4

The Marriage of Thames and Rhine

It was not simply that Henry's death had changed everything, and that Elizabeth, now the sole healthy Stuart child, saw both her value and precautions to ensure her safety raised considerably: she literally took her dead brother's place, as his lodgings in Whitehall were refurbished for her use.[1] The excitement surrounding the Palatine wedding subsided in certain quarters, too, as Chamberlain wrote to Carleton: 'I heare the Scotts take not so great joy in this match, but ever since the death of the late Prince have wisht and propounded that she shold be bestowed on theire Marquis Hamilton.'[2] A match with Hamilton would keep Elizabeth in her father's kingdoms. Frederick, presumably anxious to prevent his match from turning to dust before his eyes, would not leave James's side, and followed him to Royston.

The initial plans for Elizabeth's wedding had also died alongside Prince Henry. It had originally been scheduled for 7 April 1613, Easter Sunday, in Westminster Abbey.[3] James now considered a postponement until May so that the celebrations surrounding Elizabeth's marriage to Frederick would not take place before the court could reasonably dispense with its mourning garb. But with Henry's death also came the chattering. The Privy Council questioned whether, 'in view of the Prince's death, the marriage of the Princess should take place' at all, and, if so, was it wise to allow her to leave the country? James argued with his councillors, and won, reassuring Frederick that, when he married Elizabeth, he could 'take her where he liked'.[4] James was willing to consider bringing the wedding forward in a move that perhaps betrayed his fear of those voices opposing the removal of his only healthy heir to the Continent and a desire to prevent opposition to the wedding from building further.

The preliminary marriage contract had been drawn up in May 1612, announcing the couple's engagement and detailing the conditions under which the Princess Elizabeth would live once ensconced in Heidelberg. This document was amended and signed on 27 November 1612, eleven days after Henry's death. The contract's first clause now expressed the need for haste, stipulating that the couple would exchange vows *de presenti* on 6 January—that is, they agreed to be married 'from this day forth'. The public solemnization of the wedding insisted on by the Church was perhaps less important legally, and the contract merely stated that this 'be not deferred beyond the first daye of Maye next comming'.[5] The new date for this more public event was soon set as St Valentine's Day.

But first, at 10 a.m. on Sunday, 6 January, Elizabeth and Frederick were married at Banqueting House, 'in the presence of the King, and almost all the Nobilitie of the Land'. In order to 'make an even mixture of Joy and mourning', Elizabeth 'wore blacke sattin with a little silver lace, and a plume of white feathers in her head, which fashion was taken up the next day of all the young Gallants of the court and citty, which hath made white feathers dear of the sudden', while Frederick was 'apparelled in purple vellvet richely laced with Gold lace, and his cloake lined with cloath of Gold'.[6] Covert Catholic Sir Thomas Lake, who was temporarily filling the shoes of the late Secretary Earl of Salisbury, read out the contract of marriage, and the couple repeated their vows, after which 'the Archbishop [Abbot] then gave the blessing, and added a few words'.[7] Chamberlain, however, recorded the matter somewhat differently, with the youths stumbling and giggling through the ceremony:

> they say he [Lake] had translated the wordes of our communion booke into French so badly, and pronounced them worse, that it moved an unseasonable laughter as well as in the contractors as the standers by. Which was soone silenced by the Archbishops grave interposing himself.[8]

There was no doubt that the ritual had been performed 'with the sole object of stopping talk and convincing the world that the match was fixed'.[9] Those who may have wished Elizabeth on a different man now knew that the Palatine match had been concluded.

One notable absentee was Queen Anna, who, despite her warm reception of Frederick, still appeared to harbour an objection to the marriage. Carleton's secretary at the Stuart court, Sir Isaac Wake, noted her absence as being due to 'some sharp fitts of the Gout that have lately vexed her',[10]

though Chamberlain, for one, seems to have considered this as merely a convenient excuse.[11] The happy couple, meanwhile, along with Prince Charles, amused themselves with another play—albeit a tragedy in which a royal household is brought to its knees by a series of ill-considered love matches—Beaumont and Fletcher's *Cupid's Revenge*.[12] In the days leading up to what would be the most celebrated royal wedding in a hundred years, it was still not clear whether the mother of the bride would make an appearance. Just three days before the solemnization, Chamberlain, who had been suspicious of Anna's claims of gout before the January service, wrote that 'the Quene growes every day more favorable and there is hope she will grace it [the solemnization] with her presence'.[13]

