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# The Oxford University Poets and Caroline Panegyric

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Among the tributes to the Caroline monarchy published before the deepening crisis of civil war, those issued from the Oxford and Cambridge University presses constitute a large and neglected body of panegyric. The twenty-two volumes of poetry celebrating the marriages, births, and journeys of the royal family have attracted, for the most part, editors and biographers interested in the juvenalia of such writers as Cowley, Lovelace, and Marvell; for others the hundreds of occasional poems written mainly in the academic languages of Latin and Greek remain understandably daunting. The appearance of English poems in the three commemorative works Oxford authorized in 1633 establish, however, a decidedly Caroline trend away from exclusively academic languages.[1] Only four of the 108 poems on the King's recovery from an illness are in English, but the seventeen included in the poems marking Charles' return from Scotland and the nineteen in the collection for James' birth suggest a new acceptance of English poetry. Before the changing fortunes of war forced the university to abandon this mode of celebration each of the ten volumes Oxford issued from 1633 to 1643 contained a significant and often growing proportion of English panegyrics. Collectively the poems express a royalist voice of considerable magnitude outside the court; together with the masques and paintings commissioned during these years they popularize the sense of halcyon well-being central to the Caroline myth. Understanding the origin and nature of this English verse both illuminates a large, neglected body of poetry and gives dimension to the dominant impression of the period as an "age of pangegyric."[2]

The English poems emerge from a well-established tradition closely tied to the history of academic publication. Epideictic literature formed a central part of the classical heritage as well as

the humanist practice, and expressions of praise were in the sixteenth century an integral part of royal progresses and university life. When Elizabeth visited Oxford poems displayed on the various college walls and entrances supplemented the expected speeches, and verse also offered a natural means to commemorate less auspicious occasions within the university.[3] Once Joseph Barnes established his press in 1584 and the crown at least tacitly granted the university the right to print, this academic poetry found a formal outlet. Two volumes of Latin, Greek, and Italian poetry "*ex officina Typographica Iosephi Barnesii*" and commemorating the death of Sir Philip Sidney initiated in 1587 a long series of university poems. Although none of the volumes rivals in number the nearly five hundred poems Oxford published to honor James' accession, both universities duly mourned the deaths of Prince Henry, Queen Anne, and King James and celebrated Charles' return from Spain and his marriage to Henrietta Maria. Oxford found more occasion than Cambridge to elegize prominent university figures and to laud benefactors, but both soon developed a tradition of responding to state events with volumes, some of which were bound, stitched, and perfumed by the printers as elaborate presentation copies.[4] In fact between the end of the 1629 Parliament and the Short Parliament, the period of Charles' so-called personal rule, the university publications devoted to the monarchy surpassed the number issued in the previous four decades. And once English poems appeared at Oxford in the first of the 1633 issues, their number soon grew to a high of forty percent and an average of twenty-five percent. During the same period the seven Cambridge collections contained only ten English poems in *Voces Votivae* (1640) and seven in *Irenodia* (1641). Cambridge would include English poems in later commemorative printings, and in the Restoration Oxford would issue on occasion no English pieces, but for one decade in the seventeenth century the approximately 250 English poems associated with Oxford University offer at the very least a not inconsiderable strain of English panegyric.[5]

The appearance of these English poems at Oxford during this period probably has little to do with the chancellorship of William Laud, an avid royalist who actually encouraged the use of Latin at the university, and more to do with the Queen, who could not read Latin.[6] The section of English verse included at the end of *Solis Britannici Perigaem* (1633) explains in its opening address to the Queen,

> Since You haue interest in our joyes, to see
> A Husband safe return'd, a Soveraigne wee;
> Wee here translate some of our joyes, and sing
> This part to You, the other to the KING.[7]

Another prefatory poem to Henrietta Maria later that year in *Vitis Carolinae Gemma Altera* again affirms the decision to forsake the Latin "Mother tongue"; with somewhat strained wit and tact it apologizes for the "strange tongue" and "hard sort" that distance poets from the Queen, and it proposes "To tell our meanings, which you here may reade / In the same Dialect in which you breed."[8] Neither grouping of English poems contains tributes addressed solely to the Queen, and the King is more often than not the poets' primary concern, but the pretense of writing in English for Henrietta Maria's benefit offers subsequent volumes a ready excuse. When Oxford next celebrated the royal family on the nativity of Princess Elizabeth, the English contributions dedicated to the Queen are "onely meant to You," and those on the births of Anne, Catherine, and Henry continue to address her directly. When Cambridge then admits on the occasion of Prince Henry's birth "'tis time at length to use our Mother-tongue,"[9] the address to the Queen and the separate section of English poems would seem to follow a now-established format. The tributes both universities offer the next year, however, vary the pattern; though each contains a gathering of English poems, none is addressed to the Queen, who is ignored in the responses to Charles' return from Scotland. Henrietta Maria regains attention in the final series of Oxford poems, a collection celebrating her return in the summer of 1643 from Holland, and the high proportion of English poems gives further credence to the earlier apologies for the use of the less academic language. Even so, the original and decorous desire to be deferential to the Queen does not account alone for the existence of so many English poems in the Oxford publications.

The arrangement and authorship further suggest they are neither merely a gesture towards the Queen nor a compromise of academic tradition. Each commemorative work, it is true, places a premium on the Latin poetry; along with the Greek and occasional Hebrew pieces these poems always come first and always reflect social rank. Although the order breaks down in the middle and later sections, university officials and sons of prominent nobility claim the privileged place at the beginning, while the lesser academic and social ranks vie to succeed them. The English poems

relegated to the end may begin with the Vice-Chancellor's preface and also usually observe the precedent of rank; their authors, however, are fellows or students from the colleges. Some quite self-consciously admit, as John Hull apologizes, "here you see / Who scarce before read verse, now versifie";[10] others who write in English also contribute Latin poems, but they have no reservations about celebrating the monarch in both languages. In fact among the frequent English contributors, William Cartwright, Jasper Mayne, Martin Lluellin, Richard West, Josias Howe, and Abraham Wright later gain some stature in literary history as Caroline poets. The patterns of the contributions further suggest that a large proportion of the English poems form a related, even deliberate alternative to the standard Latin fare.

