

“My Rare Wit Killing Sin”:
Poems of a Restoration Courtier

ANNE KILLIGREW



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Introduction

The Other Voice

“My rare wit killing sin.”

—Edmund Wodehouse, “Anagram on Mistress Anne Killigrew”¹

Anne Killigrew (1660–1685) spoke through multiple voices: her own voice as she expressed herself through her poetry; the public voice created for her by her grieving father who printed an edition of the manuscript verses by her and others found in her possession after her death; and the iconic voice constructed for her by poets commenting on her life and writings, most prominently and influentially, the poet laureate John Dryden. This volume, while preserving the representation of Killigrew by others, seeks to highlight her individual voice—that of a young, single woman closely associated with the Restoration courts of both King Charles II and his wife Queen Catherine and of James, Duke of York, the future James II, and his second wife, Mary of Modena. Yet, as the anagram made on her name by Edmund Wodehouse suggests, Anne Killigrew gazed thoughtfully on the fashionable world she was born into and, in her life and poetry, rejected its values.

When one thinks of the Restoration period and in particular of the culture of the courts of King Charles II and his brother James, Duke of York, the most common association is with the hedonistic, libertine life-style followed by many of both the male courtiers and the women associated with them. The notorious rake John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, had passed away from syphilis in 1680 at age thirty-three, five years before Killigrew herself would die from smallpox. Wilmot and others in their satiric verses created scathing portraits of the women of the court as scheming their way to fortune and titles through their publicly acknowledged affairs. Charles and James both openly maintained their mistresses and illegitimate children. Barbara Palmer, Countess of Castlemaine, who was Charles II’s most powerful mistress, commented sardonically about the general atmosphere of the

1. University of Leeds, Brotherton Library, MS Lt 40, fol. 124v.

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court that her young daughter by the king, Charlotte Fitzroy, who was betrothed at ten and married at twelve, would be the only true “maid” on her wedding day of all the so-called “maids of honor” serving the royal households.² Traditional literary histories of the period that rely on the contemporary satires and lampoons in circulation have also depicted the young women in the courts as being intent on securing a fortune and a titled husband and thus available for the attentions of the royal brothers and their courtiers; they have also tended to focus on the writings of the so-called “court wits,” the male poets and dramatists who entertained Charles with their writings extolling sexual conquest and aggressively challenging the institutions of family and religion in their plays, poems, and in their own libertine behavior.

Through an extensive network of family relations, Anne Killigrew was closely tied to these courts and was, like many of her female relatives, a maid of honor, serving in the court of the Duke of York’s wife, Mary of Modena.³ She was also an artist, painting the portraits of James, Mary, and members of their courts, as well as self-portraits.⁴ While living in this milieu, Anne Killigrew was also writing about amazon warrior queens, heroic wives, and about rejecting social customs that seemed to demand that young people of both sexes be mercenary predators. Hers is the other voice of Restoration court culture: female, ambitiously literary, and in opposition to the prevailing libertine ethos

2. Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Phil Gyford, based on Henry B. Wheatley, ed., *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 9 vols. (London, 1893), diary entry February 21, 1665 at <http://www.pepysdiary.com/archive/1665/02/>. All subsequent references to Pepys’s diary are to this website by the date of the entry.

3. There has been some dispute among critics writing on Killigrew in recent years over whether or not she actually served as a maid of honor; the most recent entry on her in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, however, now states unequivocally that she does appear on the list of maids of honor in 1683. David Hopkins, “Killigrew, Anne (1660–1685),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004–), (accessed July 10, 2012) at <http://www.oxforddnb.com>. All subsequent references to the *ODNB* are to the online edition.

4. Carol Barash, *English Women’s Poetry, 1649–1714: Politics, Community, and Linguistic Authority* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 159. In a private communication, James Winn has also pointed to the facial resemblances of the figures in Killigrew’s painting *Venus Attired by the Graces* as being like those in other portraits of Anne Finch, Mary of Modena, and Anne Killigrew herself.

of the court. A contemporary of hers who also was a maid of honor in the court of Mary of Modena, Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea, declared later that she never engaged in literary pursuits while at the court because she feared being labeled a “versifying maid of honor” and the social scorn that might bring.⁵ Anne Killigrew, as seen in the body of work she left behind, was eager to write poetry that would bring her what she considered to be true and lasting fame.

Restoration England: History, Politics, and Religion

The exact day of Anne Killigrew’s birth is unknown, but we do know that she was born in 1660, just as the restoration of the monarchy to the throne of England was beginning. On May 29, 1660, on his thirtieth birthday, King Charles II rode through the streets of London in triumph after a long absence. He had been in exile in Europe after the execution of his father Charles I by Parliament in January 1649 during the English Civil Wars and his own subsequent defeat as he attempted to invade through Scotland in 1651 to retake the country. Although the Restoration period is sometimes studied as being a clean break from the old style monarchy of Charles I and the subsequent Puritan rule during the Commonwealth, many of the key issues that affected the life of the court and its courtiers during the first two decades of the Restoration are continuations of old arguments and divisions, and many of the influential writers, artists, and politicians shaping the “new” Restoration were in fact born during the older regimes.