The day after the wedding of 6 January, Giovanni Francesco Biondi was full of admiration for the rich gifts bestowed on Elizabeth's household by Frederick, including £2,000-worth of plate to Lord Harington, £700 to Harington's niece Anne Dudley, daughter of Edward Sutton, 5th Lord Dudley, and Theodasia Harington, one of the most important ladies of Elizabeth's household, and £200 disbursed to other ladies. It was not all plate and gifts, however, as dark rumours had begun to swirl of 'a Spanish Armada which is gathering; some say it is for Virginia, some for England, some for Ireland'.[14] Chamberlain, for his part, 'dare not beleve' reports that Catholic forces were gathering with the intention of invading Ireland and continued to 'sleep securely'.[15]

Nevertheless, armadas were everywhere, it seemed, with Foscarini describing a tapestry representing Elizabeth I's great victory over the Spanish in 1588 that he saw hanging in one of the chambers prepared for the wedding celebrations. The circumstances surrounding the defeat of the Spanish Armada—namely, the superiority of the English ships and tactics combining with adverse weather conditions and poor Spanish maritime practice—had soon given way to a general belief in the Providential rescue of English Protestantism under the leadership of Sir Francis Drake and Queen Elizabeth. In the David and Goliath mythos that was spun around the Armada, the English monarch was memorialized as the Virgin Queen who rode to Tilbury wearing armour that she might 'live or die amongst' the English soldiers, her subjects.[16] Foscarini's cynical comment that the English victory 'may be was a miracle as is expressed in the legend that surrounds it' suggests that he saw through the tapestry itself to the campaign of propaganda it was woven into.[17] As these same storm clouds were reported to be

gathering again, wedding guests from Catholic nations were not allowed to forget the last great victory of English Protestantism over Spanish Catholic aggression a quarter of a century before.[18]

A Series of Spectacular Events

From her prison cell in the Tower, Arbella Stuart, finally locked away following a secret and unwise marriage that appeared to James like yet another plot to place her on the throne, 'bought a chain of fifty-one pearls for fifteen hundred pounds and had pearls costing four hundred pounds embroidered on a gown'.[19] She was labouring under the mistaken belief that she would be allowed to attend the most eagerly anticipated event of the year, the solemnization of her cousin's marriage to one of the most powerful men in Europe, even if he was barely out of childhood, the Elector Palatine-in-waiting. England had not seen a royal wedding since Mary Tudor's marriage in 1554, which was also the last wedding celebrated with any brio since that of Prince Arthur and Catherine of Aragon in 1501. Scotland's last royal wedding, that of James and Anna in 1589, took place in Norway. So it came as no surprise that this event, which Anne Clifford would describe in 1676 as the most memorable of her life,[20] was a lavish affair, and included a fireworks display, a mock sea battle, and several theatrical performances. Clifford was not the only individual on whom the wedding made an impression. French ambassador Samuel Spifame marvelled at how the court sparkled for 'five entire and consecutive days of celebration'; one ballet was watched by 'over three hundred ladies dressed up in gold and silver embroidered materials, a display so vast one would not have believed it if one had not seen it'.[21] The marriage celebrations were stage-managed minutely, and, with almost every country of note represented by their ambassadors at the very least, they were designed to inspire awe while communicating serious political messages.[22]

Three days before the solemnization, James, Elizabeth, and Frederick, accompanied by practically the entire population of London, watched a fireworks display so spectacular it almost beggars description. Like the tapestry, these public festivities sought to establish a connection between Princess Elizabeth, English Protestant chivalry, and the late Queen Elizabeth's fervent Protestantism.

The spectacle was more akin to the opening ceremony of the Olympic games than a mere fireworks display, and necessitated 'extraordinary preparations', including the service of over thirty-six ships, five hundred watermen, and a thousand musketeers.[23] The stage was the River Thames itself, and stretched from Whitehall to Lambeth Palace: the waters were blocked at each end by a 'huge number of lighters and long masts that no boates can come to trouble them'. Security was perhaps understandably tight, given James's previous brush with large quantities of gunpowder, with five hundred musketeers assigned to guard the court during the triumphal spectacle alone, while there were 'extraordinarie watches of substantiall housholders every night'.[24]

By the time the first fuse was lit, the freighters that lined the banks of the river as viewing platforms had been occupied by members of the public for eight hours.[25] The spectacle they witnessed is described by gunners John Nodes, Thomas Butler, and William Bettis, who had each devised one part of the display.[26] The programme was a thinly disguised version of the first book of Edmund Spenser's allegorical celebration of Elizabeth I, *The Faerie Queene* (1590).[27] Spenser's epic poem tells the story of the Red-Crosse Knight who bears the emblem of Saint George and must confront his own religious doubts in the shape of the dragon Error (a distorted beast vomiting Catholic propaganda), the giant Orgoglio (symbolizing Pride), and the sorcerer Archimago (representing Catholicism), so that he might free Una (the 'one' true faith/Protestantism). The gunners' accounts call Red-Crosse Saint George, Archimago the hellish necromancer Mango the conjurer, and Una the Lady Lucida (the name implying clarity of moral vision). Their story was told through the progressive demolition of a five-layered pavilion, a tower, and two castles: each made of fireworks, and each more elaborate than the last.

