and Digby returned from Spain with the marriage articles; in August the king was imparting these affairs to 'nobody but Buckingham'. Buckingham alone played a key rôle in James's dealings with all parties. After Frederick accepted the Bohemian throne in September 1619, events moved quickly. In early 1620 the Elector's representative Baron Dohna returned to England seriously to canvass aid in what was clearly going to be a fight : received on arrival by Buckingham, he was conducted by him and other sympathetic Bedchambermen to have a long audience

---

[80] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 66, 29 March 1617.

[81] R.Schreiber *The Political Career of Sir Robert Naunton 1589-1635* (London, 1981) pp.53-4 and 136-8; though *ibid.* p.64 shows the arrangement was flexible, and in any case it only lasted two years from Calvert's appointment until Naunton's suspension in early 1621 (*ibid.* pp.68-70).

with James 'in the bedchamber very privately'.[82] On the other hand, after Gondomar's return in March 1620, with the Spanish marriage beginning to be linked with the crisis over the Palatinate, Buckingham began to share the burden of that business with Digby (who had been negotiating since 1611).[83] James played a waiting game; when Dohna was allowed to raise a volunteer force, Southampton pressed hard for the command, but James would not 'yield...that onye conselloure shall have that imployment; that war a plaine ingadging of him.'[84]

Thus James kept his options open by limiting his full confidence only to his proven agent, Buckingham, despite, as he protested to Gondomar when he arrived, being surrounded by 'three hundred Winwoods [i.e. pro-Dutch protestants] in his court and palace'; in May Kellie reported him 'fully resolved not to make himselfe a pairtye, yet wonderfull kairfull to omite noe thing that maye be for the good of his children'. This meant that he increasingly and instinctively looked to Spain to pressure the Imperial branch of the Hapsburgs into moderating their response to what James saw as Frederick's folly; but when in September 1620 the Lower Palatinate was invaded by Imperial troops, and in November Frederick and James's daughter Elizabeth were driven from Prague and Bohemia after the Battle of White Mountain, James was at length driven to at least symbolic independent action. Instead of, as in early 1620, merely telling Gondomar that he was having difficulty restraining the Puritans, he now called a parliament in order to

---

[82] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 280, 8 January 1620; Finet *Finetti Philoxenis* pp.61-2; Dohna was conducted by Buckingham, Montgomery, Doncaster and Purbeck (of the prince's Bedchamber) together with lord Grey (Arundel's representative) with others; James 'receiving him in his withdrawing chamber, took him instantly with him into his Inner Lodgings'; 'from that time he had his accesses...to his Majesties Presence, as a Domestique without Ceremony'; impressive privileges, symbolising James's concern for his son-in-law. Cf. Naunton's thanks to Buckingham for his treatment of Dohna; Gardiner (ed.) *Fortescue Papers* (Camden, 1871) p. 119, 3 February 1620.

[83] S.R.Gardiner (ed.), *Narrative of the Spanish Marriage Treaty* (Camden, OS 101,1869) pp. 319, 321, Gondomar to Philip III, 15/25 March 1620; Gondomar knew his request to work with both Buckingham and Digby would go down well with James.

[84] S.R.Gardiner (ed.), *Narrative of the Spanish Marriage Treaty* (Camden, OS 101,1869) p. 318, Gondomar to Philip III, 15/25 March 1620. H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.100, 29 May 1620.

demonstrate this. If Spain did not help him in his pacific policy based on the Spanish match, James would be forced into an anti-Catholic and anti-Hapsburg crusade. The 1621 parliament was thus assembled largely for reasons of foreign policy — the first such session of the reign.

iv) 'Parliament proofe' : foundations of power, 1621 - 1622

Between 1615 and 1620 Buckingham had become intimately involved with James's policies, both domestic and foreign, simply because he was an extremely effective king's agent. Digby, with whom he worked closely, became openly identified with the Spanish interest. James pointedly excused him to Prince Charles in May 1619, 'as having undergon a great deale of envie for doing that he had expressly commaunded him' over the Spanish match. In 1620 Digby himself protested to Gondomar that the king was 'encircled by Puritans [*'Puritanos'*]', and that 'he and the king were left alone in England on [Spain's] side'.[85] Some of this 'envie' adhered, by association, to Buckingham. To the ideologically committed such as Southampton, James's policy of non-engagement, like that of doing without parliament, was profoundly frustrating; Buckingham could easily be blamed with fostering the king's attitudes, especially as the Southampton group had entertained such high hopes that his promotion would bring real changes of policy.

The fact that the 1621 parliament took place nearly seven years after the last meeting (and technically a full decade after the last session) made it even more likely that these frustrations would surface. A number of domestic tensions awaiting resolution were

---

[85]*Letters of Chamberlain* II, 227; S.R.Gardiner (ed.), *Narrative of the Spanish Marriage Treaty* (Camden, OS 101,1869) p. 316. Lord North had just told Digby in February 'that he tooke [him] for the King of England's ambassador in Spaine, but yt seemes he is rather the King of Spaines ambassador in England': *Chamberlain* II, 292.

immediately apparent, especially as the death of Philip III put the Palatinate on the back burner as the first session began. To general surprise the revival of impositions as an issue was narrowly escaped; and just as strikingly, the issue of the Scots Bedchamber now seemed a dead letter. James in his opening speech remarked that his first (1604-10) parliament had seen many misunderstandings, and pointed to the reforms lately made to curtail waste in the household and elsewhere — now it was no longer the case that 'every day was Christmas'. If before, as James admitted, 'some did not sticke to say that they would give me all they had, were they assured it might come into my purse...', the reformers' work in abating costs enabled James now to protest that 'now I seeke your supply, not that it should fall into a bottomlesse purse, but to [be] use[d] ...as the necessity of my affairs require'. Here James of course maintained a loud silence about the Scots; so too, this time, did the Commons; but more important than reform in bringing this about was the visible omnipotence of Buckingham the Englishman within the Bedchamber. Indeed, an attack on him was widely expected, but it took some time to materialise.[86]

Immediately, the main domestic issue was less politically direct : as Bacon had predicted, the patents and monopolies to which the government had resorted since the last parliamentary supply in 1610 were called to account. Within that broad issue were worked out a welter of petty feuds and individual grudges, two of which — the cases of Bacon and Yelverton — ended in public drama. The basic issue was the liability of the referees who, under the grants mechanism and the Book of Bounty, oversaw the granting of patents. Bacon had begun to sense that he as Lord Chancellor was an ultimate target of these investigations, mounted first in the Commons by Sir Edward Sackville (the brother of the earl of Dorset who was an ally of Southampton in the Lords) and taken up by Coke

---

[86] Russell *Parliaments and English Politics 1621-1629* pp.85, 99, 108-11; SP14/119/47, James's speech, 23 January 1621.

and Cranfield, together with Sir Francis Seymour and William Mallory.[87] Lord Treasurer Mandeville also felt threatened, as briefly did Buckingham. May and Edmondes, his allies on the Council, advised the Commons on 22 February 'to be warie what they doe of the Bedchamber', when it became clear that Christopher Villiers was a patentee. At length, despite Coke's persistence, and Cranfield's view that none should be exempted 'except you mean to overthrow the whole business', the principle of the Bedchamber's inviolability — unlike the case in 1607 and 1610 — was explicitly recognised. Edmondes drew assent in observing that in any case 'we could not send to take them out of [the] beddchamber'; they, and Christopher Villiers in particular, were allowed to answer to the Commons not in person but by their counsel.[88]

In Buckingham's case, the king decided a grander gesture was required. On 10 March, as the climax of his speech to the Lords, he asked them with regard to his favourite's dealings in patents

> not to look of him as... Marquis of Buckingham, Admirall of England, Master of my Horse, Gentleman of my Bedchamber, a Privy Counsellor and Knight of the Garter, but as he was when he came to me as pore George Villiers[;] and if he prove not himselfe a white crow he shalbe called a black crow.

Buckingham gave his consent to this on his knees in the House, the scene probably prepared in advance.[89] In fact the favourite had already prepared to swim with the tide, and had abandoned dependents like Mompesson by 3 March — pointing out that he, like the king, depended on the referees in his bestowal of patronage — and, by 9 March, even

---

[87] Russell *Parliaments* pp.108-9. Goring reported to Buckingham Sackville's protest that, so far from having been 'buisy in any underhand proceedinge with the Lords to [Buckingham's] preiudice' he had been 'suspected to have revealed the persons and manner of theyre meetinge at Dorsset Howse'. This probably indicates no more than that by 15 March Sackville was willing to make his peace with the marquis. W.Notestein, F.H.Relf, H.Simpson (eds.), *Commons Debates 1621* (7 vols, New Haven, 1935) VII, 379.

[88] Notestein, Relf and Simpson (eds.), *Commons Debates 1621* II, 123; VI, 262-3, 285-6.

[89] E. de Villiers (ed.) *The Hastings Journal of the Parliament of 1621* (Camden, Miscellany XX, 1953) pp.29-30; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.94.

his brothers; by the 13th, he had regained his balance.[90] By the time the session was adjourned for Easter, the king was remarking on Buckingham's good offices in his parting speech on 26 March.

But by then Bacon was all but destroyed; here again Buckingham cleverly swam with the tide, despite Bacon's anxious requests to him in early March to silence Coke through the king. Bacon's fears had initially been about the investigation of referees, but that line of attack was stopped in the Lords on March 15; on the same day, however, the Committee for Abuses in the Law Courts heard the report that Bacon had taken bribes, and this was instead to be his downfall.[91] Bacon was pursued by Coke in the Commons; in the Lords his main persecutor was Southampton. Bacon and Winwood had been at odds over Coke's restoration to favour in mid- and late 1617, just before Winwood's death; but that event and the eclipse of Southampton's fortunes had enabled Bacon to rise without opposition from that side. The parliament had provided the most persistent grouping of 'outs' known to the Jacobean court with an opportunity to settle at least this old score.[92]

If between January and March 'much of the harmony between the government and members [of the Commons] was secured on the basis of the attack on Bacon', most of the trouble after the Easter recess, between Bacon's surrender in April, and June's ultimatum to prorogue, was apparently caused by the Southampton group's further attempt to get at what they saw as the source of the ills that beset both them and the kingdom. As in 1607, 1610 and 1614 their gaze rested on James's Bedchamber; this time it was concentrated on the person of the marquis of Buckingham.[93] Already in late February

---

[90] J.L.Marwil *The Trials of Counsel : Francis Bacon in 1621* (Detroit, 1976) pp.35-6; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 351, 10 March 1621; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.95-6.

[91] Marwil *op.cit.* p.36, 7 March; Bacon thought Buckingham had 'no great power with [Coke]: but I think a word from the king mates him'. The timing may suggest that Buckingham bargained Bacon for his own immunity and the end of the investigation of referees. His later refusal to make more than gestures to help Bacon fits in with this.

[92] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 85, 5 July 1617, and cf. Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 283; Marwil *Trials of Counsel* pp.45-6, 55, 61; though Russell sees Arundel as chief manager in the Lords against Bacon; *Parliaments* pp.112-3 .

[93] Prestwich *Cranfield* p.288; above, Ch. 4 *passim,* p.144-5.

there had been trouble in the Lords when a group of younger peers, including Dorset (Sir Edward Sackville's brother), Essex and Oxford (associates of Southampton), together with older Southampton associates Sheffield and Spenser, combined to present a petition to the king complaining of the precedence of Scottish and Irish viscounts over English barons — an indirect shaft at the sale of honours under Buckingham.[94] Now in April the Southampton group used the investigation of referees to attempt to settle another old score.

They exploited the frustrations of Yelverton, the Attorney General displaced less than a year before by Buckingham, called now (as a referee) as a witness in the Mompesson case, to test the waters for an attack on Buckingham. Yelverton, it will be recalled, had taken the same line as Sandys and Southampton in the 1606 and 1607 sessions of James's first parliament; now his speeches were even more sensational, and aimed specifically at Buckingham's Bedchamber monopoly. At first he alleged that his displacement as Attorney, and other sufferings, were merely for doing the king good service. James spoke to the Lords on 24 April and asked that the slander be punished; but on the 30th Yelverton's appearance to explain himself only added fuel to the flames. On Gold and Silver Thread he had only enforced the patent and committed the silkmen because he knew 'that my Lord of Buck[ingham] was ever at His Majesty's hand, ready upon every occasion, to hew me down'. On the Inns Patent, he received a message from Mompesson from Buckingham 'that I should not hold my place a Month, if I did not conform myself'; now 'it was come to this; whether I would obey His Majestie or my Lord'; when he stood firm for the king, he found that his fees as Attorney were being diverted 'to one of my Lord's worthies, that I retained little more than the name of Attorney', and any suits he advanced were certain of rejection; his place 'was but as the

---

[94] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 348, 27 February 1621. Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.96, 99 on the breach between Buckingham and the petitioning lords. *APC* XXXVII(1619-21)pp. 352-3, for central role of Dorset, Oxford and Essex, and cf. n87 above. Southampton felt strongly about this; in 1618 he persuaded lord Spenser not to accept an earldom when offered; C.C.Stopes *The Life of Henry, Third Earl of Southampton* (Cambridge, 1922)p. 393.

seat of winds and tempests.' 'If my lord of Buckingham had but read the articles exhibited in this place against Hugh Spenser' concluded Yelverton, 'and had known the danger of placing and displacing officers about a king, he would not have pursued me with such bitterness'.[95]

Buckingham merely urged him to go on. Afterwards Buckingham may have gone too far in asking for the Lords to commit Yelverton to the Tower for declaring the king's power was usurped by a subject, so reflecting on his honour; Southampton and Saye jumped to his defence, pointing out that the words were against Buckingham, not the king; in the end they won, and Yelverton was merely returned to the Tower whence he had been brought.[96] But basically, as Buckingham correctly sensed, Yelverton had insufficient backing.

Pembroke stood aloof from the attack, and Arundel was engaged on Buckingham's side. On May 8 Arundel and Buckingham wanted Yelverton condemned without a further hearing; they were opposed by the Southampton group (and Suffolk, who perhaps saw self-interest leading this way). Arundel so lost control at lord Spenser's insistence on the point that he grossly insulted him; on the 12th he and Buckingham were equally vehement in denying him another hearing; but on both occasions they failed to carry the House, and Arundel was sent to the Tower on the 18th (where Buckingham ostentatiously visited him) for refusing to apologize to Spenser. Yelverton was heard again, but only Southampton had broken cover. Although there was still a minority which, while admitting his words against Buckingham were scandalous, did not agree that they were necessarily false, Yelverton's sentence on the 16th closed the matter .[97]

---

[95] Above, pp.98-104. James originally suggested the Commons examine Yelverton; *Lords Journal* III, 70, 26 March; *ibid* p.121; 115 for independent testimony on Mompesson's message which, though casting doubt on Yelverton's steadfastness, confirms the threat.

[96] S.R.Gardiner (ed.), *Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords, 1621* (Camden, 1st Ser. 103,1870) pp.48, 52-3.

[97] Gardiner (ed.) *Debates in the Lords, 1621*, pp.72-3, 77-9; *idem, History of England* IV, 115; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.102-3; attendance lists in Lords Journal III, April-June 1621; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 375, 19 May 1621.

Further preparations were being made for Buckingham's downfall; on 12 May Sir Anthony Ashley told Buckingham that

> your adversaries continue their meetings and conferences here in Holborn [Southampton's house], how to give his Majesty some foul distaste of you, as making you the only author of all grievances and oppressions whatsoever, for your private ends. [98]

But these plans apparently came to nothing; Yelverton's battle-cry had died on his lips, and now it was the hunters' turn to be hunted. Soon afterwards, when the parliament was adjourned for the summer, Sandys attacked Cranfield for advising the adjournment; but Cranfield hinted knowingly that on the contrary it was he and 'many wise men' who knew 'how and by whom we are now interrupted and diverted'.[99]

The result soon after the adjournment was the arrest of Southampton, Oxford, Sandys and Selden. After helping to attack Bacon, Cranfield had rallied to Buckingham; he now sat on the Council Committee examining the four, displaying especial animosity towards Southampton, whom he saw as the 'most stirring and active to cross the general proceedings and to asperse and infame the present government'; he alleged that he 'from the first beginning of the Parliament estranged himself very much from the Court and Council Board', and that every single speech on grievances came from 'some bosom friend or ordinary guest at the least of the said Earl'.[100] The questions asked at the examination reveal the suspicions entertained of Southampton; he was asked 'whether he had not said he liked not to come to the Council board, because there were so many boys and base fellows'; and that 'there would never be a good reformation while one did so wholly govern the king'. Equally familiar from earlier complaints about extravagance was the attribution to him now of an attempt 'to worke that some of the subsidies... granted might be sent over to the K[ing] & Q[ueen] of Bohemia ...without coming att all into the Exchequer'.[101]

---

[98] *Cabala* (London, 1653 ed.) pp.307-8, 12 May 1621. Cf. above n87 on earlier meetings at Dorset House.

[99] Prestwich *Cranfield* p.324.

[100] Notestein, Relf, Simpson *Commons Debates 1621* VII 615-7.

[101] Lockyer *Buckingham* p.101; SP 14/121/136; above, pp. 113-16, 120-1.

The sentiments are similar to those at the root of his and his associates' attacks on the Scottish exclusiveness of the Bedchamber in the first two parliaments, now aimed more exclusively at Buckingham. Even as a Councillor after April 1619, he confided that 'I had much rather continewed a spectator then become an actor', since his extreme views were in such a minority on the Council; places on the Council were becoming relatively cheap; and in any case, the appointment was widely seen as a move by Buckingham to secure both his own position and the régime's stability should James have died at that time. Perhaps more importantly both his effective channel of influence and his only real court office (that of Anne's Master of the Game) disappeared with the queen's death in March 1619. The frustration of his ambitions as a Protestant military commander during 1620 made Buckingham's ascendancy even more difficult for him to support.[102]

Oxford had been linked with Southampton; their views were similar, though Yonge distinguished between them in his diary; the former was imprisoned in 1621, he heard, 'for saying we should all turn papists', the latter 'for encouraging the Palsgrave in his wars'.[103] Oxford was to prove a thorn in Buckingham's side. His irresponsibility stemmed not from exclusion, but from great security; he possessed the inherited office of Lord Great Chamberlain which, besides its enormous dignity and prestige, could be exploited for some influence at court; short of treason, it was also difficult to see how he could lose it. He first exercised the office, with a table at court and a white staff, on his return from the continent in May 1619.[104] At that time it was thought that 'his authoritie by virtue of [the office] is not greate, & his com[m]oditie lesse'; nevertheless, within a year

---

[102] SP14/108/86, Southampton to Carleton, ?30 April 1619; D.H.Willson *The Privy Councillors in the House of Commons* (New York, 1940 repr. 1971) pp. 17-21; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.65 on his appointment, from the Florence Archives. (The queen's death may also have had some bearing on Coke's behaviour in 1621).

[103] G.Roberts(ed.), *The Diary of Walter Yonge* (Camden, 1st Ser 41, 1847) p.41.

[104] Birch *Court and Times of James I* II,166, Lorkin to Puckering 24 May 1619.

he was disputing precedence with the Lord Chamberlain proper.[105] Between admission and his death in 1625 he spent roughly half his time out of the country or in the Tower; clearly he and his office were worth Buckingham's attention. Like Southampton, he was a martial leader (though the Venetian ambassador thought Southampton by far the more popular of the two with the people); but as Buckingham correctly sensed, it would take more than Southampton and Oxford to shake him; six years ago only the combination of Southampton with Abbot, Pembroke and Arundel had been enough to make Somerset totter. And certainly Southampton's allies then were holding back now.[106]

This was not because of any finer feelings for Buckingham. Abbot's association with Monson three years before had shown him disillusioned with his former spiritual son. But in practice, Abbot's extreme views on foreign policy left him isolated, with his office as his main means of influence. He had lost favour with James in 1616, when Ellesmere took over the precedence of chairing the Privy Council. After being left off the Spanish match committee in 1617 he was excluded from the most important consultations as events began to hinge on the Spanish policy; his efforts to create a private intelligence network with sympathetic English agents abroad could only partially compensate.[107] Rumours that the office of Lord President of the Council was to be revived in 1616 and 1617 further reflected James's uneasiness with him.[108] Later in 1621 two events occurred which

---

[105] SP14/109/41, 22 May 1619, Brent to Carleton; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 299. B.L.Additional MS 6297 fo.170v-171r, Earl Marshal's Commissioners consideration of his claims, probably in 1620, found he had a right to a staff of office, and was otherwise limited to rights at the coronation; *Office of Lord Great Chamberlain : Copy of Speeches Delivered by Counsel before the Committee for Privileges* (London,1902) pp. 232-3 shows that evidence of the Great Chamberlain's responsibility for the Palace of Westminster dates from the later seventeenth century. (My thanks to Dr. Starkey for these two references). In precedence he ranked fourth after the Lords Chancellor, Treasurer and Privy Seal — SP14/67/148.

[106] On travel and imprisonment, *D.N.B.* sub Henry de Vere, 18th earl of Oxford; *CSPVenetian* XVI (1619-21), 275; Russell *Parliaments* pp.108,111.

[107] Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* pp.365-6; E.R.Turner *The Privy Council of England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (2 vols., Baltimore, 1927) I,105; SP14/72/40, 24 February 1613, Abbot to Carleton; SP14/90/34, to Sir Thomas Roe, 20 January 1617.

[108] SP14/87/57,14 June 1616, Gerard to Carleton; SP14/90/26, 17 March 1617, Sherburn to Carleton.

confirmed his effective eclipse; in October Mandeville was indeed 'kicked upstairs' from the Treasurership to revive the office of Lord President of the Council; while in July Abbot, shooting with his friend lord Zouche, had missed the deer and killed the gamekeeper. Although James excused this, saying that he had once forgiven the queen for killing one of his best dogs by accident, Abbot's influence was never the same, especially with his bench of bishops.[109]

Abbot would in any case watch for movement by the more independently powerful Pembroke, who had his own suspicions and jealousies of the favourite.[110] But as Abbot himself observed in December 1617, Pembroke looked 'only to his own ends[,] and whatsoever leagues, promises and confederations are made within one hour they come to nothing'.[111] Pembroke had to be more realistic than Abbot; he had more to lose. Despite the occasional friction, Buckingham since 1617 had played a masterly game in retaining Pembroke's support (or at least avoiding his enmity) by keeping alive his hopes of further power. In August 1618, after the scattering of the Howards, the rumour began that Pembroke would move up to Lord Treasurer, with either Hay, Hamilton or Montgomery (all allies, the last preferable as his brother) filling the Lord Chamberlaincy — in effect what Suffolk had achieved in 1614. The rumour was current again in November 1618; again in January 1619, this time with Hay or Hamilton to be Chamberlain; and again, after the brief Groom Porter dispute, in January 1620, with Hay alone mooted for Chamberlain (and it was observed how annoyed Arundel would be if this happened). Immediately after the adjournment in June 1621 the rumours started again; this time Pembroke was to be Lord Treasurer, Arundel Lord Chamberlain, and Montgomery a Councillor. This looks suspiciously like the sort of bargain Buckingham

---

109 Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* pp.312-3; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 395, 4 August; 399, 13 October 1621. Mandeville may have been needed as President precisely because of Abbot's embarrassment; perhaps also because the prince now began increasingly to sit in on sessions, confusing the precedence (below, p.232).

110 Lockyer *Buckingham* p.66, for their relationship 1618-20.

111 S.Adams in H.Tomlinson(ed.), *Before the English Civil War* p.92, citing SP 105/95/15v to Carleton.

might have dangled before these three men to retain their support when he was threatened.[112]

In fact, only Arundel was immediately satisfied in the summer of 1621; he at last obtained his family's inheritance of the office of Earl Marshal, with a table and lodging at court. It was Cranfield, not Pembroke, who became Lord Treasurer. And Buckingham was now sufficiently confident to lay aside the carrot and apply the stick; by October the rumour had changed; Pembroke would now move to the retirement pasture of Lord Privy Seal (whence Worcester would finally be paid off), and the chief Spanish negotiator Digby take over the Lord Chamberlainship. Pembroke's move to the Privy Seal was now repeatedly rumoured through 1622 and early 1623; but in 1621 when his public support had been necessary, Buckingham (probably) and the rumours (certainly) had been a great deal more encouraging.[113]

Further to emphasise his invulnerability, Buckingham again perusaded the king to alter his Bedchamber. At about this time he appointed his client Edward Clarke as a Groom; he went on to do what none before had succeeded in, and persuaded James to appoint one of his clients to the Bedchamber as a full Gentleman. This was Fulke Greville, who resigned his Chancellorship of the Exchequer to the new Lord Treasurer Cranfield's associate Sir Richard Weston in October 1621, in return for £80 land and the Bedchamber. His gratitude to Buckingham was fulsome; Buckingham's debt to Greville must also have been considerable, for it was apparently his co-operation that had made it possible to

---

[112] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 168, 20 August ; SP14/103/99, Sir Edward Harwood to Carleton, 18 November 1618; SP14/105/67, Sir Thomas Wynn to Carleton, 28 January, and Goodman *Court of King James I* II, 174, Thomas Wallis to Dr Ward, 23 January 1619; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 278, 281, 1 and 8 January 1620; *ibid* 381, 9 June 1621.

