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***"Your name shall live / In the new yeare as in the age of gold":
Sir Thomas Salusbury's "Twelfth Night Masque,
Performed at Knowsley Hall in 1641"
and its Contexts***

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On twelfth night, 1641, James, Lord Strange, the future 7th Earl of Derby, and his wife Lady Charlotte de la Trémoille, hosted a masque at Knowsley Hall, Lancashire. The principal masquer was Lord Strange's heir, Charles Stanley, and the masque itself was devised by Sir Thomas Salusbury, kinsman of the Stanleys, and head of a prominent family from North Wales in Lleweni, Denbighshire.¹ In Stuart England, the elite genre of the Stuart court masque was something of a hybrid dramatic form (see Butler, *Stuart Court*; Ravelhofer; Shohet; Knowles). David Lindley, tongue-in-cheek, described the court masque as "an elaborate framework for an aristocratic knees-up" (Lindley *x*). Martin Butler further reminds us that "the masque aimed to bind the court together, represent the monarch to the political nation at large and stimulate confidence in the values with which the monarch sought to have his government associated" (Butler *Stuart* 20). As Julie Sanders has argued, the provincial or regional masque is of special interest as it demonstrates the "fluid interplay" or "flow" between "amateur and metropolitan sites of performance", encouraging us to ask how these site-specific texts "reconnect us in vital ways with the complex and dynamic geographies of performance" (Sanders "Geographies" 134-35).

Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque*, which witnessed Lord Strange's children performing speaking roles, on one level, smacks of amateur family dramatics, allowing us a rare glimpse into an intimate Derby family gathering. Yet, with prominent figures performing from leading North West families—such as the Molyneuxes of Sefton, Lancashire, and the

Hoghtons from Hoghton Tower, Lancashire—one has to ask, how "private" was this event? This is especially pertinent as masquing roles were also played by long-standing retainers from established gentry families, such as the Farrington, Fox and Tyldesley families of Lancashire. Indeed, a key aim of this essay is to tease out the Deleuzian rhizomatic logic at the heart of this performance, whereby "routes of identity" are "formed through connections and traverses" to create what Augé has pinpointed as an "organic sociality" (Deleuze and Guattari 262; Augé 94). Mike Crang in *Cultural Geography* elucidates Deleuze's term "rhizomatic" through the vivid image of "brambles" that "send out shoots to produce a tangle of plants each criss-crossing the other" (Crang 172). In the masquing space of Knowsley Hall, these entwined branches of identity reached London and beyond. As this essay uncovers, fascinating resonances exist between Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque* in Lancashire and court masques performed at Whitehall, such as Ben Jonson's and Inigo Jones' *Love's Triumph Through Callipolis* (1631), and William Davenant's and Inigo Jones' *Britannia Triumphans* (1638) (Jonson and Jones, *Love's Triumph* 319-42; Davenant and Jones).

Of course, as 1641 dawned, such "routes of identity" were under especial scrutiny as the country teetered towards Civil War. The occasion of Salusbury's masque itself, "Twelfth Night", was famously a time of misrule, and the topsy-turvyness associated with this masquing occasion was fast becoming part of everyday life. Lord Strange, as the principal magnate of the North West, was a key figure in this growing national crisis. By the mid-1630s, Lord Strange had very deliberately removed himself from court, virtually retiring to his estates in Lancashire as a mark of his displeasure with Charles I's increasingly Laudian court. However, when the Bishops' Wars of 1638-40 broke out in Scotland, Lord Strange had rallied immediately to King Charles' standard, believing it to be "an honour to give honour to your sovereign" (James Stanley, "Letter" 22; on the Bishops' Wars see Fissel). Thus,

Salisbury's *Twelfth Night Masque* offers an intrinsic insight into Lord Strange's own self-fashioning (of which the estate, the region and the national landscape were each a part) at a moment of acute political anxiety. Employing a cultural-geographical approach allows us to consider the ramifications that this site-specific performance offers into the Stanley family, the region and the country at such a volatile cultural moment.² With this in mind, I would like to begin my discussion of the masque itself by introducing its hosts, Lord and Lady Strange. In its simplest form, this masque was a New Year's gift to the couple: a tribute from their children, their household, and members of their more extended kinship network.

I. "A manly stay"(Mary Fage 81): the self-fashioning of James, Lord Strange

James, Lord Strange, was the eldest son of William, 6th Earl of Derby, who had long retired to his Bidston estates on the Wirral peninsular (Raines *Stanley Papers* xv). In June 1626, Strange had married Charlotte de la Trémoille who was herself of distinguished pedigree.



[Figures 1a–1b: James, Lord Strange and Charlotte de la Trémoille, attributed to Michiel Jansz, c. 1626, Blickling Hall, Norfolk.].

Charlotte's father was a leading French Huguenot, the Duc de Thouars, and her maternal grandfather was William I of Orange. Once married, Charlotte hoped for a position within the household of Queen Henrietta Maria.³ However, a court role failed to materialise for Lady Charlotte. Most likely, because of a difference in religion: Charlotte, a staunch Huguenot and

Henrietta Maria, a Roman Catholic, Counter-Reformation bride (on Henrietta Maria see Britland; Bailey; White, M.; Griffey).

