

Document Transcript 2

The Arrival of Queen Elizabeth in the City of Norwich

Then Her Majesty drew near the Gates of the City called St Stephen's Gate, which with the walls there were both gallantly and strongly repaired. The gate itself was thus enriched and beautified. First the portcullis was new made [with] both timber and iron, then the outward side of the gate was thus beautified. The Queen's [coat of] arms were most richly and beautifully set forth in the chief front of the gate. On the one side thereof, but somewhat lower, was placed the scutcheon of St George, or St George his cross; on the other side, the arms of the City, and directly under the Queen's Majesty's arms was placed the falcon, her Highness' badge in due form, and under the same were written these words: *God and the Queen we serve*. The inner side of the gate was thus beautified. On the right side was gorgeously set forth the red rose, signifying the House of York, [and] on the left side, the white rose, representing the House of Lancaster. In the midst was the white and red rose united, expressing the union, under the which was placed by descent, the arms of the Queen, and under that were written these two verses:

*DIVISION kindled strife,
Blessed UNION quenched the flame:
Thence sprang our noble PHOENIX dear,
The peerless prince of FAME.*

And besides that, at this gate, the Waits of the City were placed with loud music, who cheerfully and melodiously welcomed Her Majesty into the City. And then passed she forward, through St Stephen's Street, where the first pageant was placed in [the] form following.

The first pageant was in St Stephen's Parish in this manner.

It was built somewhat like the manner of a stage, of 150 foot long, and in breadth 8 foot. From the standing place upwards, [there] was a bank framed in the manner of a freestone wall, in very decent and very beautiful sort, and in the height thereof were written these sentences, viz. [namely]:

THE CAUSES OF THIS COMMONWEALTH ARE,

God truly preached.

Justice duly executed. The people obedient.

Idleness expelled. Labour cherished.

Universal concord preserved.

From the standing place downward, it was beautified with painters' work, artificially [skilfully] expressing to sight the portraiture of these several looms, and the weavers in them (as it were, working), and over every loom the name thereof, viz. [as follows]. Over the first loom was written 'the weaving of worsted [woollen yarn]'; over the second, 'the weaving of russells [woollen fabric]'; over the third, 'the weaving of dornix [woollen fabric]'; over the fourth, 'the

weaving of tuft mockado [a cloth of silk and wool]'; the fifth 'the weaving of lace'; the sixth 'the weaving of caffa [silken cloth]'; the seventh 'the weaving of fringe'.

And then was there the portraiture [portrait] of a matron, and two or three children, and over her head was written these words: *Good nurture changeth qualities*. Upon the stage there stood knitting at the one end eight small women children [little girls], spinning worsted yarn, and at the other end as many [girls] knitting of worsted yarn hose [stockings]; and in the midst of the said stage stood a pretty boy richly apparelled, which represented the commonwealth of the City. And all the rest of the stage was furnished with men, which made the said several works, and before every man the work in deed, and everything in readiness, stayed [waited for] Her Majesty's coming.

And when she did come, the child which represented Commonwealth, did speak to her Highness these words. Viz. [namely]:

Most gracious prince, undoubted sovereign Queen,
Our only joy next [to] God, and chief defence:
In this small show, our whole estate is seen.
The wealth we have, we find proceed from thence,
The idle hands hath here no place to feed,
The painful wight [hardworking man] hath still to
serve his need.

Again, our seat denies our traffic here,
The sea too near divides [divides] us from the rest,
So weak we were within this dozen year,
As care [worry] did quench the courage of the best:
But good advice, hath taught these little hands
To rend in twain [tear apart] the force of pinning
bands.

From combed wool we draw this slender thread,
From thence the looms have dealings with the same,
And thence again in order do proceed,
These several works, which skilful art doth frame:
And all to drive Dame Need into her cave,
Our heads and hands together laboured have.

We bought before the things that now we sell,
These slender imps [workers], their works do pass
the waves,
God's peace and thine we hold and prosper well,
Of every mouth the hands the charges saves.
Thus through thy held, and aid of power divine,
Doth Norwich live, whose hearts and goods
are thine.

FINIS. Bernard Garter.

This show pleased Her Majesty so greatly, as she particularly viewed the knitting and spinning of the children, perused [examined] the looms, and noted the several works and commodities which were made by these means. And then after great thanks by her [were] given to the people, marched towards the market place, where was made a second device as followeth.

