

Parthenia | Ex Umbris

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The Queen's Courtiers

Sir Philip Sidney, President of Chivalry

The Queen's New-yeere's gift

Anthony Holborne, *Pavans, Galliards, Almains* (1599)

Who is it that this darke night

Thomas Morley, *The First Booke of Ayres* (1600)

Who is it that this darke night,
Under my window playneth?
It is one that from thy sighte
Beeing ah exilde disdaineth
Everie other vulgar light.

What if you new beauties see,
Will not they stirre new affection?
I will thinke they pictures bee:
Image like of Saints perfection,
Poorely counterfeiting thee.

Why alas and are you he,
Be not those fond fancies chaunged?
Deare when you find change in me,
Though from me you be estranged,
Let my change to ruin be.

Peace I thinke that some give ear,
Come no more least I get anger.
Blisse I will my blisse forbear,
Fearing sweete you to endauger,
But my soule shall harber there.

Sir Philip Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella*

Hoboecken Tanz
Bransles de Village

Tielman Susato, *Het derde musyck boexken* (Antwerp, 1551)
Anonymous (16th c.)

"Philip Sidney was a true model of worth . . . like Zephyrus he gave life where he blew. The universities abroad and at home accounted him a general of learning; soldiers honor'd him; there was not a cunning Painter, skilful Engineer or excellent Musician that made not himself known to this famous spirit, and found him his true friend, and the common Rendezvous of Worth in his time."

Prelude and Voluntary

William Byrd, *My Ladye Nevells Booke* (c. 1591)

If ever haples woman had a cause

John Bartlet, *A Booke of Ayres* (1606)

If ever haples woman had a cause
To breath her plaintes into the open ayre,
And never suffer inward grieffe to pause
Or seeke her sorrow shaken soules repayre
Then I for I have lost mu onelie brother
Whose like this age can scarsly yeeld another.

Come therefore mournfull Muses and lament,
Forsake all wanton pleasing motions,
Bedew your cheekes, stil shal my teares be spent:
yet still increast with inundations,
For I must weepe, since I have lost my brother,
Whose like this age can scarsly yeeld another.

Then unto grieffe let me a Temple make,
And mourning dayly, enter sorrowes portes,
Knocke on my breast, sweete brother for thy sake,
Nature and love will both be my consorts,
And helpe me aye to wayle my onely brother,
Whose like this age can scarsly yeeld another.

Mary Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, on the death of Sir Philip Sidney

Sir Walter Raleigh: Amore et Virtute

The Queenes Gigue

Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603)

"These men who were thus brought back were the first that I know of that brought into England that Indian plant which they call Tabacca and Nicotia..."

Tobacco

Tobias Hume, *The First Part of Ayres...* (1605)

Tobacco, Tobacco, Sing sweetly for Tobacco,
Tobacco is like love, O love it,
For you see, I wil prove it.

Love maketh leane the fatte mens tumor; So doth Tobacco.
Love still dries uppe the wanton humor; So doth Tobacco.
Love makes men sayle from shore to shore; So doth Tobacco.
Tis fond love often makes men poor; So doth Tobacco.
Love makes men scorne al coward feares; So doth Tobacco.
Love often sets men by the eares; So doth tobacco.

Tobaccoe, Tobaccoe, Sing sweetly for Tobaccoe,
Tobacco is like Love, O love it,
For you see, I have provde it.

Upon a summers day

Anonymous ballad tune

"This captain Raleigh, coming out of Ireland to the English court in good habit (his clothes being then a considerable part of his estate) found the queen walking, till meeting with a plashy place, she seemed to scruple going thereon. Presently [immediately] Raleigh cast and spread his new plush cloak on the ground, whereon the queen trod gently, rewarding him afterwards with many suits, for his so free and seasonable tender of so fair a footcloth."

Christopher Marlowe, *The Passionate Shepherd to his Love*
Sir Walter Raleigh, *The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*

Anonymous ballad tune, arr. GCH

Shepherd: Come live with me, and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, hills and fields,
Woods, or steepie mountaines yields.

Thy gownes, thy shooes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
Soone break, soone wither, soone forgotten, -
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

There will we sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigalls.

Shepherd: A belt of straw and ivie buds,
With corall clasps and amber studs;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant poesies,
A cap of flowers and a kirtle
Imbroydered all with leaves of myrtle;

Nymph: Thy belt of straw and ivy buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy love.

A gowne made of the finest wooll
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Faire lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

Shepherd: The shepheard swaines shall dance and sing
For thy delights each May-morning:
If these delights thy minde may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

Nymph: If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every Shepheard's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.

