

G4 Sonnet Benjamin, whil'st thou art yong

Notes. As with “*Mee thought I walked in a dreame*”, John Hoskyns composed this poem during his year-long imprisonment in the Tower following the dissolution of the 1614 Parliament. Addressed to Hoskyns’ son, the poem, like the dream allegory, reflects on the political constraints on free speech that had landed Hoskyns in prison. The poem circulated in both Latin and English versions.

“Hoskins (imprison’d) to his sonne”

Sonne Benjamin,¹ whil'st thou art yong,
And hast not yet use of thy tongue;
Make it thy slave, whil'st thou art free;
Curb it, least it imprison thee.

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 2v

Other known sources. Osborn 203; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 213r; Bodleian MS CCC.327, fol. 23v; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 149; Bodleian MS Rawl. B. 151, fol. 103r; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 727, fol. 94v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 117, fol. 16r; BL Add. MS 4130, fol. 93r; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 148r; BL Add. MS 21433, fol. 147r; BL Add. MS 25303, fol. 163r

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¹ *Benjamin*: other copies read “Benedict”.