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The second pageant

The second pageant thwarted [crossed] the street at the entrance of the Market, between Master Skinner and Master Quashe, being in breadth 52 foot of assize [measurement], and was divided into three gates, viz. [namely] in the midst a main gate, and on either side a postern [side-gate]: the main gate [was] in breadth 14 foot, each postern 8 foot, their heights equal to their proportion. Over each postern was as it were a chamber, which chambers were replenished with music. And over all the gates passed a stage of 8 foot broad, made in the manner of a pageant, both curious, rich, and delightful: the whole work from the pageant downward seemed to be jasper and marble. In the forefront towards Her Majesty, was the arms of England on the one side the gate, and on the other side the Falcon with Crown and Sceptre, which is her own badge. The other side was beautified with the arms of England on the one side [of] the gate, and with the crest of England on the other side. The stage or pageant was replenished with five personages apparelled like women. The first was the City of Norwich, the second Deborah, the third Judith, the fourth Esther, the fifth Martia, sometime Queen of England. At the first sight of the prince, and till her Majesty's coming to the pageant, the musicians, which were close [hidden] in the chambers of the said pageant, used [played] their loud music, and then ceased: wherewith her highness stayed, to whom the personage representing the City of Norwich did speak in these words, viz. [as follows]:

Whom Fame resounds with thundering trump
[trumpet], which rends the rattling skies,
And pierceth to the haughty heavens, and thence
descending flies
Through flickering air: and so conjoins the sea and
shore together,
In admiration of thy grace, good Queen th'art
welcome hither,
More welcome than Terpsichore [the Muse],
was to the town of Troy.
Sea-faring men by Gemini [the constellation]
conceive not half my joy:
Strong Hercules to Theseus was never such delight,
Nor Nisus to Euryalus as I have in this sight,
Penelope did never thirst Ulysses more to see
Than I, poor Norwich, hungered have to gain the
sight of thee.
And now that these my happy eyes behold thy
heavenly face,
The Lord of Lords I humbly pray, to bless thy
noble grace
With Nestor's life, with Sibyl's health, with Croesus'
stock and store,
With all good gifts of Solomon, and twice as
many more.

What should I say? Thou art my job next [to] God,
I have none other,

My princess and my peerless Queen, my loving
nurse and mother.

My goods and lands, my hands and heart, my limbs
and life are thine,

What is mine own in right or thought, to thee
I do resign.

Grant then (O gracious sovereign Queen) this only
my request,

That that which shall be done in [by] me, be
construed to the best.

And take in part my slender [insubstantial] shows,
wherein my whole pretence [purpose]

Is for to please you, Majesty, and end without
offence.

So shall I clasp my hands for joy, and hold myself
as rich

As if I had the gold of Inde [India], and double twice
as much.

FINIS. Bernard Garter.

Then spoke Deborah:

Where princes sitting in their thrones set God
before their sight

And live according to his law, and guide their
people right,

There doth his blessed gifts abound, there kingdoms
firmly stand,

There force of foes cannot prevail, nor fury fret
the land.

Myself (O peerless prince) do speak by proof of
matter past,

Which proof by practice I performed, and foiled his
foes at last.

For Jabin, King of Canaan, poor Israel did spite,
And meant by force of furious rage to overrun
us quite.

Nine hundred iron chariots he brought into the field
With cruel captain Sisera by force to make us yield.

His force was great, his fraud was more: he fought,
we did defend,

And twenty winters long did last this war without
an end.

But He [God] that neither sleeps nor slacks such
furies to correct,

Appointed me, Deborah, for the judge of his elect,
And did deliver Sisera into a woman's hand.

I slew them all, and so in rest his people held
the land.

So, mighty prince, that puissant Lord hath placed
thee here to be,

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The rule of this triumphant Realm alone belongeth to thee.

Continue as thou hast begun: weed out the wicked root,

Uphold the simple, meek, and good; pull down the proud and stout.

Thus shalt thou live and reign in rest, and mighty God shalt please:

Thy state be sure, thy subjects safe, thy commonwealth at ease.

Thy God shall grant thee length of life, to glorify his name,

Thy deeds shall be recorded in the book of lasting fame.

FINIS [the end]. Bernard Garter.