The first spectacle, devised by Nodes, centred on the destruction of the pavilion in which the queen, Lady Lucida, was imprisoned. One of the five layers of fireworks reflected how Mango allowed 'his' queen to roam the pavilion in relative freedom and enjoy activities such as hunting. It depicted scenes from classical mythology including the Goddess Diana and her hounds chasing Actaeon, the unfortunate young man who, having spied Diana bathing, was transformed into a deer and hunted for his impertinence. Another layer, depicting a royal lady with her entourage of virgin ladies trapped in flames, reflected how the pavilion was, nevertheless, a

gilded cage: Mango had erected a watch tower and commanded a giant and dragon who acted as sentinels. The queen chanced to admit Saint George into the pavilion. Having listened to her story, 'Saint George (ever taking pleasure in most dangerous attempts, and holding it his chiefest glory to helpe wronged Ladies), vowes, that [. . .] he would quell the burning Dragon, Conquer the big-boned Giant, subvert the inchanted Castle, and enfranchise the Queene'.[28] The stage now set for Saint George to triumph, he mounted his horse and trotted over the bridge to the watch tower: the fireworks devised by Butler. It is here that the main action took place: Saint George engaged his enemies, the giant and the dragon, in combat before sealing his victory with the burning of Mango. The main castle went up in flames, freeing the queen, Lady Lucida.

The next set of fireworks, devised by Bettis, would last for an hour. All pretence at telling a story was abandoned—the chief intent was now simply to delight. Before the final conflagration there were 'divers other Rackets flying aloft into the aire, which Rackets did assimulate the shapes or proportions of men, women, fowles, beastes, fishes, and other formes and figures'.[29] Another commentator wrote that 'the fire workes danced in the aire, to the great delight of his Highnes, and the other Princes', adding that the crowd also witnessed 'an other strange piece of artificall fire-worke, which was in the likenes of a hunted Hart, running upon the waters so swiftly, as if it had bene chaced by many huntsmen'. The hart was followed by 'a number of hunting hounds made of fire burning, pursuing the aforesaid Harte up and downe the waters, making many rebounds and turnes with much strangenes: skipping in the aire, as it had bene a usuall hunting upon land'.[30] It is unlikely that anyone in the audience failed to connect these displays with James's daughter: she was the Amazon freed from the castle, Lucida the saviour of Protestantism; her late brother, who had feared his sister would be married off to a Catholic prince, was associated with the cult of St George. It is unlikely that either would have objected to his ultimate victory, the point in the display when the Catholic Archmagician went up in smoke.

Both Nodes and Bettis alluded to the fact that, while Elizabeth's association with Diana may initially have been inherited from her godmother, her Diana was not the virgin goddess of the moon but the goddess of the *hunt*. The tableau of Diana's chase of Actaeon and the later image of the hart scuttling across the surface of the Thames pursued by Diana's hounds were plainly tributes to this warrior queen. This association was no mere flattery.

When Elizabeth hunted, she did so not as a woman, but as a warrior huntsman, as a contemporary poet made clear:

> She rode to hunt an Amazon entire,
> Her limbs encased in manly attire,
> As a woman she seemed Diana's match,
> Her mount a Bucephalus, snow-white and rich,
> She takes a heavy shotgun, as if she were no lady
> And shoots a nervous deer.