By the mid-1630s, Lord and Lady Strange's religious beliefs increasingly clashed with the Laudian inclinations of Charles I's court. Rumours of recusancy and church papistry had clung to the Derby family in previous generations. However, James, Lord Strange's "Commonplace Book" reveals him to be a firm believer in the established Protestant religion (James Stanley "Worcester Ms." vol.35). As Kevin Sharpe reminds us, religion shaped identity in early modern England: it was: "a language, an aesthetic, a structure of meaning, a politics" (Sharpe 12). As part of his self-fashioning, Lord Strange's "Commonplace Book" contains an anthem which he set in 1640 for the "Organ, Lute, Irish Harp and Violls" (James Stanley "Worcester Ms." vol.35, 45-7). As he wrote in his Commonplace book "if these troubles had not happened, it had beene perfected, for the whole Creed was intended in this manner" (James Stanley "Worcester Ms." vol 35, 82). Additionally, Stanley's handwritten prayers of thanksgiving, document how he tolerated the wider penumbra of Catholic and Puritan beliefs so long as they did not tend towards the fanatical.⁴ In a letter to his son, Charles, he warned him: "neither have any [servant] to be any piece of a Puritan or a Jesuit" (cited Kemec 262).

Lord Strange had, by 1635, virtually withdrawn from court in London, focusing all his energies on his estates at Latham and Knowsley, as he put it, "far from all envy and ambition" (cited Bagley 80). Strange was disappointed by the mistrust shown towards him "by enemies in his Majesty's Council of my being too near allied to royalty to be trusted with great power" (cited Bagley 80). As Bagley notes, in this enforced refuge, Strange cultivated "the friendship of neighbours and tenants, and entertain[ed] like the Stanleys of old" (Bagley 80). Clarendon, writing in 1640, voiced the general belief that the Derby family "had a greater influence" and "more absolute command" over the people of Lancashire and Cheshire

"than any subject in England had in any quarter of the kingdom" (Coward "Social" 127-54). Indeed, despite his retreat from the court, Strange shouldered his responsibilities to the king; ensuring the collection of the hugely unpopular Ship Money tax and being active in pursuit of Charles I's military interests. He was so diligent, in fact, that some of his tenants in the North West would, by 1642, accuse him of oppression. Strange was, however, horrified at the thought of war between countrymen, writing: "God forbid we should war against each other" (cited Coward *Stanleys* 171). Intriguingly, Thomas Salusbury accentuated Strange's emphasis on peace in a hieroglyphic emblem of clasped hands [Fig. 2] which he doodled in "The Salusburies of Lleweni Manuscript", alongside an accompanying poem that represented Lord Strange as the embodiment of "fidelitie and peace".⁵ In the early 1640s, on the eve of Civil War, such a path was becoming increasingly difficult



Figure 2: A Heiroglyph of Lord Strange's name by Thomas Salusbury in "Salusburies", 301, with permission of the National Library of Wales,

II. Sir Thomas Salusbury: "th'Author" (255)

Sir Thomas Salusbury was head of one of the leading families in North West Wales. As Sally Harper has argued, Salusbury's family estate at Lleweni in Denbighshire was renowned in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a haven of learning, which straddled both the English and Welsh communities.⁶ Moreover, as Figure 3 demonstrates, Salusbury

was directly related to Lord Strange, as his great grandfather was Henry, 4th Earl of Derby, Strange's own grandfather. In 1586, Salusbury's grandfather (and ultimate Elizabethan courtier), Sir John Salusbury, had inherited the Lleweni estates unexpectedly, when his older brother, Thomas, was executed for his role in the Babington plot (for more on John Salusbury see Duncan-Jones; Bland; Bednarz; Klause). Such a disaster normally spelt ignominy for a family but John Salusbury emerged phoenix-like: marrying Ursula Stanley who was the fully-recognised, illegitimate daughter of Henry, the 4th Earl of Derby and his long-standing lover, Jane Halsall of Knowsley.⁷ John Salusbury, of course, is best known for his astonishing literary connections. William Shakespeare famously wrote "The Phoenix and Turtle" as part of the collection, *Poeticall Essays*, which was dedicated to "the love and merit of the true noble knight, Sir John Salusbury" who, in 1601, had just been knighted Esquire of the Body to Elizabeth I (Chester).

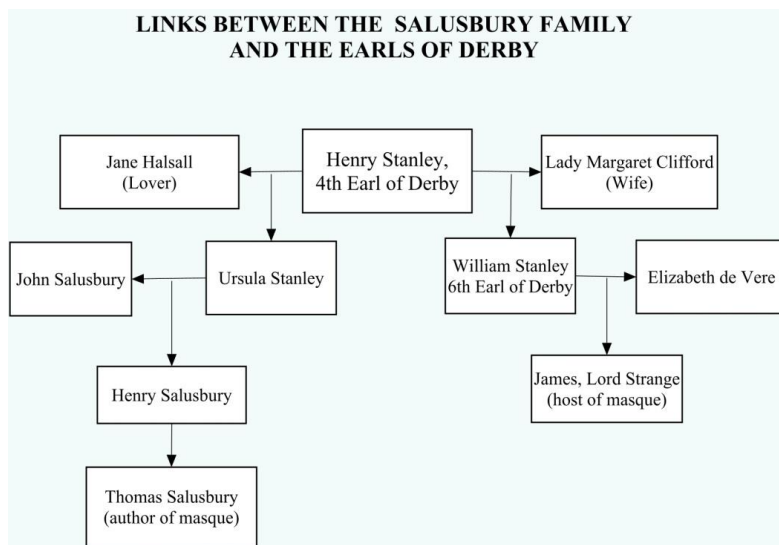


Fig. 3: Family tree showing the kinship ties between James, Lord Strange and Sir Thomas Salusbury

Thomas Salusbury, like his grandfather, John Salusbury, and his Derby kinsmen was a lover of literature. Salusbury's own ready knowledge of Shakespeare's texts is evident in this *Twelfth Night Masque* from the easy textual references to *Romeo and Juliet* and *As You*

