

D24 If greatnes, wisedome, pollicie of state

Notes. This is one of four extant poems defending Cecil that circulated in manuscript, and in both the Chetham and Clifton manuscripts it is paired with the Earl of Pembroke's similarly laudatory piece, "You that reade passing by". The Chetham manuscript attributes the poem to Samuel Daniel, and on the basis of this ascription, a handful of stylistic parallels, and evidence of a patronage relationship between Cecil and Daniel, John Pitcher has argued compellingly in favour of this attribution (175-7). Croft ("Reputation" 66-67) discusses the politics of the poem, while Pitcher (174) lists and analyses the variants between the Chetham and Clifton copies of the poem, arguing that the Clifton version, which we have reproduced, is "distinctly superior" (173).

"By another his freind"

If greatnes wisedome pollicie of state
or place or riches could preserve from fate
Thou hadst not left the companie of men
who wert both Englands purse & England pen.¹

Greate little lord² whoe only didst inheritt
Thy Fathers³ goodnes honers and his spiritt
But death that equalls Scepters with the spade
the with thy fathers bones to slepp hath layed

In good tyme for thy self tho for the statte
Most wish thy life hath borne thy fathers date⁴
And could the parsea⁵ heare or be prepaired
with prayers unfeyned thy lif had longe been spard

All now wee cann is to bewayle thy herse
not sing thy praise that cannot stand in verse
Twill fill great volumes for thy noble partes
Men writ not in hard stone but in theyr hartes

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Source. Nottingham, Clifton MS CL LM 24

Other known sources. *Dr Farmer Chetham Manuscript* 2.189; Pitcher 173; BL Add. MS 69883B, fol. 66r

D24

¹ *England purse & England pen:* Cecil was both Lord Treasurer and Secretary of State.

² *Greate little Lord:* 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 interrd”, and in the opening line of “Heere lyes Salisbury that little great comaunder”. Here the juxtaposition is affectionate.

³ *Fathers:* William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Elizabeth I’s Secretary, Lord Treasurer and Master of the Wards.

⁴ *thy fathers date:* William Cecil, Lord Burghley, lived from 1520 to 1598; Robert Cecil lived a significantly shorter life, from 1563 to 1612.

⁵ *parcea:* the Fates.