Then spoke Judith:

O flower of grace, O prime of God's elect,
O mighty Queen, and finger of the Lord,
Did God sometime by me, poor wight [person] correct

The champion stout, that him and his abhorred?

Then, be thou sure thou art his mighty hand,
To conquer those which him and he withstand.

The rage of foes Bethulia did besiege,

The people faint were ready for to yield,

God aided me, poor widow, nevertheless

To enter into Holofernes' field,

And with this sword, by his directing hand,

To slay his foe, and quiet so the land.

If this his grace were given to me, poor wight [person],

If widow's hand could vanquish such a foe,

Then to a prince of thy surpassing might

What tyrant lives, but thou mayst [them] overthrow?

Persevere then his servant, as thou art,

And hold for aye [forever] a noble victor's part.

FINIS [the end]. Bernard Garter.

Then Hester spoke:

The fretting heads of furious foes have skill,

As well by fraud as force to find their prey:

In smiling looks doth lurk a lot as ill,

As where both stern and sturdy streams do sway.

Thy self, O Queen, a proof hath seen of this,

So well as I, poor Esther, have iwis [truly].

As Jabin's force did Israel perplex,

And Holofernes fierce [did] Bethuliel besiege,

So Hamon's slights [cunning tricks] sought me and mine to vex,

Yet showed a face a subject to his liege.

But force nor fraud, nor tyrant strong can trap

Those which the Lord in his defence doth wrap.

The proofs I speak, by us have erst [earlier] been seen,

The proofs I speak, to thee are not unknown.

Thy God, thou knowest, most dread and sovereign Queen,

A world of foes of thine hath overthrown,

And hither now triumphantly doth call

Thy noble Grace, the comfort of us all.

Dost thou not see the joy of all this flock?

Vouchsafe [consent] to view their passing gladsome [exceedingly happy] cheer,

Be still, good Queen, their refuge and their rock,

As they are thine to serve, in love and fear:

So fraud, nor force, nor foreign foe may stand

Against the strength of thy most puissant [mighty] hand.

FINIS [the end]. Bernard Garter.

Then spoke Martia:

With long discourse, O puissant [mighty] prince,
some tract of time we spend,

Vouchsafe [consent] yet now a little more, and then we make an end.

The thundering blast of Fame, whereof Dame Norwich first did speak,

Not only shook the air and skies, but all the earth did break,

It rent up graves, and bodies raised; each spirit took his place,

And this lonely [sole] word was heard: 'Here comes the pearl of grace,

Here comes the jewel of the world, her people's whole delight,

The paragon of present time, and prince of earthly might.'

The voice was strange, the wonder more: for when we viewed the Earth,

Each prince that erst [previously] had reigned here, received again his breath,

And with his breath, a liberty to hold again his place,
If any one amongst us all exceed your noble Grace.

Some comfort every one conceived, to catch again his own,

His utmost skill was trimly [effectively] used to have his virtues known.

The plays surpass my skill to tell, but when each one had said,

Apollo did himself appear, and made us all dismayed.

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'Will you contend with her,' quoth he, 'within whose sacred breast
Dame Pallas and myself have framed our sovereign seat of rest?
Whose skill directs the Muses Nine, whose grace doth Venus stain [reprove],
Her eloquence like Mercury's, like Juno in her train [comportment, manner of action]?
Whose God is that eternal Jove, which holds us all in awe?
Believe me, you exceed the bounds of equity and law!
Therewith they shrunk themselves aside: not one I could espy,
They couched [hid] them in their caves again, and there full quiet lie.
Yet I, that Martia hight [am called], which sometime ruled this land,
As Queen for thirty-three years' space, got license at his [God's] hand,
And so Gurguntius did, my husband's father dear,
Which built this town and castle both, to make our homage here,
Which homage, mighty Queen, accept: the realm and right is thine,
The crown, the sceptre, and the sword to thee we do resign,
And wish to God, that thou mayst reign twice Nestor's years in peace,
Triumphing over all thy foes, to all our joys' increase.
Amen.
FINIS [the end]. Bernard Garter.