Nymph: But could youth last and love still breede,
Had joyes no date, nor age no neede,
Then these delights my minde might move
To live with thee and be thy love.

"My Lord of Essex hath chased Mr. Raleigh from the court, and hath confined him to Ireland."

Life

Hume, *The First Part of Ayres...*(1605)

What is our life

Orlando Gibbons, *The First Set of Madrigals...*(1612)

What is our life? a play of passion;
Our mirth the musicall division;
Our mothers' wombs the tyring houses be
Where we are drest for this short Comedy;
Earth is the stage, Heav'n the spectator is
Who sits and marks who here doth act amiss;
Our graves that hide us from the scorching sun,
Are like drawn curtains when the play is done:
Thus playing haste we to our latest rest,
And then we dye in earnest that's no jest.

attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh

Death

Hume, *The First Part of Ayres...*(1605)

The Lie

Go soul the body's guest
Upon a thankless errand,
Fear not to touch the best
The truth shall be thy warrant;
Go since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Say to the Court it glows
And shines like rotten wood,
Say to the Church it shows
What's good, and doth no good;
If Church and Court reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell Potentates they live
Acting by others' action,
Not loved unless they give,
Not strong but by affection;
If Potentates reply
Give Potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition
That manage the estate,
Their purpose is ambition,
Their practice only hate,
And if they once reply
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most,
They beg for more by spending,
Who in their greatest cost
Seek nothing but commending.
And if they make reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell zeal it wants devotion
Tell love it is but lust
Tell time it metes but motion,
Tell flesh it is base dust.
And wish them not reply
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth,
Tell honour how it alters.
Tell beauty how she blasteth,
Tell favour how it falters;

set to a 17th century tune by Paul Shipper

And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
In tickle points of niceness,
Tell wisdom she entangles
Herself in over wiseness.
And when they do reply
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell Physic of her boldness,
Tell skill it is prevention:
Tell charity of coldness,
Tell law it is contention,
And as they do reply
So give them still the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindness,
Tell nature of decay,
Tell friendship of unkindness,
Tell justice of delay.
And if they give reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell Arts they have no soundness,
But vary by esteeming,
Tell schools they want profoundness
And stand too much on seeming.
If Arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie.

Tell faith it's fled the City,
Tell how the country erreth,
Tell manhood shakes off pity,
Tell virtue least preferreth;
And if they do reply
Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast as I
Commanded thee, done blabbing,
Although to give the lie,
Deserves no less than stabbing.
Stab at thee he that will,
No stab thy soul can kill.

Sir Walter Raleigh

INTERMISSION

Sir Henry Lee: Queen's Champion

The Queen's Delight

Hume, *The First Part of Ayres*... (1605)

"On the 17 day of November, Anno 1590, this honourable Gentleman [Lee] together with the Earl of Cumberland, having first performed their service in Armes, presented themselves unto her Highnesse, at the foot of the staires under her Gallery window in the Tilt yard at Westminster . . . Her Majesty beholding these armed Knights coming toward her, did suddenly heare a musicke so sweete and secret, as every one thereat greatly marveiled. . . . The musicke was accompanied with these verses . . ."

His Golden locks

Dowland, *The First Booke of Songs or Ayres* (1597)

His golden locks time hath to silver turnde,
O time too swift, O swiftnesse never ceasing!
His youth gainst time & age hath ever spurnd,
But spurnd in vain, youth waneth by increasing.
Beautie, strength, youth are flowers but fading
seene: Dutie, Faith, Love are roots and ever greene.

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And lovers sonets turne to holy psalmes:
A man at armes must now serve on his knees,
And feed on prayers which are ages almes,
But though from court to cotage he departe
His saint is sure of his unspotted hart.

Sir Henry Lee

Fantasia

Byrd, *Psalms, Songs and Sonnets* (1611)

Times eldest sonne

John Dowland, *The Seconde Booke of Songs or Ayres* (1600)

Times eldest sonne, olde age the heyre of ease,
Strengths foe, loves woe, and foster to devotion,
Bids gallant youths in marshall prowes please,
As for himselfe, hee hath no earthly motion,
But thinks sighes, teares, vowes, praiers and sacrifices,
As good as showes, masks, justes, or tilt devises.

Then sit thee downe, and say thy *Nunc Demittis*,
With *De Profundis*, *Credo*, and *Te Deum*,
Chant *Miserere* for what now so fit is,
As that, or this, *Paratum est cor meum*,
O that thy Saint would take in worth thy hart,
Thou canst not please hir with a better part.

