

# The Stately Homes of England

## Dick Bentley

Lord Elderly, Lord Borrowmere  
Lord Sickert and Lord Camp  
With every virtue, every grace  
Ah, what avails the sceptred race

Here you see the four of us  
And there are so many more of us  
Eldest sons  
That must succeed  
We know how Caesar conquered Gaul  
And how to whack a cricket ball  
Apart from this, our education  
Lacks co-ordination  
Though we're young  
And tentative  
And rather rip-representative  
Scions of a noble breed  
We are the products of those homes  
Serene and stately  
That only lately  
Seem to have run to seed

The stately homes of England  
How beautiful they stand  
To prove the upper classes  
Have still the upper hand  
Though the fact that they have to be rebuilt  
And frequently mortgaged to the hilt  
Is inclined to take the gilt  
Off the gingerbread  
And certainly damps the fun  
Of the eldest son  
But still, we won't be beaten  
We'll scrimp and scrape and save  
The playing fields of Eton  
Have made us frightfully brave  
And though if the Van Dycks have to go  
And we pawn the Bechstein Grand  
We'll stand

By the stately homes of England

Here you see  
The pick of us  
You may be heartily sick of us  
Still, with sense  
We're all imbued  
Our homes command extensive views  
And with assistance from the Jews  
We have been able to dispose of  
Rows and rows and rows of  
Gainsboroughs and Lawrences  
Some sporting prints of Aunt Florence's  
Some of which were rather rude  
Although we sometimes flaunt our family conventions  
Our good intentions  
Mustn't be misconstrued  
The stately homes of England  
We proudly represent  
We only keep them up  
For Americans to rent  
Though the pipes that supply the bathroom burst  
And the lavatory makes you fear the worst  
It was used by Charles I  
(Quite informally)  
And later by George IV  
On a journey north  
The state departments keep their  
Historical renown  
It's wiser not to sleep there  
In case they tumble down  
But still, if they ever catch on fire  
Which, with any luck, they might  
We'll fight  
For the stately homes of England

The stately homes of England  
Though rather in the lurch  
Provide a lot of chances  
For psychical research  
There's the ghost of a crazy younger son  
Who murdered in 1351  
An extremely rowdy nun  
Who resented it  
And people who come to call

Meet her in the hall  
The baby in the guest wing  
Who crouches by the grate  
Was walled up in the west wing  
In 1428  
If anyone spots  
The Queen of Scots  
In a hand-embroidered shroud  
We're proud  
Of the stately homes of England

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