Summary: George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (1592–1628), favorite of James I and of Charles I as both prince and king, used skill in dancing, especially in masques, to compete for and retain royal favor. Masques in which he danced and masques he commissioned displayed his power with the rulers he ostensibly served. His example and teaching taught Prince Charles that through masque dancing he might win his father’s favor, and probably made Charles believe that his appearance in court masques of the 1630s would similarly win his subjects’ favor.

Almost every contemporary writer about George Villiers Duke of Buckingham (1592–1628) at some point remarked on his skill as a dancer and on how that skill helped him become and remain the favorite of King James and King Charles. Vis-à-vis both kings he displayed himself as a performer in both court masques and in masques he himself commissioned. For this reason, to many “Buckingham’s image, both at court and in the world at large, was that of a royal plaything, a man who amused the king by cutting capers at Masques.”

Early in The Story of the Rebellion, Clarendon reports Buckingham’s education as a courtier: “for ... giving ornament to his hopeful person he was by [his mother] sent into France, where he spent two or three years in attaining the language and in learning the exercises of riding and dancing, ... in dancing he excelled most men.” Comparing Elizabeth’s and James’s last favorites, Sir Henry Wotton thought that Buckingham had the advantage over Essex in his “neater limbs and freer delivery; ... the Earle ... was so

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far from being a good dancer, that he was no graceful goer. ... the Duke exceeded in the daintiness of his leg and foote." The anonymous portrait of the young Villiers in garter robes emphasizes this "daintiness of his leg and foote" by framing against the dark lining of his parted robes his legs in pale silk stockings and his feet in ornamented shoes, his gartered left leg shown frontally and his right profiled in a dancer's turn-out.

Arthur Wilson and Anthony Weldon, two admittedly prejudiced witnesses to Villiers's rise, link King James's infatuation with him to the display of his skill. Concerning the 1617 royal progress to Scotland, Wilson comments,

... what with Hawking, Hunting, and Horse-racing the days quickly ran away; and the nights with Feasting, Masking and Dancing, were the more extended. And the King had fit Instruments for these Sports about his Person, as Sir George Goring, Sir Edward Zouch, Sir John Finnit, and others, that could fit and obtemperate the Kings humour; For he loved such Representations, and Disguises in their Maskaradoes, as were witty, and sudden; the more ridiculous, the more pleasant.

And his new Favourite, being an excellent Dancer, brought that Pastime into the greater Request. ... every thing he doth is admired for the doers sake. No man dances better, no man runs, or jumps better; and indeed he jumpd higher than ever Englishman did in so short a time, from a private Gentleman to a Dukedom.

Weldon even more pungently links the "fooleries" of the despised Zouch, Goring, and Finett with the dancing of the favorite:

... the King ... after supper would come forth to see pastimes and foolerities; ... Zouch his part it was to sing bawdy songs, and tell bawdy tales; Finits, to compose these Songs; ... and Goring was Master of the game for Fooleries...; sometimes the property was presented by them in Antick Dances. ... with this jollity was this Favourite ushered in.

George Villiers, indeed, "was a court masque in himself. In his beauty, his magnificence, his centrality to his age and his meaninglessness to any other he partakes of that most characteristic expression of Stuart Court imagery. He might have been an allegorical figure invented by Ben Jonson and plumed by Inigo Jones." Almost from the beginning of his court career, in official court displays and in less formal progress and personal entertainments for James and Charles, he manifested his political position through the illusory fictions of masque. First appearing as but one among the "lords and gentlemen the king's servants" (though for the king the most important), after 1618, in official court masques and in others put on privately, he became Prince Charles's masquing companion/competitor for the rest of James's reign. Recognizing that Charles as heir to the throne would outlast his father as dispenser of royal favor, he used his skill as a dancer as one way to
ingratiate himself with the prince. From Buckingham’s example, Charles learned that self-presentation in masques not only represented a higher reality, but could actually create that reality. The “illusion of power” Caroline masques after 1631 grew out of Buckingham’s success with similar illusions in both the latter part of James’s reign and the early part of Charles’s own.

Villiers’s replacement of Somerset as James’s favorite was affirmed quasi-officially by his appearance in the king’s Twelfth Night masque for 1615. In December 1614, John Chamberlain wrote to Dudley Carleton that, “for all this penurious world we speake of a maske this Christmas towards which the King gaves 1500li the principall motive wherof is thought to be the gracing of younge Villers, and to bring him on the stage.” By “bring him on the stage” Chamberlain means not only “younge Villers’s” debut on the masque stage but also his debut on the stage of court advancement. John Donne thought this masque a faction move; to Sir Henry Goodyere he wrote on December 13, “They are preparing for a Masque of Gentlemen: in which M Villars is, and M. Karre, whom I told you before my L. Chamberlain [Somerset, Karre’s kinsman] had brought into the bed chamber.” On December 18 Donne answered an inquiry from Goodyere about “whether Mr Villers have received from the K. any additions of honour, or profit. Without doubt he hath yet none. He is here, practising for the Mask; of which, if I mis-remember not, I writ as much as you desire to know” 191). A letter to Goodyere dated December 20 further links Villiers’s appearance in the masque with his state of favor:

I have something else to say, of M. Villars, but because I hope to see you here shortly, and because new additions, to the truths or rumours, which concern him, are likely to be made by occasion of this Masque, forbear to send you the edition of this Mart, since I know it will be augmented by the next: of which, if you prevent it not by comming, you shall have, by letter an account (p. 198).

Donne’s “truths or rumours” show that there was quite extensive talk about the meaning of Villiers’s masque debut, and also that Donne felt uneasy about committing to paper any speculations about his court status.

On January 5 Chamberlain wrote to Carleton that “the common voyce and preparations promise so little, that [the masque] breeds no great expectation,” but in his next letter reported that it was “so well liked and applauded that the King had yt represented again the Sunday night after, ... though neither in devise nor shew was there any thing extraordinarie but only excellent dauncing, the choise being made of the best both English and Scottes” (I, 567–70). Chamberlain does not here name “younge Villers” or
the “best both English and Scottes,” perhaps because the contretemps between the Dutch and Spanish ambassadors which he also relates would matter more to a diplomat overseas than the names of those who danced in the masque.

In the 1617 Twelfth Night masque, Jonson’s *The Vision of Delight*, the masquers, representing “the Glories of the Spring,” were “discovered” in the Bower of Zephyrus as the chorus sang “All those happy when [the king] smiles” to “Advance, his favor calls you to advance [to] do him (this nights) homage in a dance” (Jonson, lines 213–15). Jonson’s word “advance” can be read as prophetic; though in context it seems to mean only “move forward,” the day before the masque, Villiers, ennobled as Baron Whaddon and Viscount Villiers only a few months earlier, had been called “to advance” by “his [James’s] favor” into the higher nobility as Earl of Buckingham. The new earl’s status within the royal family was further marked when he danced with Queen Anne in the revels, a privilege accorded him for the first time.