Most strikingly, a high percentage of the English verse is associated with Christ Church. All four of the poems in the first of the 1633 collections to break the academic tradition are by Christ Church scholars, and in each of the subsequent publications this college provides the highest proportion of English poems. Although its dominance declines as other colleges and halls begin to contribute, Christ Church generally doubles in number the English contributions of its nearest rival. Of the original four authors Jasper Mayne and William Cartwright, in fact, become the mainstays of the university tributes—Mayne wrote English poems for eight of the ten Oxford volumes, and William Cartwright is missing from only one of them.[11] Cartwright's reputation as a poet and the positions both he and Mayne rose to within the university probably account at least for some of the other poems. Among the "knot of the choicest *Oxford* Wits always together," Cartwright was closely associated with the older Mayne but "equally beloved and admired of all persons."[12] Presumably these two sustained the original nucleus of English poetry, drawing to them precocious scholars and poets from within as well as outside the college; at any rate, a number continued to write throughout their stay at Christ Church, and some would dedicate poems to Cartwright in his 1651 posthumous edition.

Similar grammar school backgrounds further bind these writers together. Each of the four poets to initiate the English verse was prepared for Oxford at Westminster, and the majority of the later Christ Church poets come from the same London school. The number may not be very unusual since Westminster annually elected three students to Christ Church and its alumni dominated official positions at the college.[13] But the grammar school also

had a reputation for producing men of letters as well as religious and academic leaders; besides the lesser lights of Cartwright, Randolph, and King luminaries such as Ben Jonson, George Herbert, and Abraham Cowley are numbered among its graduates. Jonson would later attribute "All that I am in arts" to his Westminster teacher William Camden, and the school may also have left its impression on other writers. The "Noble Genius peculiar to that place" Thomas Sprat recognizes in his "Life and Writings of Cowley" was nurtured under the guidance of Lancelot Andrewes and his lesser-known successor Lambert Osbaldeston.[14] During a headship extending from 1622-1638 Osbaldeston guided the generation of writers who appear so prominently in the Oxford collections, and he was apparently instrumental in giving new importance at Westminster to English poetry. His influence has been emphasized in studies of Cowley's early work, and the results are also apparent in the manuscripts of Latin and English poems Westminster students wrote to celebrate the monarchy.[15] Not surprisingly, then, fledgling poets immersed in the Westminster tradition of posting poems on the monarch's birthday and accustomed to demonstrating their English skills on state occasions would support in English the university's efforts to memorialize the monarchy. A Robert Meade and a Martin Lluellin or a Francis Palmer might be drawn at Oxford to the leadership of Mayne or Cartwright, a protege of Osbaldeston, and in turn all could find further inspiration and support in two other famous Westminster alumni, William Strode and Brian Duppa.

Both Christ Church leaders were at the center of its literary activities. The university orator and later Canon of Christ Church, William Strode had been the chaplain to Richard Corbett, the Bishop of Oxford and former Dean of Christ Church who was celebrated among contemporaries as "the Maecenas of the University."[16] In addition to the Latin poems he wrote for the Oxford commemorations, this "exquisite orator and eminent poet" frequently appeared among the seventeenth-century commonplace books and poetic miscellanies. Although the play he was chosen to write for the entertainment of the King and Queen during their 1636 visit was not received as enthusiastically as the other Christ Church production, William Cartwright's *The Royal Slave*, his prominence at both the university's official and literary celebrations attests to Strode's reputation and involvement.[17] His influence, however, is less certain than that of Brian Duppa. As vice-chancellor of the university Duppa appears in 1633 at the head of

the first three Oxford collections to include English tributes. Whether he actually solicited these contributions, Duppa did encourage their authors. Before he became the royal tutor to Prince Charles he had gained a reputation for "the pleasant Instructions of the choicest wits in the University, as Mr. *Cartwright*, Dr. *Lluelin*, Mr. *Gregory*, Mr. *Waring*, &c. to whom he was a very eminent Patron, as he was to all ingenuity in any extant."[18] Cartwright's 1651 edition acknowledges the eminence of "his Patron" in the preface as well as in several poems, and the extent of Duppa's influence can be gauged in the memorial pieces he published commemorating Jonson. Among the more famous contributors to *Jonsonus Virbius*—men who gathered with Falkland at Tew or helped shape seventeenth-century drama, the presence of Mayne, Cartwright, Terrent, West, Meade, Ramsay and others familiar in the Oxford collections suggests Duppa's relationships with university writers. Under his official guidance and personal patronage these fellows and students upheld the royalism Duppa and Strode exemplified in their own university expressions.

They thereby supported the values Jonson exemplified in his own poetry. Although the relationship between Duppa and Jonson remains too uncertain to argue any direct influence, the poet who once stayed "for some time in Ch. Ch. in writing and composing plays" and was "as a member thereof, actually created M. of A."[19] undoubtedly also influenced the Oxford writers gathered around Duppa. Among those who acknowledge his greatness in *Jonsonus Virbius*, William Cartwright allegedly won from "our ablest Judge & Professor of Poesie" the praise "My Son Cartwright writes all like a Man,"[20] and others such as Jasper Mayne reflect in their poetry Jonson's inspiration. For them the publication of his *Works* in 1616 and his unmistakable presence in the court and London circles gave immediacy to the humanist ideal of the poet/orator as well as new legitimacy to the panegyric mode. Besides the occasional poems Jonson continued to write to the royal family and aristocratic patrons, his masques now assumed a new importance with the 1631 productions *Love's Triumph through Callipolis* and *Chloridia*. Though Jonson would write no further masques for Charles and Henrietta Maria, his final efforts for the Banqueting House established a vision of royal splendor central to all of the later Caroline masques: "Both masques celebrate the love of King and Queen (a theme that was emphatically not part of the Jacobean royal mythology); both sing of their fruitful union, of triumphant peace at home and abroad, of plenty and prosperity in

