

D6 Robert E. of Salisburie. Libellous Anagram on Cecil

Notes. This anagram, which presumably circulated in London news circles, was mentioned in passing in a marginal note John Chamberlain added to a copy of the anti-Cecil poem “Two R:R:rs twoe Crookebacks of late ruled Englands helme”. “Burs” probably means “burse”, purse or shop, hence making a reference to Cecil’s role as Lord Treasurer.

Robert E. of Salisburie. The anagram wherof is a silie burs.¹

Source. PRO SP 14/69/67:I (transcribed in Chamberlain 1.356, n. 34)

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¹ ‘Burs’ probably has a double meaning here. Literally it is ‘burse’, purse or shop, and thus a reference to Salisbury’s role as royal treasurer. But ‘burse’ was also contemporary slang for the scrotum.