Herewith she [the Queen] passed under the gate, with such thanks as plainly expressed her noble nature. And the musicians within the gate, upon their soft [quiet] instruments, used broken [subdued] music, and one of them did sing this ditty:

From slumber soft I fell asleep,
From sleep, to dream, from dream, to deep delight,
Each gem the gods had given [to] the world to keep
In princely wise [manner] came present to my sight:
Such solace then did sink into my mind,
As mortal man on mould [earth] could never find.
The gods did strive, and yet their strifes were sweet,
Each one would have a virtue of their own:
Dame Juno thought the highest place most meet [suitable]
For her, because of riches was her throne.
Dame Venus thought, by reason of her love,
That she might claim the highest place above.
The virgin's state Diana still did praise,

And Ceres praised the fruit of fertile soil,
And prudence did Dame Pallas chiefly raise;
Minerva all for eloquence did strive.
They smiled to see their quarrelling estate [situation],
And Jove himself decided their debate.
'My sweets,' quoth he, 'leave off your sugared strife,
In equal place I have assigned you all:
A sovereign wight [person] there is that beareth life,
In whose sweet heart I have enclosed you all.
Of England soil she is the sovereign Queen,
Your vigours [virtues] there do flourish fresh and green.'
They skipped for joy, and gave their frank [free] consent,
The noise resounded to the haughty [high] sky,
With one loud voice they cried all, 'content!'
They clapped their hands; and therewith waked I.
The world and they concluded with a breath,
And wished long reign to Queen ELIZABETH.
FINIS [the end]. Bernard Garter.

Herewith she passed through the Market Place, which was goodly garnished, and thence through the other streets which were trimly [888] decked, directly to the Cathedral Church, where 'Te Deum' was sung. And after service she went to the Bishop's Palace, where Her Majesty kept [lodged] the time she continued in Norwich. All this was upon Saturday the 16 of August 1578.

Upon the Monday following, Master Churchyard brought Mercury in a gallant coach strangely apparelled, into the green yard under the privy [private] or bedchamber windows, out of the which the Queen's Majesty looked: which Mercury, in verse made for the purpose, uttered to Her Highness, that if it were her pleasure at any time to take the air abroad [outside], there were devices [shows] to be seen to pleasure Her Majesty. And according to that promise, on Tuesday following (for before that day by means of the weather she went not abroad [outside]), he performed a very pretty pleasant show before Her Highness without [outside] St Benet's Gate as she went towards Costessey Park to hunt. [...]

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Glossary

Caffa – a silken cloth.

Ceres – in Roman mythology, the goddess of the harvest.

Costessey Park – this was a park for hunting which lay three miles west of Norwich. Queen Elizabeth loved hunting.

Croesus – the fabulously wealthy King of Lydia in the sixth century BCE.

Dame Need – in the poem, a personification of poverty (need), caused by lack of work.

Deborah – in the Old Testament in the Bible, Deborah was a prophetess and judge. Elizabeth was often represented as a wise Deborah figure.

Diana – in Roman mythology, the virgin goddess of hunting. Queen Elizabeth was often associated with Diana because of her decision not to marry.

Dornix – a woollen fabric.

Esther or Hester – in the Old Testament in the Bible, Esther was the wife of the Persian King Ahasuerus.

The King's advisor Haman planned to massacre the Jews, but Esther outsmarted him.

Falcon with Crown and Sceptre – this image was Queen Elizabeth's personal badge (different from her royal arms). It resembled the badge of her mother, Queen Anne Bolyen, which also featured a falcon.

Freestone wall – a wall made out of blocks of shaped stones.

Fringe – cloth used for decorative bordering.

Gemini – sailors used to refer to the weather phenomenon St Elmo's Fire as 'Gemini' when it appeared on their ships. They were pleased to see it because it was said to signify good fortune.

Hercules to Theseus – in ancient Greek mythology, the hero-god Hercules and the hero Theseus were best friends and companions in adventures together.

Jove – another name for Jupiter. In Roman mythology, the god of the sky and thunder, and King of the Gods.

Judith – in the Old Testament in the Bible, Judith slew the tyrant Holofernes. Elizabeth was often represented as a conquering Judith figure.

Juno – in Roman mythology, the goddess of marriage. As the wife of Jupiter, she was Queen of the Gods.

Martia – in ancient British legend, Martia skilfully ruled Britain as regent for her young son.

Master Churchyard – Thomas Churchyard was an important writer, performer and creator of many of the entertainments presented to Queen Elizabeth in Norwich.

Mercury – in Roman mythology, the trickster god of commerce and eloquence.

Minerva – another name for Pallas. In Roman

mythology, Minerva was the goddess of wisdom and military strategy.