The Dutch poet responsible for this verse had witnessed the 16-year-old Elizabeth dispatching her prey on a hunt. He had little compunction in comparing her to both an Amazonian warrior and Diana the hunter-goddess while conjuring the memory of Alexander the Great.[31]

The day after the fireworks, the stage was reset for a mock sea battle, a spectacle that the late Prince Henry had had a hand in designing.[32] While the fireworks were a great success, the more expensive sea battle met with rather less enthusiasm: 'the King and indeed all the companie took so litle delight to see no other activitie but shooting and putting off gunnes' that they called it off before it was finished. James ordered the dismantling of the castle that had been built on the river's banks, a decision that led to many injuries among those charged with the task: 'one lost both his eyes, another both his handes, another one hande, with diverse others maimed and hurt.' The decommissioning of a castle filled with fireworks and gunpowder and intended for an explosive end turned out to be more dangerous than building it in the first place. To avoid further damage, the ruin was left to fall into its own ashes.[33]

James had sought the Palatine match to help secure both domestic and continental peace, not to incite religious conflict. He may have appeared to be throwing his weight behind the Protestant cause, but he did so in order to prevent a full-scale, Europe-wide confessional war, not to drive a wedge between the Protestants and Catholics as they contested the Holy Roman Empire. *Rex Pacificus* was still very much alive. In joining with the Union and marrying his daughter to the Elector Palatine-in-waiting, he expected to keep the Protestant forces on the Continent contented. He was unaware of the Union's internal conflicts and its inherent military weakness.[34] Part of the plan had been to offset his daughter's Calvinist husband by finding Prince Henry a Catholic wife, but Henry's unexpected death threatened this delicate balancing act. There was still Charles, of course, the sickly spare who was now the official heir. If he were to marry the second Spanish Infanta who had been offered for Henry, this would reduce the chances of

a confessional war breaking out.[35] James certainly thought, perhaps naively, that King Philip III of Spain wielded enough power to rein in Maximilian of Bavaria, head of the Catholic League, and the recently installed Emperor Matthias. The tapestry and fireworks had already given the celebrations a somewhat militaristic and anti-Catholic theme, and it may well be that James felt the purely martial scenes enacted in the phoney naumachia were going too far. On the other hand, he may simply have found a series of explosions lacking a coherent narrative rather dull.

The next day, the day before the solemnization, was dedicated to rest. The original plan had been for the court to enjoy a masque written specifically for this moment by Palatine councillor Georg Rudolf Weckherlin, with costumes and staging by the celebrated architect and engineer Inigo Jones. The masque's author gives a hint of its subject matter, if not of its principal players. Designed to show Elizabeth's marriage as a mighty 'confessional alliance' between two Protestant powers, it was to have involved Prince Henry himself.[36] Since Henry's death had led to the dissolution of his court, the masque was cancelled, leaving the energy and sentiments that had lain behind this celebration of chivalric glory, and the more bellicose members of the court who had supported its creation, in need of a new outlet. James's intervention in the Jülich–Berg and Cleves crisis had fed speculation that the Stuart Crown had finally come down unequivocally in favour of militant Protestantism, and the marriage of Princess Elizabeth to the soon-to-be leader of the Protestant Union added fuel to this fire. Following talk of James having poisoned his own son, however, this king's reputation as a champion of Protestantism began to fade. The Protestant faction called upon their princess to conjure the spirit of her namesake, Elizabeth I, and had found the means to do so in tapestry, fireworks, and a mock sea battle, albeit one that had come to an abrupt end. The cancelled masque, which was untitled but is now known as *The Masque of Truth*, was pro-Protestant, and emphasized Britain's alignment with the Palatine, portraying his Calvinism as the true faith that would convert Catholic powers.[37] But this masque was not just down to the late Prince Henry, as Elizabeth had also had more than a hand in its invention.

A court masque was no mere staged entertainment. It was, rather, a performance by the court for the court and contained political and moral messages. Highly choreographed affairs that were sometimes referred to as ballets in contemporary accounts, they took full advantage of the court's financial resources, and featured complicated costumes, set designs, and

often astonishing special effects designed by the most creative engineers that could be found. Accounts talk of machines that enabled almost magical scenery changes, with architecturally fantastic buildings vanishing only to be replaced by others within seconds, to the delight and amazement of their audiences. Ben Jonson described the denouement of his *Masque of Queens* (1609) thus:

> the hell into which [the hags] ran quite vanished, and the whole face of the scene altered, scarce suffering the memory of such a thing. But in the place of it appeared a glorious and magnificent building figuring the House of Fame, in the top of which were discovered the twelve masquers, sitting upon a throne triumphal, erected in form of a pyramid and circled with all store of light.[38]

Jonson was not only a writer of scurrilous comedies and learned tragedies for the London stage but was also the acknowledged master of this elite form of staged entertainment, and the *Masque of Queens* formalized the English masque into a unique tripartite structure of *ante-masque*, *masque proper*, and *dance*. In the *ante-masque*, often performed by professional players, evil forces (witches, demons, or enemy nations) would move erratically, grotesquely, and acrobatically across the stage. Next came the *masque proper*, in which the forces of good would appear in the form of the queen and her ladies-in-waiting or the king and his gentleman servants. Through their goodness, beauty, and virtue, as symbolized by choreographed dances and symmetry, they literally dazzled and eventually destroyed evil. Following the victory of light over dark, the ladies invited the gentlemen from the audience—the king and his followers (or vice versa, depending on who had put on the masque)—to accompany them in the *dance*. Elizabeth's mother, Anna, had made the masque an extremely popular form of entertainment, albeit one purely for the elite—it was also the only place in which women might appear onstage, though in non-speaking roles—but, unfortunately for the form's aficionados, Jonson was loitering in Paris while the Palatine wedding was being planned and celebrated.