Villiers was one of the “high dancers,” young men who could execute the “loftie Gallyards that were daunst in the daies of old, when men caperd in the ayre like wanton kids … and turnd aboue ground as if they had been compact of Fire or a purer element,” a style of male dancing that the anonymous author of *Hic Multier* contrasted with the effeminate “traurerses and tourneys, … modest statelinesse and curious slidings” lately taken over from women by “effeminate” men. Jonson wrote such “high dancing” into a song for the chorus in *The Golden Age Restored* (Twelfth Night 1616):

> ... do not only walk your solemn rounds,
> But give those light and airy bounds,
> That fit the *genij* of these gladder grounds.

James’s notorious interruption during *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* shows that he expected to see male masquers execute spectacular capers and turns in the air. Between 1615 and 1624 Buckingham performed “those light and airy bounds” in at least eight court masques (all of men), as well as in private entertainments for King James.

In 1618 Buckingham, now further “advance” to marquis, was a masquer in *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, Prince Charles’s masque debut. For this occasion “some extraordinary devise was loked for (it being the Prince his first Mask) and a poorer was never sene.” Unlike his brother Prince Henry, who in 1611 had danced the title character in *Oberon*, Charles was given no masque persona of his own, nor was he costumed “as Roman emperors are represented” as his brother had been. His masquing suit differed from those of his fellow masquers only in more silver lace, costlier accessories, and
ampler plumes, his distinction only being marked by his position “always at the apex” when the masquers descended “from the scene together in the figure of a pyramid,” as long as the dancers remained “in the same figure.”¹⁶

But Mercury’s long speech before their entry equalizes the masquers as “twelve Princes”; fewer than four lines of this speech place Charles above his companions:

... one, and chief of whom
Of the bright race of Hesperus [James] is come,
Who shall in time the same that he is, be,
And now is only a less light then he.
( Jonson, lines 202–7)

Some contemporaries thought that not all Charles’s fellow-masquers were of high enough rank for a prince’s masque debut. Chamberlain wrote contemptuously that “(besides the two marquises [Buckingham and Hamilton], the earl of mongomerie and some other lords) [the masque] was furnished and filled up with Sir Gilbert Haughton, Aber Crommie, Ackmoutie, Hodge Palmer, and such like dauncing companions” (Chamberlain II, p. 128). Nathaniel Brent listed Hamilton, Buckingham, Montgomery, and two of Suffolk’s sons, calling the rest no more than “minorum gentium to make them twelve” (Jonson X, p. 576).¹⁷ Orazio Busino, the Venetian ambassador’s chaplain, reported the startling interruption during some slow pavanes; the king shouted, “‘Why don’t they dance? ... Devil take all of you, dance.’ ... [Buckingham], his majesty’s favorite minion, sprang forward, and danced a number of high and very tiny capers with such grace and lightness that he made everyone admire and love him, and also managed to calm the rage of his angry lord.” Emulation followed; the Venetians “counted 34 capers in succession cut by one knight, but none matched the splendid technique of the Marquis.”¹⁸ The best Busino could of Charles was that, though lacking “breath” because so young, “he cut some capers with considerable grace,” was never out of step, and “surpassed all the others in his bows” (Orgel and Strong I, p. 283).¹⁹

Though Mercury calls the masquers of Pleasure Reconciled “princes,” they are represented as schoolboys released for a brief holiday under the eye of Daedalus their schoolmaster. They descend from Mount Atlas as “signs / of royal education” (Jonson, line 201) for a few “hours, by Virtue spared” to pleasure, and must afterwards “return unto the hill / And there advance / With labor, and inhabit still” (lines 297–304). The representation accords with the prince’s familial position as Baby Charles even into his twenties, a
royal Peter Pan who neither challenged James's authority nor, as his adult heir, reminded him of his mortality. Yet court dancing masters would have known that, though etiquette required them to give the prince preeminence among the masquers in figure dances, for James the true masque star was Buckingham. When the king shouted "Dance," Buckingham's spontaneous "capers" — his "high dancing" — effectively eclipsed the Prince of Wales.

Busino seems puzzled by James's behavior after the performance: "the Prince went in triumph to kiss his royal father's hands, by whom he was embraced and warmly kissed. The King then honoured the Marquis with extraordinary signs of affection, touching his face" (Orgel and Strong I, p. 283). English courtiers would not have been puzzled; the favorite's letters addressed the king as "dear Dad," while some of James's letters address him as "my only sweet and dear child," as if James had forgotten that in Charles he had a son.20 The Venetian ambassador noted that "Charles behaved 'as if the favourite were prince and himself less than a favourite'" (Bergeron, p. 160). But Buckingham must early have realized that James's favoritism might serve him ill once Charles succeeded to the crown, for he took steps to ingratiate himself with the heir. After the Pleasure Reconciled debacle he offered the king and prince "a friend's feast" (Lockyer, p. 34), and subsequently gave Charles effective "coaching and support" in dancing.21 By the 1623 journey to Spain, he had made himself Charles's closest friend and counsellor, and remained so for the rest of his life.

After Pleasure Reconciled Charles and Buckingham both danced in all the remaining masques of James's reign. From 1618 on, the Florentine ambassador Amerigo Salvetti implied their equal status as masquers, always naming Charles and Buckingham but never the other participants. In December 1618 he wrote that in the upcoming Twelfth Night masque (lost) the prince was to be "accompanied by eleven other noblemen, among whom the Earl of Buckingham is first," and, reporting the masque itself, reiterated that "the most Serene prince [was] accompanied by eleven other noblemen, among whom the Earl of Buckingham was first."22 In January 1620, Chamberlain reported a private masque that included the same "dancing companions" (though not Charles):

the Marquis Buckingham and Hamilton, the Earles of Oxford and Mongomerie, the Vicount Purbeck and Lord Hunsdon, Sir Hen: Rich, Sir Geo: Goring, Sir Tho: Badger, young Maynard, Ackmoutie and Aber Commie went in a maske to the French ambassadors [where James and Charles were guests] ... their greatest bravery consisted in copper lace, which in my opinion was very pore for such parsonages: and the greate
Porter at Courte being drest like a giant came in bearing the Earle of Mongomeris page like a hawke on his fist (II, p. 282).23

The Venetian report of “the [1620] prince’s masque,” News From the New World Discovered in the Moon, shows that these diplomats now grasped the effective equality of prince and favorite: “[Charles] and ten other cavaliers made a brave show. Among them Buckingham was first. ... His Majesty ... greatly enjoyed the agility and dancing of his son and of the marquis, who contended against each other for the favor and applause of the king and to give him pleasure” (Herford & Simpson X, p. 597). When the masquers were about to approach the state, a spoken line identifies Charles as “that excellent likeness of your self, the Truth” (Jonson, lines 282–3), but neither the published description nor the costume accounts suggest that his orange-tawny and white costume distinguished him from the other masquers, unless, as in Pleasure Reconciled, by a costlier ruff and taller feathers.