the country, and of a renaissance of the arts."[21] Outside Whitehall in the universities the poems to the monarchs offer their own poetic counterpart to the elaborate, ritualized praise. For a king and queen who had surprisingly little public ceremony,[22] the Oxford publications in particular provide a collective voice of celebration. Like the masques specifically performed for the Queen, the English poems often assume a limited audience, but their authors obviously intend to go beyond the academy and the royal family. In reinforcing the royalist vision of the Caroline decades and reflecting somewhat the times, writers trained in the public school and university traditions sought their inspiration quite naturally in rhetorical precedent; those also anxious to impress more than their peers found in Jonson an example and an English poetry that would influence several generations of writers.

The English poems of this group reflect an awareness of traditional rhetorical precepts and contemporary poetic practice. A long tradition of demonstrative oratory detailed at length the epideictic style, and the classical rhetorics offered more than a general sense of the modes suited to communal celebration. The seminal pronouncements of Menander and the Renaissance discussions of Scaliger and Puttenham offered various topoi of praise along with specific examples, but seventeenth-century poets were not locked into the structural patterns of epideictic oratory. Though Renaissance writers found guidelines in the established rhetorics, as A. Leigh DeNeef observes, they began to "move away from the specific structural formulae of earlier rhetorics to a more generalized idea of the 'ceremonial' form."[23] When the Oxford writers therefore sought models for the bulk of their poetry—the five works commemorating the royal births and the three celebrating the monarchs' returns to England, they did not feel constrained to imitate a set form or duplicate a series of prescribed topics. Jonson, Drummond of Hawthornden, and less influential poets such as Herrick and Corbett had already shown them a willingness to interpret rhetorical theory quite liberally.

The direction they would take is apparent in the established rhetorical and poetic attitudes towards the genethliaca or natal songs that most tax the Oxford writers' muse. Menander and the Pseudo-Dionysius had outlined at length the classical birthday speech. After the proem and its professions of inadequacy, the orator praised the day, noting along with the season of the year any omens and religious festivals. The place of birth and the family were then duly celebrated, and afterwards the individual's

accomplishments became the focus of praise. In the case of infants and young people the family received greater attention and the encomium added to the traditional hopes for a prosperous life a prediction of future accomplishments.[24] By the time Puttenham wrote *The Arte of English Poesie* the "duetie and ciuilitie" poets owed their rulers on these occasions had been reduced to a succinct formula: "ioyfull songs and ballades, praysing the parentes by proofe, the child by hope, the whole kinred by report, & the day it selfe with wishes of all good successe, long life, health & prosperitie for euer to the new borne."[25] Poems written in English for the birth of Prince Charles and not published in the university editions suggest still less allegiance to the original form. The appearance of a star during the day of birth and the eclipse of the sun two days later conveniently signaled the auspicious occasion, yet not all of the poems mention the propitious event. Nor do they uniformly praise the family or prophesy the Prince's future. In the most formal of the poems, Henry King stresses his own inability to commemorate the occasion; others tend to narrow their focus and develop a single conceit.[26] The best of the poems, Herrick's pastoral and Jonson's epigram, wittily turn the epideictic conventions to their own ends. Jonson's twelve-line poem especially reveals a deft and studied touch:

> And art thou borne, brave Babe? Blest be thy birth,
> That so hath crown'd our hopes, our spring, and earth,
> The bed of the chast *Lilly*, and the *Rose*!
> What Month then *May*, was fitter to disclose
> This Prince of flowers? Soone shoot thou up, and grow
> The same that thou art promis'd, but be slow,
> And long in changing. Let our Nephewes see
> Thee quickly [come] the gardens eye to bee,
> And there to stand so. Hast now, envious Moone,
> And interpose thy self, ('care not how soone.)
> And threat' the great Eclipse. Two houres but runne,
> *Sol* Will re-shine. If not, *Charles* hath a Sonne.
> *Non displicuisse meretur,*
> *Festinat, Caesar, qui placuisse tibi.*[27]

Though it invokes Martial in apology for the hasty performance, the epigram clinches its points without sacrificing many of the traditional topoi. Less accomplished poems in the Oxford collections tend to fulfill the same conventions self-consciously; they also praise the royal family more extensively.

For them the inexpressibility topos assumes an immediate and paramount importance.[28] Throughout the five volumes of birthday poems the Oxford poets remain extremely sensitive to the Queen's transcendent position. From the outset they acknowledge she best creates her self in her children and needs "no borrowed Prayse." "Where Nature is so high," the poems repeatedly insist, "Art must be lesse," and "Where the newes only is so eloquent," they confess, "fancie's mispent."[29] With more than the usual lipservice to convention some agree with Thomas Isham that they are at best logicians turned poets, while others confirm they are more comfortable with syllogisms than with verse. Taking their cue from the occasion the poems emphasize the misgivings of "Infants in the Arts" and virgin wits in travail who are forced to confront the midwife press with their barrenness. Each royal birth strains an already tortured wit, and protests of exhaustion increasingly appear among disclaimers of poetic talent. Ultimately Dudley Digges seeks consolation in the promise that practice may indeed elevate if not perfect hobbled verse, but Abraham Wright probably more candidly intends a double pun as he prays, "God send the Schollers safe delivery."[30]

The laboring poets remain inspired, however, by the Queen's own travail, and they insist she is the creator of poets as well as princes. Again her creativity occasions fanciful attempts to exploit a wit now apparent in seeing the Queen as their poetic mother, father, and midwife. Much of the verse reveals the forced comparisons and predictable puns seen, quite characteristically, in Richard Newman's apology,