[113] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 401, 20 October 1621; 462, 4 November 1622; 471, 4 January 1623, with Denbigh or Carlisle to be Chamberlain. In 1624 Pembroke nearly came into the open against Buckingham; in August after the parliament rumours started again of his promotion to Lord Treasurer — Buckingham's attempt at reconciliation.

destroy his superior, Suffolk, in 1618.[114] It helped that the king already liked Greville, and shared some of his tastes, perhaps sexual, certainly intellectual; after appointment, James used him as a book reviewer; but the appointment was nevertheless an undoubted coup for Buckingham.[115]

During the second session of the parliament in November, brought forward because Digby's return from Europe had revealed new doubts of Spanish reliability, Buckingham began to take on a more visible rôle in matters of policy. Since the session was meant to impress the Spanish with declarations of potential martial intent, grievances were to be deferred until after Christmas. James's tactics in handling the session were striking. Neither he nor Buckingham interrupted their routine for the parliament, but stayed at Newmarket for the entire session, where they would normally have been at that time of year. Chamberlain reported that

> yt is much marvayled that so much busines beeing now on foote both at home and abrode, the King shold kepe still at Newmarket, where...he can...have... [no] great...store of companie, the Lord Marquis Buckingham, his Lady, and his mother the Countesse and the Lady of Purbecke beeing all of note that I can heare are about him.

Certainly, distance made concerted action difficult. This is most evident in the apparent mix-up over Sir George Goring's motion, to draw a petition to declare war on the King of Spain unless he withdrew his forces from the Palatinate — apparently an official inititaive, but obsolete in terms of policy even as it was made. But there were reasons for the king's behaviour besides his, and Buckingham's, rumoured illness; as we shall see in the next chapter, Buckingham (with his own secretary Packer) took the overwhelming share of procurements out of the hands of the remaining Secretary Calvert in October - December 1621. In combination with the king's isolation at Newmarket, it is probably correct to

---

[114] On Clarke, above p.69, n 85. R.Rebholz *The Life of Fulke Greville, 1st Lord Brooke* (Oxford, 1971) pp.245-9; 275 on their relationship. Treasurers always wanted their own man as Chancellor; above, p.119; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 49; 252; 399. Greville had also been a Gentleman of Elizabeth's Privy Chamber; a unique double achievement (LC 2/4(4)).

[115] Rebholz *op.cit,* pp.54-5 ; Marwil *The Trials of Counsel* p.197 — Greville gave James his opinion of Bacon's *History of King Henry VII* .

speculate that James and his favourite were closing down the court as negotiations became especially sensitive; this makes it all the more likely that Goring's motion came from both James and Buckingham. The distance perhaps also made it clearer that James had no need to urge the Commons to action. When they went too far in this, and became too specific about whom the prince should marry, James in anger dissolved the parliament; but by then the developments that had made Goring's motion out of date had also made sabre-rattling in parliament less necessary : for all the anger, Chamberlain thought the decision to dissolve a considered one, and though 'many impute it to some yll affected about the king', he thought James 'too strong in his owne judgement, and of too great experience to be led along or relie on private whispers.'[116]

Nevertheless, another parliament lay in ruins, ended by a snap dissolution as in 1610 and 1614. Forced loans had to plug the financial gap at a time when some sort of military preparations were still essential to the credible conduct of the foreign policy James had chosen. But amidst all his exasperation about the Commons' behaviour, there was at least one positive result for the by now heavily disillusioned king; Buckingham himself had been a great success as a court manager from 1615 to 1620; now Buckingham himself apparently expressed his relief at also being proven 'parliament proofe'.[117]

Within months of proving his power in the arena, Buckingham moved decisively to capitalize on his victory and complete his grip on the Bedchamber, the root of his power. Since 1617, he had been packing the department with relatives and dependants (his brother Christopher in 1617, his 'innermost friend' Wray in 1618). Now in June/July 1622, in a general Bedchamber settlement, he came to terms with two of the remaining independent powers in the Bedchamber, the marquis of Hamilton, the new

---

[116] Russell *Parliaments* pp.124-6; 133-6; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 408, 17 November; 413, 1 December 1621; below p.214 on procurements; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.108-11. *Chamberlain* II, 419, 4 January 1622.

[117] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 374, 19 May 1621.

Scottish favourite, and John Murray, Keeper of the Privy Purse. At the same time, he added to the number of his loyal dependants apppointed to the department.[118]

An unprecedented three new Gentlemen of the Bedchamber were admitted at once; Murray, Buckingham's brother Christopher (both promoted from Groom of the Bedchamber) and his brother-in-law viscount Feilding, recently made Master of the Great Wardrobe upon Cranfield's elevation to Lord Treasurer. At the same time a three-way marriage alliance between Hamilton's and Murray's sons and Feilding's daughters sealed the bargain. Into the vacant Groom's places went Buckingham's 'cousin' Richard Turpin, and his kinsman Arthur Brett. Finally, to tidy things up, Buckingham had his former friend Wray displaced as Groom for disloyalty — abetted by the earl of Oxford, he had married Christopher Villiers's intended bride — and instead appointed Montgomery's man James Palmer.[119]

Left out in the cold by this were the long-serving Scots in the Bedchamber, headed by Lennox, his brother Esmé, lord Aubigny (since 1619 earl of March), and Kellie, the Groom of the Stool. Kellie riposted by moving closer to his fellow-countrymen and by floating schemes to resign the Groomship. Lennox also responded — more ominously in potential — by beginning his own negotiations to match his neice (Esmé's daughter Elizabeth) with Arundel's eldest son lord Maltravers; Arundel too had been left out of the new dispensation. Immediately, however, these schemes came to nothing; on one hand Arundel looked long at the match due to the small portion offered by the Stuarts; on the other, Kellie would only agree to relinquish the Groomship to the earl of March. Rather than resign to one of Buckingham's candidates, Kellie remained in office to the end of the reign as an occasionally effective thorn in Buckingham's side.

---

118 On Murray, below, pp. 203-6, 214-7.

119 *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 434, 27 April 1622; 441-2, 22 June 1622; LS 13/168, fo. 239v (20 July 1622, allocation of carts to three new Gentlemen). E351/1817, LC 5/50, Brett's livery 25 July. On Turpin, Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* p.307, n 10; on Palmer, LC 5/50, E 351/1817; for his connection with the Herberts, *D.N.B.* Sir James Palmer, d.1657 (this man), second wife, and Ruigh *Parliament* pp.130-1; on Wray, SP14/128/97, Locke to Carleton, 30 March 1622, and *Chamberlain* II, 429, 30 March 1622.

Lennox died in February 1624 just as observers thought he was organizing an outright attack on Buckingham; the Arundel marriage did in fact occur in 1626.[120]

Such rumblings of discontent aside, however, the 1622 settlement gave Buckingham a near-absolute control of the Bedchamber, as the appointment and dismissal within a few months of his kinsman Arthur Brett made clear. Admitted in July 1622, there were rumours by September that Brett was likely to become the next favourite. In December, Buckingham told Brett to withdraw to France 'not upon any commandment of the King.' He remained there until early 1624, when Buckingham informed him that he was 'no longer his Majesty's servant' since he had returned without permission. Buckingham had so come to dominate the Bedchamber that Brett was reduced to accosting the king himself in the hunting field in an attempt to appeal over Buckingham's head.[121]

The 1622 settlement was thus the culmination of Buckingham's whole previous approach to the personnel of the department; it was also, as we shall see, the foundation of his new commitment (in association with Prince Charles) to a forward foreign policy. But Buckingham's dominance also had other, more specifically administrative foundations, enabling him to control with minute accuracy the day-to-day traffic of politics and patronage around the king; and we must turn to investigate these matters, before seeing what Buckingham and Charles were to build on this basis.

---

[120] H.M.C *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.123-5 (4 July 1622), pp.125-7 (17 July 1622). M.Lee *Government by Pen* pp.212-3 on Hamilton's strength in Scots politics after mid-1622. On Erskine's attempted resignation : H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.124, 130, 148; more rumours in December 1623 (*Letters of Chamberlain* II, 535, referring to the Groomship, not the Captaincy of the Guard, relinquished by Erskine in 1617), with Anglesey or Sir Henry Rich as his replacement; and again in August 1624 (SP 14/171/49), with Denbigh as replacement. Cf. Lockyer *Buckingham* p.116 on these changes. M.F.S Hervey *The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel* (Cambridge, 1922) pp.240-5.

[121] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 442, 571; SP14/170/2, /44I; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.121-2, 201-2.

Chapter Seven

Bedchamber Administration 1611 - 1625

Privy Purse and Sign Manual under John Murray and Buckingham

The transition from Elizabethan to Jacobean arrangements for the Privy Purse and Sign Manual has already been described; the present chapter takes the story to the end of the reign. In both spheres the trends already visible in the earlier period, which so disrupted the activities of an Elizabethan first minister like Cecil, now continued, and indeed became dramatically more pronounced. These trends gave the Bedchamber, and the Bedchamber favourite in particular, increasing importance in the private administrative machinery; they reached their fullest expression in the unprecedented personal take-over of most of that machinery by Buckingham between 1618 and 1622.

i) The Keeper of the Privy Purse, 1611-25

The key figure in the private finances was John Murray, Keeper of the Privy Purse from 1611 to 1622 as a Groom of the Bedchamber, thereafter as a Gentleman. As already remarked, on his taking over from Dunbar, Exchequer funding began to tail off dramatically — if the evidence of surviving warrants is reliable. Between 1611 and 1625 only fourteen warrants apparently survive to supply the Privy Purse from the Exchequer; spread unevenly between 1613 and 1625, twelve of the warrants total £1,951 — an insignificant sum compared even to what we know of the department's annual outgoings

under Elizabeth.[1] The obvious question follows : from where was the Privy Purse drawing its supplies? Part of the answer seems to be the fourteenth warrant, dated December 1614 for £5000 from the Exchequer 'to be spent according to the king's wishes'. A reference in a Treasury Commission document of 1619 may mean that the £5000 was a regular annual payment from the Exchequer.[2] But if this were so, there is positive evidence that cash windfalls large enough to overshadow even such a regular supply were directed to the Privy Purse, by-passing the Exchequer. In July 1614, for instance, Murray reportedly received £5,400 in admission fines for new Sergeants-at-law, and in July 1619 £6,000 'for the King's use' from the City for the confirmation of London's charters. The last case was pure bargaining to fill the Privy Purse; Attorney General Yelverton acted on a verbal warrant from the king to make the best composition he could between the City and Murray. It is possible that we would not know about the transaction at all but for Yelverton's downfall because of this.[3]

In general, the Exchequer deficit after 1610 (made even more serious by the 1614 disaster)[4] makes it likely that these recorded payments are only the tip of the iceberg; for while, on the one hand, there are no accounts to admit of certainty on the point — as Murray's discharge stated after James's death, his 'particular disbursements' were 'not

---

[1] Above,p.85. *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 206, 251, 418; X (1619-23) 314, 364; XI (1623-25) 499; SO 3/6 May, August, October 1614, April 1615; SO 3/7 December 1620, September 1623.

[2] *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 36 (the thirteenth warrant), no sum specified. SO 3/6 December 1614, procured by Murray. B.L.Sloane MS 2904 (1619), Exchequer Payments, £5,000 to the Privy Purse; Additional MS. 58,833 fo. 11 has £5,000 for the Privy Purse as an 'Ordinarie Annual Issue' of the Exchequer in 1615, but notes 'this differs from the present issues, 1619'. H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie* p.101, October 1621, £2,000 (Scots) to Murray for the king's 'private affairs', probably a small regular payment from the Scottish Exchequer.

[3] *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 548, 21 July 1614; SO 3/6, July 1619, procured by Murray himself. Above, p.183.

[4] Cf. Stone *Crisis of the Aristocracy* p.422 on the need to avoid the Exchequer; though transferring a pension to another source was not so much a courtier's 'defence against... attacks on the pension list' as a means of avoiding the month-to-month uncertainty of Exchequer payments.

convenient to be publicly made known'[5]; on the other, there is other evidence besides these spectacular payments of what the shadowy world of Bedchamber finance must have meant in practice. Traditional histories relate a number of stories about the presence of large sums of cash in the privy lodgings between 1611 and the 1620's; first Salisbury's arrangement to show James what £20,000, his proposed gift to Carr, looked like (to frighten him into reducing the sum); in 1613 the contrary case, Carr's personal loan to the king of £22,000 in gold, by presenting him with the key to a chest when the Exchequer was empty after the Palatine marriage; then Rich's seeing £3,000 in cash and wishing he had as much (in which James supposedly obliged him).[6] It is also possible to get an idea of the physical scale of the Coffers in Murray's charge. After he had stayed behind in order to fill them, in 1617 a Yeoman Usher and a Yeoman of the Chamber were paid for their daily attendance in Scotland on the coffers and Privy Purse; in 1621 the coffers were extensive enough to be granted their own cart on hunting journeys.[7]

Clearly, there was cash on hand in the Bedchamber and privy lodgings, and the coffers to keep it in. Though there is little evidence of where Murray's disbursements were directed, the removal from the Privy Purse to the Treasurer of the Chamber of a number of routine Elizabethan payments, first effected in 1608, was confirmed and extended in 1614, leaving the Keeper free for a less formal and perhaps more ambitious rôle.[8] At particular moments of acute shortage, when the Exchequer could no longer be left to fend off creditors, the king himself in his Bedchamber seems to have stepped in; Sherburne reported the 'many cryes of poor men and others, who some for 3 yeares... are behind and

---

[5] T.Rymer (ed.) *Foedera* (17 vols, London, 1704-17) XVIII, 733 (13 July 1626).

[6] For the stories; Osborne in Scott *Secret History* I, 232-3, Gardiner *History of England* II, 201; and Akrigg *Jacobean Pageant* pp.85, 91, 95. The Rich incident probably occurred after 1620, since James Maxwell supposedly relayed the wish to James.

[7] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 70-1, 19 April 1617; *APC* XXXVI (1618-19) 277-8; LS 13/168 fo. 227v, 20 February 1621. New coffers in 1624-5 included 'three coffers, four Cabonetts... and two barehides' for the Privy Purse; LC 5/38 p. 57. No such detailed accounts exist for earlier in the reign.

[8] LC 5/115/18, 11 October 1614; cf. above, p.85.

unpaid', now heard at court in December 1616. While they may not have been the highest priority, in January 1617 Sherburne reported that 'the king himself will take charge of ambassadors' supplies'. In the next year, after Suffolk's removal, Fenton thought that the king, though very busy 'for onye thinge that I see wilbe thesaurar himselfe for sume time'. The great stringency of 1619-20, when jewels were pawned and plate sold to meet expenses, has already been alluded to.[9] A large part of the fines for Sea-Coal duty were left in the contractor's hands in August 1620 'to be disposed for his Majesty's service', rather than allow the money to sink into the Exchequer.[10] In February 1622 £10,000 paid by the earl of Bedford for an entail went 'direct to the king, instead of into the Exchequer'; in the next two months, the Chancellor of the Duchy paid a total of £7,000 to 'the king's own hands'.[11] At such times, James must have relied heavily on the resources and expertise of his Keeper of the Privy Purse.

ii) Buckingham and Bedchamber finance

There are few indications — with one massive exception — that others in the Bedchamber besides Murray were involved in informal financial transactions. Somerset of course could lend the king money, and was himself Lord Treasurer of Scotland for two years. The Lord Steward and Lord Chamberlain occasionally handled sums. Three Scots Grooms of the Bedchamber appear in the record being repaid from the Exchequer for laying out sums 'for special service', 'on the king's affairs', 'by [his] special direction' — in 1614 and 1616 Barnard Lindsay, in 1617 and 1622 James Maxwell, and also in 1622 William Carr. Sir Roger Aston disbursed money on the king's direction as Master of

---

[9] SP14/89/68, Sherburne to Carleton, 7 December 1616; *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 429, 21 January 1617; H.M.C *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.28 September 1618. Above p.185.
[10] S.R.Gardiner(ed.) *Fortescue Papers* (Camden,1871)135.
[11] *CSPDomestic* X (1619-23) 350, 364, 372.

the Great Wardrobe from within the Bedchamber during his tenure from 1607 to 1612.[12] After 1612, Hay (Master of the Great Wardrobe between 1612 and 1618) received warrants of discharge for large sums from the Exchequer for his lavish embassies to France in 1616 and Europe in 1619; in the first case Lord Treasurer Suffolk was also discharged for the £20,000 'delivered to Hay by the king's private direction'. In 1617 Hay was granted a baron to pay for hangings on the trip to Scotland. And indeed, in each of these cases the revenue from peerage sales, which increased sharply after 1615, was the prime source. Overshadowing Hay in handling this revenue, however, and indeed as a consequence rising well above the rest of the department as a whole (including Murray) stands the figure of Buckingham.[13]

The proceeds from peerage sales (which effectively began in 1615) went mostly to unidentified destinations. Professor Stone, pointing out the mystery, thought that 'in most cases the money went straight to a courtier, usually Buckingham'. Generally it has also been supposed that the money was used simply to line his own pocket; but what we know of his private finances makes it more likely that in this Buckingham was acting rather as a private royal treasurer supplying the king's purposes (which might of course include support of the favourite's state), just as such sales were on other occasions earmarked for specific ends. By April 1624, for example, Kellie reported that Buckingham had 'laide out of his owin monnye 15 thowsand punds for prepairing the navye'.[14]

This suggestion is strengthened by the broad warrants of discharge, without precedent earlier in the reign and without parallel among other courtiers, issued to

---

[12] *CSPDomestic* X (1619-23) 428, 22 July 1623 (Lennox); *ibid.* XI (1623-25) 164, 16 February 1624 (Pembroke); *ibid.*IX (1611-18) 257, 12 October 1614; SO 3/6 June 1616; *CSPDom* IX (1611-18) 441, 8 March 1617; *ibid.* X (1619-23) 364, 27 March 1622; 354, 3 March 1622. *CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 391, 496, 567, 625 on Aston.

[13] Stone *Crisis of the Aristocracy* pp.104-15. SO 3/6 March 1619 (for Hay's 1616 embassy), *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 387 for Suffolk, and *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 18; SO 3/7 April 1621 (£14,000 for the 1619 embassy); Gardiner (ed.) *Fortescue Papers* (Camden,1871)p. 149.

[14] Stone *Crisis* pp.106, 456; H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.199, 12 April 1624; cf. Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.211-3 for the difficulty of distinguishing Buckingham's from the crown's finances in 1624.

Buckingham. Where Murray received a single broad discharge, without formal submission of accounts, after leaving office, Buckingham received a series of discharges, with no sums specified, only 'upon such satisfacc[i]on as he hath given to his M[ajest]y'. In December 1618, Buckingham was discharged 'of all monies by him received from his Majesty's own hands, or from others by his Majesty's appointment, before the [20] November last' — noticeably, without cash limits. In the following January came another discharge for 'divers sums delivered to [Buckingham] in private and otherwise'. A further discharge, similar in wording to that for 1618, was to follow in 1622. It should be stressed that these discharges were in no way routine; their wording was so unspecific as to represent nothing less than a species of 'general pardon'; and their solicitiation probably reflects — especially in the tense atmosphere of financial inquest of 1618-19 — Buckingham's particular responses to the short-term insecurities of faction struggles at court. Like other aspects of Bedchamber finance, therefore, our possessing evidence of such activity is largely accidental.[15]

The traditional picture of financial jobbery and irresponsibility associated with peerage sales must be modified. Buckingham's role as broker in a large number of sales (particularly those of Irish peerages) has long been clear; but disapproval both of him and of such sales has perhaps prejudiced commentators. That wise contemporary Chamberlain was less conservative in these respects than many later historians, and was by no means so negative about the sales or the favourite's rôle in them; indeed he explicitly remarked that the traffic was 'less to be misliked if it [the cash] came to the King's Coffers.' And in all, such evidence as we have points to those Coffers being of great importance in meeting the day-to-day demands on the crown after parliaments had been adandoned as a regular contributor to the king's finances.[16]

---

[15] SO 3/6 December 1618; *CSPDomestic* X (1619-23) 3, discharge of 11 January 1619; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.61-2, 120-1 (the 1622 discharge).

[16] What Chamberlain objected to was the grant to courtiers (as patronage in kind) of the right to sell baronies. *Letters of Chamberlain* I, 601, 15 June 1615.

iii) Procuring the Sign Manual

The Sign Manual, as we have seen, was central to the machinery of patronage. Under Salisbury, the job of procuring the royal signature had been (as under Elizabeth) largely delegated to a subordinate of the Secretary; but as we have also seen, that deputy — Sir Thomas Lake — was quickly appropriated by the Bedchamber as their reliable co-operator. Salisbury's death made very little difference to these arrangements. Lake continued as a mere signet clerk to procure the bulk of signet warrants. Others appear alongside him in the record; Humphrey May, a Groom of the Privy Chamber, in August 1611 officially given a patent to draw 'all Bills, warrantes, [and] l[ette]res as are to pass His Majestie's signature' for Irish affairs; other signet clerks like Francis Windebanke; and the usual rota of Masters of Requests. In addition, the Bedchamber interfered directly in a piecemeal way in this business between 1610 and 1614; Aubigny, Haddington, Lennox, Fenton and Montgomery all appear in the record; but the impression is that their rôle was very limited, and depended mostly on their own personal interests. The activities of Carr fit in with this picture; although at times he made a special effort to procure a warrant for an office or grant of special importance to him, this was evidently only rarely

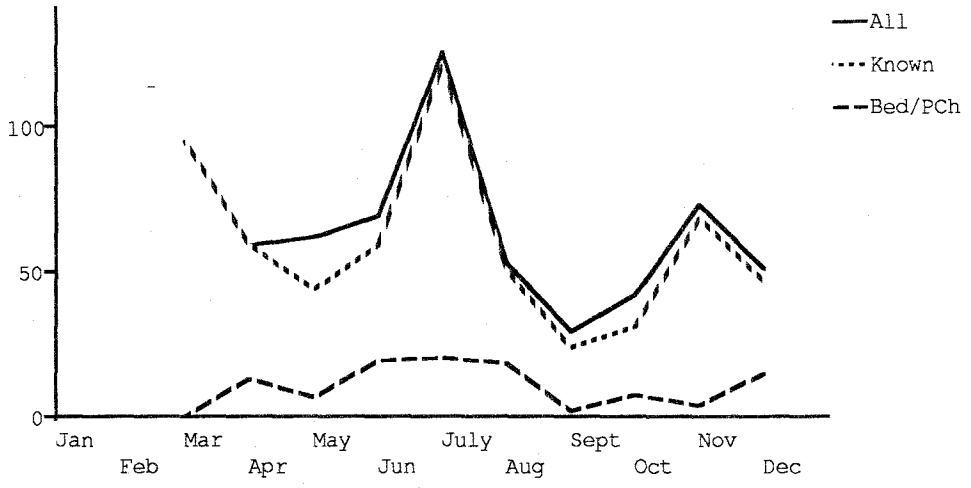
necessary; if Carr was acting Secretary between May 1612 and mid-1615, he had no real hold on procurements.[17]

This was still the broad situation in the immediate years after 1614, when the full analysis of procurement figures conducted for this study begins.[18] In March to December 1614, Bedchamber and Privy Chamber staff procured about 19% of all warrants whose procurers are known. A chart of the figures shows that this share was fairly constant, not affected appreciably by changes in the overall volume of business — a probable indication of the private and/or routine nature of much of the Bedchamber and Privy Chamber's share.

---

[17] Above, pp.91-2; this paragraph is based on an examination of SO 3/5, the register of King's Bills covering the period 1610-14. On this class of document cf. M.S.Giuseppi *Guide to the Public Record Office* (3 vols, revised ed., London,1963) II, 258. Windebanke effectively stopped procuring on Winwood's appointment as Secretary in March 1614.

[18] The Registers of King's Bills, SO 3/6 (March 1614 - November 1619), 3/7 (December 1619 - March 1624), and 3/8 (April 1624 - March 1625) have been analysed, all warrants counted in monthly divisions, and totals established for each individual who procured the king's signature.



a) Procurements, 1614[19]

With the formal reconstitution of the Secretary's office in Winwood's hands in 1615, the Bedchamber's share for that year dropped to about 17%[20]; but in the next two years, it rose somewhat, to about 27% in 1616, and 23% in 1617. Most of this was due to the increasing involvement of George Villiers in the business, who first procured the royal signature a year after his promotion to the Bedchamber, in April 1616.