The same year, in Pan’s Anniversary, on James’s June 19 birthday, “the best and bravest spirits of Arcadia, called together by the excellent Arcas” were “discovered sitting about the fountain of Light” (Jonson, lines 42–3). Charles’s masque-name Arcas does not recur in the spoken text, which implies that he was slightly if at all distinguished from the others, unless by being the lead dancer as in Pleasure Reconciled. The costume accounts for this masque name only “ruffes and cuffes for Mr. Bowy and Mr. Paulmer,” gentlemen in Charles’s household, so we cannot tell whether as Arcas Charles wore a distinguishing costume as Prince Henry had as Oberon. The published texts of Pan’s Anniversary do not record Buckingham’s participation, though he was very likely among the masquers, nor do the meagre reports of the performance mention any balletic contention between prince and favorite such as the Venetian reported in 1619. Apparently the identities of masquers in this family entertainment at Greenwich did not attract diplomatic attention or interest London gossips, as did the great court masques of the Christmas and Shrovetide seasons.

In all his reports Salvetti paired Charles and Buckingham and ignored the other masquers. In December 1620 he wrote that “the Prince in company with the Earl [of Buckingham] is preparing the usual masque for the Christmas festivities” and in 1621 that “Prince Charles ... is scrupulously preparing a masque in the company of the Earl of Buckingham” for the following Twelfth Night (Orrell, Theatre Survey, pp. 5–6). In January 1622, to inaugurate the new Banqueting House, “the Prince and other Lords and Gentlemen” danced the Masque of Augurs. At the king’s request they
repeated the masque in May (Jonson X, p. 639). The accounts for Augurs list four identical masking suits of white satin and taffeta and accessories for Mr. Palmer, Mr. Bowey, and Mr. Wray, but not for the fourth masquer, almost certainly Charles, whose personal tailor Patrick Black made all four suits. The accounts also record “the ffive Maskers for Maskin suites” and “vi venitian maskes.” The remaining masquers presumably paid for their costumes, whoever made them. Salvetti wrote that the prince was “accompanied by the Earl of Buckingham and ten other of the principal noblemen” (Orrell, Theatre Survey, 7).

In January 1623 both Charles and Buckingham danced in Time Vindicated to Himself and to his Honours. The costume records show little difference between the white and carnation suits made for Charles and for James Bowey, except that Charles’s “fayre white plume with a topp of Egretts” cost ten shillings more than Bowey’s; this plume, a girdle embroidered with silver instead of carnation and white, and a single pair of embroidered gloves (Orgel & Strong, I, p. 651) may have marginally distinguished Charles from the rest. Only for this year does Salvetti’s report on the masque not mention Buckingham, showing more interest in its postponement because of the king’s illness (Orrell, Theatre Survey, p. 7). In none of these masques is Buckingham distinguished by a masque name, even one so empty of content as Charles’s “the excellent Arcas,” but after Pleasure Reconciled he and Charles seem always to have “contended against each other,” probably dancing side by side.

In February 1623, a month after Time Vindicated, Charles and Buckingham adopted the roles of “ventorous knights in a new romanso” (Ross Williamson, p. 129), embarking on a quest for a Spanish Infanta in the real world of royal diplomacy. They took for this “ventorous” quest not chivalric names like Prince Henry’s in Barriers and Oberon, but prosaic Thomas and John Smith. The month after their return, Buckingham gave “A lost masque by John Maynard ... before the Spanish ambassadors at York House” which was choreographed by “Mountague the dauncer” and used “Spanish Ruffes” in its costumes; it “appears to have upset the ambassadors a little.” For Twelfth Night 1624, Neptune’s Triumph for the Return of Albion was prepared as the court’s official celebration of Charles’s safe return, but was cancelled at the last minute for diplomatic reasons. Neptune’s Triumph bestows transparent aliases on several participants in the Spanish venture. The jester Archy Armstrong, among the swarm of English courtiers who followed to Madrid, appears under his own name as “the sea-monster
Archy.” Neptune is code for King James though, curiously, the god was neither painted on the proscenium as in *Tethys’ Festival* nor shown “triumphing” on the stage. Charles was shadowed as Neptune’s son Albion, a traditional eponym of Britain, and his secretary Francis Cottington as “Proteus, master of disguise.”  

For the first time in a masque at court, Buckingham was allotted a masque name of his own, indeed two masque names: Hippius, Neptune/James’s “powerful Manager of Horse,” and Haliclyon, which Jonson glosses as “renowned at sea ... and gien to the same person with Hippius” (*Jonson*, VII, 695). These names allude to Buckingham’s two most important offices, Master of the Horse and Lord Admiral. In his dialogue with the Master Cook, the Poet relates how Neptune sent Hippius with Albion “to assist his course,” which refers to the party’s ride (course) across France from Boulogne to Madrid. Here, like Proteus / Cottington, Hippius / Buckingham is represented as Albion / Charles’s servant. But a song late in the masque celebrates the return of prince and favorite side-by-side as virtual equals: “Doris, dry your tears. / Albion is come — / And Haliclyon, too, that kept his side, as he was charg’d to do” (*Jonson*, lines 315–18).  

The script of the cancelled *Neptune’s Triumph* was reworked for Twelfth Night 1625 as *The Fortunate Isles, and their Union*, only three months before James died. It used the same costumes and sets as *Neptune’s Triumph* (slightly modified) but no topical names. Salvetti reports that “the prince performed his masque, accompanied by the Duke of Buckingham and other titled noblemen, to the number of twelve; it came off very beautifully” (Orrell, *Theatre Survey*, p. 10).