The libretto of the cancelled *The Masque of Truth* survived in a French pamphlet whose dedication noted Elizabeth as 'the prime mover' behind its creation.[39] That Elizabeth's involvement in this masque was direct and personal is made clear by Foscarini, who wrote in November 1612 that the princess was preparing 'a sumptuous ballet of sixteen maidens of whom she will be one' at the cost of 'twelve thousand crowns'.[40] While they had both enjoyed masques as spectators, Elizabeth was more keen on participation

than her late brother, whose one experience, dancing in Jonson's *Oberon the Fairy Prince*, on 1 January 1611, might only have taken place because she reminded him to forsake the countryside and hunting as 'the time to study the ballet [was] approaching'.[41] Like her childhood friend, Lucy, Countess of Bedford (who had danced in more masques than anyone other than Elizabeth's own mother),[42] Elizabeth loved the genre, and the princess had danced the role of a water nymph personifying the River Thames in Samuel Daniel's masque *Tethys' Festival*, written to commemorate Henry's investiture as Prince of Wales in June 1610, and had played a 'Daughter of the Morn' in Jonson's *Love Freed from Ignorance and Folly* in February 1611. While this may not sound like much, the latter was probably a leading role, trumping Anna's 'Queen of the Orient', because the sole costume design that survives is hers, a costume, moreover, that had 'the striking feature of her breasts revealed under transparent gauze', which was 'an English convention for unmarried girls, signifying nubile chastity' (Fig. 8).[43]

The Masque of Truth had been Elizabeth's own co-production, and she continued with rehearsals until January 1613, two months after her brother's death.[44] It may be that Henry's passing left her feeling insufficiently empowered to put on a masque that presented militant ideas that opposed those more eirenic ideals of her father, but grief was apparently not the reason for its cancellation.[45] Another explanation can be found in the shape of Lucy, Countess of Bedford, who had been gravely ill following a stroke. On 3 December 1612, the 3rd Earl of Dorset wrote to Sir Thomas Edmondes that 'My Lady Bedford last night, about one of the clock, was suddenly, and hath continued ever since, speechless, and is past all hopes, though yet alive'.[46] Her health cannot have been helped by the shock of Henry's death, as it affected her family's fortunes. Her brother John had been Henry's friend and favourite since around 1604, following careful manoeuvring on the part of the entire Harington family. With the death of the heir to the Crown, John had lost his position at court in the blink of an eye, and his prospects had become uncertain. It seems unlikely that Lucy—the most experienced lady masquer at court—would not have been closely involved in preparations for this masque; though she was recovering by February, her biographer suggests that her even attending the wedding 'must have required a tremendous physical effort'.[47] There are other possibilities, of course. Elizabeth's masque was three times as expensive as her father's, and costs of the wedding celebrations were spiralling out of control: the Crown was already laying out more money than it had set aside for Elizabeth's

Fig. 8. The practically transparent masque costume designed by Inigo Jones for Elizabeth. Effectively part of the stage set, this displayed the purity and innocence of the court ladies that will ultimately triumph over darkness. © The Devonshire Collections, Chatsworth.

dowry—the money she, as bride, was to take with her into the marriage. The court may simply have been running out of cash. Alternatively, the bringing-forward of the public celebrations from May to February might have meant Elizabeth did not have time to fully prepare such a performance.