---

[19] "All" is the total of warrants recorded for the period in SO 3/6; "Known" consists of that number minus warrants not indicating who procured them; "Bed/PCh" includes all warrants procured by members of those departments (including Humphrey May). Full figures are :

1614	All	Known	Bed/PCh		All	Known	Bed/PCh
Jan.	-	-	-	July	126	121	21
Feb.	-	-	-	Aug.	54	51	19
Mar.	95	95	1	Sept.	30	25	3
Apr.	60	60	14	Oct.	43	32	9
May	63	44	7	Nov.	74	69	5
June	70	60	20	Dec.	52	47	15

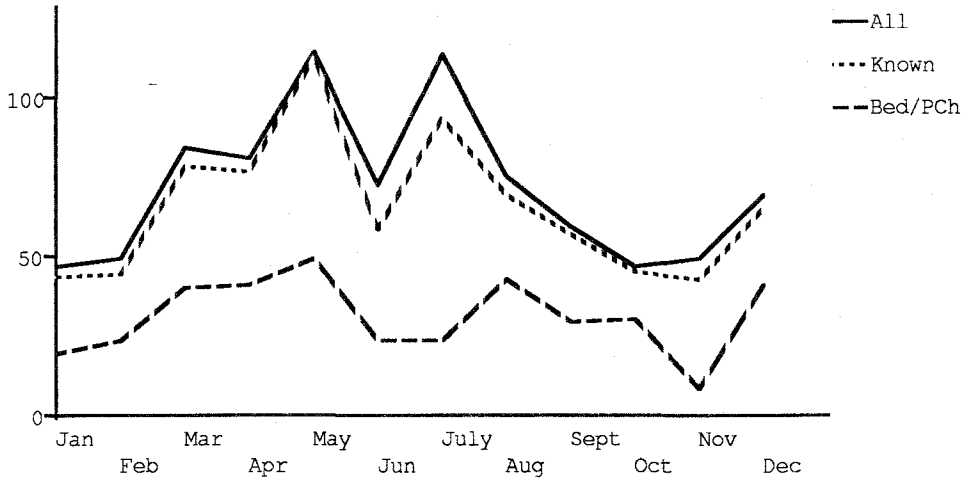
[20] Above, p.166; in July-September 1614, Winwood had already briefly rivalled Lake in his share, procuring in those months 52, 15 and 9 to Lake's 32, 10 and 6; thenceforth the division was more even, with Winwood again recovering his preponderance in late 1615.

Buckingham has rarely figured in the pages of history as a bureaucrat. Yet the record shows him to have devoted a minute, painstaking personal attention to the machinery of government and patronage unique amongst Jacobean politicians; the Sign Manual was central to this machinery. As the Bedchamber's share began to rise, Buckingham was clearly the most active of all, both in number of warrants and frequency of procurement. Between April 1616 and March 1625, Buckingham procured an average of just over seven warrants per month, and over that entire period failed to procure in only six months while in England and Scotland. The Bedchamberman next most active in procurements was John Murray; during the same period he procured on average about one warrant per month, and appeared in the record in only one month in two.[21] It was thus pre-eminently Buckingham's responsibility that the overall share of procurements of Bedchamber and Privy Chamber rose dramatically to about 42% in 1618; 44% in 1619; 43% in 1620; 45% in 1621; 48% in 1622; dropping with his absence in Spain to 31% in 1623; recovering to 40% with his return in 1624, and 43% in the first three months of 1625.[22] A graphic representation of the Bedchamber's share of procurements during 1622 illustrates both its increase since 1614, and its greater responsiveness to the general pattern of business — an indication that the department had become the effective mainspring of the administrative machine.

---

[21] Buckingham: 695 warrants in 100 months (omitting March-October 1623 inclusive; he failed to procure in May and June 1617, August 1619, and May, June and August 1624). Murray: 119 warrants in 108 possible months, appearing in 57 of those months.

[22] Percentage figures have been rounded up from three decimal places to the nearest full point. The definition of "Bedchamber/Privy Chamber" is the same as that given above, n 19; with the exceptions that May was replaced in Irish business by Sir Francis Blundell (a dependant of Buckingham's, not of the Privy Chamber) in January 1618, and he by Sir Henry Holcroft (ex Groom of the Privy Chamber to Anne) in May 1622; and that after January 1619 the figure also includes Buckingham's secretary John Packer's procurements. SO 3/6, 3/7, 3/8 *passim.*



b) Procurements, 1622[23]

If from the first Buckingham was dramatically more active than his Bedchamber colleagues in this business, after the axial year 1618 he began to rival and soon outstrip the Secretaries of State in it. Secretary Winwood, who had taken a sizeable share in the business, died in October 1617; Lake after being made Secretary in January 1616 still retained much of the procurement business until he was progressively deprived of the functions of office after mid-1618 — he last procured in July of that year. Thereafter Buckingham, assisted from 1619 by his own secretary John Packer, was almost always more active in procuring the Sign Manual than either one or both of the new Secretaries, Naunton or Calvert. Naunton never had a large rôle, and virtually ceased to procure in August 1620, a full five months before his official disgrace and suspension.[24] Calvert

[23] SO 3/7; see previous footnote for definitions. Full figures are:

1622	All	Known	Bed/PCh		All	Known	Bed/PCh
Jan.	47	44	20	July	114	94	24
Feb.	50	45	24	Aug.	76	70	43
Mar.	85	79	41	Sept.	60	57	30
Apr.	82	77	42	Oct.	47	46	31
May	115	113	50	Nov.	50	43	9
June	73	59	24	Dec.	70	66	42

[24] In 1618 Naunton procured 127 warrants (to Buckingham's 119, and Lake's 147); in 1619 30; in 1620, 29 — after August that year, he only procured one warrant in September, another in November 1620, and a final one in January 1621. R.Schreiber *The Political Career of Sir Robert Naunton* (London, 1981) pp.63-66, 76-83 sees Naunton's serious personal problems with the ArchDuke's ambassador in August 1620 as merely peripheral, and his fall due to more short-term developments in early 1621; the procurements evidence suggests the quarrel might have been more significant.

(appointed in early 1619) took a share in the business, but after late 1620, Buckingham and Packer (who first procured in January 1619) handled on average more procurements than Calvert.[25]

Particular circumstances could take things further and turn Buckingham's dominance into a near monopoly. In the last session of the Parliament of 1621, Buckingham and Packer procured fifty-three warrants to Secretary Calvert's seven — the figures for October, November, December 1621 run : Calvert; 4, 1, 2 : Buckingham and Packer; 9, 20, 24. In the months before the Madrid journey of 1623, the figures ran eighty-four to forty-eight; thus, for July to December 1622 :

	Calvert	Buckingham and Packer
July	13	16
August	8	13
September	13	15
October	4	19
November	2	4
December	8	17

At times like these Buckingham was clearly the real Secretary, especially when one considers his primacy in the real business of foreign negotiations from 1618 onwards. Only indeed with Conway's appointment as Secretary in 1623 was the favourite content to leave the Secretary's duties to the Secretary.[26]

In early July 1624 Conway informed the Master of the Mint (Buckingham's brother Sir Edward Villiers) that 'His Ma[jes]tie finds that his service suffers much pr[e]iudice by the sorenes of his handes, w[hi]ch disables him to signe, or give dispatch to businesses that require his owne signature. For remedie whereof his Ma[jes]tie is resolved to have a stamp'. An official warrant quickly followed, with a model 'James R'

---

[25] During the 28 months, October 1620-February 1623 inclusive, Buckingham and Packer procured 424 documents to the sole Secretary Calvert's 325; Buckingham and Packer had larger totals in 20 of the months.

[26] Above, pp.173-6, 185-7; Conway, appointed January 1623, took over the lion's share of procurements. During March 1623- March 1625 (inclusive) Conway procured 302 warrants : Calvert 81 : Buckingham (and Packer, who last procured in July 1624) 59.

signature for an engraver to copy.[27] But James seems even at this late stage in the reign to have been otherwise quite fit, and Conway remarked at this time that some business had merely 'taken up all the time that hunting hath spared'. It seems that James recovered somewhat, for the first use of the stamp of the Sign Manual was not recorded until October 1624, at which time it was in the custody of John Murray, by now earl of Annandale, the Keeper of the Privy Purse.[28]

When the last stamp of the Sign Manual had been made — for Henry VIII — it, like the Privy Purse, had been kept by the Groom of the Stool. Murray thus now had in his hands virtually the same administrative powers as the Henrician groomship. How significant was this revival?

A survey of these grants signed by the stamp 'in his Ma[jes]t[i]es presence' at first yields no immediately impressive result. The first nine warrants in October, and four more in late November, were quite routine administrative orders; they were largely concerned with Council-approved troop levies, first for Count Mansfeld, later for Ireland.[29] But in December, more matter of significance appears; the French marriage articles were confirmed, together with a letter 'exemplifying' the oath in the treaty and a third document entitled simply 'Secret Escript', all by stamp; the next day the king's declaration of support for Mansfeld's expedition was similarly passed. A day later three letters to the French royal family about the marriage went through. Given the Council's ignorance of these negotiations, the use of the stamp in the Bedchamber for these paper instruments of Buckingham's and the prince's policy was probably deliberate.[30]

The suspicion is heightened by the gaps between the use of the stamp. James seems to have recovered again, and only the real Sign Manual appears on documents until

---

[27] SP14/169/20, Conway to Sir Edward Villiers, 5 July; /32, James to Villiers and Sir William Parkhurst, 8 July 1624.

[28] SP14/169/26, Conway to lord Brooke, 7 July 1624.

[29] SP14/173/109, 9 items, 28 October; SP14/175/66, 4 items, 27 November 1624, both signed by Annandale.

[30] SP14/176/45, 12 December; /52, 13 December; /53, 14 Dec. 1624. Below pp.250-1.

mid-March 1625. By then the business handled was mostly patronage — grants of office (Clerk of the Navy, a Gunner in the Tower), or cash (a Privy Seal to Sir Robert Gordon). Montgomery was able to bring in two letters that interested him personally, one for preservation of game around Salisbury, another for sale of books printed in Oxford; Murray himself got his grant of Plumpton Park, his rich estate in the North East, confirmed under the stamp. Warrants passing the stamp in the last two weeks of March 1625 represent a confusion of minor administrative and personal matters.[31] And even at the very end, the stamp never became an instrument of power independent of the king; the very last example in the surviving collection of original King's Bills for the reign, the congé for Goodman to be Bishop of Gloucester dated 26 March 1625 (the day before James's death), bears the king's own — very shaky — signature, probably so as not to admit of any doubt in the appointment.[32]

The use of the stamp seems therefore to have had significance only in the handful of important documents relating to the French marriage which were authenticated in this way in late 1624. Later, unlike the case with Henry VIII's death, custody of the stamp of the Sign Manual was not crucial to the succession settlement that materialised around James's deathbed; the power to seal warrants was in itself much less important than the favour of the Prince of Wales. And in addition, the other major power in James's Bedchamber besides the prince — Buckingham — was also about to become even more important in the next reign. This limited any independent scope for administrative action Murray may have had. As we have seen, his rise to the peerage and status of a full Gentleman of the Bedchamber had been dependant on his coming to terms with

---

[31] SP14/185/57 (15 March, 14 pieces plus letters brought in by Montgomery and Patrick Maule — Pembroke was Chancellor of Oxford University); /78 (18 March, 8 items); /84 (20 March, 6 items); /100 (23 March, 17 items); /115 (24 March, 5 items); /122 (25 March, 1 item).

[32] SP 39/17. Nos. 1 - 23 (29 July 1624 - 12 March 1625) all bear the actual Sign Manual; nos. 24-44 (16 March - 25 March 1625) bear the stamp; no. 45 (26 March) goes back to the signature; SP14/185/62, Goodman to Conway, 16 March 1625, makes clear there was a mistake in Goodman's warrant that had to be put right in the king's presence.

Buckingham in the 1622 Bedchamber settlement — especially after his support of Yelverton from 1617 to 1621. After 1622 Murray was one of the few 'old Scots' around James who co-operated with Buckingham. This was largely because Buckingham made the effort to compromise because of Murray's office — both when it simply involved the coffers, and later when it briefly gave him, through the stamp, power in the grants mechanism. Buckingham's anxiety to come to terms with Murray, and his success in doing so, show the high value he placed on these aspects of Bedchamber administration.[33]

Why did Buckingham devote such attention to jobs which Cecil had been content to leave to a deputy? The contrast highlights the different bases of their power. Cecil ruled as a councillor and great officer, Buckingham as a Bedchamber favourite, patronage broker and personal secretary. The exercise of the Sign Manual was the physical link between the Bedchamber and the disposal of patronage. Buckingham would not leave control of this link in the hands of anybody else, certainly not in the hands of any whom he had cause to distrust; his harrying of Lake from office in 1618 showed this, and we shall see that he was also anxious about the Masters of Requests. More positively, he could use his command of the machinery of patronage to bring officers as powerful as the Attorney General under his control. Henry Yelverton, for instance, got the Attorneyship independently of Buckingham's patronage in 1617, but he was forced retrospectively to acknowledge his dependence by giving his warrant of appointment to the favourite to get it signed.[34]

And with the demise of great officers controlling the seals after 1612 and 1614 — with the deaths of the Elizabethan great officers Salisbury and Northampton, the virtual abolition of the Privy Seal, and the subordination of the Signet first directly to the Bedchamber favourite himself, and then indirectly through its limitation to his dependent Secretaries of State — the Sign Manual became indeed the driving force not only of

---

[33] Cf. Starkey *Thesis cit.* pp. 337-57; above pp.183, 200-1.
[34] Above, pp.175,172; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.40-41.

patronage, but of the entire administration. James's passion for secrecy and personal direction in foreign policy took the emphasis away from the seals and placed it on the Sign Manual in the most important areas of foreign affairs. If Salisbury had dominated the administration of foreign policy at a distance from the royal court, by Buckingham's time this change of emphasis had gone too far for that to be possible. In March 1621, for example, a delicate letter from the king had to be sent to the Queen of Bohemia, to stop her arriving in London in the middle of parliament. Calvert deferentially drew back from the business and sent the letter to Buckingham to get it signed 'because I know not whether his Majesty would have any else acquainted with it'. We shall see in the next chapter the degree of secrecy with which foreign negotiations were conducted in the Bedchamber late in the reign; we seldom glimpse, as here in the Queen of Bohemia's case, what such a régime meant in practice.[35] Professor Elton's description of the Sign Manual as a 'vital weapon of power', if put in question by Cecil's behaviour, is fully borne out by Buckingham's.[36]

iv) Buckingham and the Masters of Requests

Buckingham's concern with appointing his own men Masters of Requests has already been noted. While Buckingham and the Bedchamber theoretically had no business to be involved in procurements at all, the Masters were the official channel for suitors to the king, and as such intermediaries, the only members of the court besides the secretaries (or their deputies) with regular access to procure the signature.[37] The King's Bills bear out this theoretical view of the Masters' importance; they indeed procured regularly. On the

---

[35] S.R.Gardiner (ed.) *Fortescue Papers* (Camden, 1871)p. 151, 13 March 1621, Calvert to Buckingham.

[36] G.R.Elton "Tudor Government : the Points of Contact. III. The Court" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th Ser., 26 (1976) 217.

[37] SP29/58/7, August 1662 petition of the Masters of Requests referring to past practice; Aylmer *King's Servants* pp. 13-14, 47.

one hand, the nature of the suits they were involved with seems largely to bear out Wilbraham's earlier complaint about his own office — that 'such as were beggars were left to the ordinary Masters of Requests'. Between February and June 1618, for example, Sir Sidney Montagu procured two warrants for an almsroom, a pardon for shipping silver coin, another for a felon, and a grant of the benefit of an outlawry. On the other hand, however, even if it were so limited in scope, this business gave the Masters frequent audiences in which to transact it — the key to their importance. The use to which that access could be put has already been referred to. This was why Buckingham began to influence the appointment of Masters as soon as he gained a voice in any court appointments at all.[38]

Here he was fortunate that age and death made the Elizabethan Masters due for replacement when in 1616 he began to turn his attention on them. In early 1615 Sir Daniel Dunn, Sir Christopher Perkins and Sir Roger Wilbraham had been serving since the beginning of the reign; Sir John Daccombe had replaced Winwood upon his move up to Secretary in 1614. The death of Wilbraham in August 1616, followed by the removal of Daccombe to be Chancellor of the Duchy in early 1617, and Dunn's retirement in the middle of that year, opened up the field for Villiers's men. Sir Robert Naunton had been immediately appointed in Ordinary in June 1616, effectively replacing Wilbraham; while Sir Sidney Montagu and Sir Lionel Cranfield were waiting in the wings as Extraordinary Masters from June and November 1616 respectively.[39] Both began to wait in ordinary during 1617, but during the second half of that year the record shows disruption to the normal pattern of at least three (and usually four) Masters procuring. Only Naunton procured in the third quarter of 1617, to be rejoined only by Sir Christopher Perkins in the fourth. The explanation for this evidently lies in Buckingham's manipulation of the

---

[38] SO 3/6, February-June 1618; above, p. 168.

[39] L.M.Hill (ed.), *The Ancient State, Authoritie and Proceedings of the Court of Requests by Sir Julius Caesar* (Cambridge, 1975) p.31 for Elizabethan Masters; *CSPDomestic* IX (1611-18) 390, Sherburne to Carleton, 15 August 1618 on Wilbraham's replacement; above p.168.

department, for in 1617 Perkins, by then in his sixties, was persuaded to marry Buckingham's aunt. Having passed this test of reliability, it seems that he was allowed to return to his duties.[40]

In January 1618 Buckingham completed the takeover. Naunton was removed to be Secretary; Sir Ralph Freeman, who in the previous year had also been persuaded into a convenient marriage (to a member of Buckingham's mother's household), replaced him; Montagu and Cranfield took over full duties and began to procure the signature; and new orders for the quarterly waiting of these three and Perkins were drawn up and published. In the space of sixteen months all four Masters had become Buckingham clients.[41]

Not surprisingly, Buckingham took care to maintain his grip on the Masterships once established. Only after Cranfield had signalled his allegiance by his marriage in 1619 did he depart to greater office, enabled to leave his Mastership to his brother-in-law Sir John Suckling. When Suckling became Comptroller of the Household in 1622, Buckingham's client Sir Edward Powell replaced him; and when in the same year Perkins died, Buckingham arranged for his naval advisor Sir John Coke to take his place.[42] Buckingham's approach to the Masterships of Requests was thus fully in line with his handling of the personnel of the Bedchamber, and the machinery of the secretarial business and Sign Manual; in all cases, his aim was the efficient enforcement of his own eventually near-total dominance.

---

[40] Goodman *Court of King James I* I, 331-3; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.39.

[41] SO 3/6 January-June 1618; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 131, 17 January 1618.

[42] *D.N.B* sub Sir John Suckling (1569-1627) wrongly dates his Mastership from February 1620 (rect. 1619). On Cranfield, above p.168. Buckingham procured Powell's warrant of appointment (SO 3/7, March 1622); Lockyer *Buckingham* p.113, and H.M.C. *Cowper* I, 121-7 on Coke.

v) Cranfield and attempts to control Bedchamber patronage

If under Buckingham the Bedchamber had acquired a stranglehold on the mechanisms of patronage, this was partly because of the fact that since Salisbury's death the Lord Treasurer and Exchequer had been ill-placed, due to corruption and vacancy, to attempt in Salisbury's manner to control the situation. The Book of Bounty was enforced by the committee for suits during 1612-19, but as we saw, the indications are that it effectively became a clearing house for the examination of projects, rather than an effective brake on royal grants of patronage to and through the Bedchamber. It is difficult to see the committee in operation during Suffolk's time as Lord Treasurer, but after his fall and eight months' work by the new Treasury Commission, the mechanism for referring grants was tightened up; a new committee for suits was appointed in 1619, and the Book of Bounty re-published with some revisions — a clause was added to the effect that no new pensions were to be granted.[43] But despite that clause, the committee almost certainly remained little more than a forum for projects, where the patent referees, pursued so doggedly in the 1621 parliament, operated. With the Treasury in Commission, the committee for suits was in any case not powerful enough to stop grants outright; its members were not of the first rank of councillors, and only a Lord Treasurer of the power and application of Salisbury, with the addition of the personal favour and support of the king, could

[43] B.L.Additional MS. 10,038 (Caesar's Project book) fo. 2, a copy of the new commission for suits dated 14 April 1619 — cf. SP14/97/19-26, an exact copy of this dated (surely wrongly, though the figures are clear) 18 April 1618, with drafts and two copies of the 1619 printed Book; Prestwich *Cranfield* p.272.

realistically hope for any success in controlling Bedchamber patronage, especially now with Buckingham all-powerful in it.[44]

Lionel Cranfield was apparently such a Lord Treasurer, prepared to take on the Herculean task of regularizing the grants mechanism, and curbing expenditure. Salisbury, however, had also been Secretary of State, with formal power to stop grants, and, for all Lakes's shortcomings in reliability, no real rivals (especially from the Bedchamber) in controlling the procurement of the Sign Manual. Cranfield as a Master of Requests must have seen enough of Buckingham's new Bedchamber-dominated world to appreciate that some grip on the sign manual was essential for his success; but formally the Lord Treasurer had no rôle in the grants mechanism. It is because of this situation that Cranfield's powers as Lord Treasurer have a decided air of novelty about them. The mechanism of the Book of Bounty continued in force, but the innovations side-stepped that committee mechanism. Essentially Cranfield's solution to the problem consisted of three elements; the limitation of the Sign Manual to those formally authorized to procure it, on officially made-up bills; the vesting of full power to quash grants first in the Treasurer alone, then in the Lord Treasurer and Chancellor of the Exchequer, leaving the suits committee to vet projects; and, unavoidably more vaguely, the co-operation of the all-powerful Buckingham in behaving responsibly about procuring the Sign Manual. The first aim of all this was to effect a reduction in the numbers and size of pensions paid to courtiers.

As early as 1617, before the Treasury was in commission and while still a Master of Requests, Cranfield had advocated that 'the backstairs...[be]...closely kept and well looked into and all men commanded to keep their distance'. Soon after his appointment as Lord Treasurer a proclamation was issued against 'the inordinate libertie' in exhibiting

---

[44] In 1619 the suits committee consisted of : Greville, May (Chancellors of the Exchequer and Duchy), Caesar (Master of the Rolls), the Barons and Chamberlains of the Exchequer, the Masters of Requests, the Attorney and Solicitor General, the Clerks of the Council and Signet, and Thomas Wilson, Keeper of the State Papers, who apparently acted as its secretary (cf. SP14/98/32, 22 July 1618) : B.L. Additional MS 10,038, fo. 2.

> bills to passe [the] Great and Privie Seal[s], and Warrants for preparing such bills, as also letters and other Instruments and Writings... drawn by Scriveners and other like Persons, and not by his *Majesties* officers to whom the care thereof appertayneth, whereof ensueth a contynuall Vexation to his Majestie, and... exceeding Danger and Prejudice both in his Revenue and Otherwise.

Only those officers 'to whose places it appertayneth' were henceforth to write and offer such bills, on pain of James's displeasure and condign punishment.[45] More immediately, Cranfield on taking office secured personal power (without reference to a commission, with the opportunities that gave for interests to be voiced) to stop grants. And he wrote to Buckingham on 12 October 1621 that, while he was sure that 'some will make their addresses to his Majesty or your Lordship... I pray let their answer be, his Majesty hath referred the trust of ordering his estate to me'; he must have been encouraged to hear reports that Buckingham was telling suitors 'not to move him in any business of revenue for a year'. From this position, Cranfield also secured a stop on pension payments and a ban on renewals as a condition of taking office.[46]

A year later, the efficacy of these initiatives can be judged from the need for new efforts. Once again in mid-1622 existing Exchequer pensions were stopped. By now Cranfield was procuring regularly as Lord Treasurer, which gave him some independence of Buckingham, and must have confirmed his appreciation of the importance of the Sign Manual; accordingly a new aggreement was reached to limit the signature to grants. In October Cranfield himself procured James's hand to a 'Declarac[i]on of his ma[jes]t[i]e's pleasure under the Signett' subjecting warrants for any grant, farm, office, contract, fee or pension on Irish revenues, for any offices, farms, licenses on English Customs or

---

[45] Prestwich *Cranfield* p.464, n1; J.F.Larkin and P.L.Hughes (eds.) *Stuart Royal Proclamations* (2 vols, Oxford 1973) I, 524-5, 7 October 1621. Larkin and Hughes seem to be mistaken in seeing excessive Chancery fees as the grounds for this proclamation. Williams stopped the proclamation at the Great Seal to try to get the Privy Council exempted, but was overruled; Gardiner (ed.) *Fortescue Papers* (Camden, 1871) p.161, 17 October; 163, 22 October; *Cabala* (1653 ed.) pp.82, 14 October; 60, 27 October 1621. Williams had as yet no experience of procuring the signature. Since the Bedchamber's share of procurements was higher in 1622 than 1621 (above, p.212), the proclamation anyway had little evident effect.