> Methinks (Great Queene) when ere you doe lye in
> 'Tis my Religion still if I but sinne:
> 'Tis duty makes vs Erre, and you may say
> All our Devotion is Apocrypha.
> O then Baptize our infant wits, and you,
> That gaue vs matter, give vs language too:
> Inspire yourselfe, that we may chaunt your song,
> And thus be thankfull in our Mother-tongue.[31]

More accomplished pens find virtue in a language that can only obscure meaning. For poets consumed with loyalty and duty art becomes less important than motive:

> we here impart
> In modest silence copyes of our heart,

> And thus interpret what our soules doe speake,
> And Image out our thoughts: but o how weake
> Is fancy! how out done by true delight!
> Each man reioyces more then all can write.[32]

This gracious, even graceful deference to the Queen's own "fruitfull patterne" captures the spirit of the volumes: love and devotion inspire both the Queen's and her subjects' creativity. Even though the poets make much of their inability to imitate Henrietta Maria, in the end they admit, "we, how e're dispis'd, cannot but try / To spring our loyall'st veine of Poesy";[33] with the help of the epideictic topoi they struggle to give new importance to both the births and their celebration.

Not surprisingly a number of poems capitalize upon the genethliacon's first concern, the day of birth. Although no uncommon celestial occurrences marked the nativities of Charles' brothers and sisters, poets bent upon celebrating the day remain undeterred. While Robert Barrell alone among the writers manages to turn a "late" lunar eclipse into an effective recognition of the Queen's celestial nature, others make a virtue of the unportentous times. The absence of "hurtlesse Natalitious fire" at the birth of Prince James becomes for William Cartwright itself a sign of nature's approval. When Princess Elizabeth then enlarged the royal family, the wit takes a predictable turn:

> For, now that Royall Births doe come so fast,
> That we may feare They'll Commons be at last,
> And yet no Plague to cease, no starre to rise,
> But those two Twinne-fires onely of Her eyes.[34]

Poets assured themselves they needed no prophetic stars to mark the births because the "Mothers throwes" were omens far superior to the comets conventionally sighted at important nativities. Most instead stress in characteristic epideictic fashion the circumstances surrounding the date of birth.

Scotland provides the inspiration for many tributes to Prince James and his younger brother Henry; the season of the year offers a ready topos for celebrating their sisters' births. The King's return from his coronation in Scotland during the summer of 1633 and the birth of James in October make an already tired pun on travail irresistible for a number of poets who variously conclude:

> Mary will Travaile too, and I dare say
> A longer journey, though at home She stay. . . .

If we compare Their labours, we shall find
She no way was outgone, though left behind.
And of their gaines, behold the difference,
He only brought a Crowne, She brings a Prince.[35]

Henry's birth in the midst of the disastrous Scottish upheaval tempers the optimism, but the poems written in 1640 regularly contrast the threats of war with his promise of peace. The transformation his birth assures the nation is also celebrated in his sisters' "Royall Calender." Elizabeth's birth on December 28, 1635, becomes more than a New Year's gift; the spring she brings to winter also dispels the ominous and superstitious fears commonly associated at this time of the year with Rachel's cries for the children Herod slew. "Times loose their seasons at the beck of Queens,"[36] and with Princess Anne, born March 17, 1636/7, the "suddeine" and "forward" spring the poets note seems to imitate the child whose "Chaster Sweets, and Virgin grace" brighten the Lenten sadness. For some, in fact, she is the genius of spring, and her time of birth represents the promise of both beauty and fertility. Though the death of her sister Catherine within hours of birth on January 29, 1638/9, tempered extravagant hopes, poets would still insist "Each birth begins a season" in which the Queen renews the nation with still greater blessings.[37]

The celebration of this fecundity becomes, quite understandably, the poems' dominant concern. Jasper Mayne ends the first of the English tributes to the Queen with the wish, "O may You still be fruitfull, and begin / Henceforth to make our yeare by lying in," and less elegant poets would continue to pray "may not this Bosome sticke, / 'Till we grow barren in Arithmeticke."[38] Though the many births taxed students more adept at numbers than at poetry, the memorable lines are not the endless quibbles on the three graces, perfect square, five senses, and doubled three. The university poems share the Caroline masques' emphasis on the royal couple's creative union, and through their various poetic forms they too celebrate the blessings envisioned in the court performances. With none of the extravagance of these spectacles they agree with James Shirley's masquers,

To you great King and Queen, whose smile
Doth scatter blessings through this isle,
To make it best
And wonder of the rest,

We pay the duty of our birth,
Proud to wait upon that earth
Whereon you move,
Which shall be nam'd,
And by your chaste embraces fam'd,
The paradise of love.[39]

In praising the children as the emblems, mirrors, maps, and epitomes of the parents, the poems go beyond recognition of the monarchs' immortality. The birthdays of royal children are an epideictic occasion for the celebration of their parents as well as the future of the monarchy, and the poems surpass the masques in their emphasis on the fulfillment implicit in each birth. Tributes to the children and wishes for their future often laud Charles' "royall mind" or unrivalled merit and single out the Queen's beauty or virtue. While much of the compliment labors to be witty, an address to the Queen can gracefully acknowledge the union and its offspring:

In your faire selfe, those sweets which nature yeilds
To you, shee shadowes in lesse beauteous feilds.
She copied out the rose from your choice frame,
Which falling Short, some say lookt red for shame,
Thence shee a patterne for the lillies tooke,
And doth confesse her flowrs spring from your
looke.[40]

The authors may be removed from the splendor surrounding the court, but the spirit of the masques is also captured, for example, in the sustained lyrical passage that begins the imagined responses of several Cupids:

These Venus eyes (says one) these are
Our mothers sparkes, but chaster farre:
And Thetis sylver feet are these,
The Father sure is Lord o'th'seas.[41]

Through their chaste love and valorous strength Charles and Henrietta Maria in effect give new life to an "age of Clay." Poets liken each offspring to olive branches, and in the initial volumes the children promise both defense and conquest. To a nation removed from the turbulence of the Thirty Years War, princes endowed with their father's nobility seem bulwarks against the destruction sweeping across Europe, and their sisters in the pattern of their

mother appear able to conquer foreign rulers. Through the royal family the "amorous peace" that courts the English in their homeland assumes the dimensions James I could only fondly imagine. Though Henrietta Maria and Charles may not supplant the heaven envisioned in Thomas Carew's *Coelum Brittanicum*, the births of Princesses Elizabeth and Anne convince the university poets that from so great origins "nothing can be / Borne lesse then Kingdomes, or a Monarchye."[42] Only the royal love, they insist, can enlarge the perfection of its creators, and only a larger dominion can give it scope.