Like It (see also Bowsher's article).⁸ However, Salusbury clearly self-identified as a son of Ben Jonson composing "An Elegie meant upon the death of Ben Jonson", in 1637, and mining Jonson's country house poem "To Penshurst" and masque *Gypsies Metamorphosed* for his own Chirk Castle entertainments of 1634 and 1641 (Salusbury "Salusburies" 293-94). In much the same way, Jonson's "Christmas his masque" from 1616-1617, published in 1640, carries a possible kernel of Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque* with its banishment of any hint of "fish and fasting days" (Jonson "Christmas" 249-269; 261 l. 67). Anthony Wood deemed Salusbury "the most noted poet of his time" which is rather an overstatement (Wood). However, his extant texts are fascinating. They include two masquing entertainments performed at Chirk Castle for his other key patron and uncle, the Parliamentarian, Sir Thomas Myddelton 2nd, together with two short plays and two fragments.⁹ Salusbury's only published work is a long poem *The History of Joseph: A Poem* published in 1636, and dedicated to his step-grandmother, Lady Anna Myddelton, widow of Sir Thomas Myddelton 1st, former Lord Mayor of London (Salusbury *History*).

Interesting parallels can be drawn between Salusbury and his cousin, Lord Strange, regarding the two-way "flow" between the North West and London (Sanders *Cultural*). In 1632, Salusbury was living in London and studying at the Inner Temple. Indeed, Lady Anna Myddelton gave Salusbury "near upon a hundred pounds" which she thought "well spent, it having added much to his education in respect of his discretion and fashune" (Smith 73, Letter 140). However, by July 1632, after his father's unexpected death, Salusbury decided to concentrate his attention on his Lleweni estates. His uncle, Sir John Maynard, urged him to seek a position in court or travel abroad. But, despite his personal inclinations towards travel, Salusbury believed he must

acquaint himself with his own country [Wales], and there be known to his friends and kindred and study the people amongst whom he is to live for 'our countrymen ... are a

crafty kind of people, and ... beare an internal hate to such as make themselves strangers unto them' (Smith 78, Letter 154).

Thus, just from a very brief examination of Thomas Salusbury's oeuvre, we can start to see a fascinating North West (Lancashire / Cheshire / Wales) network emerge. Moreover, not only had Salusbury penned masques for Sir Thomas Myddelton 2nd at Chirk Castle, but Lord and Lady Strange had actually performed at the Caroline court masques in Whitehall. In January 1631, Lord Strange had taken a leading role with King Charles in Ben Jonson's and Inigo Jones', *Love's Triumph Through Callipolis* (London: 1631) whilst, in February 1631, Lady Strange had appeared as one of Queen Henrietta Maria's fourteen nymphs in Jonson's and Jones' *Chloridia: Rites to Chloris and her Nymphs* (Jonson and Jones *Chloridia* 345-374). Lady Strange had also performed in ballets at the Hague before her wedding. So it would be perfectly natural that the twelfth night celebrations at Knowsley Hall in 1641 should have been celebrated with a masque. In fact, as David George has suggested these could well have been yearly events (George "Masque" 252). Certainly, masques were performed at Rushden Castle for the Derby family when they visited the Isle of Man – as this record of a glittering masquing occasion from Christmas 1644 makes clear:

The Right Honourable Ladies with their Attendants, were most gloriously decked with silver and gold, broidered works and costly ornaments, bracelets on their hands, chains on their necks, jewels on their foreheads, ear-rings in their ears, and crowns on their heads. (Cumming 104).

During this period, as critics such as Martin Butler and Peter Walls have noted, there was a rise of amateur masques mounted at great houses (Walls 261-88; Butler, "Provincial " 149-73). Just as the court masque at Whitehall was an event for the court and the kingdom signalling the king's vision on matters of state, so, too, regional masques were important

occasions for the county. Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque* at Knowsley Hall allowed Lord Strange a very visible means of strategic self-fashioning, engaging with the politics of the moment to create an ideal vision of concord and harmony to project to the wider region. This luminous golden world of Knowsley was all the more potent when juxtaposed against the restless reality of the nation in 1641.

III. The Masque argument: "Christmas day yat year lighting on friday" (255)

The Whitehall masques of 1638 to 1640 boldly engaged with vibrant political topics. *Britannia Triumphans* (1638) celebrated King Charles I's alleged maritime triumphs and attempted to prove that the unpopular Ship Money tax was necessary; *Luminalia* (1638) powerfully blazed Queen Henrietta Maria's Counter-Reformation successes to Whitehall and the wider courts of Europe; whilst, *Salmacida Spolia* (1640), saw King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria jointly perform in a masque where the King appeared as "Philogenes" the "lover of his people", and was the epitome of magnanimity in the face of wilful opposition from malevolent ill-wishers. In contrast, Salusbury's masque argument, which centred around the fact that Christmas Day in 1640, and New Year's Day the following week, both "light[ed]" (255) or fell on a Friday, might seem rather prosaic. But in the festive season of 1640/41 this was political dynamite. At this time, in the established church, Fridays were traditionally days of fasting and abstinence, with the exception of festivals, like Christmas and New Year, when the fasting strictures were lifted (Ryrie "Fall" 89-108). Salusbury used this tiny, yet explosive, detail to deftly satirise the religious debates which were rocking the country. It should be remembered that Lord Strange had recently fought against the Covenanters in the Bishops' Wars which had erupted in Scotland over attempts to introduce a prayer book into the Scottish Kirk which was seen as too Popish (Russell; Salusbury "Masque" 257). Salusbury's masque pokes fun at Puritans and their infamous dislike of

