

Petition to the King (11 July 1640)

Grand Jury of Berkshire

Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 22959, ff. 64r–64v

64r

To the kings most excell[en]t Majestie The humbe petition of yo[u]r Maj[estie]s Loyall Subjects the Grand Iury empanelled the 11th of Iuly 1640 to serue at the generall Assises holden for the County of Berke in the behalfe of themselues & the rest of the bodie of the County

Sheweth

That whereas yo[u]r Petitioners haue been of late yeeres & still are much burthened with sundry greevances of diu[er]se natures, deriving their authority from yo[u]r Majestie, but being directly contrary to yo[u]r Maj[estie]s Lawes established in this yo[u]r kingdome, the chiefe of them presenting themselues in a schedule hereunto annexed, for redresse whereof as [*Left margin:allows*] yo[u]r Petitioners hoped yo[u]r Maj[es]tie was graciously pleased about the middle of Apr. last to assemble the Great Councell com[m]only called the high Court of Parliament & some three weekes after to dissolue [*Left margin:it*] the same, for want (as it seemes to yo[u]r Petitioners) of a good Agreement betwixt the 2 houses And neu[er]theles since the said dissolution to expresse such a fatherly care of yo[u]r pore people that yo[u]r Maj[es]tie hath vouchsafed by yo[u]r printed declaration to inuite them to the powring out of their complaints into yo[u]r Princely care

It may therefore please yo[u]r most Excellent Maj[es]tie to take the said particulers into yo[u]r tender consideration & to giue yo[u]r Petitioners such ease therein as in yo[u]r Royall wisdom shall be fitte & whereby it may appeere to all yo[u]r Maj[estie]s Subjects, especially to those of yo[u]r Maj[estie]s most hon[our]able Privy Counsell & the other officers & Ministers of Iustice that you are resolved to continue to them all their rights & liberties, which they desire by the Petition of Right & were confirmed by yo[u]r Maj[es]tie in the 3d yeer of your Reigne And yo[u]r Pet[itioner]s as most bound shall continue

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to procure the length & happines of yo[u]r Maj[estie]s said reigne by their prayers & all actions of zeale & duty.

[*Left margin:Berke*] A Schedule of such greeuances as most oppresse this Country.

[*Left margin:1*] The illegall & unsupportable charge of Ship-mony nowe the 5th yeere imposed as high as ever, though the Subject was not able to pay the last yeer being a Third.

[*Left margin:2*] The nowe taxe of Coate & Conduct mony with undue meanes used to inforce the payment of it by messengers from the Counsell Table.

[*Left margin:3*] The Compelling some Free-men by imprisonment & threatnings to take presse-mony & others for feare of the like imprisonment to forsake their place of habitation hiding themselues in Woods, whereby their families are left to the Charge of the Parish & Harvest worke undone for want of Labourers.

[*Left margin:4*] The infinite number of Monopolies upon ev'ry thing the Country-man must buy.

Besides the Easterne parte of this Country where yo[u]r Maj[esty]'s Forrest of Windsor is particulerly burthened.

[*Left margin:1*] With the unmeasurable increase of [th]e ~~{gap: illegible}~~ deere which if they should goe on so for a fewee yeeres more will leaue neither food nor roome for any other creature in the forrest

[*Left margin:2*] With the rigid execution of the Forrest lawes in theirre extremity

[*Left margin:3*] With the exaction of immoderate Fees by some Officers under the Lo[r]d Chiefe Iustice in Eyre.

Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Harley MS 4931, ff. 66r–66v
- British Library, Lansdowne MS 1232, ff. 66v–67r
- British Library, Additional MS 24064, f. 9r
- Beinecke Library, OSB MSS 28, Box 2, Folder 25, item 37, 516r–v
- Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 65, ff. 135r–v
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.192, ff. 9r–10r
- Northamptonshire Record Office, FH2604
- Northamptonshire Record Office, IC 3574
- Northamptonshire Record Office, IC 3576
- The National Archives, SP 16/466, /42 [ff.122v–123v]

Modern print exemplars

- *Somers Tracts* (2nd ed.), vol. 4, p. –
- J.S. Morrill, *Revolt of the Provinces: Conservatives and Radicals in the English Civil War, 1630-1650* (London, 1976), p. –

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<https://mpese.ac.uk/t/BerkshirePetition1640v1.html>