In their enthusiasm the poems do not overlook, however, the murmurings of discontent at home. The ship money levies and the growing Scottish unrest are at first unobtrusive references. John Robinson alone uses Elizabeth's birth on December 28, 1635, to conclude pointedly, "Let none repine at *Caesars* generall Taxe / At this blest Birth-day." The "exemplary loyalty" the Queen exhibits in paying her own tribute further impresses two poets who respond to the next nativity, that of Princess Anne. Peter Bradshaw insists the people cannot deny any loans to rulers responsible for reviving the nation's fortunes, while Abraham Wright hopes the people will imitate the Queen's fruitful blessings and "Encrease and multiply their love, and vie / To every child a freewill subsidie."[43] With the death of Catherine soon after her birth on January 29, 1638/9, the poems become increasingly sensitive to the country's troubled future. Among the repeated emphasis on the Queen's safe delivery and her Phoenix-like nature the poems that see the child as a covenant with God and praise the commonwealth's delivery assume unmistakable political dimension. Her selfless spirit of sacrifice and the King's unwavering commitment to a religious settlement inspire some of the best lines in this largely consolatory collection;[44] their ideals gain additional immediacy in *Horti Carolini Rosa Altera*, the final volume of birthday poems.

Prince Henry's birth on July 8, 1640, added another rose to a Caroline garden now threatened with the Second Bishops War, and the poets react in embattled royal partisanship. Forthrightly they attack the blindness of a country unwilling to value all the blessings the monarchs have showered on such "Thanklesse Desarts." A new stridency in the denunciation of the common people's ingratitude and in the protestations of the university loyalty culminates in the hopes that the King's courage and love may ultimately "bestrow the Pavements where he treads / With loyall Subjects hearts, or Rebells heads."[45] Now more than ever the Queen also embodies in her

motherhood the ideal. A shortsighted nation is exhorted to emulate the homage and courage she exemplifies in her service to the country, and discontented subjects are chided with the Queen's own ability to triumph over the loss she has experienced. Her fortitude, patience, and love recall the virtues celebrated earlier that year in the last Caroline masque, *Salmacida Spolia*. Its final scene of a prosperous city and a triumphant harmony made possible through the royal couple's virtuous love has its counterpart in the blessings an equally sullen people now ignore. The poems variously welcome the new son as the prince of peace or scourge of rebellion who appears with his brothers and sisters to "hedge this Eden in." Along with her husband the Queen, in particular, brings comfort and renewed life to the kingdom. Above the threatening turmoil, she promises to settle the floating isle by transforming tumult into harmony and faction into peace. Her devotion inspires Henry Bennet to express the essential spirit of each encomium:

> Wee wish that She may ever bring
> Such yearely pledges to our King;
> And yet her selfe remaine to be
> The patterne of her Progenie:
> That, like the *Halcyon*, when she please
> To bring forth, both the Land and Seas
> May feele one Calme, and no Storme rise
> T'eclipse the lustre of Her eyes.[46]

The hope Henrietta Maria and Charles offer a troubled nation becomes even more unmistakable in the final Oxford publications, the poems greeting their return to England.

The King's journey from Scotland in the autumn of 1641 and the Queen's voyage from Holland in the summer of 1643 were, like the birthdays, occasions for expressing joy and expectation. The rhetorical precedents for the epibaterion or welcoming speech emphasize many of the topoi found in the genethliacon; the praise, however, focuses more exclusively on the ruler. "After the expression of joy," Menander counsels, "divide the speech thus: brief encomium of the emperor; then a similarly brief encomium of the governor's ancestry (if distinguished); then his actions, with a separate comparison for each virtue; then a general comparison; and finally the epilogue."[47] Drummond of Hawthornden follows this pattern quite closely in the panegyric he wrote to celebrate James I's return to Scotland in 1617, and some of the same

emphases are found earlier in Ben Jonson's and Samuel Daniel's greetings to the newly crowned king.[48] Their joyous reactions to the peaceful well-being envisioned in the monarch's presence anticipate at greater length the poems written in a similar tradition to greet Charles' return from his Scottish coronation in August, 1633.

Although the English poems in *Solis Britannici Perigaevm* were written ostensibly for the Queen, only two address her specifically; she occupies, quite appropriately, an important though subordinate position in the other epibateria. In Charles' absence her radiance becomes a reminder of the King's majesty and her love affords a model for the poets' devotion. The vine clinging to the cedar and the turtle dove longing for her mate, she assumes already the role of unbounded love celebrated in the later genethliaca; to an even greater extent her husband manifests an admittedly inexpressible virtue. In the most sustained praise, a poem perhaps indebted to Jonson, Jasper Mayne celebrates the justice, probity, and wisdom manifest in the Monarch's rule; others are quick to seize upon the peace and prosperity he has created. Their central conceit exploits comparisons to the sun suggested by the volume's title as well as by rhetorical convention. Like the sun's light and warmth, Charles emanates an inexhaustible source of bounty and worth; united without eclipse, the figurative sun and moon shine with unprecedented splendor engendering new life in the nation.