traditional Christmas festivities with the genial figure of Christmas mocking "theire brainesicke fancies" with their "nickenames" for him of "Christide instead of Christmas" (257). In a nimble move, Christmas is equally suspicious of Laudian and Catholic practices emanating from Court. Christmas worries that his "successors" will "be bannasht / for ever hence to Roome: & heere esteem'd / as superstitious raggs of Popery" (257). Instead, the masque promotes the "magnifecent solemnities / being still observ'd" (257) by Lord Strange and the traditional established Church of England. Immediately, we can see how this masque served both as an entertainment and as a means of Lord Strange's own self-fashioning to his household and the region. For Lord Strange, religious unity was the primary goal, the danger was "fanati[ci]sm" (cited Kemec 262). The brilliance of Salusbury's masque is that, in much the same way as the Whitehall masques, it allowed Lord Strange the opportunity to bind his household, kinsmen and neighbours together and present this dynamic tableau to the wider, political nation.

We cannot pretend that the masque itself is great literature. Salusbury boasted that he wrote this masque "in six howres space" (255). In many ways this is no surprise, as Salusbury's masque is derivative of Thomas Middleton's *Masque of Heroes or The Inner Temple Masque* (1619). However, as the Knowsley performance in 2016 showcased with Sir Julian Fellowes playing Christmas (see introduction to this special edition), Salusbury created a gem of a masque (which shines even more brightly in performance), complete with two antimasques comprising vigorous dancing, especially the sophisticated "matchine", and a seventeenth-century cast which cleverly encompassed members of the household from "Peter the cook" to little Lady Henrietta Stanley in the role of April. The antimasque section opens on a conversation between Dr Almanack and Christmas who appeared as an old jovial gentleman attended by all the good things.¹⁰ In Christmas' train are plump, festival days and there is much talk of "plum porridge" and "mynce pie" (255). Christmas refuses to believe Dr

Almanack's diagnosis that he is on the point of death, and so orders his followers—the plump festival days—to dance. Here, we have the first antimasque; as the dance is rudely interrupted by the sudden appearance of "leane ghost like apparitions of fasting dayes" (256) which signals the Puritan attack on Christmas. Shocked by this assault on his followers, Christmas orders another antimasque; this time a "Matichine" (257) or a "sword dance". In this antimasque, the fasting days win outright which suggests the powerful assault of these forces on established traditions. But Christmas has the last word: realising he will die, he makes a will, which honours Lord Strange who still observes Christmas' traditional ways despite "light[ing]" on a Friday:

...to this honorable familie
where I and all my predecessors have
receau'd such bounteous entertainment and
with soe magnificent solemnities
being still observ'd, I somewhat may bequeath (257)[.]

The will which Dr Almanack proceeds to draw up is completely correct from a legal point of view which adds to the humour. After all, Thomas Salusbury had attended the Inns of Court in 1631-32. But, more importantly, for a twelfth night festivity, it is full of good-humoured joshing of well-known figures within the Knowsley household. Lord Strange's Chaplain, Samuel Rutter, for instance, is promised a "Cupfull of my last breath to coole him in his expectations" (258).¹¹ Mr Abraham L'Anglois who is identified by David George as Lady Charlotte's French apothecary, and still spoke broken English, is bequeathed a "quantity of English hony, to annoynt his tongue, that hee may bee vnderstanded" (261), whilst Lord Strange's "Steward" is to be "obeyd, by ye whole family" (258). This extended antimasque section ends when Christmas completes his will, breathes his last, and is promptly carried off stage by the "sonnes of hunger", the "leane" fasting days (261). Now the masque proper

begins. The focus turns to the celebration of the New Year, which in 1641 was especially full of uncertainty. Acknowledging this transition, we have a specific scene change which intensified the sense of occasion and seriously questions the "amateur" nature of regional masques:

The Scene changeth ye Temple of ye New year being discovered full of lights out of
which issues a Priest & Priestesse with siluer censers in theyr hands scattering
incense a Chorus of Priests follow them (261).

The sensory nature of Salusbury's masque is apparent here, as are parallels with Lord Strange's own performance in *Love's Triumph* in the previous decade, where the "Chorus" walked "about with their censors" to usher in the arrival of the masquers (Jonson and Jones *Love's Triumph* 338). In Salusbury's masque, with the Chorus having sung a song urging the arrival of the New Year, the temple opens, to reveal Lord Strange's heir, Charles, representing the New Year, with his "12 month[s] about him" (262). Fascinatingly, a direct resonance occurs with the recent Whitehall masque, *Britannia Triumphans*, where, Charles I (Charles Strange's godfather), performing the role of Britanocles, was lauded by priests and emerged from a temple in a blaze of light and glory (Davenant and Jones *Britannia* 520-32).¹²

However, just as Salusbury's masque deftly draws on cutting-edge London practices it also follows regional preferences. For whereas the masquers at Whitehall only danced, at regional masques they also spoke, as is seen in Milton's *Comus* performed at Ludlow Castle in 1634 and Salusbury's *Antimasque of Gypsies* staged at Chirk Castle in December 1641.

New Year's speech, performed by Lord Strange's heir, depicts Charles as 'your risinge Sunne' who need not

promise more

then my great Ancestors perform'd before

Let States, and Kingdomes change their fates & face

new Lawes, new Councillers, yet this old place
shall take it as my blessinge, and possesse
theire Auncient plentie, Mirth and happines (p. 262).

