

1649

TO LUCASTA, GOING TO THE WARS

Richard Lovelace

Lovelace, Richard (1618-1658) - English Cavalier poet who was passionately dedicated to the Royalist cause; he was imprisoned twice for defending Charles I. Thought to be one of the handsomest men of his age, he was admired for his graceful gallantry. To Lucasta Going to the Wars (1649) - A frequently quoted poem in which Lovelace asks his lady to forgive him for going off to war.

Opening lines: Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind / That from the nunnery ...

TO LUCASTA

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To wars and arms I fly.
True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.
Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shalt adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more.

THE END