Between March 1625 and January 1631, there were no court masques of men. In 1626 the new queen presented a pastoral followed by a masque (*Steele*, pp. 231–32). On November 5, 1626, Gunpowder Day, Buckingham gave an elaborate entertainment for the king, the queen, and the French ambassador, which Salvetti described as “a mystic conceit” of “a marine view representing the sea which divides England from France, and above it the Queen Mother of France, sitting on a regal throne amongst the Gods, beckoning with her hand to the King and Queen of Spain, the Prince and Princess Palatine, to come and unite themselves with her there amongst the Gods, to put an end to all the discords of Christianity.” An English letter-writer reported that “all things came down in clouds” and that there was “a representation of the French King and the two Queens, with their chiefest attendants, and so to the life that the Queen’s Majesty could name them,” but does not mention Buckingham as a masquer, so he probably did
not dance on this occasion. On November 16 the queen entertained the French ambassador at Somerset House, with "une très belle assemblée, puis un ballet, et de là une collation de confitures." On December 3, a London correspondent of Joseph Mead's describes "the great masque on Thursday was sennight." The date of the letter puts this performance in the second half of November, an unusual time for a "great" masque, unless to celebrate Charles's November 19 birthday. But according to John Finett, the entertainment that day was "a comedy before the King, Queen, and the French ambassador Bassompierre," who called what he saw "une excellente comédie angloise" (Steele, 233). As a sometime deviser of ballets for the French Court, Bassompierre is unlikely to have called a normal court masque a "comédie," but this entertainment was not played by professional actors, for Mead's correspondent says that on this occasion Buckingham and Holland performed antimasque-roles which the writer thought beneath the dignity of privy councillors.

His grace took a shape upon him the other (Thursday) night, which many thought too histrionical to become him; when in the presence of the king, queen, ambassadors, and the flower of the court, he acted a master of defence, to teach the great porter to skirmish, as my Lord of Holland, a privy counsellor, also taught him the mathematics, and Sir George Goring to dance. For in the great masque on Thursday was sennight that overgrown Janitor, hight Gargantua, son and heir to Pantagruel, after whose decease Gargamella his master, desirous to breed up the young gentleman in virtuous qualities, recommended the care of his youth to those three grave tutors, whereof though the third might be excused, yet never before then did any privy counsellor appear in a masque.

This writer must have remembered that Buckingham often danced in masques after what was regarded as his premature appointment to the Privy Council, and may not have known that he took speaking parts in a "very familiar comedy in the wilds of the country" in 1620, and in *Gypsies Metamorphosed* in 1622, the latter performed not only *en famille* "in the wilds of the country," Buckingham's house at Burley and his father-in-law Rutland's house at Belvoir, but also at the royal castle of Windsor before the king, members of his Privy Council, and other noblemen. Perhaps Buckingham delighted in things "too histrionical to become him," *pour épater la noblesse* who, despite the titles the king had given to him and his kindred, regarded them all as upstarts.

By the middle of the 1620s ... [Buckingham] had become a grand if headstrong political strategist who did not fail to enlist the arts of spectacle, drama, dance, and music to aid his impossible forays into the world of international relations. In this he merely followed where kings showed the way. His attempted alliances with Spain and France, his punitive
military expeditions, his rash diplomatic embassies: all were accompanied by the propaganda of the court theatre (Orrell, REED, 8).

He appeared not only in masques at Whitehall, where (at least according to the scripts) he was either leveled with his fellow masquers or was at most second to Prince Charles, but in private maskings that displayed him more transparently than could a court function focused on the king. The one such masque that survives, _The Gypsies Metamorphosed_, delighted James so much that Jonson revised it for each of its two further performances. Almost all the masquers were related to Buckingham by blood or marriage, the one exception being possibly Sir Gervase Clifton, a Nottinghamshire neighbor of Buckingham’s who was well known at court (Orgel, pp. 496–97). Perhaps because it was a private entertainment, this masque gave antimasque-like speaking parts to normally unspeaking masquers. As gypsies,33 they told the fortunes of James, Charles, and the principal guests and picked the pockets of rustic antimasquers. The rustic antimasque continued after the gypsies ran away to “metamorphose” by washing off their “tawny” paint and donning the usual masque finery; after this, as in court masques, they danced but did not speak.34

Dale Randall’s argument that Buckingham recognized and enjoyed the masque’s “undoubted satiric thrust” against him and his family and their representation as the parasitic parvenus most aristocrats thought them, has been widely accepted.35 Jonathan Goldberg comments that the performance “managed to delight the sovereign and yet did not shirk criticism. . . . Jonson presents in the actions of the masque a metaphor that cuts at least two ways precisely because main masque and antimasque are virtually one and the same; it is the courtiers who are disguised as the reprobates, the gypsies.”36 At the Windsor performance the gypsies told the fortunes of Arundel the Earl Marshal, Worcester the Lord Privy Seal, Henry Montagu the Lord Treasurer, and Bishop Williams the Lord Keeper, who all owed their places to Buckingham’s influence. Only Lord Chamberlain Pembroke, Lord Steward Lennox, and Buccleuch (without office) were not indebted to him. The Patrico’s impudent “We may both cary / The George & the Garter / Into [our] own quarter . . . There’s a purse and a seal / I’ve a good mind to steal” (Jonson, lines 217–22) was indeed spoken not by one of the Buckingham masquers but by a hired actor. Even so, thanks to his combining the roles of Gypsy Captain, chief fortune-teller, and chief dancer, the one who dominated the show, as in _Pleasure Reconciled_, was Buckingham.
After the closely-spaced deaths of King James, the Duke of Richmond, and the Marquis of Hamilton, and Buckingham's first attempt to emulate Elizabeth's favorite the Earl of Essex in his military as well as his court roles (as Sir Henry Wotton noted), the long-simmering hostility to Buckingham became overt during Charles's first parliament in 1625. In April 1626 a letter to Joseph Mead at Cambridge reported that "Businesses against the duke come in very fast, ... a servant of the Earl of Bristol (Walsingham Gresley) ... said, he heard his lordship, if he might be heard, he would make it appear, that the ill success of the negotiation concerning the palatinate was the duke's fault."37 Some suspicions of Buckingham came from suspicious sources, such as a 1626 pamphlet from Antwerp

by one Dr. Egglesheim, who of late was the Marquis of Hamilton's physician; a papist he is, and papistical he saith, that whereas we tax Jesuits and Roman Catholics with poisoning, and other kind of murders and cruelties, is it not, saith he, a foul shame, perditio rem illum Buckinghamium, who hath been author, by way of poison, of the deaths of the Duke of Richmond, the Marquis of Hamilton, &c., and lastly, of King James, should be nestled in the bosom of King Charles?38

