
SUMMARY: The document below is an undated letter, endorsed 1605, from William Stanley (1561 – 29 September 1642), 6th Earl of Derby, to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, mentioning the birth of his son and heir, Oxford's grandson, and expressing the hope that the King and Cecil would act as godfathers, and that the King would deign to permit the child to bear the name James. See also CP 110/4.

According to the *ODNB*, James Stanley (31 January 1607 – 15 October 1561) was the eldest son of William Stanley and Elizabeth de Vere. However if James Stanley, 7th Earl of Derby, was not born until 31 January 1607, the endorsement on the letter below indicates that he was not the eldest-born son, but rather the eldest surviving son of the 6th Earl of Derby and Elizabeth de Vere.

My very good Lord, sithence it hath pleased Almighty God to send me a son and heir to my great comfort, I therefore am to entreat your Lordship in the behalf of my wife and myself to be an humble suitor to his Majesty to be our royal gossip, and to invite him as the person to whom we dedicate ourselves and all ours whilst life lasteth, and withal to beseech his Majesty that the child may be held worthy of that memorable character of his own name, it if may please him to make us so happy. And for the other godfather, my wife challengeth your promise that it would please your Lordship to be the same yourself, unto whom we owe all the faithful love that may become a nephew and niece unto so honourable and kind an uncle.

Thus desiring your Lordship to excuse me to his Majesty that I came not myself by reason I have not had my health, I commit your lordship to God's protection, and rest always,

Your loving nephew and friend to my power,

William Derby

Endorsed: To the right honourable my very good Lord and uncle the Earl of Salisbury, one of the Lords of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, these

Endorsed: 1605, the Earl of Derby