[46] Prestwich *Cranfield* pp.343-4, 341.

Impositions, for grants of Exchequer lands, and for pensions or changes of pensions, to the approval of both the Treasurer and Chancellor of the Exchequer.[47] This second attempt was also followed by signs of co-operation from Buckingham. The favourite could not afford to appear financially irresponsible, since Cranfield had a fair measure of the king's favour, both personally, and for his financial schemes. Thus Buckingham assured him that since he would be unable to refuse to forward suits, and that some suitors might insist on his writing to Cranfield with his own hand, he had contrived with the king and prince to assure Cranfield in such cases that 'whatsoever this unavoidable importunity shall force me unto, you will do no more than you shall think fit in your judgement'.[48]

By November 1622, the new initiative was apparently so successful that relations began to cool between Buckingham and the Treasurer. The rumours in September that Arthur Brett, Buckingham's cousin but also Cranfield's brother-in-law, was in line to be the next favourite cannot have diminished his suspicions; the favourite's absence in Spain during much of 1623 further increased them, aided by reports of Cranfield's lack of co-operation in providing funds to Buckingham's supporters. On his return, Buckingham (and the prince) were implacably opposed to Cranfield, despite the efforts of Hay (by now earl of Carlisle) and Lennox to reconcile them. As soon as Cranfield's efforts began to take effect (particularly in the favourite's absence), the Treasurer's position became unstable.

---

[47] SO 3/7, 12 October 1622. As Master of the Wards and Great Wardrobe, Cranfield procured a handful of warrants in 1619-20. From January 1622 as Lord Treasurer, however, he procured regularly, missing only 3 months in that year and handling a total of 21 warrants; after a brief hiatus (cf. SP14/139/52, 3 March 1623, Cranfield asking Conway to 'get me leave to come over' with letters 'prepared for [the king's] signature... wherewithall... I find it necessary that I should waite upon him') he again appeared from April to July 1623, procuring 11 warrants; then in October and November 1623 (3 warrants); finally procuring 3 more in January and March 1624. They were largely for routine Exchequer business, though in some cases his personal or patronage interests (a commission for his son's Wardship in April 1623, office and land for Lennox in April 1622, cash for William Carr in October 1623) are visible. Previous Lords Treasurer hardly ever procured the signature; Suffolk only did so at critical moments; his total is comprised of one warrant each in April and May 1615, and one in January 1618. SO 3/6, 3/7 *passim.*

[48] Prestwich *Cranfield* p.360; SO 3/7 7 October 1622 (cf. *CSPDomestic* X (1619-23) 453, 458, (7, 13 October 1622)); on Cranfield's favour, below pp.247-9; Prestwich *op.cit* p.361.

But it was to take a parliament in 1624 to ditch Cranfield, and even then James's reluctance to let go of a trusted minister was quite apparent to observers.[49]

For a Lord Treasurer to function effectively in James's reign, it is clear that some curb had to be placed on the often feverish patronage activities of the Bedchamber. By the end of the reign it seems James was so impatient with the constant harrassment this involved that he was sympathetic to such restrictions. Earlier in the reign, he had been rather more anxious to accomodate his Scots.[50] Cranfield indeed was personally better placed than Salisbury had been earlier to attempt such control; he had begun his career with regular royal audiences as a Master of Requests; the king's favour which he won in this way accounted for his rise; as Treasurer he still had frequent access (if the number of signet warrants he procured is a faithful indication); at his fall James was one of the last to abandon him. Unlike Salisbury, in other words, Cranfield understood that a minister now had to be a courtier too.

For all that, Buckingham and the prince were able to uproot him. The fact is more a commentary on their power than on James's inconstancy. The Bedchamber régime which Buckingham had been building since 1617, and which had come to fruition in 1622, was by now, with the prince and Buckingham effectively joint heads of James's Bedchamber, virtually unstoppable.

---

[49] R.E.Ruigh *The Parliament of 1624* (Cambridge, Mass, 1971)pp. 303-11; below pp.247-9 on Cranfield's fall.

[50] Conrad Russell *Parliaments and English Politics 1621-1629* (Oxford, 1979)pp. 99, 109, Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* p.304; above p.94. For legal aspects of this pressure, cf. A.Horstman "A New *Curia Regis* : the Judicature of the House of Lords in the 1620's", *Historical Journal* 25 (1982)pp. 417-8.

Chapter Eight

'The Prince becums a bed-chamber man'

Charles, Buckingham and Politics 1622-1625

We have seen the 1622 settlement gave Buckingham a near-absolute control of the Bedchamber. This becomes clear if we examine the department in 1617, before Buckingham began to appoint, and then again in late 1622. In early 1617 there were ten Grooms. Seven of them — John Gibb, John Murray, John Achmouty, Barnard Lindsay, William Ramsay, John Levingstone, and Patrick Maule — were veterans appointed between 1603 and early 1605, the first four of whom had been varlets or pages of the chamber in Scotland in 1596, the other three dependants or relatives of established members of the chamber before 1603.[1] Similarly, the three subsequent additions, Robert Hay, Henry Gibb, and William Carr, were all relatives of incumbent Gentlemen or Grooms.[2] Of the seven Gentlemen, only Buckingham had been appointed since 1603, and only he and Montgomery were English; Lennox, Fenton, Haddington, Hay and Aubigny had all served in some capacity in Scotland. As late as 1617, then, the department was no more than a clique of Scotsmen centred on those who had served James in Scotland. By late 1622, the picture was rather different. Now there were twelve

---

[1] E351/1814, Cofferers Account 30 September 1616—1 October 1617. Scottish Record Office E34/47, January 1596. William Ramsay was the brother of another page of 1596, John, who had become a Gentleman of the Bedchamber in England; Levingstone was probably patronised by Lennox (H.M.C.*Laing* I, pp. 105-7, H.M.C.*Various Collections* V, p.111 for his connections with the family), Maull originally perhaps by Dunbar (*CSPDomestic* VIII (1603-10) 162-3, warrants linking him with Robert Carr).

[2] James Hay's brother, appointed October 1611; John Gibb's son, appointed June 1613; Robert Carr's nephew, appointed in November 1614.

grooms. Five original members survived — Achmouty, Lindsay, Levingstone, Maule and Ramsay — together with William Carr and Henry Gibb. James Maxwell, Hamilton's appointee in 1620, made an eighth Scotsman. The other third of the department at Groom level was quite new; Arthur Brett, Richard Turpin and Edward Clarke were dependents of Buckingham appointed in 1621-2; James Palmer, if probably Montgomery's man, only found a place in the latter year through Buckingham's displacing his former friend Edward Wray. Of the twelve Gentlemen, all seven from 1617, including Buckingham, remained. But after 1622, Buckingham possessed half the department at Gentleman level : in that year the royally-appointed Hamilton became his ally, and a further three Englishmen, Denbigh, Anglesey and lord Brooke, together with John Murray owed him their promotions in 1621-22. By 1622, then, though the department retained a core of long-serving Scots, it was now dominated by Buckingham's English (and Scottish) dependants.[3]

The 1622 settlement was not only the culmination of Buckingham's whole previous approach to the department; it was also the foundation of his new commitment (in association with Prince Charles) to a forward foreign policy. Buckingham's rôle had been originally to act as a patronage and faction manager, distancing the king from the struggles of English court politics as he withdrew from any real inititiatives in it. But events abroad had by 1620 forced James into taking a stance on foreign policy, and even into calling another Parliament, and in this Buckingham also became a political figure. In action as in inaction, however, James's approach was determined by his prejudices, and his solution to the problems of Bohemia and the Palatinate centred on a Spanish match upon which he had set his sights some time before the crisis in Europe began.[4]

The deliberate pace of this diplomatic approach was frustrating to hawks such as Abbot and Southampton, who wanted a universal war for religion, but realistically there

---

[3] Above, pp.69, 200-1.

[4] Above, Ch. 6, sections iii), iv) (pp. 180-202).

was much to be said for it given the crown's financial weaknesses, and so long as it could be seen to be delivering results. The real intentions of the Spanish crown towards the Palatinate question and the Emperor were the all important factor here, and they had caused much shuffling of policy when James's trust gave way to suspicion, and his suspicion once more to renewed trust during the second session of the 1621 parliament. James at that time was able to continue to try to negotiate. In February 1622, a benevolence was raised; the king explained that having tried to recover his children's patrimony 'by Treaty, and by all faire and amicable wayes', now with 'our hopes... at last frustrate,' he was 'enforced ...to recover [it] by the sword'; yet even then the treaties continued to be tried, and only token efforts made to raise credible military forces.[5] But in September 1622, a crisis came which effectively put an end to the plausibility of James's wait-and-see diplomacy. That event was the siege and fall of Heidelberg and the Lower Palatinate. Early in September suspicions had been aroused when Weston, negotiating in Brussels, had found that for all the concessions on the side of the Prince Palatine, the Emperor's forces were still besieging the capital of Frederick's Electorate; he then asked Buckingham to get him orders to leave the conference 'when I shall hear that they will not remove the siege of Heidelberg'. At this time Kellie assured his cousin that the Emperor's actions at Heidelberg 'dois mutche trubill the King', and two weeks later it was clear how displeased James was with the dealing at Brussels. But even then nothing could be resolved until Spain had been consulted 'whome the Prince hes saide to my selfe he can not yet blame'. Negotiations in Spain rested — literally, as his opponents later said — in the hands of Sir John, by now lord Digby, wholly James's man, negotiator for the match for the past eleven years, and a consistent optimist about the Spanish policy. Weston had pointed out the difference between 'the weak hopes given me here [in Brussels]' and the 'strong assurances given by my Lord Digby out of Spain'. Such a divergence of voices had finally

[5] SP14/127/65, James to the Council, 2 February 1622.

to be reconciled when news at last reached the court of the loss of Heidelberg on 21 September 1622.[6]

This serious failure of James's diplomacy took the initiative out of his hands; the evidence points to the prince, abetted by Buckingham, as being henceforth the initiators in foreign affairs in handling the crisis. Personally, James took the setback hard over the next few weeks; Kellie reported that though he had not seen the king since the news arrived, he had heard 'bye sindrye that never onye man did see him soe discontented'.[7] The Prince had allegedly gone on his knees in tears to his father 'to suffer himself no longer to be abused with treaties'; while curious rumours flew about of James's reaction; he was alleged at Royston while hunting, 'both the Marquises [Buckingham and Hamilton] being with him' to have suddenly stopped in his tracks and rounded on them, to

> tell them that he was shamefully abused, and they were the causes thereof; as having made him believe that all would be well by treaty, till now his son[-in-law] had lost all his inheritance. "You, my lords," quoth he, "have much abused me".

The reporter, on the contrary, thought Hamilton at least abused, 'being known and taken by all to be of the contrary faction'; but such stories tell us most about James's state of frustrated despair.[8] The first rumours of Brett as a new favourite came in early September when the loss of Heidelberg began to seem likely; his favour, and the rumours, fluctuated until his dismissal in December, providing the letter-writers (and perhaps James) with a distraction from European events.[9] But while James became distracted, Buckingham and the prince acted.

---

[6] Adams "Spain or the Netherlands" in Tomlinson (ed.), *Before the English Civil War,* esp. 97; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.128-35; *Cabala* (1653 ed.) p. 201, 3 September; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.133, 4 September; p. 136, 17 and 25 September 1622.

[7] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.137, 25 September 1622.

[8] G.Goodman *The Court of King James I* II, 250-1, Meade to Stuteville, 19 October 1622.

[9] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.133, 4 September; p.140, 30 October; p. 144, 27 November, Hamilton helping Buckingham by having Brett's backer Sir Robert Dalyell (Gentleman of the Privy Chamber) ejected from court; p.145, 10 December 1622. There is perhaps a parallel here with James's reaction in 1614 to failure (this time domestic and parliamentary), in turning to George Villiers.

The immediate result was a closing down of the court. The day after the news arrived of Heidelberg's fall, the king moved from Theobalds to Havering, and on the next day (the 23rd) to New Hall, Buckingham's house, accompanied during the whole journey by 'only the Prince... and his beddchalmer, all uthers debarred, bothe Court and Consell, but theis of the beddchalmer that warr in the liste'. Not only is this the first clear evidence that an entrée list was being used to limit attendance on the king; Kellie's own absence from attendance also suggests whom in the Bedchamber the list was designed to exclude — those upon whom Buckingham (and the prince) felt they could not absolutely rely. From these close counsels emerged an altered pace in policy, and in rumours of policy, relating both to Spain and the match, and to the Palatinate and its recovery.[10]

This change centred on the prince and Buckingham. After Weston's return from Brussels the rumour was that Charles would lead an army in person to recover the Palatinate, and Kellie reported that 'the Prince hes stayed with the Consell at London to sette all things in ordour to this effekt.' In the next breath he reported that 'Porter, the Prince his servand, is gone to pit the King of Spaine too it, that he will ather causs the Pallatinat be delyvered againe according to his promiss or then to joyne his forces with our king's.' Sending this new agent to Madrid in early October 1622 was indeed meant to achieve an altered pace in the marriage negotiations, which had been spun out happily for years by Digby. Endymion Porter was at once a Groom of the Bedchamber to Charles and a confidential agent of Buckingham's, to whom, according to the Venetian ambassador, he served as patronage secretary and 'gateway to all favours'.[11] He was sent to fix a time limit with lord Digby either to conclude or to break off the match; the origins of his mission in the secret consultations between James, Charles and Buckingham was made

---

[10] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.136, 25 September 1622 for dating of events; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.128 wrongly has the news arriving at New Hall.

[11] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.138, *c.* 5 October 1622. LC 2/5 (Queen Anne's funeral list, 1619; Porter as Groom of Charles's Privy Chamber; his appointment to the prince's Bedchamber probably occurred in 1621). Lockyer *Buckingham* p.129 misses his office with the prince. *CSPVenetian* XVII (1621-23) 439. G.Huxley *Endymion Porter, the Life of a Courtier 1587-1649* (London, 1959) throws no light on these matters.

clear by Porter's accident on the journey, when despite his injuries he was ordered to follow in person his dispatches to Madrid, causing suspicion that he had been given private commissions, different from those resolved in council.[12]

Tight control of access to the court in general, and to the king, continued and was intensified as the year ended, and James waited anxiously for reports of Porter's mission. At Christmas 1622, a proclamation sending home the nobility and gentry from London to keep hospitality in their counties was enforced with unusual rigour, and Whitehall was so deserted that all the Gentlemen Pensioners and Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber were ordered to attend.[13] Other such proclamations during the reign — at the accession, in late 1614 and 1615, and during James's absence in Scotland during 1617 — had come at moments of political crisis or vulnerability.[14] In December the proclamation was extended beyond London to remove nobles and gentry from provincial towns until further notice.[15] Nothing so comprehensive had been tried or effected before in policing the politically active classes[16]; the Venetian ambassador thought the nobility saw the proclamation as a strategy to make the court more manageable, 'that by preventing the nobility from meeting together, they remove all occasion for discussion and murmuring, which the king fears just now'.[17]

In all this prince and favourite were working as one. Buckingham from the beginning had cultivated the prince almost as carefully as the king : he had put his brother

---

[12] *CSPDomestic* X (1619-23) 451, Nethersole to Carleton 28 September; *CSPDomestic* XI (1623-25) [Addenda] 560, Nethersole to Carleton, 18 October 1622.

[13] Larkin and Hughes *Stuart Royal Proclamations* I, 561-2 (20 November 1622), and nn. *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 468 (21 December 1622).

[14] Larkin and Hughes *Stuart Royal Proclamations* I, 20, 44, 323, 356, 369.

[15] Larkin and Hughes *Stuart Royal Proclamations* I, 563, 22 December 1622. On 2 February 1623 Mandeville reported to Conway those who remained in London over Christmas 'w[hi]ch are not very many'; SP14/139/19.

[16] Stone *Crisis of the Aristocracy* pp.397-8 sees the period after 1632 as that of real initiative to clear London by proclamations, the motivation being 'the conservative social aspirations of the Tudors'. But precisely because these ideas were so commonplace, the timing of these proclamations' issue under James makes the political explanation more likely. The proclamations after 1632 need to be reviewed in this context.

[17] *CSPVenetian* XVII (1621-23), 530 (23 December 1622).

in Charles's Bedchamber as early as 1616; two years later their friendship was established, with Charles resigning to Buckingham his reversion to the office of Lord Admiral; by May 1619 it was plain, in reports that Charles 'putteth upon [th]e marquis [of Buckingham] al his businesse of importance'.[18] From 1620 onwards Villiers used one of his agents in the prince's Bedchamber as patronage secretary to what by then may have been a joint operation. First he used his brother Purbeck, though by late 1620 his fits of what was viewed as insanity were a real problem. But it was probably at about this time that Porter took over his role.[19]

Charles's public political rôle developed a little later. He sat in informally on Privy Council meetings in early 1621, but was not formally sworn a Councillor until March 1622. Thereafter he took a leading, often indeed a dominant, part in discussions; by October 1622, as we have already briefly seen, while Buckingham was with the king at Royston, the prince was virtually directing the Council at Whitehall. From the beginning, he carried weight; the Lord Keeper used his help to outflank the Archbishop of Canterbury's insistence and the Lord President of the Council's inaction on one item of business; Conway thought him 'diligent', showing 'moderation, Judgement and resolution'. By November the king himself, through Calvert, was asking the prince to organize a Council meeting to deal with the States Ambassadors.[20]

It is important to be clear about the nature of his authority. He was not setting himself up, like a Hanoverian Prince of Wales, as the reversionary interest in opposition to the court. Rather he exercised power through the court. He was the ally of one great

---

[18] *Letters of Chamberlain* II,32-3, 9 November 1616; Lockyer *Buckingham* p.38, Sir John Villiers, later viscount Purbeck, appointed Gentleman of the Robes and Groom of the Bedchamber to Charles; *ibid* p.34 for the onset of their friendship; Birch *Court and Times of James I* II, 103, 3 November 1618 on the Admiralty. SP14/109/34, Brent to Carleton, 15 May 1619.

[19] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 279, 1 January 1620 asserts that Purbeck was acting as Buckingham's patronage secretary. For Porter's rôle in 1622, above n 11.

[20] *E.g. APC* XXXVII (1619-21) pp.352-3, 19 February 1621; SP 14/128/70, 26 March 1622; *Letters of Chamberlain* II 457, 12 October; *Cabala* (1653 ed.) p.75, Williams to Buckingham, 12 October; SP14/133/51, Conway to Carleton, 17 October; S.R.Gardiner (ed.), *Fortescue Papers*, (Camden NS 1,1871), pp.187-8, November 1622.

power there, Buckingham; and he was himself the other. Always the Ordinances had provided for the access and attendance of royal princes in the Bedchamber, with rights of far greater intimacy than ordinary Gentlemen. And Charles exercised these rights to the full : in fact he became, with Buckingham, joint head of his father's Bedchamber.[21]

This was crucial to the new policies pursued by prince and favourite, for it was in the Bedchamber that James, still for all his withdrawal the final arbiter of policy, took the decisions, which were then presented to the Council as *faits accomplis*. This situation made Buckingham's comparative weakness on the Council, observed by one historian, virtually irrelevant, so long as he was in accord with king and prince; it was only James's estrangement from his son and favourite in late 1623 and early 1624 that gave the Council a renewed voice in these matters. It also, by effectively shutting out the rest of the court and council, neutralised debate on these issues, which is why the court in 1622 has been described by another historian as 'a comparatively peaceful place'.[22] The situation, and the prince's rôle in it, is visible as early as 1619. Secretary Calvert informed Hay, who had departed on a major European embassy in an attempt to settle the Bohemian crisis, that the important letter he had left behind as lost had been located : 'the Prince seeking for other papers this morning in his Majesty's Bedchamber found that very letter in one of the windows behind a cushion, which you thought you had put up in your pocket'.[23] The closeness of counsel, and the strict limits on Bedchamber access imposed during the crisis of late 1622 have already been described. After Porter's return with the results of his Spanish consultations in early January 1623, the closeness was maintained; all that leaked to Kellie, the official head of James's Bedchamber, was a rumour that Buckingham would now go to the Spanish coast to fetch home the Infanta.[24] Clarendon later recorded the

---

21 Portland MS PwV 92 (1661 Ordinances) article 17, and above pp. 59, 137-8.

22 S.L.Adams "Foreign Policy and the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624", in K.Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament*, p.154; Conrad Russell *Parliaments and English Politics*, p.146.

23 B.L.Egerton MS 2592 fo. 39, Calvert to Hay, 4 May 1619.

24 H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.189, 25 January 1623 (misdated 1624; cf. p. 186, letter of 2 January 1623, misdated 1624).

account he had from Cottington of the discussions behind locked Bedchamber doors regarding the prince's proposed trip to Madrid; for all Charles's anxiety to go and emulate his father (who had gone to Scandinavia to fetch his bride in 1589), he thought it was Buckingham who out-argued the king, who had nobody to back him up. Kellie thought that later James regretted his decision to let them go, but that the prince had been as vehement in his arguments as Buckingham — 'the matter being soe mutche urged by the Prince, not onlye for his owin goeing but that he mycht have my lord of Bukkinghame with him'. Although he found James difficult to read just after their departure, he thought that they had both

> press[ed] the besines to his Majestie, never showing his Majestie onye kynd of hazard, but the contentment the Prince shuld have in perfyting that work him selfe. But now upon efter thochts I can not think but it trubills his Majestie when the hazards they run are laid before him.

Although these alleged second thoughts may have been advanced by both observers to explain what seemed to them (and many others) an incomprehensible decision by James to let the pair go, the accounts of Kellie and Cottington concur in seeing James giving way to overwhelming pressure in his own Bedchamber, with no alternative counsels to fall back on.[25] Accordingly, when on 18 February Charles and Buckingham set off on their journey (accompanied by Cottington and Porter), all the Council knew was a rumour that they had gone; they posted from London to James at Newmarket, where as Calvert said 'wee all upon our knees before his ma[jes]t[ie] humbly besought him... whether the reportes were true'. It was remarked that in fact Buckingham had been the only member of the Council who had known of the plan in advance.[26]

With the Madrid journey, the court effectively split in two; but observers must have been surprised to see how little difference the physical absence of Buckingham and

---

[25] Clarendon *History of the Rebellion* (ed. Macray) I,15-22; his sketch was based on information from Cottington, then Charles's Secretary, noted at the time to have 'protested exceedingly against the journey' (SP14/138/99, Dudley Carleton to Carleton, 27 February 1623); H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.153, 25 February 1623.

[26] SP84/111/148, Calvert to Carleton; SP14/138/99, Dudley Carleton to Carleton, both 27 February 1623.

Charles made to their hold on James and the court. The proclamations, strictly enforced, clearing London and other provincial towns of nobility and gentry, were re-inforced.[27] Relations between the king and Council began to run like clockwork according to bureaucratic form; a string of routine despatches between Conway and the Lord President of the Council dealt with the largely uncontroversial business of the Council, which met mostly at Whitehall and Greenwich while James stayed at Newmarket and Royston. The amount of patronage and other business passing the royal signature decreased markedly, as did the Bedchamber's share in it.[28] And besides the preponderance of loyal Buckingham appointees and new members of the clan in the department, James also seems to have spent a good deal of time with Buckingham's wife and mother. Although Buckingham on his return felt betrayed by some of his protégés (Cranfield, Weston and Williams in particular), and by August and September 1623 was getting advice from more than one sympathetic correspondent to make haste home, there was no real threat while he was absent, and all three suspects were cautious to appear loyal; the real threat they posed came only after his return, with his change of front on policy.[29] The absence of any real pressure on the king from Buckingham's rivals must have been aided by the king's decision to reserve 'all... matters of grace or favor till the Lord of Buckingams returne'; as an anonymous correspondent told him, 'all men find you so fast riveted into the king's heart that they see it is an impossibility to work you any way displeasure in your absence'.[30]

---

[27] Larkin and Hughes *Stuart Royal Proclamations* I, 572-4, 26 March 1623.

[28] *E.g CSPDomestic* X (1619-23) 502, 509, 624; XI (1623-5) 2, 7, 88. Average traffic through the sign manual for the five years 1618-22 was 779 warrants p.a.; 549 passed in 1623, a drop of 30% (SO3/6, 7); above, p.212.

