

D20 Heere lyes Salisbury that little great comaunder

Notes. Croft (“*Reputation*” 55, 61, 65) discusses and contextualizes several parts of this poem. Like the author of “*Passer by know heere is interrred*”, the poet here casually attributes attacks on Cecil to “*the Vulgar*”, before going on himself to attack Cecil, in this case in the guise of ostensibly praising his charitable activities.

Heere lyes Salisbury that little great¹ comaunder
On whome Mallice it selfe cannot fasten a slander
Though Crookeback the Vulgar did terme him in sight
There weere more beside him that are not upright
Hee was just to king James as hee was to the old queene² 5
Did many good deeds that never were seene
He humbled the rich, made much of the poore
Hee would father the orphanes,³ and ferritt the whoore
Betweene married folkes if ther fell any strife
To doe for the husband hee dealt with the wife 10
Thee widdowe hee kept, and oft in the yeare
Good turnes hee did Virgins that cost him full deere
I meane not her honor, for shee was noe mayde
By her wee confesse hee soundly was paid⁴
A gamster hee was their never was fairer 15
Yet hee plaid most with old cards and had ever a sharer
Hee was bitter foe, but hee was a sweet frend
When any hee loved, hee loved to an end
By way of prevention offences to shunn
Hee would pnish offences before any weere done, 20
To the good of the state, hee was a mayne stay
Till Poe⁵ with his Sirrope⁶ did squirt him away
Don Leonard⁷ great Scorpio⁸ that governs the tayle⁹
The cullions¹⁰ and members¹¹ both female and male

A sonn¹² hee hath left us, though noebodie mynd him
 And a doughter¹³ for goodnes that comes not behind him
 Thus heere lyes his lordship interr'd as you see
 And noe doubt but his Soule is where it should bee
 If pray for the dead you cannot with hope
 Yet say Lord have mercy on Beeston and Cope.¹⁴

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Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 65-66

Other known sources. Huntington MS HM 198, 2.125

D20

¹ *little great*: Cecil was both a powerful man (“great”) and of small physical stature (“little”). The same phrase is used in line 2 of the Cecil libel “Passer by know heere is interr’d”, and more affectionately in line 5 of Samuel Daniel’s “If greatnes, wisdom, pollicie of state”.

² *old queene*: Elizabeth I.

³ *father the orphans*: alludes to Cecil’s work as Master of the Court of Wards.

⁴ *soundly was paid*: i.e. contracted syphilis.

⁵ *Poe*: Leonard Poe, one of Cecil’s physicians.

⁶ *Sirrope*: syrup; presumably here a medicine. If the syrup is a syphilis treatment then it might refer to the commonly used decoctions of guaiacum wood that could be drunk by the patient.

⁷ *Don Leonard*: Poe.

⁸ *Scorpio*: astrological sign, whose application to Poe is unclear.

⁹ *tayle*: in contemporary bawdy usage, tail can mean either the posterior or both the male and female genitalia.

¹⁰ *cullions*: testicles.

¹¹ *members*: genitals.

¹² *sonn*: William Cecil, created Viscount Cranborne in 1605, succeeded his father as 2nd Earl of Salisbury in 1612.

¹³ *doughter*: Cecil's daughter Frances, married in 1610 to Henry Clifford, the son of the Earl of Cumberland.

¹⁴ *Beeston and Cope*: Sir Hugh Beeston and Sir Walter Cope, both members of Cecil's inner circle. Cope wrote and circulated a manuscript *Apology* for Cecil that vigorously defended the Lord Treasurer's reputation (see Croft, "Reputation" 65).
