

L10 Heaven blesse King James our joy

Notes. In the chosen source, this scabrous poetic assault on the favourite and his much-rewarded kindred is dated 1623. Knowles (“To ‘scourge the arse’” 77-78) analyzes the poem’s use of images of sodomy to “figure the profligate acquisition of rich matches and office”, while Cogswell (Blessed Revolution 47-48) contextualizes the poem’s bitter attack on Buckingham’s kin as evidence of the hatred the favourite’s pro-Spanish policies had aroused. This particular copy of the poem includes marginal notes identifying some, but not all, of the personages targeted by the libeller.

Heaven blesse King James our joy,

And charles his baby. [m.note: “The prince”]

Great George our brave viceroy [m.note: “Buckingham”]

And his fayre Lady.¹

Old Bedlame buckingame,² [m.note: “George his mother”] 5

With her Lord Keeper.³ [m.note: “Bishoppe Williams”]

Shee loves the fucking game

Hee’s her cunt creeper.

Thees bee they goe so gay,

In court and citty,

Yett no man cares for them,

Is not this pittie. 10

Thee fayre young Marchionesse,⁴

And Lady Feildinge,⁵

Kate for her worth heavens blesse 15

Su:⁶ for her yeildinge.

Ned Villers hath a wife⁷

And shee’s a good one,

Buttler⁸ leads an ill life,

Yett’s of the blood one 20

Theese be they, goe so gay

In court & citty,
And find grace in each place,
Or else t'were pittie.

Cranefeild ⁹ I make a vow;	[m.note: "Lord treasurer"]	25
Not to bee partiall,		
Nan ¹⁰ was us'd you know how,	[m.note: "his wife"]	
By the earle Marshall, ¹¹	[m.note: "Arundell"]	
Thy horne of honour ¹² foole		
Hee hath exalted		30
Tell no tales out of scoole		
Least thou bee palted, ¹³		
These bee they, goe so gay		
And keepe the mony,		
Which hee can better keepe		35
Then his wifes cunny.		
Old Abbott Anthony	[m.note: "Sir Anthony Ashley"]	
I thinke hath well done,		
Since hee left sodomy,		
To marry Sheldon. ¹⁴		40
Shee hath a buttocke plumpe,		
Keepe but thy tarse ¹⁵ whole,		
And shee'le hold up her rumpe,		
With her black arse hole.		
These bee they, goe so gay,		45
In court & citty,		
Yett the next spring, they must singe,		
Thee Cookeoes ditty. ¹⁶		
And Vicecount Feildinge ¹⁷ too	[m.note: "Sir Wllm Feildinge"]	
Is a good fellowe		50

But indeed Tom Comptons¹⁸ blew

Nose, doth looke yellowe

Will¹⁹ hath the better way

Hee can indure all,

What need Tom care a straw?

55

Lincolne²⁰ can cure all.

These bee they, drinke & play,

In court still busy

They will supp at the cupp,

Till there braynes dizey.

60

Young Compton²¹ might have had,

Wives by the dozen,

And yet the foole was madd

For George²² his cosen

Maxwell²³ swares by his sale

65

Hee's not bee hindred,

They gett the divell & all,

That swive²⁴ the kindred.

Thes be they, goe so gay,

All the Ile over.

70

There is no greater foole,

Then the fond lover.

Kitt²⁵ was allmost forgott,

[m.note: "Kitt Villers"]

Damport²⁶ had hid him,

75

They two were at the pott,

While Wray out ridd him²⁷

For at his elbowe stood

Bulching²⁸ with sherry

[m.note: "The drawer"]²⁹

Cryng this breeds good blood

Hang wives, bee, merry.

80

Thes be they spend the day,
I drinke & swivinge³⁰
Gentle Kitt learne more witt
Then goe a wifinge.

Thee fidler was an asse, 85

Hee liv'd by scraping,

His lusty kindred was,

Not worth the japing.³¹

Nor yett in number sure

Could they come neere us,

90

Wee are the chast & pure,

Hell need not feare us.

These bee they, goe so gay

In court & citty,

Yett but few love us,

95

Thee more is the pittie.

Harke how the wagons crack

With there rich ladinge³²

Doll³³ comes up with her packe,

Su's³⁴ fitt for tradinge.

100

Phill:³⁵ will no longer stay,

With her base baby

What dare the people say

When shees a lady

Thes be they, goe so gay

105

In court & citty

Would you have an office pray

You must bee thiss witty.