When others sings *Venite exultemus*,
Stand by and turne to *Noli emulari*,
For *quare fremuerunt use oremus*
Vinat Eliza for an *ave mari*,
And teach those swains that lives about thy cell,
To say Amen when thou dost pray so well.

Sir Henry Lee

Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex: Young Favorite

The Queenes good Night

Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke* (London, 1603)

The Earle of Essex Galliard

Dowland, in Morley, *The First Booke of Ayres* (1600)

“...My Lord of Essex chose to evaporate his thoughts in a Sonnet (being his common way), to be sung before the Queene, (as it was) by one Hales, in whose voice shee tooke some pleasure...”

Can she excuse my wrongs

Dowland, *The First Booke of Songs or Ayres* (1597)

Can she excuse my wrongs with vertues cloak?
Shal I call her good when she proves unkind?
Are those cleer fires which vanish into smoak?
Must I praise the leaves where no fruit I find?
No no: where shadows do for bodies stand,
Thou maist be abusde if thy sight be dim,
Cold love is like to words written on sand,
Or to bubbles which on the water swim.
Wilt thou be thus abused still,
Seeing that she wil right thee never?
If thou canst not orecome her wil,
Thy love wil be thus fruitles ever.

Was I so base, that I might not aspire
Unto those high joyes which she holds from me?
As they are high, so high is my desire:
If she this denie, what can granted be?
If she will yeeld to that which reason is,
It is reason's will that love should be just.
Deare make me happy still by granting this,
Or cut off delays if that die I must.
Better a thousand times to die,
Then for to live thus still tormented:
Deare but remember it was I
Who for thy sake did die contented.

Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex

“The Earle of Essex his Buzze, Which he made upon some discontentment he received a little before his journey in to Ireland. Anno Domini 1598”

It was a time when silly bees could speak

Dowland, *The Third and Last Booke of Songs...*(1603)

It was a time when silly bees could speake,
And in that time I was a sillie bee,
Who fed on Time until my heart gan break,
Yet never found the time would favour mee.
Of all the swarme I onely did not thrive,
Yet brought I waxe and honey to the hive.

Then thus I buzd, when time no sap would give,
Why should this blessed time to me be drie,
Sith by this Time the lazie drone doth live,
The waspe, the worme, the gnat, the butterflie,
Mated with grieffe, I kneeled on my knees,
And thus complaind unto the king of Bees.

My liege, Gods graunt thy time may never end,
And yet vouchsafe to heare my plainte of Time,
Which fruitlesse Flies have found to be a friend,
And I cast downe when Atomies do clime,
The king replied but thus, Peace peevisch Bee,
Th'art bound to serve the time, the time not thee.

Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex

From silent night

Dowland, *A Pilgrimes solace* (1612)

“A repentant Poem made by Robert Earle of Essex while he was Prisoner in the Tower. 1601.”

From silent night, true register of moanes,
from saddest Soule consumde with deepest sinnes,
From hart quite rent with sighes and heavie groanes,
my wayling Muse her wofull worke beginnes,
And to the world brings tunes of sad despaire,
Sounding nought else but sorrow, grieffe and care.

Essex' Last Good-night

Anonymous, *Elizabeth Rogers hir virginall booke* (c.1656)

A lamentable Dittie composed upon the death of *Robert Lord Devereau, late Earle of Essex*, who was
beheaded in the Tower of London, upon *Ashwednesday* in the morning. 1601

music: 'Remember O thou man', Thomas Ravenscroft, *Melismata* (1611)

Sweet England's pride is gone,
welladay, welladay,
Which makes her sigh and grone
evermore still:
He did her fame advaunce,
In Ireland, Spain and France,
And now by dismall chaunce
is from her tane.

And sayd unto him there,
mournefully, mournefully,
My Lord you must prepare
to die tomorrow:
Gods will be done quoth he,
Yet shall you strangely see
God strong in me to be,
Though I am weake.

He was a virtuous Peere,
welladay, welladay,
And was esteemed deere
evermore still:
He alwaies helpt the poore,
Which makes them sigh full sore;
His death they doe deplore
In every place.

In the morning was he brought,
welladay, welladay,
Where a Scaffold was set up
within the Tower:
He then prayed heartely,
And with great fervency
To God that sits on hie
for to receive him.

Brave honor grac'd him still
gallantly, gallantly,
He nere did deede of ill,
well it is known:
But envie, that foule fiend
Whose mallice ne're hath end,
Hath brought true vertues
friend unto his thrall.

His gowne he slipt off then
welladay, welladay,
And put off his hat and band
and hung it by,
Praying still continually
To God that sits on hie,
That he might patiently
there suffer death.