[29] Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.152-4; Halliwell *Letters of the Kings of England* II, 195, 18 April 1623, James describing Middlesex's advice on keeping Oxford in the Tower lest he 'provide a ringleader for the mutineers' in Buckingham's absence; Williams in *Cabala* (1653 ed.),p. 78 (n.d.); Weston *ibid.* p.202, 17 July; advice to return *ibid.* p.159, from 'LRH', ?August, *ibid.* p.316 from Sir John Hippesley, 1 September 1623.

[30] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 490, 19 April 1623; *Cabala* (1653 ed.) p.159, ? August 1623.

In the crucial matter of the Spanish negotiations, James was apparently even more faithful to the prince's request, in the first important joint despatch the two sent home, to 'advise as little with your council in these businesses as you can'. Observers noted repeatedly the king's caution; couriers were forbidden to divulge anything; in May it was reported that James 'keeps close all letters from Spain', and later in the month Kellie heard the king had immediately burnt the single letter brought by a courier; in June Kellie reported James 'verrye reserved to himselfe'; in early July Chamberlain wrote about 'secret consultation which is kept very close'.[31] James was candid about the problems in the Bedchamber which this tight secrecy caused;

> I have been troubled with Hamilton, who being present, by chance, at my receiving both your... packet[s] out of Madrid, would needs peer over my shoulder when I was reading them, offering ever to help me to read any hard words.

James indeed made considerable efforts to keep the proceedings away not only from the council, but also from his Bedchamber; at the height of his worry about the pair being detained in Spain, just after he had commanded their return, he was 'cloiss in the particulars [of Spanish negotiations] to him selfe, onlye in the generall he sayes to us that are neere him that all things are concludit, and that bye the nyxt [courier] the artiklles shuld be sent'.[32] But apparently these efforts were finally insufficient; in August the prince and duke wrote that Bristol had told them that the Spanish ambassador in England 'by the French ambassador's means' had seen the whole of their correspondence to the king; they could only lament to James 'that you are betrayed in your Bedchamber'.[33]

The risk of such 'betrayal' only grew for Charles and Buckingham after the Spanish fiasco, but in itself the leaks in the English Bedchamber probably did little damage

---

[31] Halliwell (ed.) *Letters of the Kings of England* II,184, 17 March 1623; SP14/144/27, Dudley Carleton to Carleton, 9 May; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.169 (16 May), p.172 (3 June), p.174 (11 July); *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 507, 12 July 1623.

[32] Halliwell (ed.) *Letters of the Kings of England* II, 190, James to Charles and Buckingham, 1 April 1623. Williams advised Buckingham on dealing with Hamilton; *Cabala* (1653 ed.) p.78, n.d.; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.158-9; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.174, 11 July 1623.

[33] Halliwell (ed.) *Letters of the Kings of England* II, 226, 20 August 1623.

to their negotiations. Of more importance for the political future were events in Spain — not of course in the sense of substantive negotiations, but rather in the effect the journey and stay in Spain was having in strengthening the relationship between Buckingham and the prince. Each was perceived very differently by the Spanish; both came away with first hand experience of a different court system; and as a result Buckingham's relationship with Charles as prince (and later king) was henceforth expressed in a particular court language which originated in the court of Spain. Buckingham apparently alienated the Spanish by 'his French garb, ...his stout hastinesse in negotiating, and [his] over-familiarity with the Prince'. After their return the Spanish ambassadors presented James with a detailed list of such complaints, which is worth rehearsing for the Spanish perspective it gives on what such 'French familiarity' meant : the allegations demanded

> whether sitting at the table with the Prince he did not behave himself unreverently? whether he were not wont to come into the Prince's chamber with his clothes half on, so that the doors could not be opened to them that came to visit the Prince from the King of Spain, the door-keepers refusing to go in for modesty's sake? Whether he did not call the Prince by ridiculous names?

James's allegedly shocked reaction to these outraged complaints is interesting; he had taught Buckingham to behave in precisely this French manner.[34] The prince, on the other hand, impressed the Spaniards by his reserve and gravity; in this the admiration between Philip IV and Charles was apparently reciprocal, and went beyond mere flattery.[35] Instead of flattery, there was imitation : the consequence was that certain aspects of the Spanish system were taken over by Charles during his stay there, paradoxically in order to institutionalize the easy-going (but so far merely private) relationship he had with Buckingham, who held office only in James's household. Charles used Spanish symbolism effectively to make Buckingham First Gentleman of his own Bedchamber. The Spanish court, using the Burgundian ceremonial transferred to it in 1548 by Charles V,

---

[34] *Cabala* (1653 ed.) p.16, Anon. letter, ?30 September 1623; p.221, *c.* April 1624 — cf. Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* p.286, n 33 on this document (a translation of the official charges of the Spanish ambassadors in April 1624, originally in Latin), and p.281 on James's reaction. Above, Ch. 1 section iii)., pp. 13-14, on French familiarity.

[35] J.Brown and J.H.Elliot *A Palace for a King : The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV* (New Haven, 1980), p.40.

employed a golden key as the badge of this officer, the *sumiller de corps,* who under Philip IV of course was Olivares. Just after Charles's formal entry into Madrid, Philip IV gave half of the Spanish guard he had provided for him 'golden keys of the court to dispose to such English as the Prince was pleased to intrust'. Evidently, for Charles this pre-eminently meant Buckingham, and James must have quickly received news of it, for when he wrote to the pair on 1 April 1623 he observed that Buckingham had 'now turned Spaniard with his golden key'.[36] Indeed, combined with his office of Master of the Horse — which he was exercising in Spain to the extent of claiming sole right to attend the prince in the coach, forcing out Bristol from the negotiations which he, the prince and Olivares were conducting within — Buckingham now possessed exactly the combination of court offices *vis à vis* Charles which Olivares enjoyed with regard to Philip IV.[37] The news did not take long to get back to England; by mid-May Kellie was hearing the complaints of the prince's household (which had arrived in late March)

> in respect of his Heichnes more retired carriage then thaye have bein accustomed with... There lyes none in the Prince his chalmer but my lord of Bukkinghame. Sume of his Heichnes servands... hes not that wonted access thaye have had, ...sume of them cumming awaye; uthers above stairs sume of them are goeing to see sume things in uther places and soe to passe the tyme till his Heichnes cume homewart.[38]

With the failure of the negotiations, Buckingham's new position with the prince was the most significant result of the Madrid journey — Kellie was quick to observe soon after their return that 'the Prince loves him [Buckingham] in an extraordinarye degree'.

Thus established on his return to England as prime gentleman in the Bedchambers of both prince and king, and with Charles his ally as joint head of James's Bedchamber,

---

[36] On the key's later history, above pp.38, 53-4, and D.Starkey "Representation through Intimacy" in I.M.Lewis (ed.), *Symbols and Sentiments* (London, 1977) pp.214-5. Brown and Elliot *A Palace for a King* pp.31, 36; G.Huydts "Le Premier Chambellan des Ducs de Bourgogne" in *Mélanges D'Histoires offerts à Henri Pirenne* (2 vols., Brussels, 1926) I, 265. Thomas Frankland *The Annals of King James and King Charles the First* (London, 1681), p.75; G.P.V.Akrigg (ed.), *Letters of King James VI and I* (London, 1984) p.403.

[37] Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.150-1; H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.166, 167, 170; 4, 9 and 16 May, 1623.

[38] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.169, 16 May 1623; cf. *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 499, 30 May 1623, and F.H.Mares (ed.) *The Memoirs of Robert Carey* pp.77-8 for Charles keeping his household at arms length.

Buckingham began to press for war with Spain. At first observers thought he would carry the king; for all the 'emulations and banding' in the court, thought Kellie, 'soe long as the King and Prince dois howld soe weill with Bukkinghame, all that other men can doe or darr doe is to lytill purposs'.[39] But two weeks later Kellie began to observe the break-up of this triple alliance, which manifested itself in James's illness, both gout, and, as Kellie thought, 'of his mynd lykewyse. ... You can not imagine how the world is possessed of the vexatione his Majestie hes in his mynd.' A week later the split was quite apparent to Kellie, who wrote that

> His Majestie is so pressed with sume things whitche in his judgement he can not yet condiscend to doe; but he hes choysen a number of the Consell to whome he will participate his mynd in theis things. But in the meantyme he is in mutche trubill in his mynd. I mutche dout that sume wold have him to imbrace things mutche contrarye to his dispositione and verrye unfit for the nature of this tyme, and he soe mutche without monnye as he is.

James, in other words, outnumbered and out-argued by Buckingham and the prince in his Bedchamber, turned at length for help to his council. It was at this point that the threat to Buckingham became real; Kellie the inveterate king-watcher did not need James to spell out his attitude, so that although James 'hes noe discourss of this subject with me, yet theis that thinks thaye knowe him best is of this mynd that it wilbe contrarye to his will if the matche shall not goe on, without the whitche their is lytill hope of a quyet lyfe'.[40] Only if the prince backed him could Buckingham hope to survive, and here his new hold over Charles must have given him confidence to strike out; for observers were clear that Buckingham was more extreme and less temperate in his views on Spain than the prince, and more vindictive towards those he regarded as betraying him after his return.[41] In late January 1624 a meeting of the select Council refused to break the treaties for marriage and

---

[39] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.182, 18 October 1623.

[40] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.183, 4 November; 11 November; 184, 29 November 1623.

[41] Russell *Parliaments* p.147; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.183, 184, 11 and 29 November 1623; *Cabala* (1653 ed.),pp.88-90, Williams to Buckingham, 2 February 1624, writing with the prince's encouragement and relaying his instructions; cf. Russell *op.cit.* p.153.

the restoration of the Palatinate with Spain, only Buckingham, Conway and Carlisle voting to break, Lennox, Hamilton (Bedchamber king-watchers), Pembroke (who had his brother to watch for him) and Belfast abstaining or 'neutral', and Williams, Middlesex, Arundel, Weston and Calvert against.[42] The Council indeed provided James with a breathing-space; but in the event this only forced Buckingham and the prince to widen the forum still further and pursue their aim by giving a parliament its head to ride roughshod over the king's doubts — a parliament which they had carefully manipulated the Council into recommending, and James into accepting.[43]

To do so, Buckingham and Charles formed an alliance with the parliamentary groups who had been involved in attacks on Buckingham in 1621, and as we have seen, in opposition to James policies since 1604; in particular, with the groups led by the earls of Southampton and Oxford. Kellie remarked that 'monye of theis Parlament men that did disturbe the last Parlament ar now als mutche for my Lord of Bukkinghame as thaye warr then against him'; certainly, concerted lobbying seems to have occurred which led to rumours of an 'undertaking' like those of 1614. The change had been signalled almost immediately; after their homecoming celebrations, Charles and Buckingham had departed for Whitehall and the Council on 30 October, leaving the king at Royston, 'no body with him but the earle of Southampton', an unprecedented signal of trust and favour. On 30 December Oxford, that potential 'ringleader of the mutineers' was released by Buckingham's means from the Tower.[44]

Both the policy and the methods used crossed James's deepest instincts; they also alienated the two surviving great powers of the Bedchamber who had been excluded

---

[42] Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* pp.39-42; Adams in Sharpe (ed.) *Faction and Parliament* p.156.

[43] Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* pp.32-5.

[44] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.193, 4 March 1624; Russell *Parliaments* pp.148-53 on the organization of support; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 522, 8 November 1623; Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* pp.35-6;

from Buckingham's settlement of 1622 : Lennox and Kellie.[45] They disapproved of the thrust of the new policies as such; and they were further encouraged in their opposition by their awareness of James's own distaste. Buckingham countered by tightening his hold on king and prince; the Venetian ambassador reported Buckingham staying with the king in the Bedchamber at Newmarket 'like a sentinel'; this, however, only soured relations still further. In January 1624 it was remarked that Lennox and Buckingham were at odds, and that most of the 'great ones' were backing Lennox, because

> it seems the Duke of Buckingham engrosses the Prince's favour so far as to exclude all other both from the father, and the son... he [Buckingham] stirs not from the King, but keeps close about him, to cut off all access

— incidentally a clear reference to Buckingham's new position with the prince.[46] It was thus a great stroke of luck for Buckingham that Lennox died on the day that the 1624 Parliament was to be opened. The other 'great ones', of whom Pembroke was the most important, held back from attacking, though in Pembroke's case it was a close thing.[47] Even so, Kellie acting alone was able to provoke a real crisis in Buckingham's favour in mid-1624.

Kellie had on the king's behalf dealt secretly with Spanish affairs in the Bedchamber before. In December 1615 he had been sent to Sarmiento to assure him that the Spanish negotiations would still have top priority despite the fall of Somerset. In March 1616 he was reported to have interviewed the Spanish ambassador Sarmiento 'by the king's order', 'very secretly'. Such references are understandably rare, but Kellie himself admitted further such dealings in 1620. It was no coincidence that it was he who took the king's barges to Gravesend to meet the current ambassadors on their arrival in

---

[45] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.203, 30 May 1624 — 'The Prince his cariage at this Parlament hes bein from the beginning thocht be the wysest sorte to be a lytill too populare, and I dout his father was a lytill of that mynd and as I think hes spokin his mynd freelye to him'; above pp.200-1.

[46] *CSPVenetian* XVIII (1623-25) 208; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 542, 31 January 1624.

[47] Lennox died suddenly on February 16. Russell *Parliaments* p.148, n4.; Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.177, 202; above, pp.197-8.

June 1623.[48] But in acting in these affairs, as he later protested, he was more the king's trusted servant than inclined to favour Spain. James needed loyal servants upon whom he could rely; thanks to Buckingham's packing the Bedchamber and the prince's support, such men were few, and Kellie was now the chief of them. Kellie's activities in 1624 which made him so unpopular with Buckingham and the prince consisted of procuring secret audiences both for official and unofficial members and agents of the Spanish embassy; he did so by exploiting his right as Groom of the Stool to appoint audiences and to admit ambassadors to the Bedchamber.[49] Just after Buckingham had given parliament his version of events in Spain, the Spanish ambassadors complained to James of his allegedly derogatory speeches. Kellie was given the task by James of seeing that the ambassadors were satisfied, by making enquiries of Secretaries Conway and Calvert. The result was accidently to make Buckingham the hero of the hour in parliament, and to secure no more than a proclamation against directing abusive words and actions at ambassadors.[50] But at the same time a secret route to the king was opened for the ambassadors by Kellie, at James's request. James wanted to hear fresh proposals on the Palatinate, now that the threat to break the treaties had become real — the basic approach of all his previous diplomacy. The ambassadors wanted to persuade James to get rid of Buckingham, whom they saw as the main cause of the breach, and if possible to dissolve parliament before treaties could be broken or war monies granted. Kellie simply brought the two willing partners together. On 29 February 1624 Don Francisco, one of the ambassadors' confessors, came to Kellie's chamber at Hampton Court and asked on the ambassadors's behalf 'that he mycht delyver a letter to his Majestie from the imbassadours

---

[48] Gardiner *History of England* II, 368; *CSPVenetian* XIV (1615-17) 147, 11 March 1616; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.199 — 'I have not since two yeares before Gondomarr went [early 1622] had onye thing to doe in the Spanish besines'. *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 501, 14 June 1623.

[49] H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.195, 11 March 1624 — 'do not ...beleive that I am ather Spainyart, Fleeming or Frenche or onyething uther then that I shuld be...', i.e. the king's man. Nottingham University Library Portland MS PwV 92, §10 (1661 Ordinances), and above p.45.

[50] Russell *Parliaments* p.162; *CSPDomestic* XI (1623-25) 175-6, 2-4 March 1624.

and to saye sume thing to him that he had to saye'. Kellie thought 'his best courss was to goe be my Lord Chamberlane as the rycht waye betwyxt his Majestie and the imbassadours. He replyed that if I did think it inconvenient for me he wold doe soe. I ansuered him that for this tyme I wold serve him.' Modestly, after informing the king of the audience, he also informed the prince, who was present at it. But at a second meeting on 2 March at Theobalds, Don Francisco had audience 'where the Prince nor noe bodye was, but my Lord of Annan[d—John Murray—] and my selfe'. These meetings were concerned with diplomatic fencing about the treaties, and whether the ambassadors should delay sending home their dispatches; James was hoping until the last minute that diplomatic pressure would work and bring on fresh proposals from Spain. Nevertheless, the prince was furious, especially at the second audience, and evidently on 7 March when Don Francisco came again to court, Kellie cautiously referred him to the Lord Chamberlain, 'whoe was his convoye to the Kings Majestie' — the public way.[51]

There Kellie's activities rested until the end of March. Meanwhile James had pulled the rug from under Charles and Buckingham by speaking out of turn to a Committee of both Houses, asking for larger sums than scripted; the prince actually interrupted him in public when he asked for additional supply for his own debts. But after this one aberration on 13 March, James refrained from such tactics and responsibly toed the line; Charles and Buckingham glossed and explained the king's words in reporting them on the 15th, and secured the king's admission that this was indeed what he had meant to say; one courtier probably caught the flavour of what was really going on when he sent his correspondent lord Zouch the words that 'came out of a Kinges mouth, & yet no sooner boorne but... eaten uppe againe' by James, 'who went cursing & swearinge awaye

---

[51] Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* pp.266-7; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.195-6, Thursday 11 March 1624; Ruigh misdates the third audience to 9 March. Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.184-5 for the significance of these meetings, and Buckingham's reaction to them.

towardes Tibbowles againe... & would neither heare the prince, nor p[ar]lament speake a woorde'.[52]

It may be that James was attempting to split Charles from Buckingham by making life so difficult for them; if this had failed for the moment on the public stage of parliament, James now apparently tried again in his Bedchamber. In a formal audience on 29 March an elaborate subterfuge started the secret meetings going again; while one of the ambassadors was put 'upon the Prince and Duke in a discourse', the other, the Marquess of Inojosa, 'thrust a letter into the king's hand, which he desired the king to read in private'. James 'thrust it into his pocket, and went on with his discourse, as if he had received none'. The purpose, as Don Francisco later put it, was 'to procure private accesse for Don Francisco to come and speak with the king, which his Majestie appointed by my lord of Kellie, and he by secresie'. Appointed for 31 March, the secret audience was deferred by Kellie since Don Francisco arrived too late in the day 'and he could not enter the palace unseen as it had been agreed'.[53]

The first of four private, and supposedly secret, audiences that month took place at dawn on 1 April, at Theobalds, with Kellie standing guard in the withdrawing chamber to guard against eavesdroppers. Another meeting was arranged on the 3rd, this time with another unofficial agent, Padre Maestro, being smuggled in, and Conway, 'Buckingham's sentinel', dismissed from the audience; and after a day's deferral, due to the prince's presence threatening privacy, a third audience, again with Padre Maestro, occurred on the 20th.[54] James was probably expecting an initiative on the Palatinate from

---

[52] Russell *Parliaments* pp.185-6; SP14/160/81, ?15 March, Edward to John Nicholas; /92, Sir Cavallero Maycote to lord Zouch, 18 March 1624.

[53] *Cabala* (1653 ed.), 90, "The Heads of that Discourse which fell from Don Francisco...", dated by Ruigh (*op.cit.* p.274 n.21) to 5 rather than 7 April; Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* p.270, quoting the Spanish transcripts.

[54] Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* pp.271-81; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.199-200, 5 May 1624; Kellie was clearly being disingenuous (at the very least) in swearing 'in the presence of Almychtye God' to have had nothing to do with Spanish affairs since the previous month, giving Mar another account of his dealings in early March! (cf. above, pp. 242-3).

these meetings, since a new agent (Maestro) had just arrived; but he received instead a denunciation of Buckingham, so well-informed about court realities that somebody on the Privy Council opposed to him and the war policy must have been behind it. (Middlesex later headed the contemporary list of those 'vehemently suspected'[55]). The charges were wide-ranging, and included (as we have seen) specific complaints about Buckingham's behaviour in Spain; some courtiers found these laughable when made public.[56] James himself seems to have had no time for the sensational allegations that Buckingham wanted to keep Charles unmarried so that his own daughter should be queen, married to the Palatine's son when he succeeded. But other charges carried more conviction, and interested James. James was informed that he was 'besieged and closed up with the servants and vassals of Buckingham' — which as we have seen was very close to the truth; second, that the ambassadors had been informed 'four moneths ago that [James] was to be restrained, and contained to his Country house, and pastimes, and the government of the State to be assumed and disposed by others' — which, plots or no plots to formalise such an arrangement, had already begun to happen in late 1622, and was clearly the case in late 1623-early 1624, with Charles running the Council at Whitehall; and third, that 'the Duke had reconciled himself to all the popular men of the State, and drawn them forth out of prisons', instancing Oxford, Southampton and Saye — which, again, was broadly the case. These things were revealed to James to enable him to see his own plight and take steps to re-impose his authority.

Don Francisco reported James's reactions to these revelations. If much of this must already have been familiar to James, he took care to encourage the agent. At each of the first two audiences, James asked in particular for further details of Buckingham's 'affecting popularity' or 'popular courses'; if such were presented James promised he

---

55 SP14/163/50, Nethersole to Carleton, 25 April 1624; cf. SP14/164/10, Locke to Carleton, ?3 May : both suspected Cranfield

56 SP14/164/12, Dudley Carleton to Carleton, 3 May 1624 — 'frivolous allegations ...as would... moue laughter'.

would 'quickly take a course with him'. And in answer to Don Francisco's worries about the prince's power to protect Buckingham, James (allegedly) expressed his belief that Charles was now carried away by Buckingham 'who had he knew not how many devils within him since that journey'; but that he was still certain of 'his own power to sever them two, when he pleased'.[57]

James's reaction to at least some of these accusations was encouraging enough for the official ambassadors to come to court on 24 April and officially reveal the plot; they directly accused Buckingham of having said, during the Council preparations for parliament and the debates on whether to break the treaties in January,

> that if His Majesty would not accomodate himself to their counsels, they would give him a house of pleasure whither he might retire himself to his sports, in regard that the Prince had now years sufficient to, and parts answerable for the government of the kingdom.

On being asked for evidence and the names of their informants, the ambassadors replied that the Privy Councillors could supply it if examined on oath. Two days later the procedure to do so was worked out; James was to take the oaths himself, and prime suspects Calvert and Weston were to write their answers; first-rank suspects Middlesex and Bristol were not safe to consult, and were omitted. But the oath on 2 May revealed nothing. From then on James was nothing so gracious or accomodating to the Spanish ambassadors, who eventually departed in late June after one more impatient audience on 3 May, under all the marks of disgrace.[58]

James had used the loyal rump of his Bedchamber as fully as he could in order to embarrass his son and favourite without breaking with them or disavowing their actions, of many of which he clearly disapproved. Perhaps the interpretation which makes best

---

[57] Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* pp.271-81; *Cabala* (1653 ed.)pp. 90-3, Don Francisco's account of his interview of April 1, with details from Maestro's of April 3, told to Williams on April 5 1624. On the charges' grounding in reality, see the foregoing and Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.179-80.

[58] Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* pp.283-301, and Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.192-5. The ambassadors may have hoped to give Bristol a chance to be heard if summoned; but he was formally denied the presence on the day of the plot's public revelation — SP14/163/43, Conway to Bristol, 24 April 1624.

sense of the events centring on the Spanish ambassadors' revelation of the 'plot' to retire James, is that James was testing to see how far Charles would go along with Buckingham. The Venetian ambassador suspected that James encouraged the Spanish to lay the public charges; and when James confronted the pair with the allegations directly, he at least learned, as one historian has rightly observed, 'that it was virtually impossible to break their alliance'. The final ritual of proceeding to an examination of the Council on oath (based on questions taken from a much watered-down recension of the charges) in fact seems to have arisen from Buckingham's insistence on making an issue of the matter — both king and prince were reported as being earnest with him to drop it.[59] In fact, of course, if James was waiting for a re-awakening of Charles's filial piety (or simply his common sense), he was to be disappointed; Charles was going to have Buckingham, Charles was going to have war, and James was not to be allowed to spoil any of it. On 26 April he advised Buckingham to go along with the investigation under oath; to refuse would only make the king more suspicious, but above all 'I can not think that any man is so mad as to call his own head in question by making a lie against you, when all the world knows me to be your true friend'. And this was a security that James could hardly shake a little, let alone break.[60]

Equal care to that lavished on the ambassadors was taken by the prince and Buckingham to deny access to the earl of Middlesex and his friends, to whose destruction the parliament turned once questions of finance and foreign policy became less pressing. There seems little doubt that James parted reluctantly with his servant; we have seen the origins of his career in the king's personal favour, and the unique access to the Sign Manual he enjoyed as Treasurer. Now, while being pursued, he 'behaued himselfe with

---

[59] Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* p.285; SP14/164/12, 3 May 1624, Dudley Carleton to Carleton, on Buckingham's insistence, and H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.199, 5 May 1624 — 'Bukkinghame hes takin great exceptione, thoe bothe the Prince and King himselfe wold willinglye have had him never takand onye notice of it'.