Valentine's Day

Just as the date had been moved forward to St Valentine's Day to provide a public solemnization as soon as was possible following the actual marriage in January, it was also no longer to take place at Westminster Abbey but at the Royal Chapel in Whitehall. It was enough for it to take place within the official mourning period that followed Henry's death without having the bride walk past her brother's tomb as well. As it was, Elizabeth would not be

the only attendee of the wedding dressed in white: white was also the colour of feminine royal mourning.[48]

The French Ambassador Spifame described Elizabeth's wedding dress as 'a gown of silver thread and pearls, spangled with precious stones' with an 'exceedingly long' train borne by Ladies 'each dressed in cloth of silver'.[49] An anonymous writer has both Elizabeth and her ladies wearing 'white satten gownes'.[50] Unfortunately, the few portraits we have from this period do not show her in her wedding gown. One of them instead shows Elizabeth in an embroidered dress with a red partlet—that is, the lace around the neckline—and a white lace standing collar bearing the Lion, Unicorn, and fleur-de-lys of the royal coat of arms. She also wears a thick, black mourning band on her left arm, which is accompanied by a black locket—presumably containing a portrait of Henry or a lock of his hair—tied loosely to her three-stringed pearl necklace with a bow of red ribbon such that this *memento mori* falls close to her heart (Fig. 9).[51] None of these details appear

Fig. 9. Elizabeth's accessorizing was much imitated—the white feather that here adorns her head became so fashionable prices rocketed. A similar painting is to be found at Queens' College, Cambridge. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

in a single one of the many extant accounts of the wedding.[52] We might put this down to what Chamberlain called 'the excesse of braverie, and the continued succession of new companie', which dazzled him so much that he 'could not observe the tenth part of that I wisht',[53] were it not for an important and very visible piece of wedding paraphernalia that is missing from this portrait, namely

> a crown of refined golde, made Imperiall (by the Pearles and Diamonds thereupon placed,) which were so thicke beset, that they stood like shining pinnacles, upon her amber coloured haire, dependantly hanging plaighted downe over her shoulders to her Waste, between every plaight a role or liste of Goldspangles, Pearles, Riche Stones, and Diamonds, and withall, many Diamonds of inestimable value, imbrothered upon her sleeve, which even dazeled and amazed the eyes of the beholders.

It was not merely the bride and her ladies who wore white: Frederick walked at the head of the procession to the chapel at Whitehall 'in a white satten sute, richly beset with Pearle and Golde', attended 'by a number of young gallant Courtiers, both English, Scottish, and Dutch'. In a foreshadowing of the arguments over precedent that would blight her early days in Heidelberg, Elizabeth followed her future husband, led by her guardian Lord Harington. Her enormous veil was carried by fourteen or fifteen ladies, with Lady Harington following immediately afterwards at the head of a train of 'Noble-mens Daughters, in white Vestements', a 'traine of gallant young Courtiers, flourishing in several Sutes, Embrothered and Pearled, who were Knightes, and the sonnes of great Courtiers', four Heralds at Arms, many Earls, Lords, and Barons, the King of Heralds, all the Lords of the Privy Council, four bishops, and four sergeants of the mace. Then came the Earl of Arundel carrying James's sword, and, finally, King James and Queen Anna, who was 'attired in white Satten, beautified with much embrothery, and many Diamonds', and attended by many married ladies,[54] including the Countess of Bedford, who had stared death in the face just weeks before and was still convalescing (Fig. 10).

James appeared not to have received the memo regarding the white wedding, as he was dressed 'in a sumptuous blacke suit, with a Diamond in his hatte of a wonderfull great value'.[55] Chamberlain thought him 'somwhat straungely attired', but this was less the result of his black suit than to his sporting 'a cap and a feather, with a Spanish cape and a longe stocking'.[56] While Elizabeth and Frederick exchanged vows, it seemed that

Fig. 10. Frederick, accompanied by Lennox, is preceded by trumpeters at the head of the wedding procession; Elizabeth follows with her brother, Charles. James and Anna take their place at the rear. © Metropolitan Museum of Art.

James was already thinking of the next royal wedding—that of his surviving son, Charles.

Not content with merely dressing in the Spanish style, James was keen to show off the rich resources that were the Stuart Crown jewels. 'After dinner', the French ambassador wrote, Elizabeth 'retired to change from her gown into another, this one stitched with gold and without a train [. . .] Her Hair was dressed in a different manner. The crown remained on her head.'[57] Elizabeth was not going to let go of a crown once it had been placed on her head without good cause. In the spirit of James's more ecumenical approach to the celebrations, the court then witnessed *The Lords' Masque* by musician Thomas Campion (though once more utilizing the talents of Inigo Jones), a performance originally designed to counterbalance the militant *Masque of Truth* of the siblings with a more eirenic theme, the celebration of the wisdom of James, the new Solomon.[58] The Venetian ambassador, meanwhile,

noted that Anna 'had in her hair a great number of pear-shaped pearls, the largest and most beautiful there are in the world; and there were diamonds all over her person, so that she was ablaze'.[59] James was keen to remind the assembled dignitaries of his wealth, and 'in a publick discourse upon occasion of that dayes gallantry' stated that the jewels worn by the family were worth some £900,000, and had the diamond-studded coronet valued at one million crowns the day after.[60] James may have erred on the side of magnificence in his valuations, but Lord Harington alone was given £3,914 to pay for 'Jewells for [Elizabeth], and for apparrell for her Servants'.[61] Jewels, for James, represented 'princely virtue and were thus requisite adornment for the royal body'.[62]

