

Pi15 Great Buckingham's buried under a stone

Notes. This epitaph focuses primarily on Buckingham's perceived betrayal of the European Protestant cause during the opening decade of what would become the Thirty Years' War.

"Epitaph"

Great Buckingham's buried under a stone

'Twixt heaven and Earth not such a one,

Pope and Papists Freind, the Spaniards Factor,¹

The Palatines bane,² The Dunkirks Protector,³

The Danes disaster,⁴ The French kings intruder,⁵

Netherlands oppressor,⁶ the English deluder,

The Frend of Pride, the Peere of Lust

Th'avaritious actor of things unjust.

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Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 182v

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 143

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¹ *Pope and Papists...Spaniards Factor:* Buckingham is here charged as the friend of the Roman Catholic Church and its followers, and as an agent for the Spanish who were understood by many Englishmen to be the military and political arm of the Catholic cause.

² *The Palatines bane:* i.e. the Palatine's curse. Buckingham is blamed here for the continued sufferings of the Calvinist Frederick V, Elector Palatine, his wife, Charles I's sister Elizabeth, and the German lands they once ruled. Frederick had accepted the Crown of Bohemia after the Protestant rebellion there in 1618, and as a consequence was driven from his ancestral lands by Catholic forces in 1620-21 (see Section N). Despite both diplomatic and military efforts, the English Crown had been unable to restore the Palatinate.

³ *Dunkirks Protector:* the port of Dunkirk in the Spanish Netherlands was the base for pirates who preyed constantly on English shipping during this period. As Lord Admiral, Buckingham was held responsible by some parliamentary critics for the English failure to deal with the Dunkirk problem.

⁴ *The Danes disaster:* in 1625, Christian IV, the Lutheran King of Denmark, intervened on the Protestant side of the Thirty Years' War to disastrous effect. The English—despite Charles I's wish to aid his relative—failed to assist the Danes, just as they had failed to assist the Palatinate.

⁵ *The French kings intruder:* Buckingham led the English war effort against France in 1627-28, and commanded the ill-fated 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré outside La Rochelle.

⁶ *Netherlands oppressor:* the Protestant Dutch United Provinces renewed their war of independence against Spain in 1621, with virtually no military assistance from the English. A vocal body of English opinion believed that the English should fight side-by-side with their Dutch Protestant brethren.