

Pi12 The pale horse of the Revelation

Notes. This is one of a number of libels that allude to Buckingham's supposed last words, a curse let fall at the moment of the dagger's impact. For some contemporaries, the Duke's dying oath was further confirmation of his moral failings. The godly Simonds D'Ewes, for instance, noted that, "it might have been wished that his end had not been so sudden, nor his last words mixed with so impious an expression" (Autobiography 1.382). Holstun briefly explores how this "brilliant epigram...prefigures the way in which radical sectaries would infuse everyday social and political life with chiliastic energies during the next three decades" (181).

"Upon the Dukes death"

The pale horse of the Revelation¹

Hath unhorst the horseman of our Nation,

And given him such a kick on his side²

(At Portesmouth)³ that hee sware⁴ and dy'd.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 181v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 197; Huntington MS HM 116, p. 82

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¹ *The pale horse of the Revelation*: "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him" (Revelation 6.8).

² *kick on his side*: Felton stabbed Buckingham in the chest.

³ *Portesmouth*: Buckingham was assassinated in the south coast naval town of Portsmouth.

⁴ *hee sware*: some reports suggest the oath was "God's wounds".
