

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter endorsed 'July 1581' which the mention of 'these other causes of the two Lords' dates to shortly after a quarrel on 12 July 1581 between Thomas Radcliffe, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Sussex, and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. For the quarrel, see Sir Francis Walsingham's letter to Lord Burghley dated 12 July 1581.

In the letter Oxford urges Lord Burghley to remind the Queen of her promise that he is to be freed from house arrest, lest she forget him because her attention is taken up with the quarrel between the two Earls.

The cause of the Queen's imprisonment of Oxford in the Tower, and her later confinement of Oxford to house arrest, was the birth on 21 March 1581 of his illegitimate son, Edward Vere, by one of the Queen's Maids of Honour, Anne Vavasour. See Sir Francis Walsingham's letter of 23 March 1581 advising that the Queen was 'greatly grieved' by the incident, Huntingdon Library HA 13066.

Oxford mentions that the Queen has sent him a message via Sir Francis Walsingham that she wishes to have the matter involving Lord Henry Howard, Charles Arundel, and Francis Southwell 'heard' again. For Oxford's denunciation of Lord Henry Howard and Charles Arundel to the Queen in late December 1580, and their subsequent libellous allegations against Oxford, see TNA SP 12/151/49, f. 109 and other documents on this website.

Sir Francis Walsingham has also told Oxford that the Queen prefers that he sell some of his land rather than cut down his woods.

The Queen has heard that certain of Oxford's servants have taken advantage of him during his imprisonment, causing him to suffer losses, and has promised, through Sir Francis Walsingham, that she will redress these losses 'so far as she could with justice'. Oxford also advises Lord Burghley that the bearer of the letter will disclose the truth behind false reports which some of Oxford's servants have brought to Lord Burghley about their fellow servants during the time of Oxford's imprisonment.

Oxford concludes the letter by thanking Lord Burghley for his efforts to secure Oxford's release from house arrest.

My Lord, Robin Christmas did yesterday tell me how honourably you had dealt with her Majesty as touching my liberty, and that as this day she had made promise to your Lordship that it should be, unless your Lordship shall make some to put her Majesty in mind thereof, I fear in these other causes of the two Lords she will forget me, for she is nothing of her own disposition, as I find, so ready to deliver as speedy to commit, and every little trifle gives her matter for a long delay.

I willed E. Hammond to report unto your Lordship her Majesty's message unto me by Mr Secretary Walsingham, which was to this effect: first, that she would have heard the matter again touching Henry Howard, Southwell and Arundel; then, that she understood I meant to cut down all my woods, especially about my house, which she did not so well like of as if I should sell some land else elsewhere; and last, that she heard that I had been hardly used by some of my servants during this time of my commit, wherein she promised her aid, so far as she could with justice, to redress the loss I had sustained thereby, to which I made answer as I willed Hammond to relate unto your Lordship.

Further, my Lord, whereof I am desirous something to write, I have understood of certain of my men hath resorted unto your Lordship and sought, by false reports of other of their fellows, both to abuse your Lordship and me. But for that this bearer seems most herein to be touched, I have sent him unto your Lordship, as is his earnest desire, that your Lordship might so know him as your evil opinion, being conceived amiss by these lewd fellows, may be removed. And truly, my Lord, I hear of those things wherewith he is charged and, I can assure you, wrongfully and slanderously, but the world is so cunning as of a shadow they can make a substance, and of a likelihood a troth. And these fellows, if they be those which I suppose, I do not doubt but so to decipher them to the world as easily your Lordship shall look into their lewdness and unfaithfulness, which, till my liberty, I mean to defer, as more mindful of that importing me most at this time than yet seeking to revenge myself of such perverse and impudent dealing of servants, which I know have not wanted encouragement and setting on.

But letting these things pass for a while, I must not forget to give your Lordship those thanks which are due to you for this your honourable dealing to her Majesty in my behalf, which I hope shall not be without effect, the which attending from the court, I will take my leave of your Lordship, and rest at your commandment at my house this morning.

Your Lordship's assured,  
Edward Oxenford

Addressed: For my Lord Treasurer

Endorsed: [*In Lord Burghley's hand*: July 1581, Earl of Oxford, thanks.] [*In another later hand*: Thanks his Lordship for obtaining a promise of his liberty of the Queen, entreating him to remember the Queen of him. The Queen's message to him to Walsingham.]