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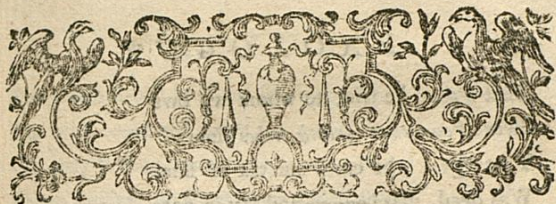
**Poems On Several Occasions**

**Gay, John**

**London, 1745**

Prologue to the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Bolingbroke.

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# PROLOGUE

To the Right Honourable the

*Lord Viscount BOLINGBROKE.*



O, I who erst beneath a tree  
Sung *Bumkinet* and *Bowzybee*,  
And *Blouzelind* and *Marian bright*,  
In apron blue or apron white,  
Now write my sonnets in a book,  
For my good lord of *Bolingbroke*.

As lads and lasses stood around  
To hear my boxen haut-boy found,  
Our *Clerk* came posting o'er the green  
With doleful tidings of the *Queen*;

That

That *Queen*, he said, to whom we owe  
 Sweet *Peace* that maketh riches flow ;  
 That *Queen* who eas'd our tax of late,  
 Was dead, alas ! — and lay in state.

At this, in tears was *Cic'ly* seen,  
*Buxoma* tore her pinnars clean,  
 In doleful dumps stood ev'ry clown,  
 The parson rent his band and gown.

For me, when as I heard that death  
 Had snatch'd *Queen ANNE* to *Elizabeth*,  
 I broke my reed, and fighting swore  
 I'd weep for *Blouzelind* no more.

While thus we stood as in a fount,  
 And wet with tears, like dew, the ground,  
 Full soon by bonfire and by bell  
 We learnt our Liege was passing well.  
 A skilful leach (so God him speed)  
 They say had wrought this blessed deed,  
 This leach *Arbutnot* was yclept,  
 Who many a night not once had slept ;

But

But watch'd our gracious Sov'reign still :  
For who could rest when she was ill ?  
Oh, may't thou henceforth sweetly sleep !  
Sheer, swains, oh sheer your softest sheep  
To swell his couch ; for well I ween,  
He fav'd the realm who fav'd the Queen.

Quoth I, please God, I'll hye with glee  
To court, this *Arbutnot* to see.  
I sold my sheep and lambkins too,  
For silver loops and garment blue :  
My boxen haut-boy sweet of sound,  
For lace that edg'd mine hat around ;  
For *Lightfoot* and my scrip I got  
A gorgeous sword, and eke a knot.

So forth I far'd to court with speed,  
Of soldier's drum withouten dread ;  
For Peace allays the shepherd's fear  
Of wearing cap of Granadier.

There saw I ladies all a-row  
Before their Queen in seemly show.

No



No more I'll sing *Buxoma* brown,  
 Like goldfinch in her *Sunday* gown;  
 Nor *Clumfilis*, nor *Marian* bright,  
 Nor damsel that *Hobnelia* hight.  
 But *Landſdown* freſh as flow'r of *May*,  
 And *Berkely* lady blithe and gay,  
 And *Angleſey* whoſe ſpeech exceeds  
 The voice of pipe, or oaten reeds;  
 And blooming *Hyde*, with eyes ſo rare,  
 And *Montague* beyond compare.  
 Such ladies fair wou'd I depaint  
 In roundelay or ſonnet quaint.

There many a worthy wight I've ſeen  
 In ribbon blue and ribbon green.  
 As *Oxford*, who a wand doth bear,  
 Like *Mofes* in our Bibles fair;  
 Who for our traffick forms deſigns,  
 And gives to *Britain* *Indian* mines.  
 Now, ſhepherds, clip your fleecy care,  
 Ye maids, your ſpinning-wheels prepare,  
 Ye weavers all your ſhuttles throw,  
 And bid broad-cloths and ſerges grow,

For trading free shall thrive again,  
Nor leafings leud affright the swain.

There saw I *St. John*, sweet of mein,  
Full stedfast both to Church and Queen.  
With whose fair name I'll deck my strain,  
*St. John* right courteous to the swain;

For thus he told me on a day,  
Trim are thy sonnets, gentle *Gay*,  
And certes, mirth it were to see  
Thy joyous madrigals twice three,  
With preface meet, and notes profound,  
Imprinted fair, and well y-bound.  
All suddenly then home I sped,  
And did ev'n as my Lord had said.

Lo here, thou hast mine Eclogues fair,  
But let not these detain thine ear.  
Let not affairs of States and Kings  
Wait, while our *Bowzybeus* sings.  
Rather than verse of simple swain  
Shou'd stay the trade of *France* or *Spain*,



Or for the plaint of Parson's maid,  
Yon' Emp'ror's packets be delay'd ;  
In sooth, I swear by holy *Paul*,  
I'd burn book, preface, notes and all.



M O N D A Y,