

## B16 Immodest death that wouldst not once conferre

*Notes.* Copies of this libel typically identify its target as Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, 1st Earl of Dorset, and James I's Lord Treasurer, who died at the Privy Council table on 19 April 1608. This version of the poem incorporates into a single work two segments—the opening four lines and the concluding six—that also circulated as separate poems. The verse opens by accusing Buckhurst of accepting bribes—the kind of everyday corruption expected of government servants—and then switches to allude to Buckhurst's bitter and protracted legal battle with Sir John Leveson. (One of the copies of the concluding six lines as a distinct poem is titled “On the L. Treas: Buckhurst, who died at the Councell Table swearing falsely against Sir J. Luson” (Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fol. 96r)). The battle concerned the large estate left by Sir Richard Leveson to Sir John Leveson's son. Buckhurst connived in the forging of a will that left the estate to one of Sir Richard's cousins, Mary Curzon, who was married to Buckhurst's grandson.

### “On the Death of the L. Treasurer”

Immodest Death that wouldst not once conferre

Dispute or parle with our L. Treasurer

Had hee bene thee or of thy fatall tribe

He would ha spared thy lyfe & tane a Bribe

He that so often hath with Gold & wit

perverted lawes & almost conjur'd it

He that could lengthen causes & was able

To sterve a suitor at the councell table

At last not having evidence to show

Was faine perforce to take a deadly blow

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**Source.** Huntington MS HM 116, p. 25

**Other known sources.** *Wit Restor'd* 65; Bodleian MS Ashmole 781, p. 136; Bodleian MS CCC. 328, fol. 97r; Bodleian MS Don. d.58, fol. 18r; Bodleian MS Douce f.5, fol. 11r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.14, fols. 95v and 96r; Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. e.97, p. 94; BL Add. MS 34218, fol. 6r; BL MS Cotton App. L, fol. 169r; BL MS Egerton 2230, fol. 35v; BL MS Harley 3991, fol. 126v; Brotherton MS Lt. 25, fol. 8r; V&A MS D25.F.39, fol. 67v; Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, p. 48; Folger MS V.a.97, p. 153; Folger MS V.a.103, fol. 20r; Folger MS V.a.345, p. 33; Rosenbach MS 1083/16, p. 114; Rosenbach MS