On the night of the wedding, of course, the theatre was of a different kind, as the assembled throng waited for the young couple to abandon the court, and Campion's masque, for their own, more private celebration. The poet John Donne caressed these moments in verse as only he could: 'You two have one way left your selves to entwyne, / Besides this Bishops knott or Bishop Valentine' wrote the famously sensuous poet, before suggesting the frustration in the air: 'The Maskers come late, and, I thinke, will stay, / Like Fayrys, till the Cock crow them away.' Finally, having lived through five long sonnets, and on the turn of the sixth, they are finally alone:

> But now Shee's layd; What though Shee bee?
> Yet there are more delays, for, where is hee?
> Hee comes, and passes through Spheare after Spheare
> First her Sheetes, then her Armes, then any where.
> Oh let not this day but this night bee thine.
> Thy day was but the Eve to this ô Valentine.[63]

The day after their Whitehall wedding, James 'went to visit these young turtles that were coupled on St Valentines day, and did strictly examine him whether he were his true sonne in law, and was sufficiently assured'.[64] The marriage had been solemnized in public and consummated in private.

Paying for the Piper

Having cancelled *The Masque of Truth* and paid £400 for *The Lords' Masque*, James was no doubt relieved that Solicitor General Sir Francis Bacon had

convinced the Inns of Court to finance George Chapman's *The Memorable Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn*, and Francis Beaumont's *The Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn*, which they staged in the days after the wedding.[65] Certainly, he might have baulked at paying for Beaumont's effort. James postponed the performance once everyone had seen both stage set and costumes, on account of being 'so wearied and sleepie with sitting up almost two whole nights before'.[66]

The jewels on display notwithstanding, the wedding had been a costly affair, the final bill coming in at a hefty £93,278, around £12.5m in today's money. Of this, £40,000 was assigned to Elizabeth's marriage portion (her dowry), and another £5,555 on transportation to Heidelberg. The remaining £47,723 was listed under the general title of 'The Charge of the Lady Elizabeths marriage, with the Palsgraves Dietts, and other Charges incident to the same', and included such expenses as £2,880 'to Sir Roger Dallison Lieutenant of his Majesty's Ordonance for fireworkes on the River Thames', £4,800 'to Sir Robert Mansell Treasurer of the Navie for a Navall fight to be performed on the river Thames', and £400 'to Inigo Jones for charges about *The Lord's Maske*'.[67]

James struggled to find the money, even with the city of Edinburgh's promised dowry and another £20,500 from 'a feudal levy on freeholders'.[68] This did not stop Anna from sending Piero Hugon, one of her pages, to present her daughter with a wedding gift: 'a jewell from her Majesty gainst her highness mariage.'[69] Anna may have harboured reservations about the match itself, but seeing her daughter celebrated with such pomp had melted her heart. The wedding contributed to 'a marked increase in the state deficit, which reached in 1613 about £160,000 in spite of massive sales of noble titles'.[70] Bills were still being paid almost a quarter of a century later. It was not until July 1637, for instance, five years after the death of the groom, that a warrant was finally issued for £8,911 to Edward Hillyard for embroidered robes that Elizabeth wore for the marriage.[71]

While the bills were being added up, Elizabeth, Frederick, and Charles were ready for more theatre: they saw several plays at court (John Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* on 7 March by Lady Elizabeth's Company; George Chapman's *The Widow's Tears* on 9 March by Children of the Queen's Majesty's Revels; and Chapman's *The First Part of the Knaves* on 12 March by the Prince's Company), and possibly *Raymond, Duke of Lyons* outside the court's boundaries at the Swan, once more performed by Lady Elizabeth's Company.[72]