[60] Halliwell (ed.), *Letters of the Kings of England* II, 231-2, Charles to Buckingham, 26 April 1624.

wonderfull pride[,] his hope being upon the kinge', with whom, in early April at least, his credit was reported to be as great as ever. By the middle of the month, however, despite several long audiences after the attack began — 'two accesses at least in [th]e bed-chamber, and his last two hours' — James was reported as 'haveing forsaken him'.[61] Even so, Buckingham and the prince, his chief prosecutors, took no chances; when he made a dash to Theobalds in late April, taking witnesses in the case with him, to clear himself with the king, the prince was tipped off and followed him there; this was apparently enough for one of Middlesex's witnesses to change his story, incriminating the Treasurer instead of clearing him. Such a desperate measure nevertheless showed what sort of access Middlesex had been used to; Chamberlain reported on 30 April that

> for a fortnight together he had often access to his Majestie and much private conference, by the meanes (as is said) of the Lords of Kelly, Holderness [John Ramsay, formerly viscount Haddington] and Annan[d] : and on Saterday last was long with the King before he was up : but that afternoone [the 22nd] he received a message by the Prince, not to come into the Kings presence any more till he have cleered himself.[62]

Having, as Chamberlain makes clear, offered Middlesex fairly consistent support, on his fall the old Scots in the Bedchamber, Kellie and Holderness, helped get his petitions for mitigation into James's (apparently willing) hands; Holderness, in the manner of Inojosa, waited in the Bedchamber for two hours for his opportunity, 'took advantage of the Prince and Buckingham turning about, and privately conveyed it into the king's hand, who as privately put it into his pocket and swore he would read it as soon as they were gone'. James's speech in May 1624, accepting the verdict on Middlesex, seemed to Chamberlain so ambiguous as to admit of construction either in his favour or against him, and Kellie remarked that indeed James 'dois stand mutche for him, in all things that in reason he can doe'. In early June on his release from the Tower Chamberlain

---

61 Above, pp.221-5. SP14/163/1, Sir Edward Conway jnr. to Carleton, 18 April; SP14/162/12, Nethersole to Carleton, 3 April; SP14/163/2, Sir Henry Goodere to Carleton, 18 April, on accesses; SP14/162/56 [actually at no. 60 in vol.], Dudley Carleton to Carleton, 14 April 1624.

62 SP14/163/50, Nethersole to Carleton, 25 April; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 555, 30 April 1624.

took seriously a rumour that he was 'in probabilitie' to be made a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. But none of these ambiguities was to any real avail. To rehabilitate Cranfield would have meant an impossible break for James with both his heir and his favourite.[63]

There is thus every reason to agree with the verdict that James in early 1624 'was fighting, very cleverly but against the odds, for control of his own court'.[64] The urgency of the policy initiatives made by the prince and Buckingham, their need to watch the king 'like sentinels', and the simultaneous breaking of several political storms in the Bedchamber — the Spanish ambassadors' plots, the renewed threat and exclusion of Brett[65], the denial of the presence (and the enforcement of that denial) to Cranfield and Bristol[66], together with several dashes to and from court made by the prince or Buckingham to square various items of policy with the king[67] — made the court in the period from their return from Madrid to the end of the parliament on 29 May an extraordinarily hectic and confusing place, even by the tumultuous standards of James's later years. But if relative peace fell upon the scene during May and June, it does not follow that, for all his continuing strength, James then 'slowly began to regain control of his own court'.[68]

With the treaties broken, military preparations on foot, and negotiations for a French marriage and alliance in train, Buckingham and Charles could afford once more to reduce the scope of their consultations, and once and for all tighten the grip on the Bedchamber and the policy that was made therein, which they had been struggling to make complete throughout the first half of the year. The inveterate court watcher John Holles,

---

63 Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* Ch. VI; H.M.C. *Fourth Report* p.288, 11 May 1624, Kellie to Middlesex, 10 January 1625, Nicholas Herman to Middlesex; *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 559, 13 May; 562, 5 June; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.200-1, 13 May 1624.

64 Russell *Parliaments* p.202.

65 On Brett's return in late March 1624, and banishment in July, H.M.C *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.197, 24 March; SP14/170/2, Nethersole to Carleton 15 July, /44I, Brett's examination 23 July 1624.

66 The prince denied both James's presence; cf. Lockyer *Buckingham* p.197.

67 Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.184-88 on the hectic pace of policy in March.

68 Russell *Parliaments* p.202.

now lord Haughton and soon to become earl of Clare, laconically remarked on this process as the storms abated in July 1624, writing to none other than his former patron the earl of Somerset. Few would have understood better than he the significance of Holles's observation that over recent months

> the Prince becums a bed-chamber man, and setts the clock to Buckingham's meridian, this is sayd, to keep out strangers, and of those, none more preiudiciall then a new favourite: for new lords new lawes, Brett was voiced a while to be the man, and all the part he playd, was to breake his brother in laws [Middlesex's] neck... the like part Munson played before.[69]

The French marriage negotiations were now conducted with the same secrecy that Buckingham, the prince (and James) had imposed on Spanish affairs. In early July 1624 at the reception of the French ambassador Effiat 'onlye the Prince and the Dewke of Bukkinghame was prevye to what was sent'; those two were from the first joined only with Hamilton and Pembroke in a Council committee from which Williams, Calvert and Arundel were excluded.[70] By August Kellie reported that

> my lord of Bukkinghame his power is wonderfull great, and more with the Prince than with the King, at the least noe less.... Matters are all governed be the King, the Prince and the Dewke of Bukkinghame, and none with them upon the [dispatch] of matters but Secretterye Connowaye

— of whom Kellie had also written a month previously that the king was 'als weryed as ever you warr of the skoole', so this arrangement was unlikely to be James's first preference. Indeed Calvert, James's own appointee as Secretary, was put on ice from April 1624 onwards, when the prince forbad him to deliver the Spanish ambassadors' papers to James; though while it still mattered in March and April 1624, James seems to have insisted that Conway conduct his business *via* John Murray, by then earl of Annandale, perhaps because Conway was too much the duke's man.[71] When the

---

[69] P.R.Seddon (ed.), "The Letters of John Holles, 1587-1637, Vol II" *Thoroton Society Record Series* XXXV (1983) p.285, Holles to Somerset, 5 July 1624 — Somerset was pardoned in October and allowed to live at Chiswick, though still forbidden the verge; Holles was perhaps briefing him on recent events. (*Letters of Chamberlain* II, 582)

[70] H.M.C *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.206-7, 6 July 1624.

[71] H.M.C *Mar & Kellie Supplement* pp.208-9, 12 August, 17 July; also p.212, 16 October; 213, 5 November 1624; Ruigh *Parliament of 1624* pp.281-2, n. 29. *CSPDomestic* XI (1623-25) 184-6, 191-2, 209, 213.

marriage articles were finalised in September, Kellie did not know the conditions 'nather can I learne that onye body ells knowes of them but his Majestie, the Prince, and...Bukkinghame; for none of the commissioners as I am informed knowes of any thing but what thaye can learne be their frinds ... as uther men doe that are not of the commissione.' Matters continued close through October and early November. Even after the marriage was finalised, the Privy Council committee was kept totally in the dark; we have seen the stamp used in the Bedchamber to authenticate the articles, including the secret clauses; and although one reason for the use of this was certainly the 'universall paine in [his] shulders, elboes, knees and feet' from which James was suffering badly at Cambridge in December, there was certainly deliberate secrecy too. By December 1624, the Privy Council was so far excluded from matters of foreign policy that it had to ask the reason for the bonfires burning all over London — they had been lit to celebrate the successful outcome of the negotiations for a French marriage. At the formal ceremony, only the king, prince, Buckingham and Secretary Conway were present, and it was of them, together with the actual negotiators of the marriage Hay and Henry Rich, viscount Kensington, that Abbot was thinking when he remarked, allegedly, that there were now two Councils in England, of which 'that of Newmarket was the higher'.[72]

The French match indeed was Buckingham's own inspirational solution to the problem of whom the prince would marry after the Spanish fiasco. If the pace of these negotiations, the vagaries of the French court, and problems of military preparation deferred real military intervention through Mansfeld until close to James's death, that was not so much because Buckingham and the prince had failed to impose their policy as that James as final arbiter could still in the last resort stonewall and delay, still firm as the Venetian ambassador put it in his demand 'only for repose', 'only... constant in his

---

[72] Lockyer *Buckingham* pp.209, 216; above pp. 214-6; H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.216, 15 December 1624, for the annoyance of Hamilton, Arundel, Pembroke, Edmondes, Suckling and Weston at being excluded.

determination to do nothing'[73]. But the initiative in policy had shifted from James in 1622, and thenceforth his rôle was effectively limited to that of making provisos.[74]

Towards the end his attitude to the favourite was one of resignation, and by October 1624 Chamberlain was unsure how welcome Buckingham and the prince were in visiting the king at Royston. After virtually surrendering it to Buckingham in 1622, and with Charles and Buckingham tightening their grip after the 1624 parliament, James never did regain control of his own court. He failed to do so because he had lost control of his Bedchamber. Kellie suffered beneath the fury of prince and duke — the real heads of the department — merely for performing his office in accordance with the king's wishes.[75]

The Bedchamber, which had begun as the instrument by which James both protected and proclaimed his independence, had now instead become his prison.

---

[73] *CSPVenetian* XVIII (1623-25) 50, 22-3, 455; cf. H.M.C. *Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.184, 29 November 1623, on James's need 'in his owld dayes' for 'a quyet lyfe', an apparent combination of policy and convenience.

[74] Lockyer *Buckingham* p.216; S.Adams "Foreign Policy...1621 and 1624" in Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament* pp.152-9 (cf. Lockyer *Buckingham* p.206); S.Adams "Spain or the Netherlands" in Tomlinson (ed.), *Before the English Civil War* p.97; Russell *Parliaments* pp.202-3.

[75] *Letters of Chamberlain* II, 584 (23 October 1624) : cf. Clarendon *History of the Rebellion* (ed. Macray) I, 13. H.M.C.*Mar & Kellie Supplement* p.197, Kellie to Mar, 5 April 1624 — 'thoe I have suffered a lytill out of noe errore of myne but of that whitche noe man of woorthe or spiritt culd have done utherwayes, yet I hope his Heichnes [Charles] is sufficientlye perswaded of my integretye evrye waye, and I beseitche your Lordshipe be perswadit that I am evrye waye rycht in that matter... and that I defye all that the most malicious can doe against me.'

Conclusion

The Bedchamber's rôle in politics is an invaluable guide to the intentions and priorities of the king. James has conventionally been held to have gone into decline at the end of his reign, either physical, or mental, or both.[1] It has recently been suggested that on the contrary, any such decline was only apparent to Anglocentric eyes : James merely turned his attention elsewhere, to Scotland.[2] This study of the Bedchamber can do much to clarify this question : it indeed suggests that James's withdrawal was deliberate and can be dated quite precisely. James signalled his intentions through his Bedchamber; first he used it to further his schemes, particularly that of Union, and make possible his personal intervention; then later — after 1610 ambiguously, after about late 1615 with more certainty of purpose — to shield himself from the forces he had been unable to manipulate into following his lead.

During the first period, between 1603 and 1615, we have seen the all-Scottish Bedchamber as the ubiquitous cause of parliamentary failure on the two key issues of Union and finance, and as the trigger issue of two dissolutions seen by contemporaries as tactically disastrous. How did the king allow his Bedchamber to assume such importance, and apparently to wreck some of his most important plans?

---

[1] D.H.Willson *James VI and I* (London, 1956) pp. 405, 408, 412 etc. sees both, from 1619 onwards; W.J.Jones "Ellesmere and Politics, 1603-17" in H.S.Reinmuth (ed.) *Early Stuart Studies* (Minneapolis, 1970), p. 57, mainly physical after 1616; J.P. Cooper "The Fall of the Stuart Monarchy" in *idem* (ed.) *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol IV* (Cambridge, 1970) p. 533 sees porphyria taking an increasing toll after 1610.

[2] J.Wormald "James VI and I : Two Kings or One?" *History* 68 (1983) p. 207.

The simple answer is that his policy of reserving the Bedchamber was a point of principle that was a central part of James's wider plans; not an inconsequential, accidental personal obstacle to them. In other words, the Bedchamber between 1603 and 1615 was not a sink of indolence and self indulgence, but rather the focal point of a deliberate and rational policy. If the policy eventually became largely negative (eventually in modern terms it came to guarantee a sort of symbolic positive discrimination for James's few long-serving and trusted Scots); if indeed it failed in its immediate aim of forcing the political establishment of James's southern kingdom to co-operate fully with James's plan for even-handed Union between the nations; yet it still acted as a comprehensible and rational symbol of continued resolve and refusal to capitulate on the part of the frustrated and beleagured king.

James on arrival had done something to widen the Elizabethan establishment, which had become in practice a clique composed of a handful of families — in 1606 he officially announced he had found 'a state in faction' at his accession. The promotion of the Howards came close to being a simple case of rewarding the dynastic supporters of a reversionary interest — except for their close association with Cecil.[3] And that qualification is significant, for realism and political prudence ruled out any more ambitious adjustments to the pattern of power. Beyond this, the very structure of English office-holding meant that by the early seventeenth century even an established monarch was very limited in his ability to purge his bureaucracy, or to create new offices and departments to by-pass the old, in accordance with his and his ministers' wishes and policies. Before Winwood's appointment as Secretary in 1614, the appointment of Henry Howard as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in 1603 (and in 1608 as Lord Privy Seal) was James's only advancement to major office of an Englishman who might not legitimately have expected

---

[3] Above, Introduction, pp. 1-5; P.Williams *The Tudor Régime* (Oxford, 1979) 427, 454-6. *Commons Journals* I, p. 309 (15 May 1606).

such an appointment under Elizabeth. (In this context, Howard's fulsome gratitude to James at the accession makes perfect sense).[4]

The Bedchamber was the main means available to James to gain a breathing-space from this stifling conservatism. It was in all respects a new department : it was the one such innovation that James was able to effect. How did James use this breathing-space? What did he hope to achieve by manipulating the membership of the department? To draw conclusions about the meaning of James's policy towards his Bedchamber in this period, what is needed first is to put his use of the court, and particularly his immediate Bedchamber, into a longer and wider perspective.

We have examined in some detail the Bedchamber's role in the politics of the accession, and its relation to the principle of "equal partition" that was applied elsewhere in the Outer and Privy Chamber. There were many precedents for the use of a court in this way in order to promote particular dynastic unity between different territories united only in the person of their ruler. On a less elevated level, Philip II in England had retained a guard of 400 split evenly into English, Spanish, German and Swiss quarters; his predecessors, the fifteenth century dukes of Burgundy, upon whom his court regulations were based, organized their *chambellans ordinaires*, drawn from their scattered territories, into quarterly shifts to institutionalize the connections back and forth between the duke and each diverse locality.[5] With fewer such problems, Edward IV's stated aim in the *Black Book* of his household ordinances was to bring representatives of the most important families from all over England to his court.[6] The Tudors had expanded this function of the court,

---

[4] G.E. Aylmer "Office Holding as a Factor in English History", *History* 44 (1959) pp.232, 240; and *The King's Servants* (2nd ed., 1974) Ch. 3 and p. 159. Peck, *Northampton* pp.22, 182.

[5] S.Pegge *Curialia* (5 Parts, London,1782-1806) Pt. III, 28; G.Huydts "Le Premier Chambellan des Ducs de Bourgogne" in *Mélanges D'Histoires offerts à Henri Pirenne* (2 vols., Brussels, 1926) I, 263-70; C.A.J. Armstrong "The Golden Age of Burgundy" in A.G.Dickens (ed.), *The Courts of Europe* (London, 1977) pp.61, 63, 70.

[6] A.R.Myers(ed.) *The Household of Edward IV* (Manchester, 1959) pp.108, 127 on Knights and Esquires of the Household; Starkey "The Age of the Household" in S.Medcalf (ed.), *The Later Middle Ages* (London, 1981) p. 263, and *passim.*

with institutions like the Gentlemen Pensioners, of whom their Captain wrote to James in 1603 that the 50 Gentlemen, waiting quarterly, were 'chosen out of the best and auncientest families of England,...some of them sons to Earls, Barons, Knights and Esquires, men thereunto specially recommended for their worthiness and sufficiency'.[7] Thus in dividing up most of his court equally between English and Scots, James was seeking a rather radical effect by entirely traditional means.

Indeed, there was in this period a conventional assumption that change and reform should begin at the centre. The court was regarded as the mirror of the ruler's territories, and at the same time as a master pattern and exemplum which enabled the ruler to operate on his territories and change them. If this was a European commonplace, it was particularly applied to Scotland and England. The dedication to James VI of John Napier's *Revelation* of 1594 urged him to reform the universal enormities of the country, 'and first to begin at his own house, family and court'. Later in England, the collected household ordinances of Charles I began with the expressed intention 'to establish goverment and order in our Court w[hi]ch from thence may spread with more honour through all partes of our kingdomes'.[8]

If this was the wider role of the court, there was a particular role for the chivalric orders established by rulers of dispersed territories in Western Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. James practised here the visible, symbolic even-handedness which he had applied more generally elsewhere. A succession of paired Englishmen and Scotsmen were admitted to the Order of the Garter. When in 1608 the earls of Dunbar and Montgomery rode off together in procession to Windsor, the Venetian ambassador

---

[7] J.Nichols *The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivities of King James I...* (4 vols., London 1828) I, 125-6.

[8] See *D.N.B sub* Napier, John (1550-1617); LC 5/180 p 1. Holles's insistence on the court being 'the cause of all' (above, p.116) in 1610 fits perfectly into this general view of things.

reported that James thought 'that nothing can more contribute to the Union than the idea and demonstration of an equality of rank between the two nations'.[9]

Moreover, there was something about this somewhat mechanistic and numerical even-handedness which seems to have appealed to James personally. It related to his wider belief in 'balance', in being for the mean in all things. Time after time, whenever opportunity presented itself, James imposed symmetry on the structures surrounding him. This could take the form of the exercise of poetic justice; the opposition of Ralegh and Fortescue to Scots in office was balanced by their loss of all their offices to Scotsmen. Similarly with Salisbury; he had led the king to the brink of bargaining away his rights to Wardship, so the administration of Wards was to be removed from Salisbury to the king himself. It could take the form of balance between the nations in appointment to major court offices; we have seen the appointment of Scots subordinates to the Lords Chancellor and Treasurer in 1603; in 1615-16 the appointment of the Englishman Pembroke as Lord Chamberlain was again balanced by giving him a Scotsman, Lennox, as his superior Lord Steward. The promotion of Villiers as an English favourite seems in its early stages to have been intended to balance out Carr's position as Scottish; while from 1617, and more especially with his appointment to the Bedchamber from 1620 onwards, the marquis of Hamilton in fact acted as a Scottish Bedchamber favourite as a counterpart to Buckingham's domination of England. It also, as we have seen, took the form of a perhaps studiedly theoretical, mechanical delight in balancing factions against each other; Elizabeth had allegedly been the master of this deliberate game, and if this was true Cecil must have registered a shock of recognition in April 1600 when he heard from Scotland that there were

---

[9] *CSPVenetian* XI (1607-10) 137, 4 June 1608; XII (1610-13) 142, 4 May 1611, admission of Arundel and Rochester; above, p.165 on the admission in May 1615 of Knollys and Fenton.

> two factions...at privy strife[.] It seems the king keeps both their counsels and thinks it policy to uphold them both, having said that it is her Majesty's policy to have and uphold two factions, one for the encounter of the other, that so she may overrule them both.[10]

We have seen that James adopted just such a deliberate policy in England after about late 1614, when the years of drift after Salisbury's death had come to some sort of resolution. Thus the strongly anti-Spanish Pembroke's appointment as Lord Chamberlain was also balanced by the appointment in 1616 of the largely pro-Spanish Digby as his subordinate Vice-Chamberlain. There were other such striking juxtapositions.

The simple composition by rank of the Bedchamber reveals a fascinating continuing concern with formal balance and symmetry for which only the king can have been responsible, who alone directed matters both of ennoblement and Bedchamber appointment. Between 1603 and 1617 the department basically consisted of a duke (Lennox, the only duke in two kingdoms), two earls (Montgomery and first Dunbar, then Somerset, one English and one Scots), two viscounts (Fenton and Haddington) and two barons (Hay and Aubigny), together with the anomalous Aston — the only Gentleman of the Bedchamber who literally remained a mere gentleman. In later years two marquises — Hamilton and Buckingham — ranked below Lennox and above six earls; then two dukes lorded it over Hamilton and eight earls; though after 1622 the expansion of the department and its escape from the king's immediate control made unavoidable a number of ugly asymmetries.

There thus seems to have been an element of obsessive artificiality to James which made him delight in the manipulation of people in rank and in membership of his court. He once expressed with relish his responsibility to call up and down the individual worth of his subjects just as he determined the value of his coin. But if the personal relish

---

[10] Robert Naunton *Fragmenta Regalia* in T.Park (ed.) *Harleian Miscellany* (10 vols, London, 1808-13) II, 83;*Calendar of State Papers Scottish* XIII (1597-1603) 632-3; Nicholson to Cecil, 20 April 1600.

with which he exercised it were unique, these aspects of the office of king were in fact commonplace.

Given the precedents, the context, and the personal satisfaction James apparently derived from these symmetries, why did James keep the English out of his Bedchamber for so long? One obvious answer is his personal concern for his own security; Erskine's replacement of Ralegh as Captain of the Guard was one of the first acts of the English reign. Diffidence verging on total lack of faith was shown in James's jumpy reaction to the rumours about Southampton's intentions in mid-1604, a year after the French ambassador had been the first to talk darkly of the possibility of another Sicilian Vespers. A different ambassador still thought as much possible in 1610, and Hoskins, as we have seen, thought this a spectre worth conjuring up in 1614.[11] James's behaviour at the time of Gunpowder plot was in full accordance with such fears (as the motives of at least some of the conspirators — Guy Fawkes especially — had been at least in part anti-Scottish). The Venetian ambassador reported the extent of James's distrust for the English; in the aftermath of the plot he was living 'in the innermost rooms with only Scots about him. He dines not in public as usual'.[12]

But for all the play made by historians of the king's physical cowardice, fear was clearly not the whole story. In 1605, observers noted that James, despite his misgivings, understood the annoyance of the English at the apparent lack of trust, and when a month later his former servants in Edinburgh offered him a Scots bodyguard of light horse, he had the foresight to be seen to reject it.[13] James was capable of subordinating personal fear to policy. In keeping his Bedchamber almost wholly Scottish for so long, therefore, it is

---

[11] Above, pp.108-9; PRO 31/3/35, Beaumont to Villeroy, n.d., follows letter of 24 May 1603 in vol.; *Ambassades de Monsieur de la Boderie en Angleterre* V, 510-11 (9 December 1610); above pp.144-5 on Hoskins.

[12] *CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 293 (11/21 November 1605). On Fawkes and the Scots see A.J.Loomie "Guy Fawkes in Spain : the 'Spanish Treason' in Spanish documents", *University of London Institute of Historical Research Special Supplement No. 9* (1971), esp. pp. 61-3.

[13] *CSPVenetian* X (1603-07) 304, 22 December 1605.

probable that the king's need for personal security was merely pointing in the same direction as the requirements of his policy; both pointed towards distrust of the English.

The issue of Union as it related to the Bedchamber has been examined quite fully; if the English were willing to deny him their co-operation in his Union scheme from 1604 onwards, then James was almost without exception unwilling to admit them to membership of this most favoured of inner sanctums of the court; given that relationship of distrust, there can remain little doubt that for all James's personal preference for being surrounded, in a worryingly unpredictable and xenophobic country, by old friends whom he could trust, there was above all political calculation in his keeping the English at arms length. In such calculation, James was both guaranteeing his own freedom of action, and exercising the highest and most indisputable part of his prerogative.

Parliamentary opposition was both the practical consequence and in part the practical cause of that calculation. Such opposition forms something of a sub-plot to this study. The Scots Bedchamber was the focus of parliamentary complaint in 1604-10 and 1614. After 1615, when James began to let in the English in the person of George Villiers, it was Buckingham's Bedchamber dominance of patronage and (to all appearances) counsel which in 1621 was now attacked in parliament, arguably by the same group of 'outs'. The object of attack was the same; the 'opposition' seems to have been grouped around the same figurehead, the earl of Southampton; during the reign as a whole, how much continuity was there in this parliamentary conflict about the Bedchamber's influence and gains?