When Charles returned in November, 1641, from his second journey to Scotland, he came to rejuvenate a now fearful and disspirited land. From the outset poems stress, with no mention of the Queen and at great length, his celestial nature. The King's splendid rays once again appear to many welcomers a renewed source of comfort and light, but the poems do not merely celebrate a radiance that dispels the gloomy darkness, rebellious mists, or factious vapors. The comparison to the sun Martin Lluellin develops in the first poem concludes gratefully, "Nor doth your bright approach suggest a feare, / That you who warm'd from Scotland, should scorch here."[49] Lluellin's confidence in the King's ability to create a heaven without "Torrid zone" thinly conceals a relief found in subsequent poems. In his absence the country lived in fear that the King would rally Scottish support to help impose his will upon a recalcitrant country, and the joyful responses to his return express special solace that "You fetch'd the *Crowne* before, and now their *Love*."[50] Poems hailing the triumphant return of the conqueror laud the "stout meeknesse,"

"bright majesty," and "mighty wisdome" responsible for a bloodless victory. Charles in their view charms discord with his presence and inspires peace with his name; he is the good physician who knits fractures into stronger wholes and the great Pan who transforms armed camps into fertile pastures. Though some find in the Irish outbreak the opportunity to express the martial hopes of a now unified nation, most poems welcome the reconciliation. The halcyon ideal central to the Caroline celebrations throughout the 1630s asserts itself again without the wistfulness or nostalgia it would soon acquire. Despite some traces of bravado, the Oxford poets affirm their belief in "the Soule of Peace and Love," Charles I. The expressions of joy and the hopes of peace may be tempered somewhat by the realities of the early 1640s, but the promise of the earlier poems remains intact:

> you, yet appeare
> To us as glorious, unspent, full of ray,
> As when you first began to rule our Day, . . .
> One Forme againe doth spread it selfe through all;
> And adverse Hemispheeres become one Ball.[51]

The expectations are even greater in the final Oxford volume, the verse welcoming Henrietta Maria from her fifteen-month journey in Holland. When the Queen returned in July, 1643, with military supplies, the prospects for a royalist victory were high. The poems accordingly laud the triumphs on the battlefield and scorn the rebel forces with a new aggressiveness; their buoyant spirits also give new vitality to the image of the Queen. Reunited after their long separation, Charles and Henrietta Maria manifest openly a love undiminished during her absence. Poets cannot resist professions of speechless joy or puns on her travail, and they detail the conquests won by darts from her eyes and batteries of her cheeks, but they also celebrate at length the renewed life her presence creates. In their enthusiasm she appears another Venus, Astraea, or Orpheus who insures with her second coming the return of peace, law, and liberty. The harmony lost during her absence and the concord she returns recall the values celebrated in the court masques and inform some of the best poems. While the impressions of her luminous, inspiring nature often vary conventional compliments to her beauty, charm, and virtue, the last of the tributes to her nobility leaves an enduring impression of the Queen's character. The woman celebrated in the university poems

and court masques as the paragon of selfless devotion and boundless creativity epitomizes her nobility and love in the willingness to brave hostile forces and to serve once again:

> Courage was cast about Her like a Dresse
> Of solemne Comelinesse;
> A gather'd Mind, and an untroubled Face
> Did give Her dangers grace.
> Thus arm'd with Innocence, secure they move,
> Whose Highest Treason is but Highest Love.
>
> As some Bright Starre, that runnes a diverse Course,
> Yet with Anothers force,
> Mixeth its vertue in a full dispence
> Of one joynt influence,
> Such was Her mind to th'Kings, in all was done;
> The Agents Diverse, but the Action One.[52]

The inspiration and the hope Henrietta Maria brought back to her royalist supporters encouraged the halcyon dreams of 1643; by the autumn of that year, however, the promise had begun to fade. With the unsuccessful seige at Gloucester and the inconclusive battle at Newbury, the King's military fortunes turned against him; within a year the parliamentary army had victory in its grasp. At Oxford Abraham Cowley abandoned the epic celebration of the civil war begun at the height of the royalist cause, and the presses now turned towards the newsbook campaign John Berkenhead led with *Mercurius Aulicus*. Even with the guidance of William Cartwright, the seminal figure who died in November, 1643, the university poets had seen their era pass; when they published their next volume some ten years later, Oxford writers forced to submit to Long Parliament authority now celebrated Oliver Cromwell and his peace with Holland. But in the ten years and over two hundred English poems they had devoted to their monarchs the poets had contributed significantly to an essential Caroline vision. The regal leadership Rubens and Van Dyck glorify on their canvases and the blissful reign Inigo Jones reaffirms in the masques are unmistakable in the poems. None is as memorable as the court-commissioned works, but all give testimony to the peace and prosperity Charles and Henrietta Maria create. The numerous English poems their love inspired within the university community played an important,

even integral role in shaping the impression of halcyon fulfillment Clarendon and others would later attribute to a golden era of Caroline rule lost in civil disruption.

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Notes

1 While it is true that one English poem had appeared in 1622 among the elegies for Henry Saville and three exist among the 1614 elegies for George St. Paul, these four poems are anomalies.

2 Representative studies of the different evaluations include Graham Parry, *The Golden Age Restor'd* (New York: St. Martin's, 1981); P. W. Thomas, "Two Cultures? Court and Country under Charles I," in *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. Conrad Russell (London: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 168-93; Per Palme, *Triumph of Peace* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1956); and Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones The Theatre of the Stuart Court* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1973).

3 Falconer Madan, who is the only scholar to consider them, suggests the university publications emerged from this tradition; see his brief discussion in *Oxford Books* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1912), I, x-xi.

4 In "Cambridge Books of Congratulatory Verse, 1603-1640, and their Binders," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 1 (1953), 395-421, J. C. T. Oates reproduces some of the bindings. His study of the Cambridge University Audit-books and Voucher-books also reveals the number of copies, types of bindings, and prices of some Cambridge commemoratives. The poems celebrating the birth of Charles' son James, for example, were printed in 130 copies; two were bound for the King and Queen at the cost of fourteen shillings each, and two ten-shilling bindings went to the Lord Chancellor and his wife. Although a similar study has not been undertaken of the Oxford volumes, each university apparently presented copies to prominent individuals; the remaining copies were then sold without special bindings or gilt.

