

## F8 Brave hardie Carre-man that with thy bastinado

*Notes.* This short poem addresses a series of potentially troubling ethnic and social inversions and transformations—Robert Carr’s transition from a Scotsman to a titled Englishman, and from a socially obscure “Carre-man” or cart-driver to an Earl; and Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex’s loss of social, aristocratic and masculine symbolic capital in the wake of Carr’s marriage to Essex’s former wife. The one hitherto identified variant of this poem addresses its target as “Brave worthy carter”, making the identification of Robert Carr less certain while at the same time rendering the theme of social transformation more obvious.

Brave hardie Carre-man<sup>1</sup> that with thy bastinado,<sup>2</sup>  
Redeemst thy shoulders from the Scottish strappado<sup>3</sup>  
Take thow the Earle-dome,<sup>4</sup> give the Earle the carte,<sup>5</sup>  
He a dull coward, thow a valliant hearte.

**Source.** V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 71v

**Other known sources.** BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 69v

F8

<sup>1</sup> *Carre-man*: Robert Carr is here identified as a car-man, or cart-driver, thus typing him (somewhat unfairly) as socially base.

<sup>2</sup> *bastinado*: a cudgel or a cudgelling. In this case, the reference is almost certainly a bawdy allusion to Carr’s sexual prowess.

<sup>3</sup> *Scottish strappado*: the strappado is a form of torture in which the victim is pulled up by a rope around the hands and then let drop, wrenching out the shoulders. Carr’s freeing of his shoulders from the Scottish strappado almost certainly refers to his escape from his merely Scottish identity following the acquisition of an English earldom.

<sup>4</sup> *Earle-dome*: the earldom of Somerset, bestowed on Carr in November 1613.

<sup>5</sup> *give...the carte*: the derogation of the Earl of Essex, whose failings have allowed Carr to displace him, and have forced him to drive or ride in the socially base cart.

---