

Mii4 Why shoulde poore chauncelour be condemned by a cry

Notes. This poem on Bacon is unusual in its focus on his alleged homosexual relationship with his servant(s). To “go behind” becomes a combined allusion to bribery and sodomy. In the only known version of the poem, it is presented as the beginning of “Great Verulam is very lame the gout of go-out feeling”; however, since the latter poem is otherwise relatively stable, and widely circulated, the following lines are best considered as a discrete text.

Why shoulde poore chauncelour be condemned by a cry

Who tooke from few yett gave to many

He strove to make his Lady¹ rich we finde

He lov'd her well but alas he went behinde

God knowes he husband' not his store²

He should have done his youth less: his Lady more

But now's the time all freely speake their minde

Thy judgments are he wente too much behinde.

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Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f.10, fol. 96r

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¹ *his Lady:* i.e. his wife, Lady Alice Bacon.

² *God knowes...store:* presumably a reference to the fact that Bacon had no children