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SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 20 October 1595 from Oxford to Robert Cecil recounting the actions taken by the Queen with respect to his suit concerning Waltham Forest.

The arbitration mentioned in the letter took place between Sir Christopher Hatton's appointment as Lord Chancellor on 24 April 1587 and his death on 20 November 1591. As mentioned in the letter, after the arbitration the Queen placed the keepership in the hands of Sir Thomas Heneage (c.1532 – 17 October 1595), Vice-Chamberlain of the Household. Heneage had died three days before the date of Oxford's letter, and Oxford's postscript suggests that the Queen was considering bestowing the keepership of Waltham Forest and Havering Park on Robert Devereux (1565–1601), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Essex.

See also Oxford's letter written the following day, 21 October 1595, CP 172/81.

For the writ of privy seal dated 18 July 1603 by which King James restored to Oxford his rights to the keepership and stewardship of Waltham Forest see TNA C 66/1612, mm. 29-30.

Good Sir Robert Cecil, I have often received from you many words of courtesies & favours when I should have occasion to use ye, all which I have believed & do still, imagining those promises to proceed of a free & liberal disposition. Wherefore having at this time an especial opportunity to try my friends in a cause which I do not doubt but just, I make thus far bold with you that whereas a few years sithence I was a suitor to her Majesty for her favour thus far, that my right, which I did not doubt, to the Forest of Waltham & Park of Havering concerning the keeping thereof might have trial at law, which is a common course to every subject, & that then under pretence to do me a favour, her Majesty, to avoid charge and delay of the law, greatly to mine ease and for better expedition, her pleasure was that the matter should be referred to arbitrament, which was so done as her Majesty, taking exception to my arbitrator, had her own, Sir Christopher Hatton, then Lord Chancellor, appointed as indifferent for us both, as she did measure it.

He having heard the matter and her Majesty's counsel, with mine, was resolved, and hereupon wished me to urge her Majesty to call for his report, which accordingly I did, and the Lord Chancellor present. In short, she refused to hear him. She flatly said whether it were mine or hers she would bestow it at her pleasure, and so under pretence of keeping the same from spoil till the matter were decided between her Majesty and myself, she put it into the hands of Sir Thomas Heneage, and this, after a year's travail, I had for my short expedition.

Now my Lord your father is a full witness of all these things, being present when the matter was committed, and the intentions and all are sufficiently known to him, with all the course observed. I have written also to him and also to her Majesty. I only desire my friends that may speak their minds to her Majesty & have opportunity, that they will be

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means that either she will let me enjoy that which my right doth cast upon me (and the law) with her favour, or that she will protect me with her law as her subject, and that if it be none of mine she will rather take it away by order than oppression. This 20th of October 1595.

Your assured friend,

Edward Oxeford

As I was folding up this letter I received a very honourable answer from my Lord Treasurer. My whole trust in this cause is in you two, my Lord for that he is privy to the whole cause and handling thereof from time to time, and in you for that I assure myself in so just a matter you will not abandon me. He seemeth to doubt yet of his death, & wisheth me to make means to the Earl of Essex that he would forbear to deal for it, a thing I cannot do in honour sith I have already received divers injuries and wrongs from him which bar me of all such base courses. If her Majesty's affections be forfeits of men's estates we must endure it.

Endorsed: To the right honourable & his very good friend & brother, Sir Robert Cecil, one of her Majesty's Privy Council

Endorsed: 20 October 1595, Earl of Oxford to my Master