The Palatine wedding, though plainly an occasion to remember, was not merely glorified, idealized, and wrought into a semi-mythological paean to the Protestant cause: some recalled it in rather less triumphalist fashion. When Transylvanian Miklós Bethlen befriended William Curtius, one of Frederick's closest advisors, in London in the 1630s, for example, Bethlen remarked that Curtius 'admonished me to leave the place, for he well knew that what had transpired at the time of Frederick's marriage, and how many well bred, moral young men had fallen into depravity, both in body and mind, on account of the English women'.[73] Yet the Protestant polemic accompanying the wedding was voluminous. Oxford University published 238 multilingual lyric odes in honour of the bride and bridegroom in *Epithalamia* (1613), while Cambridge University prepared a manuscript presentation copy of a further 146.[74] A plethora of pamphlets celebrating Frederick and Elizabeth as the saviours of Protestantism accompanied these texts into the literary marketplace.[75] Taken as a whole, the English and Neo-Latin verse and prose written on the occasion of the marriage would coalesce into a propaganda programme for a unified, militant Protestantism. The alliance of Britain with the Calvinist branch of the Wittelsbachs would help combat the threat of an expanding Catholic Habsburg empire.[76]

Even before the Elizabethan imagery that pervaded the celebrations, the young Elizabeth Stuart was 'by virtue of her name [. . .] often considered to be the inheritor of the old Queen's spirit; indeed, it was a commonplace of courtly compliment to stress their successive identity'.[77] These references were initially innocuous, such as those found in the sermons William Leigh dedicated to her in December 1612. Leigh, once tutor to her brother Henry, had first preached these sermons in the last years of Elizabeth I's reign. In publicly dedicating *Queene Elizabeth, Paraleld in her Princely Vertues* to the young princess, he placed the Virgin Queen's legacy firmly at her feet. For Leigh, the resemblance was beyond their shared name: 'Shee a Kings daughter, so are you: shee a maiden Queene, you a Virgin Prince: her name is yours, her blood is yours, her cariage is yours, her countenance yours, like pietie towards God.'[78] Travel writer Thomas Coryate took up the baton: 'me thinkes I see our great Queene Elizabeth revived and resuscitated unto life from the very bowles of her grave.'[79]

By 1613, the comparisons were growing ever stronger:

> and beside thy proper merit
> Our last Eliza, grants her Noble spirit.
> To be redoubled on thee; and your *names*,
> Being both one, shall give you both one fames.[80]

In this, his *Epithalamia: or Nuptiall Poems* (1612), George Wither shows how Queen Elizabeth's spirit intensifies the virtues of the young princess. This trope of the old queen's spirit reborn was also transmitted through the image of the phoenix on account of her solitary nature and uniqueness, an image that transferred easily to the young princess, as did the hope of royal virtue reborn.[81] At the end of its life, the phoenix builds a nest of twigs that ignites, consuming both nest and bird in fire, and from the ashes the phoenix arises once more. The phoenix is synonymous with invincibility, rebirth, and thus immortality. But the world can only ever contain one phoenix, so the mateless bird also symbolizes virginity and purity. These associations may not seem entirely appropriate for a princess on the verge of marriage, but this conundrum was solved by Donne in his nuptial song 'Epithalamion'. His poem describes the impossible meeting of the phoenix Elizabeth with her soul mate Frederick, another phoenix. When the marriage is consummated at the poem's end, the two birds become one:

> Now by this Act of these two Phænixes
> Nature agayne restored is
> For since these two are two no more
> Theres but one Phænix still as was before.[82]

Just as the nuptial fireworks display had sought to place the bride within the specifically English Protestant mythology of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, contemporary poems such as Donne's would determine how Elizabeth would perceive and fashion herself as an autonomous female ruler in later years. In this sense, poetry appears true to its Greek root of *Poein*, making rather than reflecting reality.

While this association with phoenix and *Faerie Queene* could only serve to empower Elizabeth, she must also have felt the weight of such mythology on her shoulders. Many considered Elizabeth to be their future queen, believing that on her return she would restore England to the fervently militant Protestant nation it had been under her godmother's rule.

This was the fate they had once wished on her late brother Henry. The propaganda shows just how divided the country had become, as large swathes of the Protestant faithful now appeared to have more faith in Elizabeth than they did in their king. Her brother Charles, the actual heir to the throne, was rather less visible. After all, it was not only widely expected that he would shortly follow Henry into an early grave, but that, if he were to reach majority, his father would most likely give him to a Catholic bride as he had planned for Henry. While the staunch Protestant Henry could easily have resisted Catholic feminine influence, the populace had yet to be persuaded of Charles's leanings. The Palatine wedding had turned Elizabeth Stuart into their new warrior queen, a mystical heir to both Henry and the late queen Elizabeth, her godmother. Her marriage to the leader of the evangelical Protestant Union, the Elector Palatine, was surely a sign that the one true faith was favoured by God's divine Providence. Frederick and Elizabeth were—or so Protestant propaganda would have us believe—truly a match made in heaven.