

SUMMARY: The document below is a memorandum written by Lord Burghley on 10 July 1576 in response to two rumours, firstly that he was responsible for the fact that Oxford's entail had not been enrolled in the Court of Chancery while Oxford was on his continental tour, and secondly that he had failed to ensure that money was sent to Oxford while he was absent from England.

Burghley clears himself of both charges by establishing that it was Oxford's receiver-general, Edward Hubberd, who had failed to enrol the entail, and that Burghley had in fact arranged for over £5000 to be sent to Oxford while he was on the continent, although not all the money had reached him. Burghley mentions that at times there was no money of Oxford's own which could be sent to him from the sale of his lands, and that Burghley then used his own credit with Benedict Spinola to ensure that money was dispatched.

It is perhaps worth noting the possibility that Lord Burghley had not yet paid Oxford the £3000 which had been promised as Anne Cecil's marriage portion, and that the money sent to Oxford on Lord Burghley's credit may have represented, in part, the £3000 which Lord Burghley owed Oxford.

Although I both hope and assure myself that my Lord of Oxford doth now understand that the conceptions which he had gathered to think unkindness in me towards him were grounded upon untrue reports of others, as I have manifestly proved them, yet because I understand that of late the same untruths are still continued in secret reports to others, whereby some which have no cause to think amiss of me may, by giving credit to the same, think otherwise of me for lack of knowledge of the truth than I deserve or than one of my place or calling ought to be thought of without manifest cause known, therefore upon such report as I hear is lately made untruly and falsely, I do as followeth not only avow the same to be untruths, but the maintainers and devisers of them to be liars and malicious backbiters, and such as will so lightly credit such slanders of me to be light in consideration and judgement, and if they will not hear the trial of the falsehood thereof, I must think them furtherers of untruths, and unworthy for my poor goodwill or friendship.

1 Whosoever saith that I was the occasion or privy that in my Lord of Oxford's absence a certain book of his entailing of his lands to his heirs males was not enrolled in the Chancery, saith therein utterly untruly.

2 Whosoever saith that I did stay my Lord of Oxford's money here so as he had no money in Italy by the space of 6 months, they say also untruly.

Contrarily:

1 I say and swear that I was no deviser of that book of entail, nor was privy to my Lord's sealing and delivery thereof, nor had any trust committed to me to enrol the same, nor yet did hear or understand, during the time my Lord was absent nor until almost one month

after his return, whether it was enrolled or not enrolled, but after my Lord's coming home, hearing that my Lord was offended with certain other things in that book concerning the payment of his debts, I did almost a month after Easter send to Edward Hubberd, who had the custody of that book committed to him, to know who were the devisers of such things therein as I heard that my Lord of Oxford did mislike, and then also asked of him whether it was enrolled or no, and he said no, wherewith I was offended, as he knoweth, and yet he bare me in hand that there was no cause why it should be enrolled, wherein I did not believe him at that time, and so conceiving thereby that the said book was not of such force as I thought it to be, I did in speech with my Lord of Oxford tell him myself that if he misliked of anything in that book, he might reform it, for the book would not bind him. And yet afterwards I was by better learned than myself assured, and so I do think now, that there was no cause to enrol that book. And so eftsoons speaking with Hubberd, he told me that after my Lord of Oxford's departure he meant to have enrolled [+it?], and he was [+informed?] by them that are best experimented that it was not needful to be enrolled, but that it was sufficient without enrolling.

And so I conclude that I am untruly reported herein, and will so avow it by word and oath, and thereof I call God to witness to avenge me if herein I do colour any untruth.

2 Secondly, I did from time to time for the whole time my Lord of Oxford was absent, with my credit and my bills to Mr Spinola here in London, procure all the money that was sent over to him, and to prove that my Lord was not [sic] cared for by me, when there was no money to be had of his own by sale of his lands, I did, of mine own credit, and having no counter-surance of my Lord, because he should not be destitute, procure to be made overseas within the space of the first 6 months £2390, of which there was not one penny answered of my Lord's own money. And to prove this, Mr Spinola, upon my bond, forbare this sum unpaid to him near hand 6 months.

Item, to prove that I was careful for my Lord of Oxford to have money and not to lack, by my bills and credit, I having no assurance, there was made over in the whole, from February [=1575], when my Lord went, until June, the said £2390, and from thence until September £861, and from thence until the 4 of November £1361, which amounteth unto above £4000, and yet before my Lord came home I also gave my bill for £800 more to Atkins [=Atkinson?], who by chance came not to his Lordship, but yet my care was not the less.

And thus I conclude that I am unjustly and untruly charged that I did not my diligence in procuring of money to be sent over. And in other things I may as well be untruly reported, whereof I will always be ready to try my honesty, with confusion of all liars.

Endorsed: 10 Julij 1576, concerning the Earl of Oxford