

## R7 U. R. I. C. poore Canterbury

*Notes.* In its structure, this poem on William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, recalls the widely-disseminated early Jacobean libel on Robert Carr, “I.C.U.R”. The transcriber of our chosen version includes notes (as recorded here in footnotes) about the alphabetical codes for some lines.

”A Libell, upon William Laud Arch-bishop of Canterbury, in Parliament-tyme. 1640”

U. R. I. C.<sup>1</sup> poore Canterbury, in a tottring state:

A. P. O. P.<sup>2</sup> you fayne would bee, ’tis now too late.

R. U. Y. Y.<sup>3</sup> for all those eyes, that looke upon you:

U. R. A. K.<sup>4</sup> if you doe say, they all will wrong you.

S. C. O. T. some say was hee, brought all to light:<sup>5</sup>

I. C. U. R.<sup>6</sup> in a great feare, your lawne’s not white.<sup>7</sup>

A. G. R. I.<sup>8</sup> if hee come nigh, will have the Miter:<sup>9</sup>

H. E. A. D. and all for mee; you’l fall the lighter.<sup>10</sup>

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**Source.** Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 100r

**Other known sources.** *Trevelyan Papers* 3.204; BL MS Sloane 1489, fol. 46v; Folger MS E.a.6, fol. 4v

R7

<sup>1</sup> U. R. I. C.: i.e. “You are I see” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26).

<sup>2</sup> A. P. O. P.: i.e. “A pope” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26).

<sup>3</sup> R. U. Y. Y.: i.e. “Are you two wise” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26).

<sup>4</sup> U. R. A. K.: i.e. “You are a K.” (Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26); possibly a knave, or else a jackdaw (cf. “I.C.U.R”).

<sup>5</sup> S. C. O. T....*brought all to light*: presumably an allusion to the role of the Scots, whose rejection of Laud’s favoured Prayer Book in 1637 prompted the Bishops’ Wars, and precipitated the crisis that would ultimately lead to Laud’s fall.

<sup>6</sup> *I. C. U. R.*: i.e. “I see you are”.

<sup>7</sup> *in a great feare...white*: “lawn” is a fine linen used for the sleeves of a bishop; here the usage is perhaps largely figurative, suggesting at once Laud’s preoccupation with clerical vestments, and his concern for the dignity and preeminence of his office.

<sup>8</sup> *A. G. R. I.*: i.e. “Agree I”.

<sup>9</sup> *if hee come nigh...Miter*: unclear; a mitre is an ecclesiastical head-dress worn by a bishop, and therefore something Laud already wears. Perhaps this line, after the preceding one, merely reiterates a point about Laud’s obsession with ecclesiastical vestments.

<sup>10</sup> *H. E. A. D....lighter*: menacing (and correct) suggestion that Laud’s fate is execution, by the removal of his “head”.

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