That Sunday in the morn,
welladay, welladay:
That he to the Cittie came
with all his troupe:
That first began the strife,
And caused him loose his life,
And others did the like
as well as hee.

He laide his head on the blocke,
welladay welladay,
But his doublet let the stroke
some there did say:
What must be done (quoth he)
Shall be done presently,
Then his doublet off put hee,
and layde down againe.

Shrovetewsdays in the night
welladay, welladay,
With a heavy harted spright
as it is sayd:
The leiftenant of the Tower
Who kept him in his power,
At ten a clocke that hour
To him did come.

Then his headesman did his part
cruelly, cruelly,
He was never seene to start
for all the blowes:
His soule it is at rest
In heaven among the blest,
Where God send us to rest
When it shall please him.

Paradizo

Anthony Holborne, *Pavans, Galliards, Almains* (1599)

The Courtier and the Queen: The fates of Elizabeth's favorites

When Elizabeth Tudor heard the news, on November 17, 1558, that her sister Mary had died and she was the new queen of England, not even the great astrologer John Dee could have known that Elizabeth would reign for forty-five years and die still Queen, still unmarried, and transformed into an epoch and an icon. In order to survive religious quarrels and challenges to her rule from within and to the nation from without, Elizabeth relied on canny statesmen, her own personality, and the projection of that personality into a myth. Her collaborators were her poets, orators, musicians, and impresarios—many of whom were also soldiers, sailors, spies, and statesmen. All Renaissance courts were intimate arenas where power depended on closeness to the sovereign, the construction of factions and, in part at least, on talents we might now regard as personal rather than professional: throwing a really great party, for example, or riding one's horse superbly.

Elizabeth's character seems to have been both powerful and whimsical. In her famous speech at Tilbury before the troops and people who awaited the invasion of the Spanish fleet in 1588, she said:

. . . I do assure you, I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear. I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects, and therefore I am come among you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live or die amongst you all, to lay down for my God and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honor and my blood, even in the dust.

The same woman capable of this majestic and direct rhetoric was also, however, notorious for making and unmaking her mind. It took her fifteen years to agree with her advisors that her cousin Mary of Scotland was too dangerous a rival to keep alive. More than one ambassador, trying to arrange a match for his prince, or a treaty, wrote home in exasperation: *I give up trying to make sense of Her Majesty, she says one thing and does another (or nothing at all).*

All four of our featured heroes are exemplary "Renaissance men" of Elizabeth's reign, three of them from the later part of Elizabeth's reign, when the great anxieties of her first decades of rule—the question of her marriage, the danger of Mary Stuart's claim to the throne and of Catholic Spain's military challenge—had been muted if not settled, and her image complete as virgin goddess, encased in gems and stiffened fabrics, compared to "virtually every flattering female deity of classical and biblical mythology . . . from the Old Testament, the heroines, Judith and Deborah; from

Greece and Rome and Renaissance Italy, Diana, Cynthia, and the Petrarchan mistress, the Platonically learned Laura." From her intimates at least this literary adoration was also couched in terms of love, a late echo of the medieval *chevalier's* hopeless passion for his lady.

Sir Philip Sidney, described by his contemporary Fulke Greville as the 'president of chivalry', was born in 1554, the son of Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy of Ireland, and nephew of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Queen Elizabeth's early favorite. Leaving Oxford without taking a degree, he traveled the continent before returning to England in 1575 to become, though not a favorite of the queen, a popular and eminent courtier. An active patron as well as practitioner of the arts, he encouraged young poets such as Edmund Spenser, who dedicated *The Shepheardes Calendar* to him. An ardent protestant, he incurred the queen's wrath by opposing her projected marriage to the Catholic Duke of Anjou. Dismissed from court, he resided for a time at the estate of his sister Mary Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, where he composed his long pastoral romance *Arcadia*. He also authored *The Defence of Poesy*, and the inspiration for his sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella* may have arisen during his courtship of Penelope Devereux, the sister of the second Earl of Essex and Robert Dudley's step daughter. Sidney later met Giordano Bruno, who dedicated two books to him.

Sidney returned to court by 1581, and was knighted in 1583. In 1585, without the queen's permission, he secretly tried to join Frances Drake's expedition to Cadiz. She instead recalled him to court and made him Governor of Flushing in the Netherlands. In a skirmish with the Spanish he was wounded by a musket ball that shattered his thigh, and he died twenty-two days later, not yet thirty-two years of age. Though he was associated with no great political or martial accomplishments, he was accorded an elaborate funeral of the type usually reserved for great noblemen, and nearly every English poet composed verses in his praise, for he died the embodiment of Elizabethan honor and virtue.