Source. Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, pp. 187-89

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Douce 357, fol. 16r; Bodleian MS Don.c.54, fol. 60v; Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 398, fol. 192r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 178v; Bodleian MS Tanner 306, fol. 257r; BL Add. MS 5832, fol. 206v; BL Add. MS 61683, fol. 74r; TCD MS 806, fol. 75r

L10

¹ *his fayre Lady*: in 1620, Buckingham married Katherine (Kate) Manners, daughter of the Earl of Rutland.

² *Bedlame buckingame*: the favourite's mother, Mary Villiers, who was created Countess of Buckingham in her own right in 1618. "Bedlame" here means "bedlam" or mad-woman. Other copies, however, have "bel-dame", which could mean either "old woman", or "hag" and "witch".

³ *her Lord Keeper*: John Williams, who had been a chaplain to the Countess of Buckingham, was created Lord Keeper and Bishop of Lincoln in the summer of 1621.

⁴ *fayre young Marchionesse*: the favourite's wife, Katherine (Kate) Villiers.

⁵ *Lady Feildinge*: Susan Villiers, the favourite's older sister, had married William Feilding, Earl of Denbigh.

⁶ *Su*: i.e. Susan Feilding.

⁷ *Ned Villers hath a wife*: Sir Edward Villiers, the favourite's half-brother by his father's first marriage, married Barbara St. John.

⁸ *Buttler*: Elizabeth Villiers, the favourite's half-sister by his father's first marriage, married Sir John Boteler.

⁹ *Cranefeild*: Sir Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex and, from 1621 to 1624, Lord Treasurer.

¹⁰ *Nan*: Cranfield married as his second wife Anne Brett, the favourite's cousin on his mother's side.

¹¹ *earle Marshall*: Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, Earl Marshal.

¹² *horne of honour*: Cranfield's cuckold horns.

¹³ *palted*: hit with missiles.

¹⁴ *Sheldon*: Philippa Sheldon, who married the aged Sir Anthony Ashley in January 1622. Philippa was

the sister of Elizabeth Sheldon, who was married to Buckingham's brother Christopher (Kit) Villiers.

15 *tarse*: penis.

16 *Thee Cookeoes ditty*: the cuckoo was notorious for laying its eggs in other birds' nests; hence "cuckoo" was a term for "cuckold". Perhaps the implication is that, married to the aged sodomite Ashley, Philippa Sheldon was likely to stray, and any child she might conceive would thus be illegitimate.

17 *Vicecount Feildinge*: Sir William Feilding, appointed Earl of Denbigh in September 1622, husband of the favourite's sister Susan.

18 *Tom Comptons*: the favourite's step-father, Sir Thomas Compton, who married Mary Villiers c.1609.

19 *Will*: either Sir William Feilding or, perhaps, Thomas Compton's brother, William Compton, Earl of Northampton.

20 *Lincolne*: John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln and Lord Keeper, and alleged lover of Thomas Compton's wife, the Countess of Buckingham.

21 *Young Compton*: probably Spencer Compton, son of William Compton, Earl of Northampton, and the favourite's cousin by marriage.

22 *George*: i.e. the favourite Buckingham.

23 *Maxwell*: perhaps Buckingham's friend Robert Maxwell, Earl of Nithsdale.

24 *swive*: have sex with.

25 *Kitt*: Sir Christopher Villiers, Buckingham's brother, created Earl of Anglesey in 1623.

26 *Damport*: probably a contraction of Davenport; which Davenport, however, is unknown. It is possible that it could be the lawyer Humphrey Davenport, who was at this time connected with Henry de Vere, Earl of Oxford, later blamed for facilitating Edward Wray's elopement with Lady Elizabeth Norris.

27 *Wray out ridd him*: Edward Wray, a Groom of the Bedchamber, eloped with Lady Elizabeth Norris in March 1622. Lady Norris, the daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, had, as Chamberlain reported, been "designed to Kit Villers" (2.429). Wray lost his court position as a result.

28 *Bulching*: swelling, bulging.

²⁹ *drawer*: the server at the bar.

³⁰ *swivinge*: having sex.

³¹ *japing*: to jape had a number of meanings that are plausible in this context, including “to deceive” and “to copulate”.

³² *rich ladinge*: i.e. the wealth and lands the Villiers extended kindred has amassed thanks to George’s position at court.

³³ *Doll*: a nickname for Dorothy. The only plausible candidate among the Villiers extended kindred would be the favourite’s aunt on his mother’s side, Dorothy Beaumont, wife of John Hill, whose daughter Susan married Sir Edward Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, early in 1623.

³⁴ *Su’s*: either Susan Feilding or (more likely if Doll is Dorothy Beaumont) Buckingham’s cousin Susan Hill, who married Sir Edward Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, early in 1623.

³⁵ *Phill*: possibly Philippa Sheldon/Ashley, although the reference to her “base baby” is unclear.