One M.P. directly addressed him: "My lord, I can show you when a man of a greater blood than your lordship, as high in place and power, and as deep in the favour of the king as you, hath been hanged for as small a crime as the least of these articles [of impeachment] contain" (Charles I, I, p. 103). Despite this, "his majesty is yet said to remit nothing of his affection and adherence to the duke; so that some imagine, whatsoever be proved, the duke will stand invincible" (Ibid., p. 100). Robert Cotton, who was "often sent for to the king and duke," believed that "the king's affection towards him was very admirable. [...] Certainly he will never yield to the duke's fall, being a young man, resolute, magnanimous, and tenderly and firmly affectionate where he takes" (Ibid., pp. 100–101). Mead reported rumors that what might be "the last parliament of King Charles his reign will end within this week" (Ibid., p. 104), and that if Parliament should succeed in impeaching Buckingham the king would protect him by sending him as ambassador extraordinary to The Hague (Id.).39 Soon after Charles dissolved this Parliament, the Cambridge don instead found "something for the world to wonder at ... we have chosen the Duke of Buckingham our chancellor, and that with more than ordinary triumph" by the king's direct command (Ibid., p. 107).40

Having dissolved the parliaments of 1625 and 1626 to save his favorite, in 1627 Charles asserted continued favor to Buckingham by appointing him
to command a relief expedition for the Huguenots besieged in La Rochelle. Unsurprisingly, Buckingham celebrated his appointment by a masque. In May Mead’s London informant wrote “that his grace makes a farewell supper to their majesties, and that to-morrow at night is a masque to be at York House” (Ibid., pp. 223–4), news which Mead passed on to Sir Martin Stuteville: “They say the duke will have another masque before he goes [against Rochelle], which will be chargeable” (Ibid., p. 225). The Londoner’s next letter describes this masque: “first comes forth the duke, after him Envy, with divers open-mouthed dogs’ heads, representing the people’s barking; next came Fame, then Truth, &c” (Ibid., p. 226).41 This suggests that Buckingham entered “first” in his own person or a very transparent masque role, identifying the role with himself more even than he had as the Gipsy Captain in 1621. His followers, Envy, Fame, and Truth, indicate that the masque fiction reduced the House of Commons to dogs whose attacks were motivated by envy, not zeal for truth, by whom Buckingham was now vindicated.

Between 1626 and 1628 Buckingham’s absence on his sorry military ventures may explain why in these years there were no court masques of men. But in January 1628 Mead heard that “The gentlemen of the Temple [are] this Shrovetide to present a masque to their majesties, over and besides the king’s own great masque, to be performed in the Banqueting House by an hundred actors” (Ibid., I, p. 302), suggesting a very ambitious display. In February a warrant for £600 toward a masque was issued, and a stage and seats were erected in the Hall “for a new Maske intended to have been performed there,” words suggesting that plans had changed. Soon after, further sums were paid to dismantle the stage and seats in the Hall and re-erect them in the Banqueting House.42 Then records cease. Besides these cryptic accounts the only evidence for “the king’s own great masque” is in Inigo Jones costume design showing Charles with a hair style “all gaufred and frizzled, which he never used before;”43 as Mead described it to Stuteville on February 22. Perhaps failed military and naval ventures, projected expense on new ones, and increasing signs of hostility to Buckingham caused the 1628 masques to be cancelled.44 In June 1628 “his majesty went with the duke (taking him into his coach, and so riding through the city, as it were to grace him) to Deptford, to see the ships; where, having seen ten fair ships ready rigged for Rochelle, they say he uttered these words to the duke ‘George, there are some that wish that these and thou mightest both perish. But care not for them: we will both perish together, if thou doest’” (Charles I, I, p. 369).
Felton killed Buckingham in August. Mead had heard from Joh Pory that the king was thought "as much affected to the duke's memory as he was to his person ... [and] since his death hath been used to call him his martyr, and to say the world was much mistaken in him" (Ibid., pp. 396–97). Though there were plays at court the following Christmas, the king's grief for his dead favorite militated against any royal masque. Even a year later, at the end of December 1629 a correspondent of Sir Thomas Puckering's reported that "There is nothing happened here in the court ... saving that there have wanted no plays for the solemnizing of the Christmas holidays," (Charles I, II, 49), but again there was no masque.

Depending on the political loyalties of the writer, the masque could be viewed as a fit expression of royal magnificence or as a sign of corruption. The royalist William Sanderson (referring to the years before Princess Elizabeth married and left for Germany) asserts that in James's reign,

The splendor of the King, Queen, Prince, and Princess with the rest of the royall yssue, the concourse of strangers hither from forein Nations, the multitude of our own people from all parts of our three Kingdoms gave a wonderfull glory to the Court, at this time, the only Theatre of Majesty; Not any way inferiour to the most Magnificent in Christendome; ... And it was prudentiall in state to set it forth, with all moderate additions of Feasts, Masks, Comedies, Balls and such like ... through by King James at that time, little valued for his own content, unless as Spendida Nuga for the dress of Court-like recreations, but evermore with so much wit as might well become the exercise of an Academy (pp. 366–67).

Buckingham as masquer seems symptomatic of changes, signalled by Sanderson's "at that time," in how the court masque functioned during the latter part of the reign. Because his rise into favor was first publicly noted through a masque given, Chamberlain believed, only for that purpose, he perhaps came to think that his masque personas were not entirely fictions. Stephen Greenblatt's definition of Tudor's self-fashioning is especially applicable to him; it was "linked to manners or demeanor ... without regard for a sharp distinction between literature and social life, ... a profound mobility ... social and economic ... the ability to impose one's fictions upon the world; the more outrageous the fiction, the more impressive the manifestation of power." Buckingham's "[e]laborate and showy performances ... [were] unambiguous markers of sophistication through which the politically powerful like [himself] learned to compete for courtly favor." Stephen Orgel conjectures that Charles could not "perceive such phenomena in relation to their real effects," but thought that appearing "in imperial trappings" in portraits and
masques magically affected political reality.\textsuperscript{48} The same words could describe Buckingham's own self-fashioning through his roles in Jacobean court masques and still more in the masques he himself commissioned.