No answer to that question can sidestep the view of the court that has become current in "revisionist" early seventeenth century parliamentary history. Court politics has become a central area of interest for such historians because one of the most important features of the approach is its denial of the very possibility of "opposition", either between a monolithic Commons and the Crown, or between an isolated "Country" and the court; rather, on this view, conflict in parliament was almost always conflict between various

groups and factions safely confined within the broad and all-embracing "court". Such conflict was therefore safely free of "ideological" differences, and since all such factions were of the "court" and so theoretically equal, no "opposition" could be said to be taking place.[14]

As we have seen, the political map was in fact rather less simple. First, Professor Russell, the most comprehensive of the revisionists, uses a variety of terms for the "government" side of the equation in order to emphasise its breadth, and so include within it its alleged 'opponents' : 'James I', 'the Council', 'the Crown', 'the Crown and Council', sometimes "government" in quotes, at other times "court", stand for this broad, all-comprehending entity.[15] As this study has tried to make clear, these entities were not one thing, but many; nor were they all equal; views represented on the Council carried very different weight from those represented in the Bedchamber, or those held by the king himself, as James's courtiers spent years discovering. And since the "court" breaks down on examination into a complex but comprehensible political machine with distinct elements, rather than a single catch-all term, all factions cannot automatically be said to be equally represented in or on it; their share of influence in Bedchamber, Council and the wider court needs in each case (and at each point in time) to be weighed. The views of Southampton and his associates Sandys and Neville on Union and finance in 1607-14, for example, could not be directly reflected on the Council — the earl was not a member until 1619, and no other Councillor would have dared to face the king with them — but however unpalatable to James they were, these views tended to command a majority certainly in the Commons, and probably also in the Lords (especially over the Union). Thus when they were expressed in parliament, these views *were* opposition. If the earl of Southampton's attacks on Buckingham in 1621 were 'attempts by one Privy Councillor to attack the other', this should not mask or minimise the differences in their

---

[14] Conrad Russell "Parliamentary History in Perspective 1604-29", *History* 61 (1976); *idem, Parliaments and English Politics 1621-1629* .

[15] Russell "Parliamentary History in Perspective", *History* 61 (1976), esp. p. 5.

position at "court"; by now Buckingham was supreme in the Bedchamber, while Southampton's only source of influence after years of effort had come just two years earlier, when he was appointed by Buckingham's means to a Council he now probably saw as being composed of 'boys and base fellows'.[16]

The revisionist argument also runs that there was great breadth and stability to the Jacobean court in the 1620's; that this was the normal state of affairs; and that this breadth depended largely on James's lack of energy in pursuing any firm policies. This study has suggested that there was in fact an energetic initiative in the first half of the reign which meant that there was an identifiable "crown" line (on the most precise definition) to oppose, and which caused a great deal of trouble in the first two strife-torn Jacobean parliaments. But the withdrawal and disillusion of the latter part of the reign — after about 1616, symbolised by the advancement of Buckingham, and by the king's return in 1617 to his native Scotland — rather than being the normal state of affairs and part of "The Structure of Politics", is largely explicable as the consequence of the frustrating failure of that early initiative.[17] It was parliamentary opposition that had forced James into inaction; the attempts at management, and the soul-searching in the crisis years between 1610 and 1615 point clearly to that conclusion. James was dismayed to find during his first decade or so in England that there was an almost automatic majority in the Commons against not only his most ambitious scheme, the Union, but also against supply while he used his court to pursue that same end. If by 1621 he was not predisposed to press any measures, it was because he had recognised the depth of feeling these real issues could arouse; not because all was sweetness and light in the English polity.

James was prone to theorizing about the aims of those who opposed him. In 1610, as we have seen, he apparently could not understand the actions of the commons

---

[16] Conrad Russell *Parliaments and English Politics*, pp.10 ff, 14; SP 14/108/86, Southampton to Carleton, c30 April 1619; SP14/121/136, Southampton's examination, 1621.

[17] Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics* , Ch. 1, §1 (a), p. 9; J. Wormald "James VI and I — Two Kings or One?" *History* 68 (1983) p.207.

leaders 'except any had a design to lay the foundations of a popular state'.[18] These seem to have been real fears— if, like his anxiety about hatred of the Scots, usually unspoken ones. On occasions, James broke the silence to issue a warning. In 1621 at the beginning of parliament he heavily reminded the Commons that

> it is a vaine thing for a parlament man to preasse to be popular. There is in no State a Parlament without a Monarchy. The Grisons, Switzers and Low-countryes, who are gouerned without a king, haue noe Parlaments : but Councells, and Assemblies. This I putt you in mynde, That you serue under a Monarcke, and that you must stand or fall with hym.[19]

James clearly saw a problem to be addressed here; he was making an obvious bid for the allegiance of the 'parlament man' by warning him about the real motives of the sort of noblemen who might advocate such a 'Councell' or 'Assembly'. Such pronouncements have been written off as simple smears to blacken opponents at court with charges of social insubordination. This would carry more conviction if James had more consistently limited the expression of his fear of such ideas to public denunciations; instead, as above, we find both public speeches —rather serious and analytical ones — and asides to his intimates.[20]

Above all, writing off such accusations of 'popularity' and republican sympathies as smears would be more convincing if Southampton, Winwood, and Overbury had not been so deeply involved in the Low Countries, and travelled there so often[21]; and if the Dutch Revolt had never happened — a spectre that was haunting the monarchies of Europe in the seventeenth century as certainly as 1789 haunted them in the nineteenth. Simon Adams, in an admirable essay on foreign policy under the early

---

[18] Above, p.123.

[19] SP14/119/47, James's speech to Parliament, 23 January 1621.

[20] Russell *Parliaments and English Politics* pp. 23-5; cf. the comment (p. 25) that 'accusations of 'constitutional' aims... do not appear in men's statements of their own motives : they appear in statements designed to discredit opponents, and such statements are notoriously untrustworthy'.

[21] Above,pp.129, 139; Winwood was of course agent and later ambassador at the Hague from 1603 until 1613-14.

Stuarts, outlined the ideological choice; Spain or the Netherlands.[22] It is clear from the hints we have been surveying that both James and others saw the choice not limited to foreign policy, but penetrating to the main questions on the domestic scene. But the threat to James was not apparently from the 'middling sort', or the gentry; indeed, we have just seen James trying to mobilise their ambitions to stave off what he saw as the real threat : the aristocratic republicanism that looked to the Venetian oligarchy and the United Provinces as its model.[23] It was perhaps above all the intolerable personal accidents — the loss of patronage, precedence or office to foreigners — to which the succession of a foreigner to the crown subjected these noblemen that gave impetus to such ideas; at such times a native nobility in council might be perceived as a better safeguard of the established order than a disruptive alien dynasty; and so, as Charles V in 1520-21 in Spain, as Philip II in 1564-5 in the Netherlands, so James VI and I in England after 1603?[24] Such must have been his worst fears. It is in this context that his passionate advocacy of Union makes sense; as equally does the opposition to it of the likes of Southampton (and Pembroke). James was building a dynastic empire in a very dangerous climate for such enterprises; he therefore hoped to turn it into something else more stable as quickly as he could.

Such fears must have been at their most immediate early in the reign; later on, the aristocratic republicanism behind the attacks on Buckingham — the questions asked of Southampton at his examination imply that he was thought to hold such views of the peerage's rôle in counselling the king— was less threatening, and certainly, as was obvious in the response the attacks called from parliament, less widely supported. But when in 1624 Buckingham and the prince turned about to ally with Southampton and his

---

[22] S.Adams, "Spain or the Netherlands? The Dilemmas of Early Stuart Foreign Policy" in H.Thomlinson (ed.) *Before the English Civil War* (London, 1983) pp.79-102.

[23] Cf. Kevin Sharpe "Introduction : Parliamentary History 1603-1629. In or out of Perspective?" in Sharpe (ed.) *Faction and Parliament* (Oxford, 1978), § V, "The Crisis of Counsel?", for general problems about who should advise the king; C.Hill *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* (Oxford, 1965) pp. 276-284.

[24] J.Perez "Pour une nouvelle interprétation des «Communidades» de Castile" *Bulletin Hispanique* 65 (1963); G.Parker *The Dutch Revolt* (London, 1977).

associates, James, as we have seen, still saw this as a dangerous experiment with what he called 'popular courses'; such were the only accusations levelled at Buckingham by the Spanish ambassadors which really interested James. Of course, in Buckingham's case, such charges had a political usefulness, and may have been given particular currency by James for reasons of strategy. But we also have Kellie's testimony on the much more private and, we may assume, straightforward remonstrations James made with his son. James's fears, in other words, were quite genuine, and persisted from the first into the second half of his reign. They were not simply prejudices, however; they were rather the bitter fruit of the experience of failure which made up most of the early years of his English reign.[25]

Those early years of James's reign have recently come in for a great deal of comparative neglect. Partly this is a matter of the survival of source documents.[26] But it is also related to larger theoretical preoccupations, which have tended to erode the reign at both ends; either by concentrating attention on the 1620's and later, grouping together the parliaments of both halves of that decade, still looking towards the Civil War; or, on the other hand, annexing almost the whole Jacobean period for treatment as "The Survival of the Elizabethan constitution".[27]

A simple fact emerges from this study of an age when monarchs ruled as well as reigned; changes in monarch were likely to entail changes in the conduct of government. This often neglected principle provides an indispensible basis for understanding early modern politics in general; in particular, for understanding the unique approach of James I

---

[25] Above, pp.240-1 and n 45 : 245-6.

[26] The situation has changed little here since Notestein in "The Winning of the Initiative by the House of Commons" *Proceedings of the British Academy* XI (1924-5), pp.165-6, observed the disparity in sources for the 1604-10 and 1614 parliaments compared with those of the 1620's.

[27] Russell *Parliaments and English Politics* pp.419-23, in conclusion makes clear the centrality of the date 1625 in changing the political atmosphere — though more weight is put on the change from peace to war than that from James to Charles. B.Coward *The Stuart Age* (London, 1980) Ch. 4, an extreme manifestation of the tendency to treat Cecil's survival as Secretary as an indication that the Elizabethan way of doing things also continued.

to English (in his eyes British) kingship. His reign forms a unity. There was continuity in his approach, from the energy of the first decade to the withdrawal and disillusion of the last; if James finally became the prisoner of his son and favourite, it was perhaps because of his preoccupation with Scottish affairs. The emphasis he placed at the end on even-handedness between the nations, and the 'Britishness' of his kingship parallels the more enterprising interest in exactly the same things at the beginning of the reign. In February 1624 when his Lord Steward Lennox died, James replaced him with another Bedchamber Scot, Hamilton, still balancing the English Lord Chamberlain Pembroke at the head of his household. His long-serving Groom of the Stool Kellie was pleased — as no doubt was James — that he could still make such a gesture.[28] It is as just as it is necessary to our understanding of the reign to take the aims and strategies of this essentially Scottish king quite as seriously as the methods and purposes of those very English monarchs who came before and after him.

---

[28] H.M.C.*Mar and Kellie Supplement* p. 193, 22 February 1624.

Bibliography

A) MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

London
British Library

Cotton MSS

Julius CIX	Privileges of king's wives, precedents.
Julius FVI	fo. 139, Sir Edward Ashfield to James VI about England.
Caligula CVI	fo. 147, alterations to James VI's household, 1580-1.
Vespasian FIX	Matters of precedence; Northampton's *dicta*.
Titus BIV	fo. 139ff, Northampton on Hay's shortcomings in his Robes account.
Titus BV	Northampton on household reform
Titus CVI	Northampton correspondence
Titus FIV	Northampton's views on parliament

Harley MSS

589	fo.197v, 161- Privy Chamber Ordinances
1718	Signet Warrants of Charles Prince of Wales
1857	1610 Fee list
6836	fo. 121, Scottish Officers of State.

Landsdowne MSS

59	Wages of Elizabeth I's Privy Chamber, 1589
69	List of Household Officers (below stairs), England, 1592.
246	Copy of Charles I's orders of 1638 for the whole household, early 18th century.

Additional MSS

6142	Book of Diet, 1610-11
6297	Earl Marshal's Commissioners ruling on Lord Great Chamberlaincy, ?1620.
10,038	Caesar's Project Book.
11,402	Extracts from lost Privy Council Registers.
12,497	fo. 155 'Grants to Scotsmen', *c* 1610.
12,498	Caesar Great Wardrobe papers, fo. 298 on Newmarket.
15,476	Notes by Overbury's father.
27,404	Queen Anne household accounts and fees, 1605-6.
29,977	Diets, royal household, *c* 1619.
30,640	fo. 97, French ambassador on division of Privy Chamber, 1604.
31,825	1610 Fee list.
32,476	fo.3, Cranbourne to Lake, 9 Mar. 1605.
34,324	fo. 61, Caesar's advice to dissolve, 1610; fo. 215, Chapel Orders, January 1623.
35,848	Fee list, after 1605.
38,139	Documents on Queen Anne's household.

48,103	Fee list, *c* 1622.
50,842	Copy of William III's Bedchamber Ordinances
58,833	Cash gifts and other financial papers, *c* 1619.
Egerton MSS	
2026	fo. 23, lodging at court, 44 Elizabeth.
2592	Hay Papers
3371	Fee list, 1617.
3350	Charles II supplementary Bedchamber orders, May 1684.
Stowe MSS	
173	Edmondes correspondence.
561	Rights of a Gent. Usher Daily Waiter, after 1660.
563	18th century copy of William III Bedchamber Ordinances.
Sloane MSS	
542	fo. 48; Poem on the death of Lennox, 1624.
1494	Gent. Usher Daily Waiter's pocket book of formulae, *temp*. Charles I
2904	1619 Exchequer payments
3479	Fee list, Jacobean.
B.L.Microfilm	
Hatfield MSS 278/3	Court Journal of Levinus Munck.

Public Record Office

C 66/1904 no. 12	Patent erecting new Court of the Verge, 1611.
E101/ 433-7, 602	Original accounts of the Comptroller and Cofferer of the Household, 1603-25
E317/Cambs./3-5	1649-50 parliamentary surveys of Newmarket and Royston
E317/Surrey/46	1649 survey of Richmond palace.
E351/ 543, 544	Treasurer of the Chamber's Declared Account, 1602-25
E351/ 1796-1821	Cofferer of the Household Declared Account 1602-25
E351/ 2792	Sir George Home, Privy Purse Account, 1603-05.
E351/ 2807	Sir James Hay's Account as Gent. of the Robes, 1605-13.
E351/ 3369	Works at Royston, 1607-8.
LC 2/4(4)	Funeral of Elizabeth I, lists of those granted black cloth.
LC 2/4(5)	James's Procession through London, 1604, Wardrobe expenses.
LC 2/4(6)	Prince Henry's funeral, black cloth.
LC 2/5	Queen Anne's funeral, black cloth.
LC 2/6	Funeral of James I, as above.
LC 3/1	1641 Establishment list.
LC 5/38	Detailed Great Wardrobe Accounts, 1622 onwards.
LC 5/50	Great Wardrobe Livery Warrants 1603-25, with index.
LC 5/51	Great Wardrobe Livery Warrants 1625-35, with index.
LC 5/115/118	Separate original warrant for transfer of charges, 1614.

LC 5/117	Great Wardrobe warrants, 1626-32.
LC 5/133	Lord Chamberlain's general warrant book, 1631-40.
LC 5/134	Lord Chamberlain's record book, reign of Charles I.
LC 5/179	Diet and Orders of Prince Henry's household, *c* 1612.
LC 5/180	Collected Ordinances, 1638, corrected by the King.
LC 5/200	Precedent book; Apothecaries dispute, 1625-7.
LS 13/6	Check roll, Household (below stairs) and some of stables, 1604.
LS 13/30	Diets and boardwages, King's side, 1627.
LS 13/168	Greencloth entry book, 1598-1625.
LS 13/169	Greencloth entry book, 1627- 1642.
LS 13/251	Miscellaneous Greencloth record book, Charles I.
LS 13/277	Copies of Household orders; treatise on Court of Steward and Marshal.
LS 13/279	Copies of books of diet
LS 13/280	Caesar's Household collections.
P.R.O. 31/3/...	Transcripts of French ambassadors' dispatches from the Archives Nationales, Paris, by Baschet.
S.O. 3/4 - 3/8	Registers of King's Bills, 1608-[March]1625.
SP14	State Papers, Reign of James I.
SP15	Additional State Papers, 1580-1625.
SP16	State Papers, Reign of Charles I.
SP29	State Papers, Reign of Charles II.
SP38/7, 38/8	Signet Office Docquets, 1603-05.
SP39/17	Original Sign Manual Warrants, July 1624-March 1625.
SP46	State Papers Supplementary.
SP84/111	State Papers Holland, 27 Feb. 1623.

Westminster Cathedral Archives

Series A, Volume 11.

Private Collection

A MS formerly belonging to the late Hugh Murray Baillie entitled "Points in Dispute betweene the Ld Chamberlaine & the Groome of the Stole. May 1683". Although its whereabouts are at present unknown, the author has a photocopy of the document.

Oxford
Bodleian Library

Ashmole MSS

792 VI 2	Fee list, *c* 1625.
824 XXII, 1	Fee list, 1614.
821 I	Fee list, 1615.
1729	Grant of precedence to Northampton.

North MSS
d. 58 — Fee list, before 1612.

Tanner MSS
75 — f. 265 on Northampton/Salisbury disagreements, 1607.
317 — Fee list, before 1614; Charles I's household, 1647.

Eng. Hist MSS
C. 290 — Fee list, Elizabethan; no names mentioned.

Oxfordshire County Record Office

Dil. xx/a/2 — James II's Bedchamber Ordinances.

Northampton
Northamptonshire County Record Office

Finch Hatton 39 — Fee list *c.* 1606-7 naming 4 Gents. of the Bedchamber.

Nottingham
Nottingham University Library

Portland PwV 92 — Charles II Bedchamber Ordinances, 1661.
Portland PwV 93 — Charles II Bedchamber Ordinances, 1673, 1678.

Edinburgh
Scottish Record Office
E34/ 35 — James VI's Household, May 1580.
E34/ 42 — James VI's Household, Dec. 1591.
E34/ 37 — Household Orders, James VI, Feb. 1584
E34/ 47 — James VI's Household, Jan. 1596.
E34/ 49/4 — Fees, James VI's household 1590?.
E34/ 49/5 — Fees, James VI's household 1590?.
E34/ 50/1 - 5 — Papers on 1617 Scots visit.

GD 90/2/22 — [Yule Collection], Fees, James VI's household 1582-4.

PS 1/... — Privy Seal Registers, 1572-1601.
PS 7/1 — Index to Privy Seal warrants, 1488-1651.

Home of the Hirshel Papers
Consulted in the S.R.O., through the kindness of the Douglas-Home family in temporarily depositing them there.

Box 6, Bundle 3 :
Described as "Papers of Sir George Home, Earl of Dunbar" in the N.R.A; unfortunately only one of the 22 pieces in the bundle relates to Dunbar, a surrender of lands to James VI in 1602; the rest relate to the Homes of Wedderburn and Earls of Home, late 16th-late 17th century.

National Library of Scotland

Denmilne MSS — Papers of John Murray, Earl of Annandale.
33. 1. 1 Vol. 1
33. 1. 1 Vols. 4-11
33. 1. 2 Vol. 14
33. 1. 3 Vol. 17
33. 1. 7 Vol. 22
33. 1. 10 Vol. 27
33. 1. 12 Vol. 29, nos. 43, 45.
33. 1. 14 Vol. 31

B. PRINTED SOURCES

i) Primary Sources

Historical Manuscripts Commission
HMC 4th Report.
HMC 7th Report.
HMC 11th Report (part 1).
HMC Bath
HMC Buccleuch I
HMC Cowper I
HMC De Lisle & Dudley V
HMC Downshire I-IV.
HMC Exeter
HMC Gawdy
HMC Laing I
HMC Mar & Kellie
HMC Mar & Kellie Supplement
HMC Portland IX
HMC Salisbury XV - XXI (1603-12), XXII - XXIV (additional)
HMC Various Collections V, VIII.
Calendar of State Papers Domestic, Vols VIII-XI (1603-25); XII (Additional, 1580-1625); Vols I, II, and IV (1625-28, 1629-31); Jan.-June 1683.
Calendar of State Papers Venetian, Vols X-XVIII (1603-25); XIX (1625-26); XXII (1629-32).
Calendar of State Papers Foreign, Vol XIX (1584-5).
Calendar of Scottish Papers, Vols V (1574-81), VI (1581-3), VII (1584-5), VIII (1585-6), X (1589-93).
Calendar of State Papers Scottish, Vols XII (1595-97), XIII (1597-1603).

Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, Vols III (1578-1585), IV (1585-92), VI (1599-1604), IX (1610-13), XI (1616-19), XIV (Add., 1545-1625).
Registrum Magnum Sigillum Regum Scotorum,1593-1608 (Edinburgh, 1890).
Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland, Vol VIII (1581-84).
Commons Journals, Vol. I.
Lords Journals, Vol. III.
Acts of the Privy Council.
Akrigg, G.P.V. (ed.) *The Letters of James VI and I* (London, 1984).
Ambassades de Monsieur de la Boderie en Angleterre (5 vols., Paris, 1750).
The Ancient Legal Course and Fundamental Constitution of the Palace Court or Marshalsea (London, 1663).
Armstrong, Archie *A Banquet of Jeastes* ed. T.H.Jamieson (Edinburgh, 1872).
B, A.D. *The Court of the Most Illustrious and Most Magnificent James the First, King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland. With Divers Rules...Precepts and...Definitions lively delineated* (London, 1619).
Baker, Sir Richard *A Chronicle of the Kings of England* (London, 1643).
Batho, G.R. (ed.) *The Household Papers of Henry Percy, 9th Earl of Northumberland* (Camden, 3rd ser. 93, 1962).
Birch, T. *The Court and Times of James I* ed. R.F.Williams (2 vols., London, 1848).
——— *The Court and Times of Charles I* ed. R.F.Williams (2 vols., London, 1848).
Bowyer, R. *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer* ed. D.H.Willson (Minneapolis, 1931).
Brown, P Hume (ed.) *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1891).
Cabala, sive scrinia sacra..., collected by a noble hand (London, 1653).
Caesar, Sir Julius,*The Ancient State, Authoritie and Proceedings of the Court of Requests by Sir Julius Caesar* ed. L.M.Hill (Cambridge, 1975).
Caesar, Sir Julius, "Sir Julius Caesar's Journal of Salisbury's First Two Months and Twenty Days as Lord Treasurer : 1608", ed. L.M.Hill *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 45 (1972), pp.311-27.
Carey, Sir Robert, *The Memoirs of Robert Carey* ed. F.H.Mares (Oxford, 1972).
Carleton, Dudley, *Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, 1603-1624 : Jacobean Letters* ed.M.Lee (New Brunswick, 1972).
Chamberlain, John *The Letters of John Chamberlain* ed. N.E.McClure (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1939).
Cleland, J. *A Monument of Mortalitie, upon the Death and Funerals, of the Gracious Prince, Lodovick, late Duke of Richmond and Lenox...* (London, 1624).
Clifford, Lady Anne, *The Diary of Lady Anne Clifford* ed. V. Sackville-West (London, 1923).
A Collection of Ordinances and Regulations for the Royal Household, printed for the Society of Antiquaries (London, 1790).
Collins, A. (ed.) *Letters and Memorials of State [from] Queen Mary [to] Oliver...* [Sidney Papers] (2 vols., London, 1747).
Cotton, W. and Woollcombe, H. eds. *Gleanings from the Municipal and Cathedral Records relative to the History of the City of Exeter* (Exeter, 1877).
Craig, J. (ed.) *Papers Relating to the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Bannatyne Club, 26, 1828).
Darcie, A. *Frances Duchesse Dowager of Richmond her Funerall Teares* [lists Lennox's household at his funeral] (London, 1624).
A Deep Sigh breath'd Through the lodgings at Whitehall deploring the absence of the Court and the Miseries of the Palace (London, 1642).
D'Ewes, S. *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* ed. J.O. Halliwell, (2 vols., London, 1845).
de Villiers, E (ed.) *The Hastings Journal of the Parliament of 1621* (Camden, Miscellany XX, 1953).

du Tillet, J. *Receuil des roys de France leurs Couronne et Maison* (2 vols., Paris, 1602).
Ellis, H. *Original Letters Illustrative of English History* (11 vols, 1824-46), 3rd. ser. Vol. III.
Finet, Sir John, *Finetti Philoxenis* (London, 1656).
Frankland, T., *The Annals of King James and King Charles I* (London, 1681).
Foster, E.R. (ed.) *Proceedings in Parliament, 1610* (2 vols., New Haven, 1966).
Galloway, B. and Levack, B.P. eds., *The Jacobean Union : Six Tracts of 1604* (Edinburgh, 1985).
Gardiner, S.R. (ed.) *The Fortescue Papers... collected by John Packer* (Camden, 2nd Ser. 1, 1871).
——— *Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords, 1621* (Camden, 1st Ser. 103, 1870).
——— *The Narrative of the Spanish Marriage Treaty* (Camden, 1st Ser. 101, 1869).
——— "On Certain Letters of Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar", *Archaeologia* 41 (1867).
——— *Parliamentary Debates in 1610* (Camden, 1st Ser. 81, 1861).
Gawdy, Philip, *The Letters of Philip Gawdy* ed. I.H. Jeayes (Roxburghe Club, 1906).
Goodman, G. *The Court of King James I* ed. J.S.Brewer (2 vols., London, 1839).
Gutch, J. (ed.) *Collectanea Curiosa* (2 vols, Oxford, 1781).
Halliwell, J.O. (ed.) *Letters of the Kings of England* (2 vols., London, 1848).
Harington, H. (ed.) *Nugae Antiquae* (2 vols., London, 1804).
Holles, Gervase *Memorials of the Holles Family* ed. A.C.Wood (Camden, 3rd ser. 55, 1937).
Holles, John, *The Letters of John Holles, 1587-1637, Vol. I* ed.P.R.Seddon (Thoroton Society Record Series, XXXI, 1975).
——— *The Letters of John Holles, 1587-1637, Vol. II* ed.P.R.Seddon (Thoroton Society Record Series, XXXV, 1983).
The Ioyfull Receiuing of Iames the sixt... and Queen Anne... into... Edenborough... May... 1590 (London, 1590).
Knowler, W. (ed.) *The Earl of Strafforde's Letters & Dispatches* (2 vols., London, 1739).
Larkin, J.F. and Hughes, P.L. (eds.) *Stuart Royal Proclamations* (2 vols, Oxford, 1973-83).
Lilly, W. *Mr W.L.'s true History of King James I and King Charles I* (London, 1715).
Loomie, A.J. "Guy Fawkes in Spain : the 'Spanish Treason' in Spanish documents", *University of London Institute of Historical Research Special Supplement No. 9* (London, 1971).
Loyseau, C. *Cinq Livres du Droit des Offices* (Paris, 1610).
M, T. *The True Narration of the Entertainment of His Royall Majestie from... Edenborough; till his receiving at London* (London, 1603).
Melville, Sir James, *The Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill* ed. G.Donaldson (London, 1969).
Munck, Levinus "The Journal of Levinus Munck" ed. H.V.Jones *English Historical Review* 68 (1953) pp. 234-58.
Myers, A.R. *The Household of Edward IV* (Manchester, 1959).
Naunton, Robert *Fragmenta Regalia* in T. Park (ed.) *Harleian Miscellany* (10 vols., London, 1808-13) vol. II, pp.81-107.
Notestein, W., Relf, F.H., and Simpson, H., (eds.) *Commons Debates, 1621* (7 vols., New Haven, 1935).
Rimbault, E.F. *The old cheque-book or book of rememberance of the Chapel Royal, 1561-1744* (Camden, NS 3, 1872).
Rushworth, J. (ed.) *Historical Collections* (4 pts. in 7 vols., London, 1657).
Rymer, T. (ed.) *Foedera...* (London, 17 vols, 1704-17).
Savile, John, *King James his Entertainment at Theobalds, with his welcome to London...* (London, 1603).