In the 1650s, the country initially was governed by Parliament and became a Commonwealth, but the Parliamentary general Oliver Cromwell soon gained complete control over the government and dismissed Parliament, ruling alone as Lord Protector. Many English Protestants at that time believed that the second coming of Christ was eminent, and that the civil wars had been a sign: England must prepare for the millennium by becoming a godly country, a nation of saints. Numerous edicts were passed during the 1650s banning frivolous activities that distracted from godly devotions, such as the publica-

5. Anne Finch, *The Poems of Anne, Countess of Winchilsea*, ed. Myra Reynolds (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1903), 7–8.

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tion of “merry books” and sporting events such as horse racing.⁶ The London theaters, which had been officially closed in 1642, struggled to exist with clandestine performances, frequently raided by the army, with both its actors and the audiences facing fines and imprisonment. The celebration of Christmas was banned as a pagan festival, and even daily language was purified, with pagan words for days of the week and names of months being frequently replaced by numbers, as seen in the title of an entertainment by William Davenant, *The First Day’s Entertainment at Rutledge House* performed in 1656. Davenant (1606–1668) had been a favorite dramatist of Queen Henrietta Maria before the war for his platonic comedies and his masque *The Temple of Love* (1635) written to be performed by the queen and her ladies in waiting. During the Commonwealth, he offered Cromwell and his Puritan audience instead of pastoral romance a series of staged debates over topics such as the value of public entertainments between two classical philosophers and a Parisian and a Londoner arguing for the virtues of each city.⁷

However, following the death of Cromwell in 1658, the Commonwealth government of England, Scotland, and Ireland fell quickly into factions and disarray. Oliver Cromwell’s son Richard, who had succeeded him, was forced to abdicate, and the army led by General Monck marched on London to regain control. With the army in possession, Royalist sympathizers joined with remaining members of the recalled Parliament to request the return of King Charles II to restore not only the monarchy but also the national Church of England, or the Anglican Church, and the House of Lords.

Conflicts over matters of religious belief and practice which had sprung up during the civil war years and Commonwealth period continued after the Restoration between not only the increasingly visible number of Catholic aristocrats serving in positions of importance, raising the same fears that had in part triggered the civil wars, but also between the established Anglican Church of England and Protestant denominations such as the Baptists and Presbyterians, and the more

6. Margaret J. M. Ezell, “Never Boring, or Imagine My Surprise: Interregnum Woman and the Culture of Reading,” in *Imagining Selves: Essays in Honor of Patricia Meyer Spacks*, ed. Rivka Swenson and Elise Lauterbach (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 155–69.

7. Mary Edmond, “Davenant, Sir William (1606–1668),” *ODNB*.

radical groups such as the Quakers. These very different groups are referred to during the 1660s as “nonconformists” because they refused to take the required oaths required of those serving as public ministers under a series of laws passed by Parliament known as The Clarendon Code (1661–1665). This often resulted in these ministers being removed from their positions and even, like the Baptist preacher and author of *Pilgrim’s Progress* (1678) John Bunyan, imprisoned for illegal preaching. The Killigrew family remained solidly within the Anglican Church and its hierarchy, although Anne’s father Henry and her brothers-in-law were the family’s only ministers, the other Killigrews apparently adhering to the pragmatic religion of the times and of the court.

The man whom General Monck and Parliament invited back to reclaim the throne of his father had been living the life of a defeated king with loyal followers but without a throne or power for over a decade. Charles, his brothers James and Henry, his sister Henrietta, and their mother Queen Henrietta Maria, resided mostly in France. Other royalist exiles were scattered about the Continent, many in the Netherlands. For the most part, the remaining royal family and many of the cavaliers with their own families who had followed them into exile, such as the Duke of Newcastle, William Cavendish and his wife, the prolific author Margaret Cavendish, spent the time living in near poverty, as Charles tried unsuccessfully to raise sufficient funds to support a military invasion of England to retake his throne. James, the younger brother, was able to enter the French army, where he served with distinction under General Turenne; later, along with his younger brother Henry, he joined the Spanish army. Anne Killigrew’s father, Henry Killigrew, had been ordained as a minister in the Anglican Church as the war began; he had served as James’s chaplain since 1642, following him into exile and eventually acting as a member of his cabinet council in Paris and Brussels. Charles, as the king of England albeit without a throne, could not follow this military path; he spent the first part of the decade with his mother in the palace at the Louvre in Paris, living off a small allowance granted by the French monarchy to her, and when that became too strained, he moved his court first to Bruges and then Brussels.

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While in exile Charles had his first illegitimate child, a son with Lucy Walter in 1649. The boy was given the name James Crofts, but he was always acknowledged by Charles. After the Restoration, Charles raised him at court, giving him the title of the Duke of Monmouth and arranging a marriage for him with a wealthy young heiress, as well as providing him with a sizeable income through gifts and positions.⁸ In later years, however, Charles flatly refused to endorse the widely circulated rumor that he had secretly wed Lucy Walter, which would have made Monmouth a legitimate Protestant heir to the throne. This would become increasingly a concern in the late 1670s and early 1680s when Anne Killigrew was growing up: Charles did not have any children with his queen, Catherine of Braganza, and there was widespread concern over his brother James, Duke of York, who had converted to Catholicism, succeeding to the throne.

While Charles was still in exile on the Continent, Monmouth's mother, Lucy Walter, was succeeded in Charles's affections by Anne Killigrew's aunt, Elizabeth Boyle, who gave birth to Charles's daughter in 1651, Charlotte Jemima. More affairs followed, and at least two more children were born out of wedlock while Charles was in exile. This pattern continued on Charles's return to England. Barbara Palmer, Countess of Castlemaine bore a child to him every year from 1661 to 1665; when Charles married the Portuguese Catholic princess Catherine of Braganza in May of 1662, he insisted that she accept Castlemaine as a lady of the bedchamber, which was a highly prestigious position in court. In the early 1660s, he pursued several of his wife's maids of honor, the most notable being Frances Stewart, who was the daughter of Queen Henrietta Maria's physician; the king was ardently and openly in love with her, but apparently without success, although to the scandal of observers. The irony of the gap between his own libertine behavior and the antics of his court and Charles's position as the head of the Church of England was not lost on observers. There was more tolerance of his affairs with women of lower classes, such as the

8. Accounts show that Charles provided handsomely for his illegitimate children and their families: for example, in 1672 and 1673, Monmouth received £43,000 from the king in gifts (his wife's earrings alone cost £1,200), the equivalent of nearly a quarter million pounds in today's currency. Maurice Lee, Jr., *The Heiresses of Buccleuch: Marriage, Money, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Britain* (East Linton, Scotland: Tuckwell Press, 1996), 100–101.

actresses Mary “Moll” Davis and one of Charles’s favorites, the comedian Nell Gwyn, but his later affair with the French Catholic aristocrat Louise K roualle, whom he made Duchess of Portsmouth and in 1680 gave a pension of  11,000 a year, caused riots in the streets of London.

James, too, had led an irregular life on the Continent, and he continued in his ways even after marrying one of his English mistresses and returning to England. His first marriage to Anne Hyde was a scandal, not so much because he had made her pregnant, but because a prince of the blood was marrying a commoner, the daughter of Edward Hyde, Charles’s constant advisor during the Commonwealth and principal negotiator for the return of the Crown. Hyde would on the Restoration be named Charles’s Lord Chancellor and receive the title Lord Clarendon. His daughter Anne, who was serving as a maid of honor in the court of James’s sister Mary, the Princess of Orange, had begun the affair with James in 1659 while the court was still in exile in the Netherlands, and he had promised her marriage; however in 1660, when it became clear that the throne would be restored, and James was next in line in the succession, the match appeared worse than simply imprudent. When informed of James’s intentions, his mother Queen Henrietta Maria was horrified, and Anne Hyde’s own father urged that she be sent to the Tower for treason. Several of James’s courtiers, including Anne Killigrew’s distant relatives, Charles Berkeley and Henry Jermyn, attempted to invalidate the marriage by spreading rumors that Anne Hyde was so promiscuous that the child could be anyone’s. Charles, having initially resisted the idea of the marriage, had, however, given his consent to it and refused to permit it to be annulled. Finally, in December 1660, James and Anne appeared in public as husband and wife, and Anne took over the running of their household, averaging  20,000 a year in expenses to support its size and opulence.⁹

James and Anne Hyde had two daughters who survived infancy, the princesses Mary and Ann; Mary would wed the Protestant Prince William of Orange and succeed her father to the throne in 1688, and Anne would become queen after her in 1702. Their mother Anne Hyde died in 1671; in 1673, James married a Catholic princess, Mary of Modena, and it became increasingly clear to Parliament and the

9. John Miller, “Anne, Duchess of York (1637–1671),” *ODNB*.

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public that James himself was a practicing Catholic. This was the court in which Anne Killigrew would be listed as serving as one of the six maids of honor in 1683. Anne Killigrew's father, Henry Killigrew, thus found himself in the odd position of serving as an Anglican chaplain in an openly if not yet publicly acknowledged Catholic court. Matters came to a point of public crisis when there was a general anti-Catholic hysteria deliberately created by a group of conspirators attempting to ensure James would not succeed his brother. "The Popish Plot," which dominated the whole country's attention between 1678 and 1681, was largely the creation of Titus Oates, who along with several others alleged that a vast Catholic conspiracy was afoot in England to assassinate Charles; their fabricated evidence led to the highly publicized trials and executions of fifteen people before his perjury was finally revealed during the period when Anne Killigrew was a young adult.¹⁰ This was contiguous with the highly factionalized Exclusion Crisis (1680–1683) when the Whig party in Parliament in opposition to the court or Tory party attempted to pass legislation that would make it impossible for a Catholic to succeed to the throne. The political and religious environment in which Anne Killigrew grew up was thus a highly contentious one involving the widespread use of propaganda and heated public debates, debates which because of the positions of her parents and relatives in the courts of Charles and James she could not avoid.

Restoration Court Culture and the Courtiers: Art and Literature

After years of poverty, the king and his court spent lavishly on restoring not only the presence of monarchy in England, but also in creating a spectacle of aristocratic power. Charles began recovering the royal art collection assembled by his father, which had been sold by Cromwell during the Commonwealth years; he also had to have new Crown jewels created for his coronation as their precious metals

10. For a detailed account of those involved in the plot, see John Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (London: Heinemann, 1972) and for the issues relating to Catholicism and the succession, see John Miller, *Popery and Politics in England, 1660–1668* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), especially chapter 4.

had been melted down and their jewels sold.¹¹ The royal palace at Whitehall had been used for government offices and St. James's Palace for army barracks; many of the other royal valuables had been lost, sold, or hidden away. Thus the royal courts of Charles and his brother James not only had to be restored to power, but also to be recreated as the stages on which monarchy was presented.