Paying tribute to his parents 'whose cares makes my tymes good' he offers 'All that my Seasons can':

...each Month shall giue
Theyre proper blessings, & *your* name shall liue
In the new yeare: as in the age of gold
Nor like the world grow worse, as it growes old (262).

Charles Stanley's lines spotlight how the Stanley household, and Knowsley itself – "this old place" – was firmly embedded in the fabric of the region, a constant in the face of the whirligig of time, which is especially poignant in the dizzying 1640s. Rather like Ben Jonson's great country house poem, "To Penshurst", there is the sense that Lord Strange has guarded his own fiefdom to create a "time-thickened" golden world against the iron ore of conflict and bitter disputes which engulfed Lancashire, Cheshire, North Wales, and the country ("time-thickened": Crang 103). This sense of region even translates into the subject matter of certain months. November, for instance mentions the feast of Martinmasse (on Martinmasse see Walsh 231-54, esp. 234). This is technically correct as the Feast of St Martin of Tours falls in November and was traditionally a time of feasting and preparation for winter. Yet, St Martin of Tours had a specific connection with the region, as he was the patron saint of Chester shoemakers. The ingenuity of the regional masques is shown in July's gift of cherries to Lord and Lady Strange. This out of season, horticultural wonder has literary resonances with the medieval morality play *The Second Shepherd's Play* where the shepherd Coll gives the Christ child a "bob of cherries", forgets his hardships and rejoices in his salvation (Coldewey 343-63). In a final, brilliant, brushstroke illuminating the complexity

of the regional masque, Salusbury's text engages deftly with Lord Strange's own performance in *Love's Triumph*. In the 1631 masque, as James Knowles reminds us, "one of the masque's key oppositions" was the "disordered *suburbs* or *skirts* of the city" which, as John Peacock puts it, were transformed "not by military but by moral conquest" (Jonson and Jones *Love's Triumph* 321). In Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque*, such a golden world exists in Lancashire, which could be seen as the "skirts" of the nation, in stark opposition to the "world" which would most certainly incorporate Whitehall and grows "worse, as it grows old" (262).

**IV. Knowsley Hall - a "palimpsest marked and named by the actions of ancestors"
(Pearson and Shanks 139).**

The dynamic complexity of this site-specific performance is evident in the act of tribute that radiates throughout the community to create a unique snapshot of the household and leading families of the North West on the eve of Civil War. The first female speaker is little "Lady Molineux".¹³ This was Lord Strange's eldest daughter, Henrietta Maria (named after Queen Henrietta Maria), who had just been betrothed, at the tender age of nine,



Figure 4: Lady Henrietta Maria Stanley with her parents Lord and Lady Strange by Anthony Van Dyck, c. 1636, with permission of the Frick Collection.

to the eldest son of the neighbouring great family: the Molineux of Sefton. Naturally, Lady Henrietta Maria played the role of April with its traditional connotations of spring weddings and new beginnings. She had one of the longest speaking parts and her speech emphasises her Stanley origins. Presenting 'her Tribute of felicitie', she prays that: 'honor, loue and euerie precious thinge /crowne all *your* dayes' so 'may you euer blesse /this place with *your* continued fruitfullnes' (263). Her betrothed, Lord Richard Molineux, takes the shorter role of February. In fact, he only speaks a couple of lines hoping that his future parents-in-law will "grow / In honours old / and in a happie age as white as snow" (263). More important here, is the display to the audience of a strategic alliance between two leading North West families. As local people would have known, the Molineux family had been just as powerful in the region as the Stanleys in previous centuries.¹⁴ But of particular interest for this alliance is the allegiance of the Molineux family to the old faith. Thus, a fascinating cross-confessionalism starts to emerge within the masque vision. Likewise, it is no accident that the masque is ended by Hugh Hoghton, in the guise of December, who represents another leading Lancashire family, the Hoghtons of Hoghton Towers. Most intriguingly, December promises a future entertainment "with more care / in the Composure" (265). This tantalisingly offers the possibility of a reciprocal twelfth night masquing culture at the great Lancashire houses, for which sadly either the texts have not survived – or have not been found, yet.

Another significant strand which emerges amongst the masquers are those figures whose ancestors had held key posts within the Stanley household, often over several generations, generating great good will which was crucial at a time of political volatility. Sonja Kemec reminds us of the importance of patronage in this era: "how it overlaps and interacts with kinship, friendship and solidarity based on shared regional origins" (Kemec 36). Lord Strange felt strongly about nurturing these reciprocal patronage bonds. In a letter to

his son, Charles, Lord Strange noted how he would deliberately choose an individual for a task because:

his ancestors have formerly dwelt in my house, as the best, if not all the good families in Lancashire have done. This certainly might breed a desire in the man that the house where his predecessors have served might still flourish, and, belike, he would willingly endeavour to be an instrument thereof himself (Mackenzie 22).