Sir Walter Raleigh is perhaps best remembered for two things he might not have done: spreading his cloak for the Queen to walk on (not impossible at a time when conspicuous gallantry could receive conspicuous reward) and introducing tobacco to England from the New World. Born in 1552, the son of a Devonshire gentleman, he first went to war in 1569 in France. In 1578 he participated in a "piratical venture" against Spanish ships, which failed, and he came to court to make his fortune: tall, handsome, witty, energetic and hotheaded, if we can judge by his being twice arrested

for brawling. He served with ferocity in 1580's campaigns in Ireland; when he returned to court his fortunes rose, in the way of Renaissance courtiers' fortunes: the queen granted him a military commission that meant he could draw the salary and send a deputy to fight; she gave him the lease of a London house, a patent to grant tavern-keepers' licenses, a monopoly on cloth exports, the position of Warden of the Stannaries, and finally a grant of land in Ireland where he was to develop English colonies. It has been noted that for all these marks of favor Elizabeth never named Raleigh to her privy council or gave him any position of real power. In 1584 Raleigh received patents for exploration and started to organize the expeditions to the Americas for which Americans, at least, are aware of him. His Virginia (Roanoke) colonies failed, and the ascendancy of Essex at court pushed Raleigh to the background. A venture to harass Spanish shipping in 1592 was more successful, capturing a Portuguese carrack, but meanwhile Raleigh's seduction of Bess Throckmorton angered Elizabeth and she had him recalled and confined in the Tower. He married Bess and was permitted to retire to the country. In 1595 he led an expedition to South America. His narrative of the voyage, *The Discoverie of Guiana*, is remarkable, but the venture itself failed. We hear that "He was now the most unpopular man in England, not only among the courtiers, but in the nation, for his greed, arrogance and alleged scepticism in religion. In 1590 he was named with the poet Marlowe and others as an atheist." He resumed his rivalry with Essex, the most popular of the courtiers, and for all that Essex was loved and he was not, it was Raleigh that oversaw Essex's execution. However, James I's accession in 1603 ended Raleigh's court career. He was associated with conspiracies against the new king and was thrown into the Tower, eventually spending ten years there under sentence of death, but able to pursue his interests in natural philosophy, in poetry, and in history. He was released in 1617 to lead a new expedition to the Americas, claiming that he could find gold in an area not claimed by Spain (unlikely!). Failing utterly and losing the remnants of his fortune, he returned to England and was executed under the 1603 death sentence.

Sir Henry Lee was related to many of the best-placed people at the Tudor courts. Beginning in service to Henry VIII at age 14, Lee managed to serve four Tudors and one Stuart. His marriage was prudent but unhappy, and his long affaire with Anne Vavasour (maid of honor to Elizabeth, who had already been mistress of the Earl of Oxford and borne his son) later created scandal. (Irregular fornication with a queen's maid of honor was no slight matter: both Anne and Oxford were imprisoned in the Tower of London for a time, as were Walter Raleigh and Bess Throckmorton.) Lee made a grand tour of Europe with his brother-in-law Henry Paget in 1559-60 and again in 1568, reporting back to Elizabeth's court and acquiring the "flowers of knighthood, courtesy and valour,"

according to a contemporary. He was a skillful jousting and fought in the Scottish wars; Elizabeth made him lieutenant of the royal manor of Woodstock where he several times entertained her with elaborate and clever festivities. He brought this talent to London in 1580, becoming master of the armoury and thus responsible for the Accession-day tilts, with their theatrical presentations of Elizabeth's glories. He himself served as her champion in gorgeous armour; it was upon his resignation of this position in 1590 that he arranged for "His golden locks," in its Dowland setting, to be sung. (Fernie, in the DNB, comments that "this famous lyric . . . may or may not be by Lee himself.") After Elizabeth's death, Lee attended James I's accession, hosted Queen Anne at Ditchley, and received an annuity from the crown until his own death in 1611.

Handsome, active, likeable (but subject to moods), Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, came to Elizabeth's court when he was about twenty and the Queen fifty-five. Robert Devereux's mother, Lettice (nee Knollys), was a cousin of Queen Elizabeth's mother Anne Boleyn. In 1560 Lettice married Walter Devereux, then Viscount Hereford. Rumors of an affair with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Elizabeth's great favorite in the first part of her reign, arose in 1565, when Lettice was pregnant with her first son, Robert. Leicester stood godfather to the boy and, in 1578, two years after Walter – now Earl of Essex – died in Ireland, Lettice did in fact marry Leicester in his house at Wanstead.

