

# The Murder of Thomas a Beket aka *Nunc Gaudet Ecclesia*

(1)

Lystyn, lordyngs both gret & small! 1  
I will you tell a wonder tale,  
Howe holy chirch was browght in bale  
*Cum magna iniuria.*  
A, a, a, a ! *nunc gaudet ecclesia.* 5

(2)

The gretteste clark in this londe,  
Thomas of Canturbury, I vnderstonde,  
Slayn he was with wykyd honde,  
*Malorum potencia.*  
A, a, a, a ! *nunc gaudet ecclesia.* 10

(3)

The knyghtis were sent from Harry þe kynge,  
Pat day they dide a wykid thyng,  
Wykyd men, with-owt lesyng,  
*Per regis imperia.*  
A, a, a, a ! *nunc gaudet ecclesia.* 15

(4)

They sowght þe bisshop all a-bowt,  
With-in his place, and with-owt,  
Of Jhesu Crist they had no dowght  
*Per sua malicia.*  
A, a, a, a ! *nunc gaudet ecclesia.* 20

(5)

They opened þer mowthes wonderly wide,  
& spake to hym with myche pryde:  
“Traytor, here thow shalt abide,  
*Ferens mortis tedia !*”  
A, a, a, a ! *nunc gaudet ecclesia.* 25

(6)

Beffore þe auter he kneled down,  
& than they pared his crown,  
& stered his braynes vp so down,  
*Optans celi gawdia.*  
A, a, a, a ! *nunc gaudet ecclesia.* 30

Source: *Songs, carols, and other miscellaneous poems*, from the [Balliol ms. 354](#)

The Author is of some debate, but the book was owned by Richard Hill, a member of Henry VIII's court.