Sir Thomas Tyldesley, who opens the masque proper as the month of January, is an excellent example of such a bond.¹⁵ Tyldesley was the eldest son of Edward Tyldesley of Morley Hall in Astley—a family which had acted as Stewards to the Second, Third and Fifth Earls of Derby. Thomas Tyldesley and Lord Strange were great friends. Despite Tyldesley's Catholic inclinations, he was known as "the companion in arms and trusty right hand of the earl" (Kemec 261). The mutual depth of feeling between the Tyldesley and Stanley families is evident from Thomas' father, Edward, who bequeathed, in his will, to the 4th Earl of Derby, his "beste horse or geldynge" (Coward *Stanleys* 87). Thus, we can see how, despite the vociferous polemical religious debates which thundered from the printing press, Salusbury's masque vision encouraged a peaceful cross-confessionalism. Likewise, the ancestors of Dick Fox of Rhodes Hall, who played the role of March, and Mrs Farrington, who appeared as September, were also long-standing members of Derby households.¹⁶

Not surprisingly for this period, it is harder to pinpoint the identity of the female masquers. But Mrs Duckenfield and Mrs E. Duckenfield who appear as June and July are, most likely, from the noted Duckenfield family of Cheshire who had Puritan sympathies. In fact, Colonel Robert Duckenfield would assume a leading Parliamentary role for the region in the Civil War. Mrs Duckenfeld is most likely the Colonel's wife, Martha, (who was the daughter of Sir Miles Fleetwood of Hesketh, Lancashire), whilst Mrs E Duckenfeld is probably Colonel Duckenfeld's sister-in-law, Eleanor (wife of his younger brother,

William).¹⁷ Once more, Salusbury, like Ben Jonson in *Love's Triumph* is forging alliances on stage. Just as Charles I deliberately engaged with "hostile courtiers" such as Lord Strange by inviting him to perform in *Love's Triumph*, so, too, the performances by the female Duckenfields could be seen, in turn, as an attempt to create bonds of harmony in the North West (Jonson and Jones *Love's Triumph* 322). Sadly, Mrs Phill and Madame Mesieur who play May and August remain shadowy figures.¹⁸ They were certainly well-known figures at Knowsley as is evident from a manuscript poem which I have found addressed to them in the handwriting of the Derby chaplain, Samuel Rutter, who celebrates the women's beauty and friendship (Rutter "Mesieur" 7).¹⁹

Finally, we have contemporary holders of key household posts in the form of Andrew Broome who played the role of November and was the Comptroller of the Kitchen. This was a position which Lord Derby particularly valued as is evident from his letter to Charles in 1650 where he advises his heir to "have a good steward of your house and clerk of the kitchen, who may make themselves awed by the servants, even as much as yourself" (Mackenzie *Legislation* 45). Thus, from uncovering what Pearson and Shanks term as site-specific, "sedimented layers of meaning", Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque* can be seen as a palimpsest of the Derby household and the leading families of the North West on the eve of Civil War: a masquing entertainment that is both twelfth night frivolity and a complex yet dynamic vision of different political and religious outlooks—a golden world indeed (Pearson and Shanks 158).

V. Staging the masque: "in greate hope to give content" (255).

As David Klausner noted, Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque* would have taken place in the Great Hall at Knowsley which had similar proportions to the specially built Banqueting House at Whitehall and also to the Great Hall, at Thomas Salusbury's home of Lleweni

(Klausner 131). The masque itself would have been candlelit and we know from records for other regional masques that it was usual to use sparkly fabrics for costumes that would glitter in the candlelight—so tinsel, and spangles and ornamental bells.²⁰ The cost would have been quite substantial but not crippling. This complemented Lord Strange's own views on masquing expenses which, following Sir Francis Bacon's lead, he believed should be "graced with elegance rather than daubed with cost" ("Worcester Ms." vol 34. 23). The word "elegance" gives us insight into how elaborate the performance would have been. By no means should we dismiss private theatricals as insignificant. Salusbury's stage directions are vivid, with specific props itemised to enhance the sensory experience of the masque. In the opening stage direction alone, Dr Almanck has an "Alminack vnder his girdle" and a "Vrinal in his hand" whilst Christmas wears a "night capp" and is "attended by his plump festivall days" (255). Music is of especial importance, which is no surprise bearing in mind that Lord Strange kept his own musicians, although he found them "troublesome", and was himself a composer and lover of music ("Worcester Ms." vol 35. 44-7; 82-3). The first antimasque is signalled by the direction "Musick strikes" (256) and a change of tempo is indicated for the second antimasque which is a "Matichine" (257) where the dancers are directed to assume "postures of strugling and wrestlinge" before the fast days carry off Christmas' festival days "vpon their backes" (257). In the 2016 performance, directed by Kathy Dacre, there was a real sensation of menace within this emblematic battle of beliefs.²¹

Additionally, in this regional masque there are at least two scene changes. The first backdrop is unclear but most likely comprises a familiar scene from Knowsley to situate the masque in performance. The scene shift from anti-masque to masque is signalled by the appearance of "ye Temple of ye New year" (261). In Davenant's and Jones' *Britannia Triumphans*, the "Palace of Fame" appeared from under the floor. In contrast, this temple could have been hidden by drapes which just needed to be drawn back. However, a more

technical moment of transformation could have taken place at Knowsley. Martin Butler makes the interesting suggestion that the engineer, Hendrik de Keyser, who was active in the region, may have assisted with the scenery at the Earl of Clifford's masque at Skipton Castle in 1636.²² As Butler reminds us, Hendrik de Keyser was the youngest son of one of the leading architects of Amsterdam, Hendrik de Keyser, Senior, who had sculpted the tomb of William the Silent of Orange (Charlotte de la Trémoille's grandfather), and built the stage for a play welcoming Elizabeth of Bohemia, James I's daughter, to Amsterdam in 1613. Butler notes how little is known of de Keyser Junior's work but he was almost certainly "Henrik the Dutch engineer' who was employed in the King's army during the Bishops War of 1639" (Butler "Provincial" 165). I believe it would seem equally plausible that Hendrik de Keyser could have come to the notice of Lord Strange during the Bishops' Wars and he could very well have assisted in creating the effect of the New Year Temple in the Knowsley masque which, in the third scene change, opens to reveal Lord Strange in the role of New Year "with his 12 month about him" who were "ye personages of ye Grand Mas(q)" (262). Altogether, what emerges from trying to piece this performance back together is of a singularly impressive occasion which simultaneously mirrors and even overreaches Whitehall masques. Both King Charles, and his godson, Charles Stanley, come forth from inside their respective temples. Yet, this regional masque is distinctive, for not only do the masquers at Knowsley speak, they collaborate with Salusbury to create a sharper performance. Apparently, Mrs E. Duckenfeld who played the role of July requested that "Iulyes part [be] chang'd" (265) which gave her the closing lines of the masque. Again, this emphasises the advanced nature of the regional masque whereby the masquers speak as well as dance, and "th'Author" (255) both listens to and gives voice to the female "personages of ye Grand Mas(q)" (262).