The records of Buckingham's self-presentation in private masques look like precedents for Charles's own self-presentation in official masques during his personal rule. Caroline masques differed greatly from those which Queen Anne, Prince Henry, "lords and gentlemen the king's servants," and Charles himself as prince had offered to King James, "from whose onlooking eyes the visual triangle radiated" (Strong, p. 169), and whom the other spectators were privileged to watch watching the masque. In comparison with their exalted king, the queen, the prince, and court lords and ladies, no matter how unequal in the book of precedence, were leveled to equality while dancing in the masque. Queen Anne's early masques did not give her much preeminence over her ladies. In \textit{The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses} she represented not Juno Queen of Heaven, but Pallas, goddess of war and wisdom, nor does she seem to have been distinguished by costume in \textit{Blackness} and \textit{Beauty} from the remaining masquers. Jonson's description of the former is explicit that "The attire of the Masquers was alike, in all, without difference" (Jonson, line 56). Anne merely sat foremost on the "great concave shell like mother of pearl" (line 46), and led the masquers when they displayed their emblematic fans to the king. In \textit{Beauty} the costumes were made in two-color schemes, but nothing indicates that Anne's was more elaborate than the others or even that she was placed highest on the floating island or led the dance. Perhaps her preeminence was so taken for granted that it did not have to be mentioned, but a few years later, \textit{Prince Henry's Barriers, Tethys' Festival, Queens} and \textit{Oberon}, displays to mark Henry's coming of age, did set the royal masquers apart from and above their fellows. Anne and Henry offered their masques to the king as before, but their masque roles asserted a degree of independence. In \textit{Queens} the ladies' costumes as historical queens differed from each other, and Anne was set apart from the rest both by costume and by a non-historical name, Bel-Anna Queen of the Ocean. She also rode from the scene to the dancing floor in a chariot "drawne by lions, and more eminent, [with] six torchbearers more, peculiar to her" (Jonson, line 314). In \textit{Tethys' Festival} she represented "Tethys, Queen / Of nymphs and rivers".\textsuperscript{49} Princess Elizabeth and the other ladies represented the nymphs of British rivers, whose names were linked with theirs in the printed text, so perhaps, as in \textit{Queens}, they were costumed individually, but only one design has survived and the text gives us to understand that the
masquers’ costumes were essentially alike. After Henry’s death, Anne danced only in Love Freed From Ignorance and Folly, whose verse describes her as the eldest Daughter of the Morn: “the queen / Of the orient, and ’twas said / That she should with Phoebus [James] wed” (Jonson, lines 65–7). Once Anne retired from the masque stage, masquers were always men as long as James was king. Whether from the Inns of Court or “gentlemen the king’s servants,” they were sundered from the watching king both by the anonymity of masquerade in performance and by namelessness in the printed texts. But as the comments of observers show, Buckingham was de facto chief masquer beginning with his 1615 debut.

In the first court masque after Buckingham’s death, Jonson’s Love’s Triumph through Callipolis (January 9, 1631), King Charles, as when he was prince, was chief masquer, the first English king to mask since the youthful Henry VIII over a century before. In Albion’s Triumph (whose title recalls the cancelled Neptune’s Triumph for the Return of Albion), Charles took an imperial masque name, the Emperor Albanactus. As Britanocles (Britain’s glory) in Britannia Triumphans, he entered through a separate gate to join the masquers already on stage. In Salmacida Spolia he bore the name Philogenes (lover of his people), and was described as great and wise. In these masques Charles took the chief place and led the masque dances. Then, leaving the masquing space, he took his seat on the royal state, where, like his father, he received the masque as an offering to himself as king. Coelum Britannicum took this duality even further. He sat as king beside the queen for at least the contention between Mercury and Momus. It is not clear when or how he left the state to join the fourteen other masquers, but perhaps he did so after the First Song, when the masquers and young lords and noblemen’s sons came forth from a cave at the base of the mountain. In any case, after the revels “the King’s majesty [was again] seated under the state by the Queen” to hear the Fourth Song of tribute to the royal couple that concluded the masque. In all the masques in which he appeared, then, Charles enacted a two-bodies role, both the ideal ruler in the masque space and in the king’s space the validator of this ideal, both giver and acceptor of the masque offering. Buckingham had gone a good way in this direction in Gypsies Metamorphosed and in the York House masque, appearing in overlapping roles as at once himself and a character in self-praising fiction.

Similar self-praising fictions appear in Buckingham’s Caroline portraits, which surround him with allegorical figures in settings like those of
masque. The Dutch artist Honthorst painted him as Mercury presenting the liberal arts to Charles as Apollo and Henrietta Maria as Diana:

A riot of cupids in the darkened air greets [a train of allegorical figures]; other figures rout the forces of satire (in the form of a goat) and detraction. The entire scene could be the action of a masque compressed into a single movement: the anti-masque of base figures, the main masque with Buckingham as the presenter leading up to the glorification of the royal couple ... the King and Queen together as celestial powers of light.\(^2\)

In a Rubens portrait (now destroyed though its programme survives in an oil sketch in Fort Worth), “Buckingham rears his horse on a windswept beach; allegorical figures whirl in turmoil in the air, Neptune and Tethys gaze admiringly from the reeds. The painting refers to several of Buckingham’s offices ... Master of the King’s Horse ... Lord High Admiral, and his full armour and martial baton indicate a military command.” The allegory is completed by the “winged figure ... blowing out the flame of life over the Duke’s head,” an alteration that Rubens must have made after hearing of his death.\(^3\) The portrait represents Buckingham as he wished to function in the world of actual politics and war, but amid surrounding images like those of masque prosceniums, masque scenery, and actors playing symbolic roles.\(^4\) The ensemble epitomizes the mode of self-fashioning through portraiture and masque fiction by which Charles had himself represented, especially in the 1630s after Buckingham’s death. From Albion’s Triumph in 1631 to Salmacida Spolia in 1640 Charles the masquer enacted “illusion of power” roles in whose political efficacy he continued to believe even as parliament was dismantling the instruments of his personal rule. He had seen that Buckingham’s self-representation through “the arts of spectacle, drama, dance, and music” worked almost magically to influence King James. By his example, and perhaps by direct instruction, Buckingham taught Charles the use of these arts, initially to draw James’s affection by practising skills that may have seemed to the prince a main cause of his father’s preference for George Villiers over Charles Stuart. Buckingham’s example showed the prince that a viable way to self-esteem was to be at the centre of a masque.

As Charles’s reign began, Buckingham co-opted masque to allegorize himself “in terms of intellect, control, and power,” usurping the role of “les rois thaumaturges ... a semi-divine race set apart from ordinary mortals [in] the world of the court fete ... an ideal one in which nature, ordered and controlled, has all dangerous potentialities removed.” In the 1630s, such narcissistic shows contrived to give Charles the “mystical aura ... that recognised monarchs and princes as a semi-divine race set apart from
ordinary mortals” (Strong, p. 40). As combined chief actor and chief spectator in masques, before his court Charles asserted his “semi-divine” status and “mystical aura” almost as if he was persuading not only the onlookers but himself that he was indeed the hero his masque roles made him. Buckingham as masquer thus transferred to his king not only illusions about his own power but the reason for hatred and contempt by those outside the magical court world. Charles’s imitations of his father’s favorite in masques and in other things helped to bring royalty into contempt, and in the 1640s bring it down.

