

**B18 Here lieth one who if his case be bad**

*Notes.* This epitaph on Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury (d.1610), survives in a number of variants, some more opaque than others. In this version, the scribe has copied the couplet in such a way as to make some sense of its message. The couplet thus appears to depend on a pun on “grace”, as both divine grace and the earthly title given to the Archbishop. Thus if Bancroft is now in hell—“if his case be bad”—it is because he lacked (divine) “grace” even though he had the title “grace” while alive.

“On Badscroft Archbishop of Canterbury”

Here lieth one who if his case be bad } his

It is because he wanted what he had } grace

**Source.** John Rylands MS Eng. 410, fol. 21r

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 18r; Bodleian MS Firth d.7, fol. 160r; CUL Add. MS 4138, fol. 49r