5 Since the volumes were often hastily put together and altered during publication, an accurate list of the English poems is difficult to compile. Falconer Madan's descriptions of Oxford books have been used to get a sense of the number of poems, but his lists at times vary from the copies in Yale's Beinecke Library used in the following discussion. Arthur E. Case's *A Bibliography of English Poetical Miscellanies 1521-1750* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1935) has also been consulted.

6 Although the Queen was increasingly at odds with Archbishop Laud, disagreeing about policies towards Catholics and vying for the King's support, neither H. R. Trevor-Roper's *Archbishop Laud 1573-1645* (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1962) nor Caroline Hibbard's *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1983) suggests Oxford University became involved in the growing differences and the attempts at reconciliation. Harry Carter observes in *A History of the Oxford University Press* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1975), "Even when Laud's power was at its height his influence on the choice of books to be printed at Oxford does not seem to have been strong" (I, 35). As chancellor Laud did, in fact, insist upon the statutes requiring the use of Latin within the university (William Laud, *The History of His Chancellorship of Oxford* in *Works*, ed. James Bliss [Oxford, 1847-60], v, 165, 172), but it is conceivable that political motives underlie the ostensible reason for the appearance of the English poems—the Queen's inability to read Latin. Henrietta Maria's biographers agree with Carola Oman, *Henrietta Maria* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936), that the Queen was a "bad linguist" (p. 30). Alberta Turner also stresses the Queen's unfamiliarity with Latin in a brief but pointed discussion, "Queen Henrietta Maria and the University Poets," *Notes & Queries*, 193 (1948), 270-72.

7 Brian Duppa(?), "To the Queene," *Solis Britannici Perigaevm* (Oxford, 1633), sig. L1 r.

8 "To the Queene," *Vitis Carolinae Gemma Altera* (Oxford, 1633), sig. I1 r.

9 J. Coke, "A Conclusion to her Majestie," *Voces Votivae* (Cambridge, 1640), sig. b4 v.

10 John Hull, "Welcome blest Herauld of Diviner power," *Flos Britannicvs Veris Novissimi* (Oxford, 1637), sig. 3(2) v.

11 Jeremy Terrent, Cartwright's tutor, contributed to later volumes only in Latin; Thomas Lockey appeared among the English poets in the next two publications.

12 David Lloyd, *Memoires* (London, 1668), p. 88. Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, ed. Philip Bliss (London, 1813-20), III, 69.

13 John Sargeaunt, *Annals of Westminster School* (London: Methuen, 1898), p. 77.

14 Ben Jonson, "To William Camden," in *Ben Jonson*, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson (1947; rpt. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1954), viii, 31; Thomas Sprat, *Account of the Life and Writings of Abraham Cowley*, in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. J. E. Spingarn (1908; rpt. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1957), II, 121.

15 See Arthur H. Nethercot, *Abraham Cowley, The Muses Hannibal* (1931; rpt. London: Russell & Russell, 1967), pp. 25-26; Sargeaunt, pp. 69-70.

16 Richard Corbett left Oxford for the see at Norwich the year before Oxford's first English publications, but the man "esteemed one of the most celebrated wits in the university" (Wood, II, 594), may well have helped foster the tradition of poetry at Christ Church. Corbett contributed Latin poems to some of the earlier commemorative volumes, and he wrote three English poems on the birth of the King's son Charles. In *The Poems of Richard Corbett* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1955), J. A. W. Bennett and H. R. Trevor-Roper point out that William Strode, "whose verses are frequently ascribed to Corbett in manuscript copies, . . . translated many of his patron's poems into Latin exercises" (p. xxxiii).

17 Bertram Dobell surveys Strode's contemporary reputation in *The Poetical Works of William Strode* (London: the editor, 1907), pp. xiii-lvi. Strode's English address and Latin poem are the final pieces in the last Oxford publication, the 1643 poems to Henrietta Maria.

18 Lloyd, pp. 598-99.

19 Wood, II, 613.

20 Humphrey Moseley's preface to the 1651 edition of Cartwright's works in *The Plays and Poems of William Cartwright*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1951), p. 831.

21 Orgel and Strong, I, 58.

22 Malcolm Smuts' fine study, "The Political Failure of Stuart Cultural Patronage," corrects the view that Charles spent large sums of money cultivating a public image; in *Patronage in the Renaissance*, ed. Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1981), pp. 165-87.

23 A. Leigh DeNeef, "Epideictic Rhetoric and the Renaissance Lyric," *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 3 (1973), 203.

24 Theodore C. Burgess, "Epideictic Literature," *University of Chicago Studies in Classical Philology*, 3 (1902), 142-46; Menander, *Menander Rhetor*, ed. D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981), pp. 159-61, 368-70.

25 George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1936), p. 50.

26 Richard Corbett develops a different focus in each of his three poems, "To the New-Borne Prince," "On the Birth of Prince Charles," and "On the Birth of the Young Prince Charles." Cf. Henry King's "By Occasion of the young Prince his happy Birth. May 29. 1630" and Robert Herrick's "A Pastorall upon the birth of Prince *Charles*."

27 Jonson, "An Epigram on the Princes birth," VIII, 237-38.

28 In addition to Menander's rhetoric see Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon, 1953), pp. 159-62.

29 Robert Waring, "To the Queene," *Vitis Carolinae Gemma Altera*, sig. L1 v.; and Thomas Hervey, "O How the Poets feare your Births! as They," *Horti Carolini Rosa Altera* (Oxford, 1640), sig. cc1 r.; William Towers, "How we betray our Weaknesse, whil'st our Ioyes," *Coronae Carolinae Qvadratvra* (Oxford, 1636), sig. B4 r.

