

**Accession number:** 1992-24/15c

**Description:** Large sheet of paper, once folded. Endorsed 'Epilogue for Fund for the old Actors', though the text is all but identical with that described as the prologue – see 1992-24/15b.

**Transcript:**

I who am now a Vet'ran of the Stage  
And Counsel for infirmity and Age,  
Must plead their Cause – feel it in heart and mind;  
A fellow feeling makes one wondrous kind!  
Might we but hope — we may, & with Success  
Your future smiles, to patronise distress;  
That hope obtain'd, the wish'd for end secures,  
To sooth their Cares, who oft have lightened yours.  
Shall the great Heroes of Celestial line,  
Who drank full bowls of Greek, & Roman Wine,  
Caesar & Brutus, Agamemnon, Hector,  
Nay Jove himself, who here has quaff'd his Nectar,  
Shall they who Govern'd Fortune, Cringe & court her  
Thirst in their age, and call in vain for porter?  
Like Bellisarius – tax the pitying Street,  
With *Date Obolum* — to all they meet.  
Shan't I, who here have Murder'd many a score,  
Stab'd many, poison'd some, beheaded more;  
Who numbers Slew in Battle on this plain,  
Shan't I the slayer, try to feed the slain?  
Brother to all, with equal Love I view,  
The Men who Slew me, and the Men I slew.  
I must, I will, this happy Project Seize, —  
That those too Old to die, may live with ease;  
*Verso* Should the Sweet Babes, I smother'd in the Tower,  
By chance or Sickness, lose their acting pow'r,  
Shall they once princes, worse than all be serv'd!  
In Childhood Murder'd, & when Murder'd Starv'd?  
Matrons half-ravish'd, for Your Recreation  
In Age should never want some Consolation.  
Can I, *Young* Hamlet once, to nature last,  
Behold – o horrible! – My Father's Ghost,  
With Grizly Bear – pale Cheek – Stalk up and down,  
And He – the Royal Dane – want half a Crown?  
Forbid it, ladies, Gentlemen forbid it,  
Give joy to age, & let 'em say You did it.  
To You\* - Ye Gods I make my last appeal \* to the Upper Gall[ery]  
You have the right to Judge, as well as feel;

Will your high Wisdoms to our Scheme incline?  
That Kings, Queens, Heroes, Gods & Ghosts may Dine!  
Olympus Shakes, Earth Smiles and we rejoice  
Still praise your bounty with one grateful voice,  
Warm from the heart this Wish each Bosom pours,  
That Ev'ry Joy you give, be tenfold Yours.

**Notes:** See also 1992-24/15a-b,-d.

Aileen Osborn, 'The Literary Material in the Hereford Garrick Papers', M. Phil thesis, University of Birmingham, 1999, 218 and notes to 1992-24/15a-b 215-7.

p. 212 'No other manuscript of this 1769 version; last 8 lines in *public Advertiser*, 23 May 1769'.

pp. 214-5 Other MSS. Title: Epilogue 1772 Folger Y.d.156(72), 1775 Epilogue for the fund Yale; Epilogue for the Fund 1776 Folger, w.b.464. [with variations].

Pp215-7 'This prologue/epilogue was evidently repeated annually at the benefit for the Theatrical Fund, set up by Garrick and a cause dear to his heart. The first of these benefits was performed on 22 May 1766. (Stone & Kahrl, p. 333) Hannah More describes his delivery of the epilogue during the 1773/4 season in her letter to John Stonehouse,

After having begged both humorously, & pathetically for the fund, he happily (in a parody of Oedipus) addresses Himself to the Gallery:

"To you, good Gods, I make my last appeal,

"For you indeed can *judge*, as well as *feel*.

When these lines had produced the Clapping He expected, he immediately subjoined 'Olympus Shakes', which in Speaking had an amazing Effect. — Yet *my Heart ach'd* for the Depravations Time is beginning to make in his Face, which was not visible, till He appear'd in His own form in the Epilogue; & of which He affectingly reminded us in these Words 'I was *young Hamlet* once'. (Letters, Appendix 5, p. 1358)

After his retirement, Garrick used his influence in parliament to get the Fund legalized

**[Note]**

The Hereford version of the epilogue was delivered at Garrick's last performance of the season when he appeared as Archer in *The Beaux' Stratagem* on 18 May...'

**Bellisarius:** The emperor Justinian's general, accused of conspiracy and imprisoned in 562. Brewer says that the later story that his eyes were put out and he was reduced to begging is without foundation.