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Notes


4. Reproduced in Roger Lockyer, Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham 1592–1628 (London: Longman, 1981), opposite p. 140. That the display of leg in this portrait was deliberate is indicated by its difference from Garter portraits such as those of Burleigh, Sir Robert Cecil and the Earl of Worcester, in all of which show the robes are girded close to their bodies.


6. Sir Anthony Weldon, The Court and Character of King James, whereunto is now added the Court of King Charles (London, 1651) (Wing 1274), pp. 84–85. Villiers may have been deficient in other accomplishments usual for his class, though when Sir Henry Wotton stigmatizes him as “illiterate” he means only that he had little or no Latin. In December 1615 John Throckmorton told William Trumbull that “The king … hath sent for some of his great horses to Newmarket, and for St. Anthony, the rider. Every morning Sir George Villiers is a-horseback, and taught to ride, whose favour increaseth” (The Court and Times of James the First, ed. Thomas Birch [London, 1849], vol. 1, p. 383). Unlike his predecessor Somerset he did not figure in the obsolescent sport of tilting, participating in 1620 for the first and only time. Among the tilters on this occasion, nearly the last King’s Day Tilt, were Prince Charles, the Marquess of Hamilton, and the Earl of Dorset (Letters of John Chamberlain, 2 vols, ed. Norman Egbert McClure [Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939], II, p. 298).


11. At the wedding of Frances Howard and Robert Carr "there was a medley-maske of five English and five Scotts, (which was called the high dauncers,) among whom Sergeant Boide, one Abraham Crummie, and Ackmoutie ... are esteemed the most principall and loftie" (Chamberlain, I, p. 496). Such dancing could be risky; John Aubrey had heard that when performing "high-danceing, ie. vaulting and cutting capers," John Ogilby the dancing master, "endeavouring to doe something extraordinary, by misfortune of a false step when he came to the ground, did spraine a vein on the inside of his leg, of which he was lame for ever after" (*Brief Lives*, ed. Oliver Lawson Dick [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957], p. 220).


13. Ben Jonson, *The Complete Masques*, ed. Stephen Orgel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), lines 150–52. All quotations from Jonson’s masques come from this edition. According to Graham Parry, *The Golden Age Restored* "seems to have been used by the Pembroke faction 9to which Jonson was indebted) as an opportunity to launch the court career of George Villiers as a counter-attraction to the current favourite" ("The politics of the Jacobean Masque," in *Theatre and Government Under the Early Stuarts*, ed. J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993], p. 107), but Villiers had already been "launched" the year before in *Mercury Vindicated*. "The current favorite," Robert Carr, later Earl of Somerset, is not recorded as a dancer. He came to the king’s attention as a mounted attendant in the 1607 Accession Day tilt, when he fell from his horse and broke his leg. The day after his 1613 wedding to Frances Howard he fought in the barriers, but is never recorded as a masquer.


15. Roy Strong, *Henry, Prince of Wales, and England’s Lost Renaissance* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1986), p. 171. Graham Parry notes that "For once, the masquers have no specific denomination. [...] These masquers were the younger generation of courtiers who seemed to promise reformation in court morals" ("Politics of the Jacobean Masque," p. 110), but that they were chosen for any such reason seems improbable.


17. Chamberlain names "Abercrommit" as a dancer in the 1612 Twelfth Night masque *Love Restored* (*Letters* I, 328). In 1616 he reports a quip that Lord Hay’s French "embassage consists in three mignards, three dauncers, and three fools or buffons ... the dauncers Sir Gilbert Hawton, Ackmoutie and Aber-Crommie" (III, 14). In 1617 he is disgusted that "Abercrommie a Scottish dauncing courtier hath gotten ... the making of two Irish barons"
(II, 69). In 1620 Abercrombie and Achmouty were among the masquers Buckingham took to the French ambassador’s house, where they danced “till after 2 a clocke” (II, 282). In For the Honour of Wales Jonson’s comic Welshmen “prove” by false etymologies that all the masquers are really Welsh, but make Abercrombie’s name alone the subject of extended wordplay. This suggests that Jonson shared Chamberlain’s view of Abercrombie as an overprivileged lightweight. Charles tended to favor such “minorum gentium” as his and Buckingham’s dancing companions. Roger Palmer was his cupbearer; James Bowey and Edward Wray were gentlemen of his bedchamber, for whose masquing suits Charles paid as he did for the liveries of servants and players.

18. Thoinot Arbeau’s Orchesography (published 1589) defines the capriole or caper as a form of the saut majeur or leap in which agile dancers “move their feet in the air” as the climax to a galliard, “dancing [his] five steps higher in the air, continuing thus until [he is] in front of [his partner, but he should not] . . . leap too nimbly at the outset” (tr. Mary Stewart Evans, New York: Dover, 1967, pp. 91–93).

19. Busino’s report, the quarto description of Daniel’s Tethys’ Festival (1611) and the Savoy agent Gabaleoni’s report of Campion’s Somerset Masque (1613) all imply that the teen-aged Charles was not much of a dancer. In Tethys’ Festival Charles as Zephyrus stood still while the court’s “little ladies” danced around him. Gabaleoni thought it somewhat odd that “Il Prencipe non ballò” when others from the state were dancing in the revels (John Orrell, “The Agent of Savoy at The Somerset Masque,” RES, n.s. 28 [1977], p. 304).

20. In some contretemps between Buckingham and Charles James sided with the favorite. In 1616 a trifling dispute about a ring that the king had given Buckingham and that Charles borrowed and misplaced evoked such “bitter language” from the king “‘as forced his highness to shed tears.’” Some months later, when in the garden at Greenwich Charles, “being merrily disposed,’ turned a tap in a fountain and spurted water into Buckingham’s face . . . the King . . . was so angry that he boxed Charles’s ears” (Lockyer, pp. 33–34). When James made his seven-month Scottish progress in 1617, he refused to take Charles but took Buckingham and appointed him to the Scottish Privy Council (on which sat no other Englishman) so he could join the king’s formal entry into Edinburgh (Hugh Ross Williamson, George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham: Study for a Biography [London: Duckworth, 1940], p. 64).


23. They went in what Chamberlain styles a “running maske” the next night to Lady Hatton’s house, where they performed for the king and Prince Charles, the night after to the Earl of Exeter’s, soon after to Henry Rich’s brother the Earl of Warwick’s, and then to Lord Doncaster’s. Chamberlain wondered how these repetitions could escape boring audiences made up of much the same people. But when the king was spending Lent at Newmarket, “they passe the time merrillie . . . and the same maske ranges over all the countrie, where there be fit subjects to entertain yt” (Letters, II, p. 288).
24. Orrell, *REED*, p. 12. This may have been “the Duke of Buckingham’s great Masque” that Aubrey mentions in his life of John Ogilvy, though it was not “represented at Court” (*Brief Lives*, p. 220).

25. Cottington, still in Spain in January 1624, could not have taken the part even had he been at court. It requires both speech and singing, so would have been played by a professional.

26. This foreshadows the way that Charles, when king, let Buckingham display equality with him by wearing his hat in his presence even in public. In 1627, as the two played a game of bowls, an onlooker “plucked the Duke’s hat off his head ... declaring as he did so that ‘there were as good and as loyal men as himself stood bare.’” Though Charles made light of it, “Reports of this incident rapidly spread into the country” as rumors hostile to Buckingham tended to do (Lockyer, pp. 451–52).


30. French noblemen such as Sieur Estienne Durand, the Duc de Chevreuse, and Marshal Bassompierre not only danced in *ballets de cour*, but choreographed them. Louis XIII violated English ideas of royal decorum by choosing for himself roles analogous to those of English antimasquers.


32. Carleton had heard that “the lord of Buckingham acted an Irish footman with all his habiliments and properties; the Marquis Hamilton a western pirate,” and ten other lords and knights played equally undignified roles below their degree (Steele, p. 208).

33. Gypsies, whether the “Egyptians” stigmatized as thievish aliens or native vagabonds disguised as Gypsies, were increasingly subject to harsh penalties of the law under Elizabeth and James (Dale B.J. Randall, *Jonson’s Gypsies Unmasked* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1975], pp. 48–56). This would not, of course, preclude using them in antimasques, any more than witchcraft laws kept Jonson from creating an antimasque of witches in *Queens*. The outrageous novelty is in casting aristocrats in antimasque roles, then openly transforming them into noble masquers. Jonson indeed wrote something like this in *The Irish Masque* (two performances in 1613–14), in which the masquers, said to have lost their masquing attire at sea, first danced in long Irish mantles, then dropped them to display true masquing glitter. But in this masque all the dialogue belongs to antimasquers in the guise of Irish footmen played by professional actors.

34. No matter what their costumes made them represent, masquers at court did not speak; indeed, their full-face masks would have made audible speech unlikely. The gentlemen who masked at the Montacute wedding hired George Gascoigne to write a speech explaining their Venetian costumes. In Elizabeth’s reign lords disguised themselves as “clowns” (in upper-class silks and velvets) and in Accession Day tilts noblemen like Cumberland and Essex jousted for the queen as shepherds in a costumed spectacle, but the speeches were
given by hired players or servants. At a lower social level than Cumberland and Essex, the
gentlemen masquers of *Gesta Grayorum* participated among the court nobles at barriers
after their masque of *Proteus and the Dadamantine Rock*; the text names these masquers,
but the names of the speakers, whether junior Grayans or hired actors, were sunk in the roles
they played.

35. Judson Curry contested this view in "'Make'em turn gypsies': Audience Perception and
Jonson's *Gypsies Metamorphosed*," delivered at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference,
Toronto, October 1995.

36. *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and their Contempo-


38. May 5, 1626, *Charles I*, I, p. 98. By summer Chamberlain had heard that "They of Scotland
cry out amain of the Duke of Buckingham, saying they will know how King James, the
Duke of Lennox, the Marquis of Hamilton, came to their end" (I, p. 132).

Elizabeth of Bohemia and signed a treaty with the Danes and the Dutch that bound "their
respective countries to work together to contain Habsburg power, secure the restoration of
the Palatinate, and preserve the liberties of the German princes" (Lockyer, pp. 278–79).

40. True, the pressure was indirect. On May 29, 1626, only a day after the death of Chancellor
Suffolk, "the Bishop of London's chaplain arrived in Cambridge to canvass on
Buckingham's behalf and to assure members of the university that the king would be most
gratified if they elected the Duke" (Lockyer, p. 325). Mead's own hostility to Buckingham
comes through strongly in his letters; on March 3, 1627 he wrote to Stuteville that "The
duke is coming to our town. ... I am afraid somebody will scarce worship any other God,
as long as he is in town. For mine own part, I am not like to sit, but hope to hear all, when
they come home" (I, p. 202).

41. The Venetian ambassador added that later in the masque was displayed "the parting to sea
of the fleet, to inflame the King's ardour" for the Rochelle voyage (Steele. p. 235).

42. Orgel and Strong, I, p. 395.


44. Among expressions of hostility to Buckingham were the murder of his client Dr. John Lamb
by a London mob. Hostile prophecies, like that of Lady Eleanor Davis "that the Duke would
not outlive August," were circulated well before his assassination (Lockyer, pp. 451–52).

45. The king was seen to be "minding nothing so much for the present as the advancement of
[Buckingham's] friends and followers. And if any accuse him in anything whereof his
majesty might take notice, he imputes wholly to himself; if in other matters, the party durst
not say so if the duke were alive. Besides, he saith, 'Let not the duke's enemies seek to catch
at any of his offices; for they will find themselves deceived.' [...] For whereas it was
commonly thought he ruled his majesty, it was clear otherwise, having been his majesty's
most faithful and obedient servant in all things" (*Charles I*, I, p. 396).


50. The Exchequer paid £55 for embroidering one costume, almost certainly the queen’s, as well as over £1000 for nearly 11,000 yards of silver and gold lace to trim the masquers’ costumes. Daniel emphasized that “there were none of the inferior sort [hired actors] mixed amongst these great personages of state and honour, as usually there have been, but all was performed by themselves with a due reservation of their dignity.” “[G]entlemen known of good worth and respect,” attended Prince Charles as Zephyrus. For this summer performance there were none of the customrary torchbearers (Orgel and Strong, pp. 191–2, 196). Daniel apparently did not think of the court musicians and singers who also participated as “the inferior sort.”


53. In 1628 some Londoners hoped to see Buckingham act on a very different stage. After King Charles had given formal assent to the Petition of Right, Mead reports, “The news being come into the city before it could be generally known, the bells began to ring, bonfires were kindled, the number whereof at length equalled those at his majesty’s coming out of Spain. But, which was strange, if not ominous, a great part of them were made upon a misprision that the duke either was or should be sent to the Tower; a strange apprehension to be so generally upon the sudden, without further desire to inquire, or to be rightly informed by such as knew the true ground, in so much (as some say) the old scaffold on Tower Hill was pulled down and burned by certain unhappy boys, who said they would have a new one built for the Duke of Bucks’ (Charles I, I, p. 362).