30 Thomas Isham, "What is our King o'recome? we thought his side," sig. 3(3) v.; Dudley Digges, "Now we may safely venture, since the time," sig. 1(3) r.; and Abraham Wright, "Dread Queene, your pardon; cause we dare present," sig. 1(3) v. in *Flos Britannicvs*.

31 Richard Newman, "So pleasant shines the Sunne, when as his lips," *Horti Carolini Rosa Altera*, sig. c3 v.

32 Dudley Digges, "Ovr labour's next; which is to tune that ayre," *Coronae Carolinae Qvadratvra*, sig. A2 v.

33 John Goad, "The third Good Omen! Sonnes of Musick say," *Horti Carolini Rosa Altera*, sig. d1 v.

34 William Cartwright, "Blest Lady, You, whose Mantle doth divide," *Coronae Carolinae Qvadratvra*, sig. a1 v. Robert Barrell's poem, "The Common people can foretell their fate," appears in *Musarum Oxoniensium Charisteria* (Oxford, 1639), sig. b1 r.

35 John Scott, "Blest be our emulous Soveraigns both, who striue," *Vitis Carolinae Gemma Altera*, sigs. k2 r-v.

36 James Farren, "Nature vnthron'd, at this birth learnes t'obay," *Coronae Carolinae Qvadratvra*, sig. B2 v.

37 George Bathurst, "So pleasant shines the aire, when some cleare beame," sig. 1(1) r.; Martin Lluellin, "To you Great QUEENE *our Muses* sing," sig. 2(4) r.; John Hull, "Welcome blest Herauld of Diviner power," sig. 3(2) r.; and Charles May, "Blest Lady whose auspicious birth," sig. 3(1) r.; in *Flos Britannicvs*. Humphrey Hull, "Your blessings doe prevent our prayers, and we," *Musarum Oxoniensium Charisteria*, sig. c2 v.

38 Jasper Mayner, "To the QUEENE," *Vitis Carolinae Gemma Altera*, sig. I2 v.; Thomas David (?), "Most Mighty Charles some Deity we see," *Coronae Carolinae Qvadratvra*, sig. B1 r.

39 James Shirley, *The Triumph of Peace*, in *A Book of Masques*, ed. Clifford Leech (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1967), pp. 298-99.

40 Dudley Digges, "Now we may safely venture, since the time," *Flos Britannicvs*, sig. 1(2) v.

41 William Cartwright, "Successe t'your Royall selfe, and us," *Flos Britannicvs*, sig. 2(2) v.

42 Jasper Mayne, "That Children are like Oliue branches, we," *Flos Britannicvs*, sig. 2(1) r. The poems' imperialism appears again in *Epibatherion Anglo Batavia* (Oxford, 1641), a volume commemorating the marriage of the nine-year-old Princess Mary to the Prince of Orange's son. William Cowper celebrates the marriage as a fulfillment of the earlier poets' prophecies; political allusions to England's own unrest are not very apparent among the other wishes for a blissful, fruitful future. William Cartwright's graceful compliment is particularly noteworthy.

43 John Robinson, "Tis generall travaille: Nature and art try," *Coronae Carolinae Qvadratvra*, sig. C3 r.; Peter Bradshaw, "Blest *Queene*! who in these times of woe, and moans," sig. 2(3) r.; and Abraham Wright, "Dread Queene, your pardon; cause we dare present," sig. 1(3) v.; in *Flos Britannicvs*.

44 See, for example, the ending of Cartwright's poem, "To the QUEENE," *Musarum Oxoniensium pro serenissima Regina Maria*, sig. a4 v.

45 John Talbot (?), "Great Blessings create wonder: Ioyes that be," *Horti Carolini Rosa Altera*, sig. c2 r. Michael P. Parker has suggested the lines may be taken from Carew's "A New-yeares gift. To the King."

46 Henry Bennet, "Tell me, *Philarchus*, shall we sing," *Horti Carolini Rosa Altera*, sig. d4 r. The Cambridge poets share to a lesser extent the same desire. Among the tributes in *Voces Votivae* to the mother of this "blest Isle," Richard Crashaw's long poem stresses, "in thy faithfull wombe, / That nest of Heroes, all our hopes find room"; in the

infant Henry's "pure smile / The world might ow an universall calm" (sigs. a3 r-v). The Queen appears to others the mother of the nation; her children reflect her virtues, guard the country, and portend victory.

47 Menander, p. 103.

48 James Garrison considers these poems and their classical tradition in *Dryden and the Tradition of Panegyric* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1975), pp. 84-99.

49 Martin Lluellin, "Your solemne Circuit past, you now shine here," *Evcharistica Oxoniensia* (Oxford, 1641), sig. A1 v.

50 Henry Vaughan, "As *Kings* doe rule like th'*Heavens*, who dispense," sig. a3 r.; and John Fell, "Though you have been where *Snowie winter* Raves," sig. b3 v. John M. Wallace explores the contemporary fears in "*Coopers Hill*: The Manifesto of Parliamentary Royalism, 1641," *ELH*, 41 (1974), 510-16.

51 Jasper Mayne, "To the KING," sig. a2 r. Cambridge also welcomed with relief the "King of Peace" and the "Kingdoms soul." Again Charles appears in his "Royall mildnesse" the triumphant ruler, "Great Prince of peace, more Conquerour then all / The Cesars that o'respread Rome's Capitoll" (Charles Mason, sig. k3 r). Directing their tributes solely to the King, they too laud his creativity: "Such as your royall self is," Samuel Brigges affirms, "in whose breast / Religion, wisdome, pitie, sweetly rest" (sig. K4 r.) in *Irenodia Cantabrigiensis* (Cambridge, 1641).

52 William Cartwright, "Hallow the Threshold, Crown the Posts anew," *Musarum Oxoniensium Ἐπιbathia* (Oxford, 1643), sig. D1 v.