Sawyer, E. (ed.) *Memorials of Affairs of State...from the Original Papers of Sir Ralph Winwood* (3 vols., London, 1725).
Scott, Sir W. (ed.) *The Secret History of the Court of James I* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1811).
Smith, L.P. (ed.) *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton* (2 vols, Oxford, 1966).
Strong, S.A. (ed.) "The Duke of Newcastle on Government" in *A Catalogue of Letters... at Welbeck* (London, 1903).
Thompson, E.M. (ed.) *Hatton Corresondence Volume II* (Camden, New Ser. 23, 1878).
Trevelyan, Sir W.C., and Sir C.E., (eds.) *Trevelyan Papers Part III* (Camden, Old ser. 105, 1872).
"A True Collection... of all the Kinges Majesties Offices and Fees... 1606", *Archaeologia* XV (1806), pp. 72-91.
Turnor, E (ed.) "A Declaration of the Diet and Particular fare of Charles, Duke of York [1610]" *Archaeologia* XV (1806) pp. 1-9.
Whitelocke, Sir J., *The Liber Famelicus of Sir James Whitelocke* ed. B.Whitelocke (Camden, OS 70, 1858).
Wilbraham, Sir R., *The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham, 1593-1616*, ed. H.S.Scott (Camden, Miscellany X, 1902).
Wotton, Sir Henry "A Short View of the Life and Death of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham" in T. Park (ed.) *Harleian Miscellany* (10 vols., London, 1808-13) vol. VIII, pp.613-25.
Yelverton, H., "Mr Henry Yelverton... his Narrative of what passed on his being restored to the King's favour in 1609[-10]", ed. J.Cumming *Archaeologia*, XV (1806), pp.27-52.
Yonge, Walter, *The Diary of Walter Yonge* ed.G.Roberts (Camden, 1st Ser. 41, 1847).

ii) Secondary Sources

Adams, S., "Spain or the Netherlands? The Dilemmas of Early Stuart Foreign Policy" in *Before the English Civil War*, ed. H.Tomlinson (London, 1983), pp.79-101.
——— "Faction, Clientage, and Party : English Politics 1550-1603", *History Today* 32 (Dec. 1982), pp.33-39.
——— "Foreign Policy and the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624" in *Faction and Parliament*, ed. K. Sharpe (Oxford, 1978), pp.139-71.
Aikin, L. *Memoirs of the Court of James I* (2 vols., London, 1822).
Akrigg, G.P.V. *Jacobean Pageant* (London, 1962).
——— "The Curious Marginalia of Charles, Second Lord Stanhope", in *Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies* ed. J.Manaway, G.Dawson and E.Willoughby (Washington, 1948), pp.785-801.
Alexander, M. van Cleave, *Charles I's Lord Treasurer : Sir Richard Weston, earl of Portland (1577-1635)* (London, 1975).
Allen, David "The Political Function of Charles II's Chiffinch", *Huntington Library Quarterly* 39 (1976) pp.277-90.
Armstrong, C.A.J. "The Golden Age of Burgundy" in *The Courts of Europe* ed. A.G.Dickens (London, 1977) pp.55-75.
Ashton, R. *The City and the Court, 1603-43* (Cambridge, 1979).
Aylmer, G.E. *The King's Servants : The Civil Service of Charles I* (2nd ed., London, 1974).
——— "Office Holding as a Factor in English History", *History* 44 (1959), pp.228-40.

Bannerman, Edith I *Les Influences françaises en Écosse au temps de Marie Stuart* (Besançon, 1929).
Batiffol, L. *Le Louvre sous Henri IV et Louis XIII* (Paris, 1930).
Beattie, J.M. *The English Court in the Reign of George I* (Cambridge, 1967).
Beatty, J.L. *Warwick and Holland...The Lives of Robert and Henry Rich* (Denver, 1965).
Beldam, J. "Royston Court House and its Appurtenances" *Archaeologia* XL (1866) pp. 119-137.
Bell, H.E. *An Introduction to the History and Records of the Court of Wards and Liveries* (Cambridge, 1953).
Birch, T. *The Life of Henry, Prince of Wales* (London, 1760).
Brown, J., and Elliot, J.H., *A Palace for a King : The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV* (New Haven, 1980).
Brown, Jennifer M. "Scottish Politics, 1567-1625" in *The Reign of James VI and I* ed. A.G.R.Smith (London, 1973) pp.22-39.
Cameron, K. *Henri III : A Maligned or Malignant King? (Aspects of the Satirical Iconography of Henri de Valois)* (Exeter, 1978).
Carlisle, N. *An Inquiry into the Place and Quality of the Gentlemen of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Chamber* (London, 1829).
Carter, C.H. "Gondomar, Ambassador to James I", *Historical Journal* 7 (1964) pp.189-208.
Chambers, E.K. *The Elizabethan Stage* (4 vols., Oxford, 1923).
Champion, P. *Henri III, Roi de Pologne* (Paris, 1951).
Cheyney, E.P. *A History of England from the Defeat of the Armada to the Death of Elizabeth* (2 vols., New York, 1948).
Clapham, A.W. and Godfrey, W.H. *Some Famous Buildings and their Story* (London, 1913).
Clark, Peter *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution : Religion, Politics and Society in Kent 1500-1640* (Hassocks, 1977).
C[ockayne], G.E. *The Complete Peerage*. (13 vols in 14, London, 1910-40).
Collinson, P., review of R. Lockyer, *Buckingham*, in *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 June 1984.
Colvin, H.M. (ed.) *The History of the King's Works* (6 vols., London, 1951-82).
Cooper, J.P. "The Fall of the Stuart Monarchy" in *idem* (ed.) *New Cambridge Modern History Volume IV* (Cambridge, 1970) pp.531-84.
Coward, B. *The Stuart Age* (London, 1980)
Crawfurd, G. *The Lives... of the Officers of... State in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1726).
Cross, C. *The Puritan Earl : The Life of Henry Hastings, Third Earl of Huntingdon* (London, 1966).
Davies, C.S.L. *Peace, Print and Protestantism* (London, 1976).
Dictionary of National Biography.
Dietz, F.C. *English Public Finance, 1558-1603* (London, 1964).
Donagan, B. "A Courtier's Progress : Greed and Consistency in the life of the Earl of Holland" *Historical Journal* 19 (1976) pp.317-53.
Donaldson, G. *Scotland : James V-James VII* (Edinburgh, 1965).
Doucet, R. *Les Institutions de la France au XVIème siècle* (2 vols., Paris, 1948).
Elton, G.R. *The Tudor Constitution* (2nd. ed., London, 1982).
——— *Reform and Reformation* (London, 1977).
——— "Tudor Government : The Points of Contact. III. The Court.", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th Ser., 26 (1976) pp.211-28.
——— "A Revolution in Tudor History", *Past and Present* 32 (1965) pp.87-94.
——— "The Tudor Revolution : A Reply", *Past and Present* 29 (1964) pp.26-49.
——— *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (Cambridge, 1953).
Evans, F.M.G. (née Higham) *The Principal Secretary of State* (Manchester, 1923).

Fletcher, A. *A County Community in Peace and War : Sussex, 1600-1660* (London, 1975).
Galloway, B. *The Union of England and Scotland, 1603-1608* (Edinburgh, 1986).
Gardiner, S.R. *History of England... 1603-1642* (10 vols., London, 1883-4).
Girouard, M. *Life in the English Country House : A Social and Architectural History* (London, 1978).
Giuseppi, M.S. *Guide to the Public Record Office* (3 vols., revised, London, 1963).
Greene, D.G. "The Court of the Marshalsea in late Tudor and Stuart England", *American Journal of Legal History* 20 (1976) pp.267-81.
Gruenfelder, J.K. *Influence in Early Stuart Elections 1604-1640* (Columbus, Ohio, 1981).
Hacket, J. *Scrinia Reserata : a Memorial Offered to the Great Deservings of John Williams* (London, 1692).
Harris, J. "Inigo Jones and the Prince's Lodging at Newmarket" *Architectural History* II (1959) pp. 26-40.
Harriss, G.L. "Medieval Doctrines in the Debates on Supply, 1603-29", in *Faction and Parliament* ed. K. Sharpe (Oxford, 1978) pp.73-103.
——— "A Revolution in Tudor History?", *Past and Present* 31 (1965) pp.87-94.
——— "Medieval Government and Statecraft", *Past and Present* 25 (1963) pp.8-39.
Hasler, P.W. (ed.) *The History of Parliament : The House of Commons 1558-1603* (3 vols, London, 1981).
Hervey, M.F.S. *The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel* (Cambridge, 1922).
Hill, Christopher "Parliament and People in Seventeenth Century England" *Past and Present* 92 (1981) pp. 100-124.
——— *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* (Oxford, 1965).
Hirst, D. "The Place of Principle", *Past and Present* 92 (1981) pp.79-99.
——— "Parliament, Law and War in the 1620's", *Historical Journal* 23 (1980) pp.455-61.
Holdsworth, Sir W. *A History of English Law* ed. A.L.Goodhart and H.G.Hanbury (7th ed., vol I, London, 1956).
Horstman, A. "A New *Curia Regis* : the Judicature of the House of Lords in the 1620's", *Historical Journal* 25 (1982) pp.411-22.
Hurstfield, J. *The Queen's Wards* (London, 1958).
Huxley, G. *Endymion Porter, the Life of a Courtier, 1587-1649* (London, 1959).
Huydts, G. "Le Premier Chambellan des Ducs de Bourgogne" in *Mélanges d'Histoires offerts à Henri Pirenne* (2 vols., Brussels, 1926), I, 263-70.
Hyde, Edward earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* ed. W.D.Macray (6 vols., Oxford, 1888).
James, Mervyn *Family, Lineage and Civil Society : A Study of Society, Politics and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 1974).
Jones, W.J. "Ellesmere and Politics, 1603-17" in *Early Stuart Studies : Essays in Honour of D.H.Willson* ed. H.S.Reinmuth (Minneapolis, 1970) pp.11-63.
Kearsley, H. *His Majesty's Bodyguard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-arms* (London, 1937).
Kelly, F.M. "Kinloss or Pembroke?" *The Connoisseur* 82 (1928), pp.73-8.
Kenny, R.W. "The Parliamentary Influence of Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham 1536-1624", *Journal of Modern History* 39 (1967) pp.215-32.
Knafla, L. *Law and Politics in Jacobean England : The Tracts of Lord Chancellor Ellesmere* (Cambridge, 1977).
Knecht, R.J. *Francis I* (Cambridge, 1982).
——— "The Court of Francis I" *European Studies Review* 8 (1978) pp. 1-22.
Lee, M. *Government by Pen : Scotland Under James VI and I* (Illinois, 1980).

——— "The Government of Scotland after 1603", *Scottish Historical Review* 55 (1976) pp.41-53.
——— *John Maitland of Thrilestane and the Foundation of the Stewart Despotism in Scotland* (Princeton, 1959).
Levack, B.P. "Towards a more Perfect Union : England, Scotland and the Constitution" in *After the Reformation : Essays in Honour of J.H. Hexter* ed. B.C.Malament (Manchester, 1980) pp.57-74.
——— "The Proposed Union of English and Scots Law in the Seventeenth Century", *Juridical Review* 20 (1975) pp.97-115.
Lindquist, E. "The Last Years of the First Earl of Salisbury, 1610-1612", *Albion* 18 (1986) pp.23-41.
——— "The Failure of the Great Contract", *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985) pp.617-51.
Lindsay, Alexander Lord *Lives of the Lindsays : or a memoir of the houses of Crawford and Balcarres* (2nd. ed., London, 1858).
Lloyd, D. *The Statesmen and Favourites of England since the Reformation* (London, 1665).
Lockyer, R. *Buckingham : The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham, 1592-1628* (London, 1981).
Lodge, E. *The Life of Sir Julius Caesar... with memoirs of his family and descendants* (London, 1827).
Loomie, A.J. "Sir Robert Cecil and the Spanish Embassy", *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 42 (1969) pp.30-57.
Lord Great Chamberlain, Office of : Copy of Speeches Delivered by Counsel before the Committee for Privileges (London, 1902).
MacCaffrey, W.T. *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572-1588* (Princeton, 1981).
——— "Place and patronage in Elizabethan politics" in *Elizabethan Government and Society : Essays presented to Sir John Neale* ed. S.T.Bindoff, J.Hurstfield, C.Williams (London, 1961) pp.95-126.
Madge, S.J. *The Domesday of Crown Lands* (London, 1938).
Marwil, J.L. *The Trials of Counsel : Francis Bacon in 1621* (Detroit, 1976).
Millar, O. *Van Dyck in England* (London, N.P.G., 1982).
Moir, T.L. *The Addled Parliament of 1614* (Oxford, 1958).
Morice, B. *An Essay towards an History of the Ancient Jurisdiction of the Marshalsea* (London, 1812).
Munden, R.C. "James I and 'the growth of mutual distrust' : King, Commons and Reform, 1603-1604" in *Faction and Parliament* ed. K.Sharpe (Oxford, 1978) pp.43-72.
——— "The Defeat of Sir John Fortescue : Court *versus* Country at the Hustings?", *English Historical Review* 93 (1978) pp.811-16.
Murray Baillie, H. "Etiquette and the Planning of the State Apartments in Baroque Palaces", *Archaeologia* 101 (1967) pp.169-99.
Neale, J.E. *The Elizabethan House of Commons* (London, 1949).
——— "The Elizabethan Political Scene" *Proceedings of the British Academy* 34 (1948), pp.97-117.
——— *Queen Elizabeth I* (London, 1934).
Nichols, J. *The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivities of King James I* (4 vols., London, 1828).
Notestein, W. *The House of Commons, 1604-1610* (New Haven, 1971).
——— "The Winning of the Initiative by the House of Commons", *Proceedings of the British Academy* 11 (1924-5) pp.125-75.
Parker, G. *The Dutch Revolt* (London, 1977).
Parkinson, C. Northcote *Gunpowder, Treason and Plot* (London, 1976).

Parry, G. *The Golden Age Restor'd : The Culture of the Early Stuart Court, 1603-42* (Manchester, 1981).
Peck, L.L. *Northampton : Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I* (London, 1982).
Pegge, S. *Curialia* (5 Parts, London, 1782-1806).
Perez, J. "Pour une nouvelle interprétation des «Communidades» de Castile". *Bulletin Hispanique* 65 (1963).
Piper, D. *Catalogue of Seventeenth Century Portraits in the National Portrait Gallery 1625-1714* (Cambridge, 1963).
Prestwich, M. *Cranfield : Politics and Profits under the Early Stuarts* (Oxford, 1966).
Quintrell, B. "The Royal Hunt and the Puritans, 1604-1605", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31 (1980) pp.41-58.
Rabb, T.K. "The Role of the Commons" *Past and Present* 92 (1981) pp.55-78.
——— "Sir Edwin Sandys and the Parliament of 1604", *American Historical Review* 69 (1964) pp.646-70.
Read, Conyers *Mr Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth* (3 vols., Oxford, 1925).
Rebholz, R. *The Life of Fulke Greville, 1st Lord Brooke* (Oxford, 1971).
Roberts, C., and Duncan, O., "The Parliamentary Undertaking of 1614", *English Historical Review* 93 (1978) pp.481-98.
Rowse, A.L. *Shakespeare's Southampton* (London, 1965).
Ruigh, R.E. *The Parliament of 1624* (London, 1971).
Russell, C. *Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629* (Oxford, 1979).
——— "The Parliamentary Career of John Pym, 1621-29", in *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640 : Essays in Politics and Society presented to Joel Hurstfield* ed. P. Clark, A.G.R.Smith and N.R.N.Tyacke (Leicester, 1979) pp.147-165.
——— "Parliamentary History in Perspective, 1604-1629", *History* 61 (1976) pp.1-27.
Schreiber, R. *The Political Career of Sir Robert Naunton, 1589-1635* (London, 1981).
Seddon, P.R. "Household Reforms in the Reign of James I", *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 53 (1980) pp.44-55.
——— "Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset", *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 14 (1970) pp.46-68.
Sharpe, K. "The Personal Rule of Charles I" in *Before the English Civil War*, ed. H.Tomlinson (London, 1983) pp.53-78.
——— *Sir Robert Cotton, 1586-1631* (Oxford, 1979).
——— "Introduction : Parliamentary History 1603-29. In or Out of Perspective?" : and "The Earl of Arundel, His Circle, and the Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-28", in *Faction and Parliament* ed. K. Sharpe (Oxford, 1978) pp.1-42, 209-244.
Sherwood, R. *The Court of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1977).
Smith, A.G.R. "Crown, Parliament and Finance : The Great Contract of 1610" in *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640 : Essays in Politics and Society presented to Joel Hurstfield* ed. P. Clark, A.G.R.Smith and N.R.N.Tyacke (Leicester, 1979) pp.111-127.
——— "The Secretariats of the Cecils, 1580-1612", *English Historical Review* 83 (1968) pp.481-504.
Spedding, J. *The Letters and Life of Sir Francis Bacon* (7 vols., London, 1861-74).
Starkey, D.R. "Court and Government", in *Revolution Reassessed : Revisions in the History of Tudor Government and Administration* ed. C.Coleman and D.Starkey (Oxford, 1986) pp.29-58.
——— *The Reign of Henry VIII : Personalities and Politics* (London, 1985).
——— "From Feud to Faction", *History Today* 32, Nov. 1982 pp.16-20.
——— "The Age of the Household" in *The Later Middle Ages* ed. Stephen Medcalf (London, 1981) pp.225-90.

——— "Representation through Intimacy" in *Symbols and Sentiments* ed. I.M.Lewis (London, 1977) pp.187-224.
Stone, L. "The Residential Development of the West End of London in the Seventeenth Century" in *After the Reformation : Essays in Honour of J.H.Hexter* ed. B.C.Malament (Manchester, 1980) pp. 167-212.
——— "The Revival of Narrative : Reflections on a new old History", *Past and Present* 85 (1979) pp.3-24.
——— *Family and Fortune* (Oxford, 1972).
——— *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965).
Stopes, C.C. *The Life of Henry, Third Earl of Southampton* (Cambridge, 1922).
Tanner, J.R. (ed.) *Constitutional Documents of the Reign of James I* (Cambridge, 1930).
Thomas, D. "Financial and Administrative Developments" in *Before the English Civil War* ed. H.Tomlinson (London, 1983) pp.103-22.
Thomas, P.W. "Two Cultures? Court and Country under Charles I" in *The Origins of the English Civil War* ed. Conrad Russell (London, 1973) pp.168-193.
Thornton, P. *Seventeenth Century Interior Decoration in England, France and Holland* (New Haven, 1978).
Townsend, A. *The Auchmuty Family of Scotland and America* (New York, 1932).
Trevor-Roper, H.R. *The Gentry* (Economic History Review Supplement No. 1, 1953).
Turner, E.R. *The Privy Council of England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (2 vols., Baltimore, 1927).
Tyacke, N.R.N "Wroth, Cecil and the parliamentary sessions of 1604" *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 50 (1977), 120-5.
——— "Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution" in *The Origins of the English Civil War* ed. Conrad Russell (London, 1973) pp.119-143.
Watson, A.G. *The Library of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* (London, 1966).
Watts, S.J. and Watts, Susan J., *From Border to Middle Shire : Northumberland 1586-1625* (Leicester, 1975).
White, Beatrice *A Cast of Ravens : The Strange Case of Sir Thomas Overbury* (London, 1965).
White, S.D. *Sir Edward Coke and the Grievances of the Commonwealth* (Manchester, 1979).
Williams, P. "Court and Polity under Elizabeth I", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 65 (1982-3) pp.259-86.
——— *The Tudor Régime* (Oxford, 1979).
——— "The Tudor State", *Past and Present* 25 (1963) pp.39-58.
Williamson, J.W. *The Myth of the Conqueror; Prince Henry Stuart* (New York, 1976).
Willson, D.H. "King James I and Anglo-Scottish Unity" in *Conflict in Stuart England : Essays in Honour of Wallace Notestein* ed. W.A.Aitken and B.D.Henning (London, 1960) pp.41-55.
——— *James VI and I* (London, 1956).
——— "Summoning and Dissolving Parliament, 1603-25", *American Historical Review* 45 (1940).
——— *The Privy Councillors in the House of Commons* (New York, 1940, repr. 1971).
Wormald, J. "James VI and I : Two Kings or One?", *History* 68 (1983) pp.187-209.
——— *Court, Kirk and Community : Scotland 1470-1625* (London, 1981).
Wright, C.E. *Fontes Harleianae* (London, 1972).
Young, M. "Illusions of Grandeur and Reform at the Jacobean Court : Cranfield and the Ordnance", *Historical Journal* 22 (1979) pp.53-73.
Zagorin, P. *The Court and the Country* (London, 1969).
Zaller, R. *The Parliament of 1621 : A Study in Constitutional Conflict* (London, 1971).

Theses and Papers

G.E.Aylmer "Studies in the Institutions and Personnel of English Central Administration", Oxford D.Phil, 1954.

P.R.Seddon "Patronage and Officers in the Reign of James I", Manchester PhD, 1967.

D.R.Starkey "The King's Privy Chamber, 1485-1547", Cambridge PhD, 1973.

Pamela Wright, "1558-1603; A Change in Direction : the Ramifications of a Female Household", unpublished paper, forthcoming as a chapter in D.R.Starkey (ed.) *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the English Civil War* (London, to be published in 1987).