Robert acceded to the earldom in 1576 at age 11. In 1585 he went with Leicester, his stepfather, to court and then to the Dutch wars in which Leicester commanded. He performed well at the battle of Zutphen. At that same battle Sir Philip Sidney died, bequeathing to Essex a sword and, by extension, the claim to his own reputation as perfect scholar-poet-courtier-knight. In 1590 Essex married Sidney's widow.

Upon his return to court, Essex charmed the Queen and became her frequent companion, so that "he commeth not to his owne lodginge tyll the birdes singe in the morninge." Leicester arranged for the position as Master of the Horse that he had held since Elizabeth's accession in 1558 to be passed to Essex, and at the Armada crisis of midsummer 1588 Essex was named commander of the cavalry in the army of which his stepfather was general. (Of course, in the event the great Spanish Armada was defeated by Drake and the English fleet, and by the winds, and the army had nothing to do.)

Leicester's death in September 1588 left Essex without his patron and badly in debt, not an uncommon state throughout his life. (Being a favored courtier was an expensive occupation, especially if you sought a popular reputation. Even military ventures required investment by the commanders.) Elizabeth gave him a tax farm (on sweet wines) and allowed him to lease the

estate at Wanstead where his mother had married Leicester, and Leicester's London house.

Essex was ambitious to lead in England; while he profited by his closeness to the Queen, he resented the exigencies of flattery and subservience that court life demanded, especially subservience to a woman. He was known to be high-tempered, quick to take offense, "a great resenter and weak dissembler of the least disgrace," and subject to periods of gloom. His relationship with the queen was marked by repeated harsh words, sulks, and reconciliations. But at the same time he was generous and open to suitors, if often unsuccessful in obtaining for them their desires.

In 1591, Essex was given command of a force sent to Normandy to combine with Henri IV in his fight against the French Catholics and their Spanish allies: the expedition eventually failed completely, despite Essex's successful pleas for additional funds and his conspicuous bravery. His brother Walter was killed. His closeness to the French king sparked the queen's suspicion. And, on his return, the position of chancellor of Oxford University was given to another man, and Lord Burghley's son Robert Cecil, no soldier, joined the privy council. The factional lines were drawn.

Essex himself joined the privy council in 1593 and tried to establish himself as the successor to Burghley, who was aging and ill. He took on foreign affairs, and in the vexed matter of religion set himself up as a champion of toleration of Catholics, if not of Spain and Spanish power. He positioned himself as a military leader, disbursed patronage and built friendships in the diplomatic corps, clergy, and scholarly circles. He secretly communicated with James VI of Scotland, offering his support to James' succession claim. He urged Elizabeth to maintain ties with France and to regard Spain as a constant danger. In 1596 Essex led an attack that destroyed the Spanish fleet in Cadiz harbor and stormed the city.

The next year Essex convinced the queen to approve a naval attack on Spain. He and his followers invested heavily in a strong fleet and army. However, the winds prevented the intended invasion, the army fell sick, and the leaders decided instead to sail to the Azores and try to capture the Spanish treasure ships. They failed (by three hours!), they returned to England to find a Spanish fleet heading for Falmouth and had to scramble to devise defences, and, while the attack was dispersed by the wind, the whole venture was an expensive disaster, damaging Essex's credit both financial and personal. Meanwhile, his rival Robert Cecil had been named secretary of state, and Admiral Howard, his co-leader of the Cadiz expedition, seemed to be getting all the credit for it.

Continental politics had also moved on. Henri IV

signed a peace treaty with Spain in 1598, dismantling the alliance among France, Holland, and England. Elizabeth and her other statesmen were also looking towards settlement rather than aggression. The dramatic moment came on July 1, in the course of a dispute over the naming of a new Lord Deputy for Ireland. In a gross breach of etiquette, Essex deliberately turned his back on the Queen. She slapped his head and cursed him, and he put his hand on his sword and said, "he neither could nor would put up so great an affront and indignity, neither would he have taken it at King Henry the Eighth his hands." He was prevented from striking her, but he had gone too far; he left court at once for Wanstead and, rather than immediately suing for forgiveness, wrote letters with dangerous comments like: "What, cannot princes err? cannot subjects receive wrong? is an earthly power or authority infinite?" It was a difficult moment, with the death of Lord Burghley (Elizabeth's principal counselor since her accession) in August, and of Philip of Spain in September, and news of military disaster in Ireland. The queen and Essex were reconciled by mid September. Essex himself would go to put down the rebels under the Earl of Tyrone, who had ambushed and destroyed an English force. Elizabeth agreed to raise and pay for a large army, and Essex declared that he was not afraid of the Irish, but only of the political maneuverings by the Cecil-Bacon-Raleigh faction that would take place when he was gone.