Part of this recreation of monarchy included royal portraits, representations of the king, queen, and the members of their courts as the serene rulers of all they surveyed. Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680), who had painted the imprisoned Charles I with his children in the days before that king's execution, was the foremost portrait painter of his day in England; he had been maintained during the Commonwealth years by commissions from some of the most powerful aristocratic families in England.¹² In 1662, he was appointed the king's principal painter, thus succeeding to the post held before the war by Anthony Van Dyke. Although he painted Charles II several times and those paintings were widely circulated in copies, his primary patron was James, Duke of York, and members of his court. James's first wife, Anne Hyde, commissioned Lely in the early 1660s to paint a collection of portraits of the most beautiful women of her court and that of the queen, which came to be known as *The Windsor Beauties*.¹³ He also received a commission from James to create a series of portraits of the naval officers who served under him in the naval battle of Lowestoft (1665). His most highly visible patron, however, was the king's mistress, Barbara Palmer, Countess of Castlemaine, who used the allegorical representations of herself in portraits as potent weapons in a war of reputations: she had Lely paint herself, accompanied by her children from the king, in the guise of the Virgin Mary, Athena goddess of wisdom, Mary Magdalene, and her namesake, St. Barbara, offering a direct and satiric challenge to the official portraits of Queen Catherine.¹⁴

11. Jerry Brotton, *The Sale of the Late King's Goods: Charles I and His Art Collection* (London: Pan Books, 2006).

12. Diana Dethloff, "Lely, Sir Peter (1618–1680)," *ODNB*.

13. See Lewis Melville, *The Windsor Beauties: Ladies of the Court of Charles II*, rev. ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: Victorian Heritage Press, 2005), "preface."

14. Julia Marciari Alexander, "Self-Fashioning and Portraits of Women at the Restoration Court: The Case of Peter Lely and Barbara Villiers, Countess of Castlemaine, 1660–1668"

Portraits, especially of members of court, thus functioned not only as artistic expressions but also as political statements.

There were two physical royal courts in London during Anne Killigrew's lifetime, that of Charles II and his queen at Whitehall and that of the Duke of York at St. James's Palace. The palace of Whitehall itself was not a royal residence in a traditional sense, being instead a conglomeration of buildings, consisting of some 1,500 rooms, resembling, as a French visitor in 1665 observed, "nothing but a heap of Houses, erected at divers times, and of different Models, which they made Contiguous in the best Manner they could for the Residence of the Court."¹⁵ It was here that Anne Killigrew's mother, Judith, served as a lady in waiting to the queen, along with her cousin Elizabeth (married to Sir Francis Clinton) who served as the queen's dresser.¹⁶ Her uncle, Sir William Killigrew, occupied rooms in Whitehall next to the royal family in his role as the queen's vice-chamberlain.

Her father Henry served the Duke of York at St. James's Palace, where he was appointed almoner to the duke and oversaw the chapel, as well as having an income from being a prebend of Westminster Abbey and serving as the master of the Savoy Hospital after 1663. The Savoy precinct like Whitehall was situated on the north shore of the Thames River; it included a former medieval palace that Henry VII had turned into a hospital for the poor in 1512. It was next to Somerset House, where the dowager queen Henrietta Maria resided before her return to France in 1665. Among the notable events at the Savoy marking the Restoration, was the Savoy Conference in 1661, when Charles II ordered an assembly of Anglican bishops and nonconformist ministers to meet in what ended up as an unsuccessful attempt to

(PhD diss., Yale University, 1999); Catharine MacLeod, "'Good but not Like': Peter Lely, Portrait Practice, and the Creation of a Court Look," in *Painted Ladies: Women at the Court of Charles II*, ed. Catharine MacLeod and Julia Marciari Alexander (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2001), 50–61.

15. Simon Thurley, *Whitehall Palace: An Architectural History of the Royal Apartments, 1240–1698* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 99–126; Samuel de Sorbière, *A Voyage to England, Containing many Things relating to the State of Learning, Religion, and other Curiosities of that Kingdom* (London, 1709), 16–17.

16. J. P. Vander Motten, "Killigrew, Henry (1613–1700)," *ODNB*; J. P. Vander Motten, *Sir William Killigrew (1606–1695): His Life and Dramatic Works* (Ghent: Rijksuniversiteit te Gent, 1980), 30.

revise the Anglican liturgy to bring uniformity to Protestant worship in England. The Savoy precinct was also the home of the bookseller Samuel Lowndes, who would publish Henry's sermons as well as the posthumous edition of Anne's poems. It was in the chapel of the Savoy dedicated to St. John the Baptist that Killigrew's mother Judith was buried on February 2, 1683 and that Anne was buried on June 15, 1685.¹⁷

In addition to restoring the court at Whitehall, one of the first actions Charles took on returning to London was to reopen the theaters, which also played a significant part in the lives of the London Killigrews. He granted two royal patents to establish new theaters and acting companies, one to William Davenant whose company was called the Duke's Company, and one to Anne Killigrew's uncle, Thomas Killigrew, for the King's Company. Charles and the royalists who had been in exile had returned with a taste for French theater, which offered plays with heroic action and noble sentiments that made use of sophisticated scenery and staging, and most notably and unlike the English commercial theaters prior to the war, the French employed women as professional actors to play women's parts. Davenant had employed women as singers in his Commonwealth entertainments, but this would mark the first appearance of women on a London commercial stage as actresses rather than musicians or entertainers.¹⁸

The demand for new plays to be performed at the new theaters—the Theatre Royal housing the King's Company and the Dorset Garden Theatre for the Duke's Company—was met in part in the early 1660s by Charles's courtiers, including another of Anne Killigrew's uncles, Sir William Killigrew, and James Howard (c. 1640–1669) who married Anne Killigrew's cousin, the illegitimate Charlotte Jemina. William Killigrew's *Selindra* was the first newly written play performed by the King's Company on March 3, 1662.¹⁹ It is a tragi-

17. *Register of the Chapel of St. John the Baptist, the Savoy*, London, Office of the Duchy of Lancaster, Royal Chapel of the Savoy Archive, February 2, 1683 and June 15, 1685.

18. For the earlier history of women as professional performers in England, see Clare McManus, "Women and English Renaissance Drama: Making and Unmaking 'The All-Male Stage,'" *Literature Compass* 4, no. 3 (2007): 784–96.

19. Nancy Klein Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedies, 1660–1671* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 62.

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comedy that blends a heroic plot centering on the restoration of the rightful queen of Hungary, who has been unjustly dispossessed of her throne, with a happily ending romance, clearly a pleasing topic for the new audience, and a subject which many of the new Restoration heroic dramas highlighted. In a commendatory verse prefacing the 1663 publication of the play, the unknown poet commends William Killigrew in terms that would be applied later to Anne: “thy wise, and modest Muse,” it asserts, “breath’st a Noble Courtly Vein, / Such as may Caesar entertain.”²⁰

James Howard, the ninth son of Thomas Howard, 1st Earl of Berkshire, wrote two successful comedies that established the early pattern for what became known as the Restoration comedy of manners featuring the “witty couple.” His *The English Monsieur* (1666) and *All Mistaken, or the Mad Couple* (1667), made the most of the acting talents of the leading male actor in Thomas Killigrew’s company, Charles Hart, and a fresh young newcomer, Nell Gwyn. As was well known to those in their audiences, while they were portraying the dashing young man about town who won’t be caught in the marriage trap and the clever beauty who wins his heart, Hart and Gwyn were in fact conducting a love affair offstage.²¹ In 1667, she scored a tremendous success in John Dryden’s *Secret Love, or The Maiden Queen*, and Samuel Pepys recorded in his diary for March 2, 1667 that the play, staged by Killigrew’s company, entertained both Charles and James who were in the audience, and Nell’s performance as Florimel was enchanting, “a mad[cap] girl, then most and best of all when she comes in like a young gallant; and hath the notions and carriage of a spark the most that ever I saw any man have.”²² Later in 1667, she would become Charles II’s mistress and the subject of court paintings by Lely and others.

20. Sir William Killigrew, *Four New Plays viz: The seege of Urbin, Selindra, Love and friendship, Tragy-comedies, Pandora, a comedy* (Oxford, 1666), “The Latine Verses Translated,” iv.

21. Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 66; Felicity Nussbaum, “Actresses and the Economics of Celebrity, 1700–1800,” in *Theatre and Celebrity in Britain, 1660–2000*, ed. Mary Luckhurst and Jane Moody (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 148–68.

22. Pepys, *Diary*, <http://www.pepysdiary.com/archive/1667/03/02/>.

The 1670s and early 1680s saw the full development of the dramas written for the new stages with their elaborate scenery and professional actresses. It is notable how many of them in the 1660s and 1670s were by writers associated with the court. Comedies by Charles's courtiers such as Sir Charles Sedley's *The Mulberry Garden*, William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, and Sir George Etherege's *Man of Mode* all were set in contemporary London, with references to actual places and people. This style of comedy featured cynical young rake heroes, whose only occupation appears to be to live well and seduce beautiful young women. Dorimant, the hero of *Man of Mode*, was supposedly based on John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, who was present in the audience watching as his character deftly manages multiple affairs: having fallen for the charms of the witty and wealthy Harriet, Dorimant nevertheless is willing to leave her company for an amorous rendezvous with the best friend of the mistress he has cast off at the start of the play. As one biographer has observed, "Restoration theatre has come to be seen as a guide to the values and attitudes of English society in the last decades of the seventeenth century, and not wholly without reason," noting additionally that between December 1666 and November 1667 Charles himself with his royal entourage attended twenty-two plays presented at court and by the King's Men in the Theatre Royal, in addition to visiting the rival company's productions.²³

Both branches of the royal family were patrons of the arts, especially the theaters, and it is clear that both the male and female courtiers were actively engaged in establishing the culture of the courts through their writings and performances. John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, and John Sheffield, 1st Duke of Buckingham and Normanby, for example, were particularly well known for their abilities to create amusing impromptu verses, and both were patrons of John Dryden and other professional writers. Both men also penned serious satires and were deeply engaged with literary matters, with Sheffield's *An Essay on Poetry*, modeled after Horace's *Ars Poetica*, going through multiple editions after it was printed in 1682. John Dryden, the poet laureate, created a steady stream of dramas first for Killigrew's com-

23. Derek Wilson, *All the King's Women: Love, Sex, and Politics in the Life of Charles II* (London: Hutchinson, 2003), 225, 229.

pany and then for Davenant's in the 1670s, but he was also during this time beginning to publish important translations of classical writers including Ovid and the historian Plutarch, making available to readers who had not received classical education or university training the rich classical tradition which so marks Killigrew's verse. In the late 1670s, he published scathing satires on the leading figures in the Popish Plot and the political parties, culminating in 1681 with the publication of *Absalom and Achitophel*, but he also produced the following year in 1682 *Religio laici*, or "the layman's faith," a long poem calling for reason and moderation in religious beliefs to avoid the conflicts of extreme sects both Protestant and Catholic.