VI. Aftermath: "born under an unfortunate planet"²³?

The delicacy of Salusbury's stage vision—signalling Lord Strange's belief in unity rather than division between neighbours—is evident if we fast-forward and revisit these figures in the aftermath of civil war. Sir Thomas Salusbury, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, Lord Richard Molyneux and Hugh Hoghton all rallied to the King's cause under the general leadership of Lord Strange who became the 7th Earl of Derby in 1642. This was not without great soul-searching, as we can see from Sir Thomas Salusbury's manuscript letter to his sister, Ursula, where he concluded, "I and my household will serve the Lord, which I cannot doe truly unless I serve his annoynted also".²⁴ Salusbury was the first to die in 1643; Tyldesley died in August 1651 during the Battle of Wigan Lane and the 7th Earl of Derby was executed a couple of weeks later after being tried by Court Martial in Chester.²⁵ What is especially sobering is that the signature of Colonel Robert Duckenfeld can be found on the Earl's death warrant. (Colonel Duckenfeld also wrested control of the Stanley estates on the Isle of Man in 1651.) Perhaps, even more woeful, is that young Charles Stanley, the "risinge Sunne" (262) of the family, ended up estranged from his parents due to a rash marriage and a fleeting rapprochement with Parliament.²⁶ Nor did the engagement between Lady Henrietta Maria and Richard Molyneux lead to marriage. Of special interest is Lady Charlotte, the 7th Earl's wife, who made the most magnificent Amazonian figure during the Civil War by famously withstanding a siege at Lathom House. Once more, the bonds of loyalty displayed at the Knowsley masque are apparent. Intriguingly, Lady Charlotte was supported during this siege by Dick Fox who had played the masquing role of March and the family chaplain, Samuel Rutter, who ingeniously managed to send notes out of the siege via a dog (de Witt 109). Whereas Lathom was completely destroyed, Knowsley withstood the ravages of war to some extent. In 1655, Lady Charlotte returned to Knowsley widowed, penniless and estranged from her son, Charles. She remarked in a letter to her sister-in-law:

You may believe dear sister how changed I find everything in this place. Never having been here since my troubles and how cruelly it recalls to my mind my past happiness (Charlotte Derby Letter, de Witt 216).

One can only wonder if gleaming memories of Thomas Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque* at Knowsley Hall lingered in Lady Charlotte's mind as she wrote these words. For as Yi-Fu Tuan argues, "home" is not just a building "but a repository of meaning and dreams" which, as Clare Wright has observed, is "embued with kinetic and emotional memories" (Tuan 164; Wright 163). This exploration of Salusbury's *Twelfth Night Masque* reveals just how central drama was as a weapon in the armoury of Stanley self-fashioning. For, in Knowsley Hall's topsy-turvy world of twelfth night festivity, Sir Thomas Salusbury achieved a fleeting, "time-thickened" glimpse of an "age of gold"; in stark contrast to those "States, and Kingdomes" which New Year denigrated for "chang[ing] their fates & face" (262).

NOTES

- ¹ On the Salusbury family, see: Harper, "Music"; Harper "Elizabethan "; Glair; Klausner. On this masque, see: Sanders *Cultural* 123-6. Also see Brown on a similar entertainment.
- ² On cultural geography see: Sanders *Cultural*; Pearson and Shanks; Malpas; Heidegger; Cresswell; Crang; Bachelard; Augé; Agnew; Tuan.

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- ³ Indeed, like the queen, Lady Charlotte was busily learning English as is testified by a handwritten French-to-English crib sheet amongst the Stanley papers (“Worcester Ms.” vol. 35).
- ⁴ Lord Strange noted down these “marks of the the true religion” in his “Commonplace book”: “1) that takes no pleasure in ye expense of blood 2) That teacheth virtue and honest living 3) That crosseth not ye word of truth 4) That takes not from ye Creator and gives most to ye Creator” (James Stanley “Worcester Ms.” vol. 35, 16).
- ⁵ <https://www.library.wales/discover/digital-gallery/manuscripts/early-modern-period/salusbury/#?c=&m=&s=&cv=300&xywh=-1888%2C-1%2C7223%2C4974> pp. 297-8 of manuscript, pp. 301-2 of digital copy. Subsequent references will document the digital version. Textual references to Salusburie’s “Masque” in the body of this essay are from David George’s edition.
- ⁶ The Salusbury family were illegitimate descendants of Henry VII. The family estates at Lleweni in Denbighshire centred on a huge house on the London to Holyhead Coaching road, marked on both Saxton’s and Speed’s maps. For a full discussion see, Harper “Elizabethan” 47.
- ⁷ The wedding of John Salusbury and Ursula Stanley was celebrated with a masque at the house of Katheryn of Berain, John’s mother, of which fragments survive. Records show continued support for the couple from the 4th, 5th and 6th Earls: Henry, Ferdinando and William.
- ⁸ For example: “a lightning before death” (255) draws on *Romeo and Juliet* 2.2.124-125 whilst the “whininge schoole boy” chimes with *As You Like It* 2.7.145.
- ⁹ Salusbury’s manuscript works comprise “Chirk Castle Entertainment” (1634); “Love or Money” (c.1638); “Knowsley Twelfth Night Masque” (January 1641); “A Show or Antimasque of Gypseys” (Chirk Castle, 30 December 1641); “Citizen and his Wife” - a

one act play with "antimasques" (1642); "The Lady of Loreto" (1643), an unfinished play; "The Wisdome of Saloman", an unfinished poem. For discussions of these texts see footnote 1; Wiggin's examination of Salusbury's *Citizen and his Wife* (Wiggin 106-7; 134-41).

¹⁰ David George suggested that Lord Strange "may himself have played the part of Christmas" (George *Records* 252). As we discussed after the symposium (see introduction to this special edition), this would now seem unlikely. The masque is presented to Lord and Lady Strange by their children, Mr Charles Stanley and Lady Henrietta Maria, so Lord Strange is the chief member of the audience to whom the masque is addressed.

¹¹ David George in his notes to the masque identifies three possible chaplains Humphrey Baguley, John Lake or Samuel Rutter (253). As Samuel Rutter's own poems are found within the Salusbury manuscript it would seem most likely that Rutter is the chaplain who performs in this masque, especially as one of his poems is addressed to Mrs Phill and Madame Mesieur who play the roles of May and August respectively (Rutter "Mesieur" 7). Additionally, Lord Strange, in a letter to his son praised Rutter as a "good teacher" and a good companion ... having nothing at all of the pedant" (Mackenzie 41).

¹² See also Bailey "Sceptre".

¹³ Samuel Rutter's poem, "To my Lady Molineux, an Ode" (Rutter "Molineux" 8). Rutter asks "Who pitties winter when hee sees the springe?" (stanza 2, l. 8).

¹⁴ For example, in July 1424, "Sir Richard Molyneux and Sir Thomas Stanley, with near 2000 men each, prevented from fighting a battle in the neighbourhood, by a writ from Henry IV" (Spiegel 10).

¹⁵ George identifies January as "possibly Edward Tyldesley, younger son of Edward Tyldesley (died c. 1618)" (252). As Peter J. Tyldelsly has noted "Edward Tyldesley, the

younger, died in 1621 and was buried at Cartmel Priory". The role of January would seem most likely to have been played by Thomas Tyldesley (1612-1651), eldest son of Edward Tyldesley and older brother of Edward. I have been in correspondence with Peter J. Tyldesley about this via his family blog: tyldesley.co.uk.

¹⁶ As with the Tyldesley family, Dick Fox's ancestor, William Fox of Rhodes, who had been the Comptroller of the 4th Earl of Derby's household, had left Earl Henry a gold coin in his will, as a mark of respect (Coward *Stanleys* 87). Likewise, Sir Henry Farrington had been secretary to the 3rd Earl, and his son William had acted as Steward to the 3rd Earl (Coward *Stanleys* 86). David George suggests that this is most likely "the wife or else a daughter, of Stanley's officer, William Farington" (George 253).

¹⁷ Building on George's editorial comments on the Duckenfeld family, I have been able to identify Mrs E. Duckenfeld via "thornber.net."

¹⁸ George suggests that "Mrs Phill" "may be an abbreviation for 'Philips', the name of the Knowsley chaplain in 1585 who went on to become the Bishop of Sodor and Man and died in 1633" (252) and Mrs Mesieur was "either a visitor from France or a companion of Lady Strange" (253).

¹⁹ Samuel Rutter, "An Ode to Madam Mesieur and Mrs Phill" in Rutter "Mesieur" 7.

²⁰ See the financial records for the Clifford masque cited by Butler "Provincial" 154-6.

²¹ The masque was directed by Professor Kathy Dacre, Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance, and the masquing months consisted of Lord Derby's family and friends whilst the antimasque was performed by a group of young actors.

²² For more on Hendrik de Keyser, Junior, see Butler "Provincial" 162-7. De Keyser was part of a large circle of Low Country artists who came to England for religious reasons and would have found both Lord and Lady Strange attractive patrons. As Butler notes, Hendrik de Keyser's father worked with Inigo Jones when he came to London and one

of Jones' assistants, Nicholas Stone, returned to Amsterdam with de Keyser, Senior, and became his son-in-law. Thus, Hendrik de Keyser, Junior, was the brother-in-law of Nicholas Stone.

²³ James, Lord Strange, put his misfortunes down to a misalignment of the planets at his birth. Coward *Stanleys* 172.

²⁴ Thomas Salusbury to Ursula Lloyd June 27th, 1642, "A Coppie of Letter written by the Honble Sr Tho: Salusbury to his sister, the Lady Lloyd, after he came from York", within "Salusburies" 255-257, 255. Salusbury's other key patron and kinsman, Sir Thomas Myddleton 2nd, supported Parliament on the outbreak of civil war which explains this anguished letter.

²⁵ According to Tyldesley family tradition, the 7th Earl wanted to visit the grave of his Catholic friend, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, on the way to his own execution. He was refused. See "peterjtyldesley.com".

²⁶ The 7th Earl, was reconciled to his son, Lord Charles before he was executed but as Charlotte, Countess of Derby's letters reveal she remained furious with her son, "repeatedly calling her daughter-in-law a 'Delilah'" and leaving Charles only £5 in her will. (de Witt, *Lady of Lathom*, 158).

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