Essex left in late March 1599. He had intended a quick strike against the North, where Tyrone was; instead he found himself fighting in the South, and realizing that the dramatic victory he had envisaged was impossible. Elizabeth insisted that he proceed against Tyrone. In September he arranged a parley, at which he and Tyrone spoke privately: the terms are unknown, but a truce was agreed, and Essex, ill, turned back to Dublin. On hearing of it, the queen wrote back: "It appeareth by your journal that you and the traitor spoke half an hour together without anybody's hearing, wherein, though we that trust you with a kingdom are far from mistrusting you with a traitor, yet we marvel you could carry it no better. If we had meant that Ireland should have been abandoned, then it was very superfluous to have sent over a personage such as yourself." She again demanded that he bring Tyrone to battle. But before her letter arrived in Ireland Essex had abruptly left for England, and four days later burst into her private chamber at Nonsuch Palace, he mud-soaked, she not yet dressed. His defense of his actions could not satisfy the council, and he was placed under arrest at York House, and there he remained, sick with kidney stones and dysentery, till March 1600. The charges of treason that Elizabeth had been contemplating finally seemed insufficient, although he had clearly been incompetent and defiant of royal authority; in addition, public opinion favored him. In the summer, he was released from all confinement, but he was forbidden to go to court. He had no position, much debt, and no income.

Essex turned to conspiracy. Disaffected persons of all kinds gathered and plotted. Messages were sent to James VI suggesting that the Cecil party at court backed the Spanish Infanta's claim to the throne, and asking for troops. Such a noisy and generalized conspiracy could not be kept secret from Cecil and his agents and friends. On February 7, 1601, Essex was called to appear before the council, and refused. His friends and supporters gathered on the 8th to march into the City of London. They were largely unarmed, and Essex swore that no harm should come to the Queen: can he have thought to rule through her? The

support they expected from London's sheriff and people failed to materialize. The leaders were arrested, and Essex went to the tower on the 9th. On the 19th, he was tried for treason and convicted, along with the earl of Southampton.

By all reports he went meekly and soberly to his end, though the bit about the collar of his doublet getting in the way of the axe seems like invention.

Nancy Mande



Parthenia, hailed by the New Yorker as "one of the brightest lights in New York's early-music scene," is a dynamic ensemble exploring the extraordinary repertory for viols from Tudor England to the court of Versailles and beyond. Known for its remarkable sense of ensemble, Parthenia is presented in concerts across America, and produces its own lively and distinguished concert series at Corpus Christi Church in NYC, collaborating regularly with the world's foremost early music specialists and has been featured on radio and television and in prestigious festivals and series including Music Before 1800, Maverick Concerts and the Regensburg Tage Alter Musik.

Noteworthy among Parthenia's inventive programs have been a presentation of the complete instrumental works of Robert Parsons at Columbia's Miller Theatre, and the complete viol fantasies of Henry Purcell at the Cathedral of St John the Divine. Parthenia performs often at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, both in Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium and in the Museum's Medieval Sculpture Hall, and appeared in conjunction with the exhibition, "Searching for Shakespeare," at the Yale Center for British Art. Parthenia's popular touring program, "When Music and Sweet Poetry Agree," is a unique collaboration with actor Paul Hecht and soprano Jacqueline Horner, a celebration of Shakespearean poetry and music.

Parthenia has commissioned, premiered and recorded many new works by composers such as Phil Kline, Brian Fennelly, Will Ayton, Randy Sandke, John Stone, Nicholas Patterson, and others, in part through grants from the American Composers Forum, the Camargo Foundation, Roger Williams University, the Viola da Gamba Society of America, and private funds. An ASCAP/CMA Award honored Maverick

Concerts' 2002 Season, which included two world premieres of works by Brian Fennelly, commissioned especially by Maverick for Parthenia. Through a 2006 grant from the Jerome Foundation, Parthenia is excited to be commissioning and premiering "Nothing Proved Can Be," a new song cycle for viol consort, voice and interactive audio processing, set by composer Kristin Norderval to the extraordinary poetry of Queen Elizabeth I. Parthenia recently recorded a new CD of the works of Will Ayton, "A Reliquary for William Blake," on the MSR Classics label. Parthenia is represented by GEMS Live! Artist Management: www.gemsny.org/gemslive For more information about Parthenia, please visit www.parthenia.org.

Ex Umbris (Out of the Shadows) has attracted the attention of audiences, colleagues and critics with unique and evocative performances of medieval, Renaissance and early baroque music. The musicians of Ex Umbris use their virtuosity and versatility on early strings, winds, percussion and voice to enliven the finest art music of the past, and their imagination, improvisational skills, and affinity with many styles of traditional music inspire explorations and reconstructions of the lost and unwritten traditions of early music.