In 1675 when Anne Killigrew was fifteen, the court mounted an elaborate and expensive masque, *Calisto, or the chaste nymph* by John Crowne, which highlighted the acting talents of the young princesses and the ladies of the court. The jewels on the costumes were astonishing, being estimated by one attendee, John Evelyn, as being nearly £20,000 worth on the costume of goddess Diana, played by the maid of honor Margaret Blagge; the account records show that her costume was made from twenty-four yards of gold brocade and one hundred and forty-six yards of gold and silver lace in addition to a quiver with sixteen arrows.²⁴ As with the earlier masques of Charles I's court, the play is a celebration of the royal family and the prosperity of the country under their reign: the character of the River Thames declares, "Pleasure, Arts, Religion, Glory, / Warm'd by his propitious Smile, / Flourish there, and bless this Isle."²⁵ The stage direction states that the "Genius of England" then gestures toward the royal family in the audience, exclaiming, "But stay! What wonder does my spirit seize? / See! Here are both the great Divinities," and the Thames confirms, "The God and Goddess too of this bless'd Isle!" thus turning the whole court audience into part of an ideal pastoral world, one filled with youth, beauty, peace, and prosperity. The irony, surely not lost on many, was that the woman portraying the Thames was none other than Charles's former mistress, Mary "Moll" Davis.

24. John Evelyn, *The Life of Margaret Godolphin* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1907), 67; Eleanore Boswell, *The Restoration Court Stage (1660–1702)* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1932), 323–24.

25. John Crowne, *Calisto, or the chaste nymph* (London, 1675), "Prologue," sig.b2r.

Thus while the world of the court was glamorous, luxurious, cultured, and literate, it was simultaneously laced with irony and the grim struggles of self-seeking men and women to hold on to their tenuous positions there. The women associated with the court were sometimes as notorious in their public behaviors as the men. Charles's and James's young mistresses, many of whom served as maids of honor, frequently scandalized Samuel Pepys, who recorded an example on February 8, 1663:

Captain. Ferrers telling me, among other Court passages, how about a month ago, at a ball at Court, a child was dropped [miscarried] by one of the ladies in dancing, but nobody knew who, it being taken up by somebody in their handkerchief. The next morning all the Ladies of Honor appeared early at Court for their vindication, so that nobody could tell whose this mischance should be. But it seems Mrs. Wells fell sick that afternoon, and hath disappeared ever since, so that it is concluded that it was her.²⁶

A French visitor to the court, the Count Grammont, likewise noted that "Lady Middleton, Lady Denham, the queen's and the duchess's maids of honor, and a hundred others, bestow their favors to the right and to the left, and not the least notice is taken of their conduct. As for Lady Shrewsbury, she is conspicuous. I would take a wager she might have a man killed for her every day, find she would only hold her head the higher for it."²⁷

Charles II appears to have been cynically amused by the real-life exploits of the young people in his court as well as entertained by the fictional ones on stage in Thomas Killigrew's theater.²⁸ Bishop Gilbert Burnet, writing about Charles in hindsight, declared that after

26. Pepys, *Diary*, <http://www.pepysdiary.com/archive/1667/03/02/>.

27. Anthony Hamilton, *The Memoirs of Count Grammont*, ed. Gordon Goodwin, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1908), 2:3.

28. For an account of Charles's relationships with his courtiers, see Jeremy Webster, *Performing Libertinism in Charles II's Court: Politics, Drama, Sexuality* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), Chapter 1.

returning from exile, Charles had “a very ill opinion both of men and women; and did not think there was either sincerity or chastity in the world out of principle, but that some had either the one or the other out of humor or vanity. He thought that nobody served him out of love: and so he was quits with the entire world, and loved others as little as he thought they loved him.”²⁹ Sexual intrigues were very often associated with political stakes, especially by contemporary satirists. Rochester wrote in 1673 after the marriage of James and Mary of Modena a nasty little lyric, “Signior Dildo,” sardonically welcoming the Italian sex toy to England and describing the enthusiastic welcome he would be given by the various maids of honor and women of the court, whom he caricatures by name: writing of the widowed Mary, Countess of Falmouth, who had been married to a distant relative of Anne Killigrew’s, Rochester snipes, “The Countess of Falmouth, of whom people tell / Her footmen wear shirts of guinea an ell, / Might save the expense if she did but know / How lusty a young swinger is Signior Dildo.”³⁰ George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, contributed in 1678 his “Character of an Ugly Woman,” attacking the “mother” of the maids of honor in Mary of Modena’s court: as one commentator noted, of all the male court wits, only Sir Charles Sedley did not have any antifemale satires credited to him.³¹ In 1681, the anonymous author of the mocking satire “An Heroic Poem” (included in Appendix 4 in this volume) likewise targets the sexual and political activities of individual court women, as well as the hypocrisy and greed of the men, in his attack on Whig politicians and supporters of Monmouth’s claim to the throne, in the courts of which Anne Killigrew and her family served.

The women at court, however, whose virtue was above question in such satires were the royal wives, Queen Catherine and Princess Mary of Modena, and, of course, there were numerous women who served them who are simply less known to later generations precisely because they did not embrace a libertine lifestyle and thus become

29. Gilbert Burnet, *History of my own Time*, ed. O. Airy, 2 vols (Oxford, 1897–1900), 1:168.

30. *The Works of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, ed. Harold Love (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 248–57.

31. John Harold Wilson, *The Court Wits of the Restoration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), 123–25.

fodder for gossip and satire. Unlike the glamorous courtesan beauties painted by Lely and celebrated by Count Grammont, many women serving in these courts were, like Anne Killigrew's mother, married to others also in royal service. There were various ranks of those who served in female royal households, most having been established during Queen Elizabeth I's long reign, all of whom received salaries, and their titles indicate their relative importance through the degree of access they had to the royal person.

The most important of the ladies in waiting was the Mistress of the Robes, followed by the ladies of the bedchamber, and by the women of the bedchamber, who during this time came to be referred to as dressers. The ladies of the bedchamber were peeresses of the realm and were frequently the wives or daughters of leading political figures or members of the king's councils. These women escorted their royal mistress in her public appearances and assisted her in the formal ceremonial tasks of dressing and dining. The women of the bedchamber, such as Anne Killigrew's aunt, Anne Killigrew Kirke, who served Queen Henrietta Maria as a dresser, Anne's mother Judith, and her cousin Elizabeth Clinton, were ladies in waiting serving Queen Catherine. These were gentlewomen who assisted their royal mistress in more mundane daily tasks such as doing her hair, keeping her clothes, waiting on her at the table, accompanying her on walks, and nursing her when she was ill. These women served on a weekly rotation, during which time they were at their mistresses' beck and call both day and night and would sleep in the royal bedchamber. The widow Lady Tuke, writing in 1682 to her friend Mary Evelyn, John Evelyn's wife, about her position as a lady in waiting, lamented that "there is nothing has troubled me more since I had the honor to serve the Queen than that restraint of my liberty... it makes life less pleasing to me, and really makes one value the world very little, nor that grinning honor which many esteem."³²

Salaries for such positions could be lucrative, but the courts of Charles and James came under financial constraints in the 1660s. In 1663, it was announced that royal servants would no longer be fed at royal expense, but would instead be paid wages to cover their board,

32. Frances Harris, *Transformations of Love: The Friendship of John Evelyn and Margaret Godolphin* (London: Oxford University Press, 2002), 105.

ranging from £547 for the Mistress of the Robes to £60 for a dresser, with additional stipends given based on seniority between £150 and £200 a year.³³ The exceptions to this were the maids of honor, whose meals according to records cost the crown £700 a year, with a £200 yearly pension. The maids of honor, like the pages of the male royals, were the youngest members of the royal courts; Anne Killigrew's uncle, Sir William Killigrew, had entered into the service of the princes of Orange when he was thirteen. They did not serve in the bedchamber itself, but participated in public court functions, interacting with visitors, performing in court entertainments, and forming a decorative entourage for their mistress or master at public events. The maids of honor shared a room with one other, had a "closet" or small private room for writing and devotion, and a common room to receive visitors.³⁴ Commentators are in general agreement that the families of these maids of honor sent their daughters to court primarily to secure good husbands, that is, well-to-do and titled ones, and their appointment was very often a reward for services to the court by their families. Spectacular marriages could be made this way: as has been pointed out, Anne Hyde, Duchess of York, was a maid of honor, as was Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, and Frances Stuart, "La Belle Stuart," fended off the king's advances to become Duchess of Lennox and Richmond.³⁵ As glamorous as this life may seem, it was easy for these young women to fall into debt; they had to provide their own clothes suitable for royal events, and those serving the queen received a stipend of only £10, while those serving the duchess received only £20, and the popular recreation of card playing and gambling also could be a young person's downfall.

A maid of honor who was noted for her piety and distaste of the libertine lifestyles that surrounded her, Margaret Blagge (1652–1678), also had numerous points of connection with people in Anne Killigrew's life. In 1666 she became a maid of honor to Anne Hyde, Duchess of York, and in 1671 on her death, Margaret Blagge became a maid of honor in the court of Queen Catherine. In 1672, she met through

33. Anne Somerset, *Ladies in Waiting from the Tudors to the Present Day* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), 134.

34. Harris, *Transformations*, 107.

35. Harris, *Transformations*, 106–7.

his wife Mary the author and diarist John Evelyn, who became her spiritual counselor and close friend. John Evelyn's preservation of his correspondence with Margaret Blagge and his celebratory biography written after her death, *The Life of Margaret Godolphin* (first printed in 1847 as *The Life of Mrs. Godolphin*), a memorial to her piety and goodness, gives us an alternative picture of court life as experienced by a devout Christian single woman.

Having nursed Anne Hyde through her final illness, the young Margaret Blagge reflected on the fate of those who once were celebrated for their position and influence. "The D[uch]ess died, a Prince honored, in power: had much Wit, much more esteem," wrote the young Margaret, "None remembered her after one Week: None sorry for her. She smelt extremely; was tossed and flung about, & everyone did what they would with that stately Carcass."³⁶ "What is this World!" she exclaimed, "What is Greatness! What to be esteem'd & thought a Wit! We shall all be stripped, without Sense or Remembrance: But God, if we serve him in our Health, will give us Patience in our Sickness."

Although she was an extremely attractive young woman and had several suitors, the one who eventually won her heart was a rising young courtier, Sidney Godolphin, who had entered Charles II's court as a page in 1662 and had risen to the post of groom of the bedchamber, an important position that offered personal contact with the king and involved attending the king in his private rooms and assisting at meals.³⁷ Even so, the couple lacked sufficient funds to marry until 1675, and Margaret herself was constantly torn between marriage and the desire to lead a single life devoted to God. While in the court, her diaries show that she divided her time between serving her royal mistress and retiring into her room for private devotion and study, leaving behind a group of manuscripts containing her meditations and prayers which Evelyn preserved.

Evelyn, who had initially welcomed the return of Charles II, soon became disgusted and dismayed by the libertine atmosphere,

36. Evelyn, *Life of Margaret Godolphin*, 9.

37. R. O. Bucholz, "The Bedchamber: Grooms of the Bedchamber, 1660–1837," in *Court Officers, 1660–1837* (London: Institute for Historical research, 2006), 20–24, at *British History Online*, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=43768>.

and he found in Margaret Blagge his exemplar for feminine piety. As Blagge's cousin, John North noted, even in the court one could find among the women "as many truly pious and strictly religious as could be found in any other resort whatsoever."³⁸ In 1673, after seven years of service, Margaret was determined to leave the world of the court and devote herself to religion, and she turned to a distant relative of Anne Killigrew's to assist her. Lady Berkeley had been formerly the groom of the stole in Anne Hyde, Duchess of York's service (a position of some responsibility involving keeping of the robes of state and dressing the duchess on state occasions), and she had subsequently joined the queen's household. Christiana, Lady Berkeley (1639–1698), was the daughter of a wealthy East India merchant and president of the Levant trading company Sir Andrew Riccard; she had been married and widowed twice before marrying Sir John Berkeley, 1st Baron Berkeley of Stratton. Berkeley was the son of Elizabeth Killigrew, a distant relative of Anne's branch of the family, and as a boy he had grown up with her father and uncles. It is to this Lady Berkeley that Anne Killigrew addresses one of her occasional poems, and two of Anne Killigrew's paintings now are preserved at Berkeley Castle.³⁹

When Margaret Blagge decided to leave court life, she turned to Lady Berkeley to provide a place for her to live. On being granted the queen's permission to resign her post, Evelyn records, she returned to her room and fell upon her knees: "she Bless'd God, as for a Signal Deliverance: She was come out of Egypt, & now on her Way to the Land of Promise."⁴⁰ Margaret Blagge was thought to have left the court in order to be married to Godolphin, but in fact she had decided against marriage, yearning for a life of celibate devotion not dissimilar to Anne Killigrew's frequent rejection of secular love over spiritual in her poems. Margaret did eventually marry her patient suitor in 1675, but died when giving birth in 1678.

Almost a decade after her death, in his diary entry for February 6, 1685, John Evelyn recorded his dismay over what the Restoration had become:

38. Harris, *Transformations*, 134.

39. One is a full-length self-portrait, and one is of an unknown lady.

40. Evelyn, *Life of Margaret Godolphin*, 32–33.

I am never to forget the inexpressible luxury, & prophaness, gaming, & all dissolution, and as it were total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday Evening) which this day sennight, I was witness of; the King, sitting & toying with his Concubines Portsmouth, Cleveland, & Mazarine &c: A French boy singing love songs, in that glorious Gallery, whilst about 20 of the great Courtiers & other dissolute persons were at Basset [a high-stakes card game] round a large Table, a bank of at least 2000 in Gold before them ... and surely as they thought would never have an End: six days after was all in the dust.⁴¹

On February 2, Charles II suddenly fell ill and by February 6 was dead. His brother James was now crowned James II and his wife became Queen Mary. There is presently no known record of Anne Killigrew's participation in any of these events. The last record we have of her concerns her own death from small pox only a few months later in June, 1685, thus making both her birth and her death coincide with the reign of Charles II.

Anne Killigrew: Life

As we have seen, Anne Killigrew was born into a family of courtiers. The Killigrew family was originally from Cornwall, with one branch settling in London. Through her grandmother, Mary Woodhouse (1590–1650), Anne Killigrew was connected to the learned daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, who, like Queen Elizabeth I, had been educated like young men along humanist principles. Through the marriage of the sister of her grandfather, Sir Robert Killigrew (1579–1633), Anne Killigrew was a cousin to the powerful family of the Berkeleys of Stratton. Anne Killigrew's father, uncles, and aunts were born either at Hanworth, near Hampton Court, or in London, and they all, in various ways, served the royal family. As a biographer of her uncle, Thomas Killigrew, commented about that generation, "in many ways

41. John Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. E. S. De Beer, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 4:413–14.