

### Miii5 The Kinge & the court desyrous of sport

*Notes.* This poem concerns a visit by King James to Oxford in August 1621, for the duration of which he kept his court at Woodstock. The poem clearly became best-known for its final eight lines, which describe a famously disastrous sermon delivered by Richard Corbett, who was at that time Dean of Christ Church. Corbett was evidently distracted from his sermon by a ring which had been given to him by the King, and as a result lost his place in his script. Indeed these lines are commonly transcribed as a discrete poem (see list below), as well as being incorporated into the longer version.

“On the Schollers flocking to Woodstock”

The Kinge & the court desyrous of sport

Six dayes at Woodstock did lye:<sup>1</sup>

The reverend Doctors, & Sattin-sleeved Proctors<sup>2</sup>

And rest of the Juvenall frye:

Whose faces did shine, with beere & with wine,

Soe fatt, that it may be thought,

University cheere, with Colledge stronge beere

Made them better fedd then taught.

An hundred beside, on horsebacke did ride

For Schollers were wondrous kind,

And ever more, as they rode before

They kisse the wenchies behind.

A 1000 on foote, without cloake or boote,

Came hither as good subjects should

And all was to show, how far they would goe

To do the kings Majesty good.

The Reverend Deane<sup>3</sup> with his band starch'd cleane

Did preach before the kinge

A ringe I espyed, in his bandstrings tyed

Was not that a pretty thing?  
The ringe without doubt, was that brought him out  
And made him forgett what was next:  
For every one there, will say, I dare sweare  
Hee handled it more then his text.

**Source.** Folger MS V.a.162, fol. 40r

**Other known sources.** Aubrey 167; *Wit Restor'd* 62; *Stoughton Manuscript* 62; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 40v; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 31r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 13; Bodleian MS Malone 19, p. 111; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 84, fol. 73v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 206, p. 72; Bodleian MS Tanner 466, fol. 67r; BL Add. MS 30982, fol. 22v; BL Add. MS 70454, fol. 53r; BL Add. MS 70639, fol. 65r; Folger MS V.a.124, fol. 19v; Folger MS V.a.262, p. 60; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 185

**Known sources of the shorter version.** "Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript" 122; Bodleian MS Ashmole 36-37, fol. 156r; Bodleian MS Aubrey 6, fol. 106r; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 15v; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 81v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 4v; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 116, fol. 54r; Bodleian MS Smith 17, p. 111; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 81r; BL Add. MS 15227, fol. 28r; BL Add. MS 44963, fol. 36v; BL MS Egerton 923, fol. 10v; BL MS Egerton 2026, fol. 66r; BL MS Harley 7316, fol. 17v; BL MS Sloane 1479, fol. 10r; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 12r; BL MS Sloane 1867, fol. 45r; NLS MS 2060, fol. 15v; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 207

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<sup>1</sup> *Six dayes at Woodstock did lye*: the visit to Woodstock, near Oxford, took place in the last week of August 1621 (Nichols 4.713-15).

<sup>2</sup> *Proctors*: officers of the university.

<sup>3</sup> *Reverend Deane*: Richard Corbett, Dean of Christ Church.

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