Ex Umbris has toured both nationally and internationally, having appeared in international music festivals such as the Tage Alter Musik in Regensburg, Germany, and the IX Encuentro Internacional de Música Antigua in Mexico City, and are frequent guest performers at Villa La Pietra in Florence, Italy. Their music is featured in the Showtime historical drama "The Tudors", and they participated as musicians and lecturers in the 12-part music-education series Exploring the World of Music for PBS educational television. Ex Umbris performed for the score of the Ric

Burn's documentary on the history of New York City that aired the Fall of 1999 on PBS, and also appeared at the 5th Millennium Council event in the East Room of the White House, for the Clinton administration, on January 25th, 1999.

In programs that are "inventive and colorful" (The Washington Post), that take "one delightful turn after another" (The New York Times), presented with "a welcome sense of drama" (The New York Times), and a unique style that has made "Ex Umbris....that one new discovery of this

year" (Frankfurter Allgemeine), Ex Umbris strives, in the noblest Renaissance tradition, to delight the ear, to stimulate the mind, and to move the heart of the listener.

Ex Umbris has two recordings on the Dorian label: CHACONA, Renaissance Spain in the Age of Empire; and THE DIAMOND OF FERRARA, Music from the Court of Ercole I. Ex Umbris is also featured on the Windham Hill compilation cd 'Renaissance'.

PARTHENIA

2008-2009 Season

November 14, 2008 - Corpus Christi Church (529 West 121st Street)

"Nothing Proved"

World premiere of Kristin Norderval's "Nothing Proved," a dramatic and haunting new song cycle for viols, voice and interactive audio processing, set to the intriguing poetry of Queen Elizabeth I, along with Renaissance works representing Elizabeth's golden reign.

April 4, 2009 - St. Ignatius of Antioch Church (552 West End Avenue)

Parthenia collaborates with Canticum Novum Singers, directed by Harold Rosenbaum

"Music for viols and choir from court to countryside"

Glorious Elizabethan and Jacobean Eastertide anthems, street cries, consort songs, and instrumental works, by the English master composers Byrd, East, Gibbons, Tye, and Jenkins.

May 1, 2009 - Corpus Christi Church

"Poeticall Music: Masterpieces from the viol consort repertoire"

The four members of Parthenia delve deeply into the 16th and 17th – century English and northern European repertoire whose seductive musical powers led us to our love of the viol.

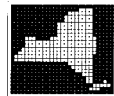
Parthenia thanks the following individuals and organizations for their wonderful support:

JoCarole Lauder, Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro, Time Warner, Michael Siny, Phong Bui, Gary Wedow, Janet and David Offensend, Virginia and Richard Storr, Maspeh Federal Savings, Johnson & Johnson, Elizabeth Guiber, Nancy Tooney, Louise Basbas, Sam Chell, Jane Furth and Augie Matzdorf, Michael Rigby, Wendy Steiner, Brigitte Segmuller, Webster Williams, Naomi and Stephen Antonakos, Nancy Goldring, Samuel and Linda Kramer, Hans & Judy Lie, Jill Samant, Irving and Lucy Sandler, Michael & Nina Sundell, Regan Heiserman and Bob Karen, Amanda Pond, Margaret Brown, Norma Cote, Rackstraw Downes, Paula Gannon, Alain and Ariane Kirili, Patsy Rogers, Hugh Young, John Behan, Anna Burton, Suzanne Darron, Gladys Foxe, Manfred Korman, Judith Murray, Joyce Richardson, Peter and Sally Saul, Tom Warren, Laura and Michael Goudket, William Atkinson, Joy Hudecz, Max Lijebitz, Lawrence Loewinger, Nona Mosiej, Arthur Williams, Evelyn Simon, Grace Feldman, Susan Hellauer, Cynthia Shaw and David Simonoff, Tilda Norberg and George McClain, Bonnie Lassen.

Parthenia acknowledges the following people and organizations for help in making this concert possible:

Father Raymond Rafferty, Louise Basbas, David Varenne, and William Brown of Corpus Christi Church; Gene Murren, Naomi Morse, Paul Ross, Mike O'Connor, Suzanne Ford, Ken Snyder, and Elizabeth Crowfield of Gotham Early Music Scene; Parthenia Volunteers Nancy Tooney, Nancy Kennard, John Romney, Ellie Seepes, and Beth Cullinane; Dongsok Shin, recording engineer

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Parthenia is a sponsored project of the New York Foundation for the Arts.
Parthenia's concert season is made possible with public funds from
the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency.