

## H7 When Carr in Court a Page at first began

*Notes.* This libel, analyzed by Lindley (160-1) and Bellany (Politics 169), is an adaptation of Epigram 4, “In Getam”, printed in Book 5 of Thomas Bastard’s *Chrestoleros* (107). Like the libel, Bastard’s original is in essence an attack on the violation of an ideally static social order by the rise of obscure men—Geta is by origin a weaver—to status and dignity. Knowles (“Crack Kisses” 147) argues that “the ‘swelling’ here can be read as sexual as much as titular”.

“On Sir Robart Carr Earle of Sommersett”

When Carr in Court a Page<sup>1</sup> at first began  
Hee swell’d and swell’d into a Gentleman;  
And when a Gentleman<sup>2</sup> and bravely dight;  
Hee swell’d and swell’d till Hee became a Knight:<sup>3</sup>  
At last forgetting what Hee was at first,  
  
Hee swelld into an Earle,<sup>4</sup> and then Hee burst.

5

**Source.** Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 68r

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 151; Nottingham MS Portland PW V 37, p. 142; Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 63v; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 66

H7

<sup>1</sup> *Page:* Carr arrived at the Jacobean court in England as a page to George Home, Earl of Dunbar.

<sup>2</sup> *Gentleman:* Carr was appointed Gentleman of the Bedchamber in December 1607.

<sup>3</sup> *Knight:* Carr was knighted in December 1607.

<sup>4</sup> *Earle:* Carr became Earl of Somerset in November 1613.

---