

Pii18 Is Felton dead? It's that hee did desire

Notes. This epitaph exemplifies the contemporary urge to present Felton as a heroic patriot martyr, and like many other contemporary works it naively implies that Buckingham's death would end the friction between king and parliament that had flared up during the mid- and later-1620s.

"Feltons Tomb-stone"

Is Felton dead? It's that hee did desire;

Hee needs no Tomb-stone for remembrance sake.

As for his Act, the world must still admire,

Enough to make all Buckinghamians quake.

His valour great did prove a Roman spirit,¹

5

And by their lawes a thousand heavens meritt.

He did endeavour by one stroke to make

The King and Commons (by him put asunder)

Joyne all in one, and resolution take

To mend all things unto the worlds great wonder.

10

Such was his love, pursueing their desire,

Hee fear'd not death, by Gallows, Rack,² or Fire.

Now farewell (Felton) take this to thy rest,

Thy fame, thy Name, thy worth doth still abound,

And by Repentance thou are surely blest,³

15

And to that end ten thousand praiers hast found.

Where Courage great, for Kingdomes good, is seen,

That Man is rare, and lasting fame doth winne.

Source. BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 196v

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¹ *Roman spirit*: i.e. the spirit of the Romans in the age of the republic. Felton was compared to Roman

republican heroes like Scaevola and Curtius in a number of contemporary poems.

² *Rack*: an instrument of torture. Reports that Felton had been tortured were widespread, and inspired a number of powerful pro-Felton libels (e.g. “Enjoy thy Bondage; make thy Prison know”).

³ *And by Repentance...blest*: Felton did in fact repent his crime in his speech from the gallows on 29 November 1628.
